



AUTUMN

TORRENTS

SHARE '54

AND THE SUN SHONE IN MAN

By - **TEN WHITE**

(SuperMancon Report)



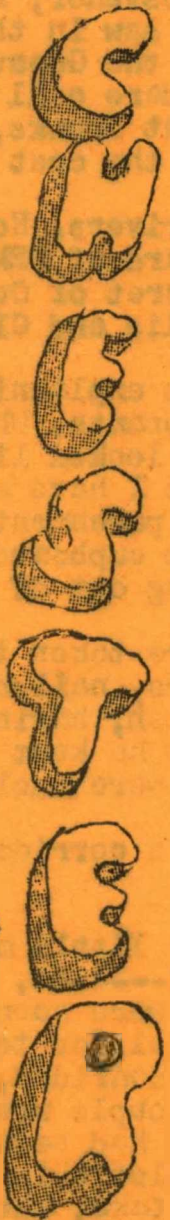
Walter Willis called the Supermancon 'The Magnificent Flop' and I could not find a better description if I studied for a year. The official programme was a flop; in fact, by common consent it was abandoned almost before it had really begun. Not that I'm grumbling. On the contrary I, along with ninety-odd percent of the congregation was damned

glad to see the back of it. It wasn't a bad O.P. - no doubt many Serious Constructive Fans would have enjoyed it. Unfortunately - or fortunately - depending upon your views - S.C.F. were at a premium at the SuperMancon. No doubt they were there somewhere, but their voices were drowned in the roar of the zap-gun.

So the programme, wilting visibly beneath the audience sideline of passing small slips of paper (containing quotes and remarks) died a complete death beneath the ad-libbing antics of Ted Tubb, in whose hilarious hands the con screamed its way to an unanimous success.

James White, I am told, was responsible for the advent of the deadly zap-gun upon unsuspecting British fen. At Manchester he was one of the very few unarmed with one of these weapons, no doubt the awful responsibility weighs heavily upon his shoulders. Zap-guns are a mixed blessing but they have come to stay. At the next con (held in London, Tubbs says) I intend to count our blessings gun by gun. *****

It was sunshining when we arrived in Manchester. This was a truly remarkable occurrence when one remembers that apart from Stonethwaite, in the Lake District, Manchester is the wettest place in England. Stonethwaite is the site of a somewhat similar gathering from time to time, being a large sheep-farm.... There have been many theories for this unusual phenomena put forward since the con but my personal theory is that the cause is tied up with the eclipse of the sun which occurred at more-or-less the same time. The frequency of the total eclipse in England is 44 years and from what I could gather at Manchester this city sees the sun at approximately the same interval. But I digress. The sun was shining when we arrived. The distance from the station to the Grosvenor is not very far --perhaps 400 yards. By dint of taking the wrong turning we managed to stretch it to a couple of miles.



Apart from the heat which made foot-travel wearying, Mal ((Ashwrth)) was wearing a tie which caused Betty and I considerable embarrassment. It was yellow. Not an ordinary, respectable yellow, buttercup or sulphur, but some utterly vile color which was presumably the result of a catastrophe in the dying vats. Reflecting the strong light of the sun it made him look like something like a ray-sticken Dero. The already shaken Maneunians fled in all directions from this apparition--those that weren't already cowering in cleears.

We finally hit on the right direction when we noticed a sign bearing the legend 'Tonight at the Grosvenor; Bentcliffe V Cohen.---THATAWAY.' Following the pointed zap we saw in the distance a massive ugly pile of masonry that could only be the Grosvenor. It was standing at the side (nearly in) a river--if I dare call it that; it was so filthy that it was semi-solid. I'm told that drunks, staggering home in the dark, have often walked across it at the cost of a slightly-muddied pair of shoes.

We were among the early arrivers. However, a gratifyingly large proportion of those present had heard of BEM, and we spent a happy hour explaining to lesser mortals the Secret of Our Success...which boiled down is - get an article from Willis and Clarke.

At twelve o'clock we claimed our rooms, the receptionist explaining that the maids had been removing traces of the last occupants. When I saw the room I was inclined to take that literally-- it looked like a stable. She didn't say who the last occupant had been, but I have my own suspicions. Tucked behind the washstand was a scrap of parchment upon which was written 'Not tonight Lady Hamilton' and in the cupboard was a cocked hat which I carefully placed on 'safety' and flung out of the window.

Getting to the room was a gaga in itself. We were taken there by a small man dressed in waterproof jacket and trousers, nailed boots and a smart Tyrolean hat. He spoke only broken English, having been imported specially for the job. On the way up in the lift he kept pointing to small clusters of pale flowers which he insisted were edelweiss.

When the lift would go no further we stepped out into a corridor. Facing us upon the wall was a notice which read:

Rooms 220 - 260 ----->

<----- Rooms 261 - 280

The little man, however, trusting to his sense of direction led us <-----, which was most puzzling since we were allocated room 231. We were soon lost. The guide explained that he had only worked at the hotel for ten years and had never been to the top floor before. In fact, he donfided, the manager hadn't known that there was a top floor until a couple weeks ago when a guest had missed his way on the floor below and had been discovered, three days later by a large posse of police. Whilst this conversation was being carried on we found ourselves, by mistake, outside room 231. The little man was most proud and departed immediately, clutching a shilling in his fur mitten.

We glanced out of the window at the dizzy depths below, then returned to the warmer regions of the con room. This was a newly-decorated room (so claimed the manager). We helped to improve the format of the place by sticking a couple of BEM front covers on the wall, then after dutifully sitting through the morning session-- which lasted only 15 minutes--thankfully departed in search of lunch. * * * * *

A couple of hours later, after again being lost, we toiled up the stairs to the first floor and entered the con-scene. We looked but we didn't understand. We rubbed our eyes, pinched

ourselves and generally carried on as we were supposed to do when we can't believe the evidence of our eyes. For the room, apart from a solitary person, was empty. Not a fan, not a chair, not a cartoon on the walls. Just this cleaner carefully removing, with a vacuum cleaner, the protective covering of cigarette-buds from the carpet. We simultaneously thought of Fredric Brown's "What Mad Universe".

We were just on the point of asking the cleaner the name of the Prime Minister when a voice behind us asked 'Looking for the Con?--It's downstairs.' And so it was. The new site was possibly larger but considerably dingier than the original one. It seemed that the Hotel manager had worried about the effect of selo-tape on his newly-decorated walls, and insisted that we move into the new room, about which, evidently, he couldn't care less.

Working like beavers, the Manchester Club, aided by other volunteers, managed to straighten out things for the afternoon session. The treasurer, Brian Varley, asked in the name of the manager, for less rubbish in the hall. The audience being bludgeoned into some semblance of order the afternoon officially began. For some people

HARNESS

the closing of the bar about the same time meant that the afternoon had already finished; especially as we had been assured not long before that the bar would be open all day. Evidently the management thought we were bad enough sober and couldn't face the idea of 200 tipsy fen howling through his hotel. A pity really.

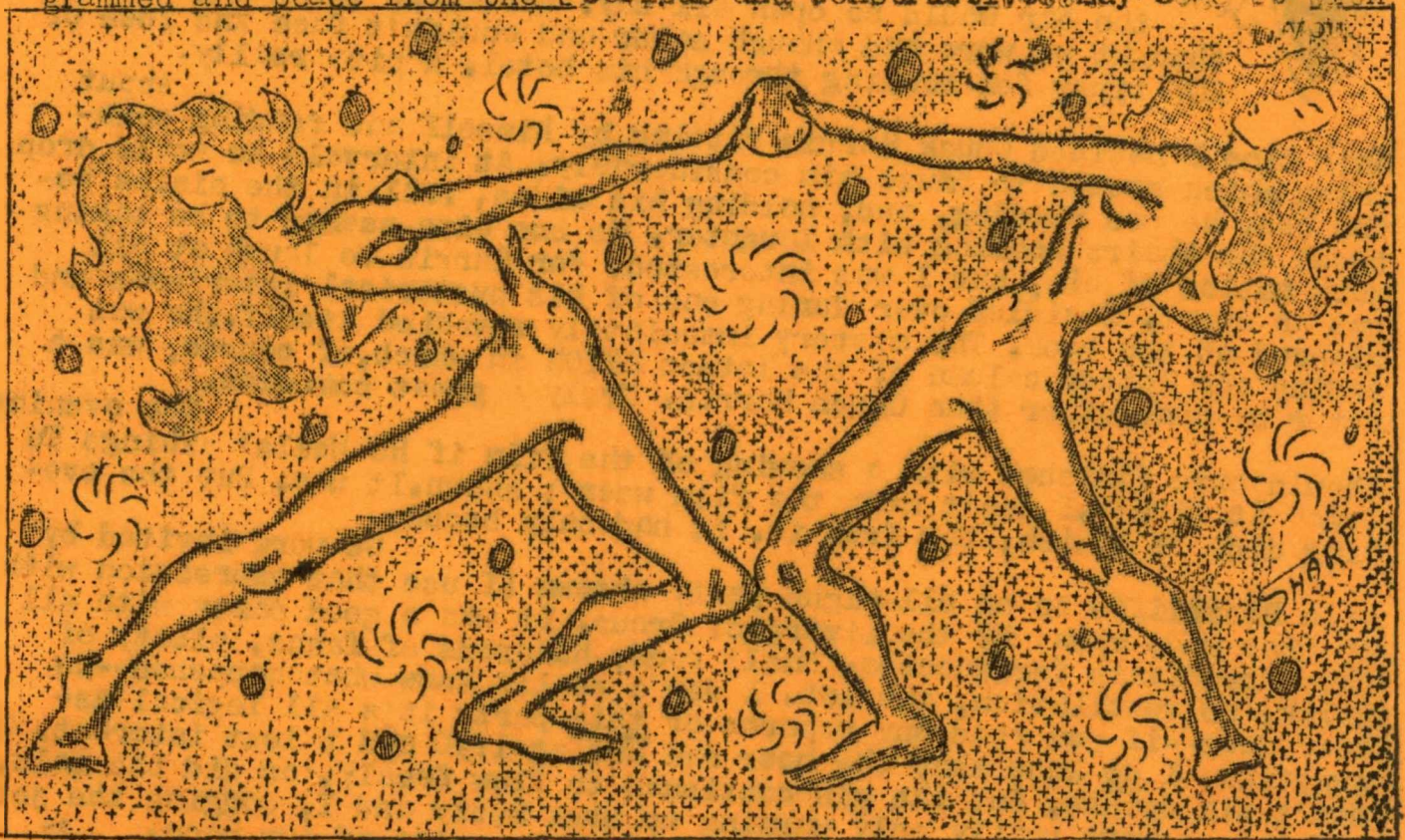
About this time I noticed Chuck Harris sitting by himself and reading something which seemed to amuse him considerably. At intervals he would drop the book he was reading, and, holding his sides, roll in the aisles between the chairs hooting with laughter. No one else seemed to be taking much notice of him, but I was interested. For Harris to laugh at all was an event. I sidled over during one of his hysterical interludes and glanced at the book. The mystery immediately revealed itself. he was reading the letter column of the latest ORION in which, of course, was a letter by none other than Chuch Harris. Truly a great comedian.

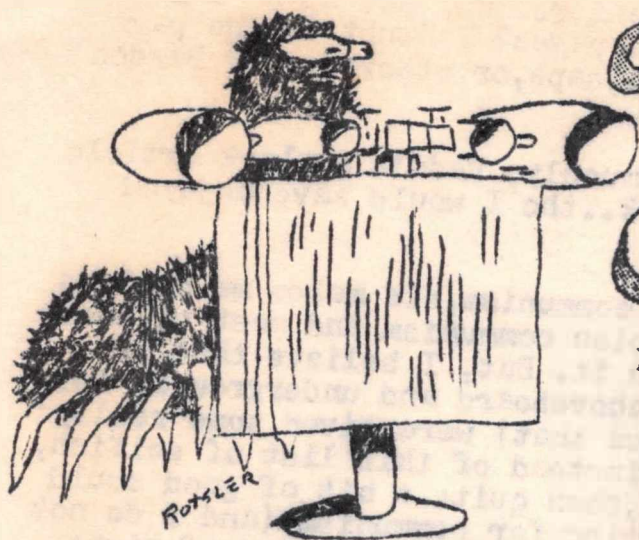
The evening should have finished with a showing of the film if HG Wells' "Things To Come" It didn't. I don't mean the film wasn't shown. It was. But the evening didn't finish, far from it. It had only begun.

We were invited by Eric Bentcliffe to an all-night party thrown (I use that expression with my eyes wide open) by the Liverpool Group. It was a good party with all the ingredients for success. Small room, hundreds of faans, plenty of drink, no ventilation, the lot. I don't really know what happened--no body does--if you read any reports of this party it's all logical assumption. I do know that the beer ran out at 1:30 and I lost interest. I don't mix drinks. But the gin continued to flow freely, as did the talk, and things were really only warming up when Betty and I, dodging the jets from soda-syphens, escaped to the comparative quiet of our room.

We were awakened early the next morning by the ringing of the cathedral bells, some fifty yards away across the square and on a level with our room. Brought to electrified awakeness by the first note I dashed across the room and slammed the window shut. Then I covered my head with the sheets. Still the deadly booming penetrated. When the bed springs began to join in with their own carillon I gave up, and wearily breaking the ice on the bucket, commenced my morning shave.

The parts of the Official programme which survived on the 2nd day were excellent. The Medaw Group were responsible for a quite funny sketch; the Liverpool Group recorded a Willis script with outstanding success and of course we had Ted Tubb keeping the attention of everyone with his marvellous ad-lib auction chatter. The final item proved perhaps the most successful of all. This was to have been a mock trial of Bert Campbell for his use of the term 'Bloody Provincials' in connection with non-Londoners. Bert, however, was last heard of half-way between London and Manchester, cursing his fickle motor cycle. He never did turn up; though I'm not convinced even yet that something more doesn't lurk behind this happening. But the trial had to go forward and in the absence of Campbell, Ron Buckmaster, resplendent in an atrocious set of black whiskers, took his place in the dock. Terry Jeeves, the author of the script, played the prosecutor; Dave Newman, also in a beard and wearing a sun-helmet with rotart propellor was the judge and Ted Tubb; the omnipresent, played defense attorney. The whole thing was a scream, I shall never forget Jeeves, pounding the table with anger; accusing the prisoner, face invisible behind a matted mass of beard, of being a bare-faced liar. After the trial everything else was anti-climax. The con broke up into small groups and soon we three, the victims of an early train had to leave. Yes, the programme failed, but the con as a whole was a great success. No one yet has attacked any part of the proceedings with any seriousness. It looks as if we finally have the ingredients for a successful meeting. Plenty of Tubb, not too much programmed and peace from the Serious and Constructive may come with





WCCG.

COMMENTS

MASQUE (Rotsler) : Ahhh! How I do like this zine! I'M kicking myself for not trying to get into Fapa sooner just so I could have read those other parts of Fitzgerald you used (nertz. I've no correction fluid whatsoever, & have been trying to be extra care-

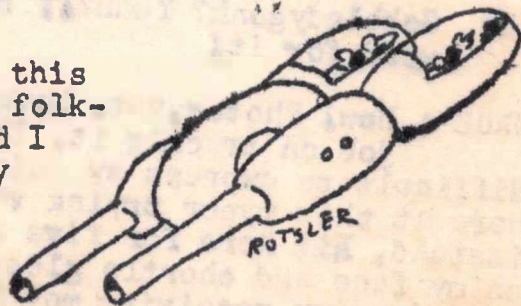
ful not to make any mistakes. So what do I do? I'm concentrating so hard on being careful with the typing I forget what word I was going to type next and so that preceding sentence looks rather off((grrrr)) odd. What I meant to say was "parts of Fitzgerald's letters" and not hunks of poor Mr. Fitzgerald..) Anyway, I like those letters of his, and think he's one of the strongest wits I've read in a long, long time. Hope you have things like this in every succeeding issue of Masque. # I was kind of disappointed, tho, to find so few of your illos in the zine. # I see what you mean about double columns and neat mimeoing. Only, pardon me while I jump up and down in utter glee... the first page of writing is actually a little smeary in my copy! tsksk # I like that quote from Schelling re art and artist on the last page of Masque, very much. # I just had a horrible thought. Is Gerald Fitzgerald the G. Fitzgerald who used to write books in the 20's and 30's?? Or is that guy dead? & if he's not and He's not he, then who is he? # This is one of the best, if not thee best, zines in the whole mlg.

FANEWS (Dunkelberger): You must read the Fargo Forum. # I liked the illos and the format, but haven't read any of the fiction yet. And I doubt if I ever will. This printed-look reminds me too much of that cruddy UAPA I belonged to a couple years ago; maybe that's why I'm hesitant about even starting to read any of those short stories. Did read the article on Frankenstein, tho. Nothing new in there.. if one has read the book, and gone to see almost all those old Frankenstein movies, then one doesn't learn much from this article, does one? # Best thing in the issue is the poem "Courteous Kind Jamie". I like that!

SIAMESE SANDPIPE (Wesson): Hey, I enjoyed this collection of folklore very muchly, much to my surprise. And I do like those tinted drawings. Looks very professional, indeed.

THE FANTASY AMATEUR: (OO): How come I

owe 8 pages yet? I thought the activity requirements meant 8 pages a year. So if I received 12 pages credit for my first Torrents, then why do I still owe 8? Or am I just confused. Does one have to have 8 pages in each mlg? # Only one thing wrong with the whole mlg, in 7,



my opinion, and that's all the single-sheeters. Why not spend a little extra amount of energy and do 2 or 4 more pages? I doubt if one page could rightfully be called a "zine"...fapa,saps,or otherwise. # Pardon me while I gird myself for the onslaught.

SPACESHIP: I like that cover. # Enjoyed, muchly, Redd's Skylark article. Ditto your reviews & Backtalk..tho I would have enjoyed reading more of you in the zine.

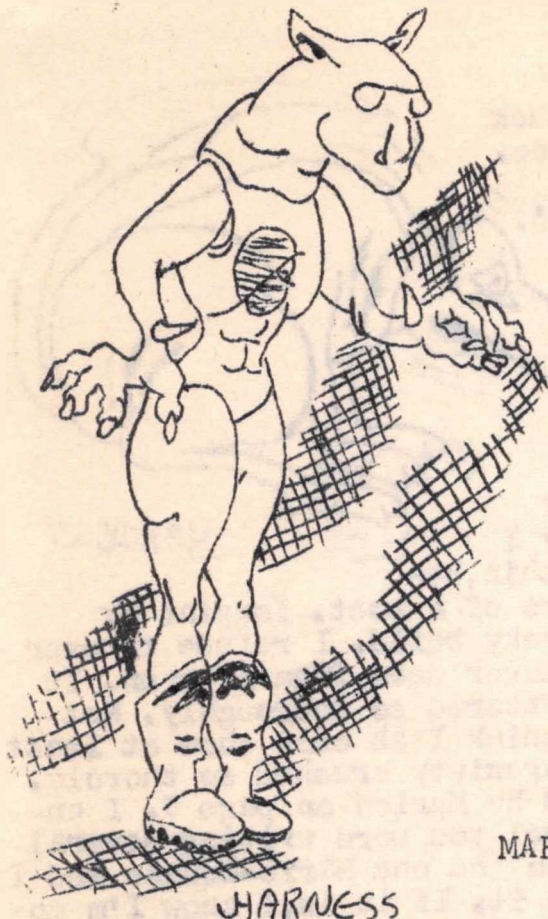
MRDSMITH: All this talk about Russia, communism, etc makes me furious tho I don't know why. I despise communism and most of those poor weak fools who so deeply believe in it. But, I believe that if all the "real" people who are fighting, aboveboard and underground, for communistic ideals (if they can be called that) were given some really good, humanitarian goal to work towards instead of this list of selfish, and just plain stupid, power-mad-dreams, then quite a bit of good could be gained for the world. The people working for communism (and I do not mean those so steeped in its doctrine that they know nothing of right or wrong except what they're told) I admire. They've got the guts and the eternal restlessness of that breed of souls which strikes out for a black wilderness and creates at least some spark of light there for future generations. Most people like to think Big thoughts and pride themselves on their nonconformist ideas, yet instead of actually getting out and doing something about it, they meekly continue to live the kind of life they secretly despise and know is wrong. But those people who do think they can find something better for their own kids and their future generations, and then get out and act on that belief, I applaud. Their ideals and ideas may seem wrong to me, but I still admire them for displaying a courageousness and eagerness to help humanity that the rest of us are either afraid to show or can't show. Personally, I believe that people are the same all over the world (perhaps even the universe) and both sides of the world are being fed a steady crummy line of lies by a minority group eager to control more humans and yet still keep control of their original group. # Oh, this is a maaaaad world!

JACK SPEER--ELDER GOD: Loved the Tucker humor in this, but upon joining Fapa I thought joyously that now I'd get to read reams of that Tucker humor every mlg. # Sure, I'll be glad to give Mr. Speer what he deserves..only I want to be his manager or whatever it is he needs to have this law passed. And being that, entitles me to a life time membership too. I insist!

SHADOWLAND # 5½ : Yah, the joke was funny. I read it before, tho, in an old joke book.

RE: Gobbledygook? Yeah?? That's it, that's it! I knew there was a word for it!

GRUE : Wow! Photos, yet. Loved that cover and think you did a wonderful job on tracing it. Though I like all your zines, Dean, I find it difficult to express my enjoyment in mere words. So instead of sitting here at this typer trying vainly to put my enjoyment in writing, I will instead, sit here for five silent minutes with a look of pure bliss on my face and chortle gleefully ~~and~~ mentally (heh??) towards Fond du Lac. Are you receiving me? # I must have an odd sense of humor, but that illo and your caption on page 3 nearly killed me. It goes so well with the look on the creature's face. It? I mean your caption. Tsk, and to think I used to get A's and B's in English during my school years.



SLIPSHOD: I like it! # Do you like Luke Short? Saw a re-issue of one of the old movies (well, I consider the 1940's old now) taken from one of his novels. You ever see/read "Blood on the Moon"? Yegods, it was quite a shock when I saw this movie again..I'd been rather eager to see it a few weeks ago at one of the local drive-ins since I faintly recollected it as being a pretty good movie. Man, what corn! At the most it could be classified as a grad c western. I guess my tastes in movies just changed for the better, because I thought it stunk upon seeing it the second time. # I bet you like horses.

TARGET FAPA: They're keeping guns away from you, too?? And you don't like Spillane, either? Bully for you!

MARCHING FIRE: Liked it just as much the 2nd time.

CAMPAIGN LIAR: Well, if you say so ...

MULLER: Noted. THE STEFMAG! : Holy moses, the ultimate in Pure Crud!
SMA FOR GHOD: Yegods and little catfishes, more of the smae slop.

FANTASIA: I like your zine and the friendly attitude you display in it. Was sorry to see it so small, tho. Bigger, next time?

STEFANT ASY: Another zine I like, "Eggs and Progress" I've read twice. And liked it both times, too. Tho I don't know why.. I dislike eggs. Got hold of some pretty un-fresh ones a couple weeks ago and seeing that poor little defenseless thingamabob laying there curled up like a biology-book photo made me feel like a cannibal. I also felt queasy. Right now I wouldn't care if all the hens in the world stoped dropping eggs all over the joint. # The treatise on Coal-driven Power Stations looks very interesting and also very technical, which is why I didn't read farther than the first paragraph.

FAPESMO: Wha'h oppned? You can read it! This is a big improvement over that mimeo-job on your first sapszine, Jack, and I'm glad I could read every word and see every illo. # Hey now, I liked Tamud.. but sir, how dare you ridicule one of my favorite Books? I'll tear you limb from limb and then stick you together again..all wrong.

FAN MAGGOT: AH yes, RABBIT COOKIES! Reminds me of my old (creak..) school days daze. Where'd you ever pick this page up?

WAWCRHetceto: Gee, Geewhizz. Walt Willis and Chuck Harris all at once in one zine??! Gee. This was/is by ~~the~~ far one of the funniest zines in the mlg. How can we hope to compare to these Isles fans? We will now pause to wonder. Which reminds me..I actually saw &

HELD IN MY BARE HANDS a real photo of Chuck Harris! And I,ve never been the same since.
ie:



CATACLYSM: Ilove poetry when it's good poetry, and needless to say, I liked this of Cat. Seems like forever since I last saw this zine. #Juanita sent me a couple of photos of the EISPA group and some of the Gleeps, Bob, and you were in one of the photos ((that sounds odd, doesn't it? Owell..)). I was nearly floored when I saw your photo..after reading your poetry I sort of imagined you as a small, rather thin, bespectacled man who looked the very picture of a poet. Imagine my surprise to find you're a giant with a husky build. I refuse to ever draw any mental images of any fans I've never seen from now on. It isn't right to have one's imagination shattered so thoroughly. Not that your photo shocked me..only that I think I should show at least some indignation over having my mental ingenuity crushed so thoroly. # This is an excellent "ritual" presented by Marion on page 7. I enjoyed it thoroughly. Is this from the novel you were writing several months (almost a year) ago, Marion? I mean the one Marie-Louise and I read chapter of while you were working on it. If it is, I know I'm going to like it even more so since seeing this "Druidic # Fragments".



: Loved that slogan you have strung across the first page: "The more I see of people the better I like dogs". You writing to Vee Hampton?? # I liked this zine..only I think I'll like it better this mlg since I'll know what you're talking about in your reviews.

SHADOWLAND #6: That's a pretty cover. But my favorite is the illo on page 14. Wish I had the original of that one..its an idea I've often tried to draw myself but never could. For several reasons..the main one being I can't draw that good. If I wasn't so careful about keeping all 'zines complete I'd tear this illo out and frame it for my room. I'm completely fasinated by it.#I'm glad you're going to feature Brad Bromleigh in future issues, since his "Old Goat" ~~was~~ was enjoyed more than I enjoy the usual fiction found in any zines(fan).

BRAD: Tsk, Bergeron, shaame on you. You forgot Venus' drapery. #Liked you're ramblings, Wrai. Please..don't mention cows. I got an aversion to them for some strange reason. # Wasn't much of Gerding in this issue, was there. My word, Nan, how could you restrain yourself like that. Only one page!

-the end-