

WHEN THE GODS WOULD SUP #7

JULY 15, 1963

Unless you're as blind as a bat (an idiosyncrasy apparently shared by more than one fan) you realize this is When The Gods Would Sup, an amateur publication Published For Communication, Etc. by Alan J. Lewis. If you're interested in an address, try c/o AMRA, Box 9006 ROSSLYN, ARLINGTON 9, VIRGINIA. By the time you're reading this, I shall either be stateside, and looking for a place to stay in New York City, or half-way between Tripoli and Charleston.

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For this issue, I had all sorts of real purty things drafted out, just like I was saying youall ought to have also (although I do it almost never myself). But through some fluke I've received the last mailing, and everything I have refers to the one before. Besides this, some of you even patted me on the head, and said a few kind words, so I don't feel nearly so mean and vicious any more. So it's cut, cut, cut, and instead of trying to squeeze in the last word about MCs, the Cult, etc and then announcing I'm dropping the discussion because I'm sick of it....why, I'll just drop it without mentioning it at all. How on that....over?

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Last mailing several people announced they still don't see what the Coast Guard is doing over in Libya. Frankly, neither do I--I suspect it has something to do with guarding the coast of the Free World. Basically, however, the Guard is responsible for the maintenance and operation of most of the United States' Aids to Navigation (including buoys, radio beacons, ocean station patrols, etc) and we are running a radio aid to navigation over here. If I have the space and time this issue, I'll try to give a brief once over on Loran for Toskey's benefit, but as I mentioned last issue, a much better book (for someone who wants to be able to show his friends) would be the McGraw-Hill volume on the same subject, or the Philco training manual on Electronic Navigation Systems, covering radio direction finding, (range, bearing, Orfordess, Sonne); Landing systems, hyperbolic systems (Loran, Lorac, Decca, Gee, POPI); Radar range and bearing systems (Rebecca-Eureka, Rho-Theta, radar mapping); H Bombing systems (Gee-H, Micro-H, Rebecca-E, Shoran) and a few others. I've probably lost most of you all ready. I don't know what they're all about--I've been running down the contents page, but if you want to...buy the book.

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Fred Patten--last mlg you asked me if I knew how the rumor was started of UCLA giving land for the fanzine collection. I can't say for sure, but I suspect this is what comes of your pushing two organizations at once--some body read about the land being donated to the Fantasy Foundation, and the

writer probably pushed the UCLA fanzine collection in the next sentence. It does seem a bit awkward, you're having all these collection agencies represented and pushed by the same people--as if you don't care who items being donated to--everything will wind up in the same pot in the end.

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Once again, I don't know how this issue is going to turn out. Bill Evans, several months ago, mailed me a bundle of stencils, but most of my belongings have been mailed home for several weeks, including all the stencils except for a few I saved to finish this particular issue. And I've just come to the horrible conclusion that most of the stencils I saved just happened to be those I brought over with me (and never threw out) which means they're at least 2½ years old, and have traveled all over the country (hell--the world) with me. The only saving grace is that a few of them hold Dave English cartoons, which I've been planning to publish real soon now--ever since 1959. But they are old, dry, and crumbling.

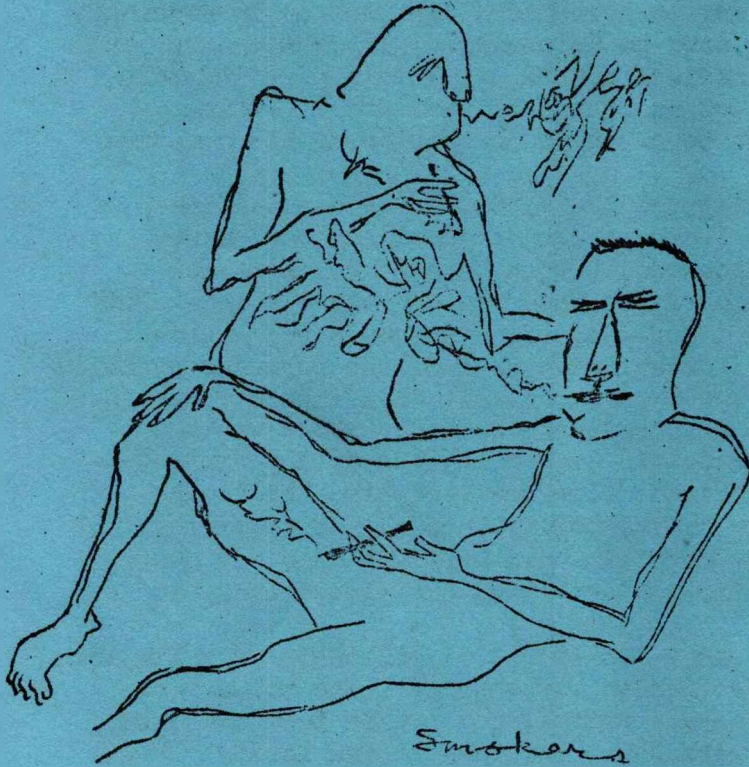
There is a minor story behind these Dave English cartoons, which will interest no-one, but which will be sure to take up a little space. I first received them when I was putting out "Fantasy Aspects"--billed as Fandom's Only Reprint Fanzine, which is a pretty shakey billing, as you must admit. I don't know how many issues of Fantasy Aspects appeared--three maybe--but I sent the last one to Dave, he sent me a few cartoons, and a pleasant little note (concerning--so help me--the muttering of several patients in a mental hospital where he once worked. I don't remember what prompted that subject, but I suspect it was my editorial) and Fantasy Aspects promptly folded. And then I joined the Coast Guard.

The Guard has not actually stopped me from being slightly more than inactive, so I continued carrying those cartoons with me until the fall of 1961 when I began running into Bhub Stewart at Ted White's basement rumpus-room; billed Metropolitan Mimeo or Metropolitan Coin Company (depending on whether Ted or Walter Breen was using the mail drop as a business address at the time), and sometimes "owner Hall. At that time Bhub wasn't doing whatever he's doing now to keep body and soul together; however, somehow promoting his great artistic talents, he had gotten a job taking a chrome plated ring, about 1½ inches in diameter, and lashing some elastic lengths of line through them. That is, loop the line, push the loop through the ring, and then take the two ends pull them through the loop, and pull tight. Apparently these devices were used to hold bundles onto wagons or sleds--or perhaps they were sold to the Indians as a new way of lashing Papposes. At any rate, Bhub was holing up in the rumpus-room, with a gigantic box of these colorful snakes, and a smaller box of rings. I had been asking him for quite some time to either stencil the cartoons for me, or do some himself, if he ever got time/energy/inclination. But I didn't expect him to ever get the courage, and he obviously didn't want to--but I, being such a wise and shrewd businessman (and mainly because I was fascinated by the idea by the idea of looping elastically colorful snakes through chrome plated rings) offered to trade jobs with him for the night. So Bhub sat, and doodled, and talked, and I sat and looped loons through rings, and we all had a great time.

I understand, however, that Bhub's boss wasn't too satisfied with his progress--at any rate, that particular job didn't last very long.

In "The Wild Colonial Boy", #2, John Foyster asked Bruce Pelz if Recollections of the Jersey Prison Ship in the "American Experience Series" was the book Pelz thought I had cribbed from for my "Notes" on the same subject.

I'm sort of sick of the whole topic, but as a matter of fact, John, no--Bruce had some other book in mind that I've never even heard of, but you would be correct in saying I used it for my major source of reference. After reading it I decided to look into the topic more thoroughly. Before doing this, however, I had the brainstorm of writing it up for SAPS (why SAPS--just for the hell of it, I suppose) and afterwards I discovered it is the definitive reference. Many of the references I did find were obviously wholly extracted from Recollections. As best I can recall (and using the only notes I still have with me--they are slopped over several notebooks, and I only have one with me at the present) I also used Frank A Leslie's Illustrated Weekly (whose illustration, I think, was the same one you see in Recollections), several other editions of Recollections, with different



introductions (and Bruce-- why should it be so hard to make Librarians understand it's only some particular edition you want to see--sometimes I got two or three different editions before I got the one I was looking for) Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute, some two or three volume History of Brooklyn (I don't know too much about this one--I happened to run across one volume of this broken set in a bookstore one night, and it just happened to be the one I needed. It's amazing I was there at all-- I'd been given early liberty when I put in a request to see an exhibition of Edward Lear!), and several other accounts of prisoners' experiences on these "Jersey hulks".

There were quite a few wide discrepancies in all these sources--the number, and

names of the ships, for one thing--and even in the maps. I have photostats of four or five different maps at home--all of the harbor where the hulks were moored--and all different. Now, of course, the mud flats have been dredged, and Brooklyn Navy Yard is at the spot, so there's not much sense in looking at a map today.

After I had written the "Notes", however, I did get one thing out of looking at a chart of New York Harbor. One of the books had mentioned the men swam two miles to escape, and land reasonably far from habitation. So I got out a ruler and measured, and found that from Brooklyn Navy Yard to the lower tip of Manhattan--the battery (which is still another story-- I'm full of them today)--is almost exactly two miles. As the lower part of Manhattan was the built up portion--about up to the lower reaches of

Greenwich Village--and the British occupied New York through all but the earliest days of the War of Independence (a fancy name for Revolutionary War) it seems most likely that they swam the other direction, against the current, which would make it considerably harder. As for where they eventually landed--well, it was either on Manhattan Island or Long Island, but I suspect chance dictated the choice more than plan. But I'm talking through my hat again, now.

What they probably did, though, was to try heading back to one of the Rebel ports, such as New London. (And here's another story, gang). New London, for example, was a fairly large privateering port (and was built, quite naturally, on the Thames River, although this one is in Connecticut). It was never seriously attacked by the British until just before Cornwallis found himself outmaneuvered at Yorktown. (Although apparently he didn't do much maneuvering--he just sort of sat there, with his back to the sea, as his ace in the hole. Everyone knew the British controlled the seas...except the French.) One version has it Lord Clinton ordered New London attacked in order to serve as a distraction to Washington who had just started marching down on Cornwallis. It didn't work, but it helped make General Arnold--Benedict, not Hap--a little more infamous than he already was. Arnold was put in charge of the assault, which helped him not a whit, because the boys back home considered him a native of those parts.

The first thing he did was misjudge the winds, so he arrived in broad daylight, instead of at dawn. There was a signal gun on the New London side of the Thames (New London and Groton face each other--New London is nearest to New York) which fired once when he was sighted. But after the signal gun fired, he had a few of his own guns sound, which confused the natives considerably. Eventually most of the boys had shambled to either the New London fort or the Groton one. It didn't make one heck of a lot of difference--they both were reduced, although there was a general slaughter up at the Groton fort. Apparently one of the British officers said "Come on out!" and somebody else answered him: "No!" The British officer didn't like having his authority knocked, so after the surrender he showed who was boss. Several Court Martials came out of the attack on both sides (stuff like cowardice, etc.) but almost everyone was excused.

All the attack accomplished was a little bit of killing, and a little bit of razing. Both Groton and New London were burned. The primary objective, however, had been to recapture several fat prizes that had just been swiped from the British and were being unloaded at New London. Most of their goods were still on board, though, and they just moved a little further up the river, and never were touched.

There are still a few traces of the war left--when you walk down the main drag in Groton you'll come across a plaque set in the wall of a small, white wood house, reading "This is where our boys were taken after the British made their dastardly attack."

Interesting enough, the New London Historical Society (it's housed in a building where they claim "George Washington Slept Here") has a very small amount of material on the Revolution. It is primarily given over to the Good Old Days of New London--the Whaling Era. And the most fascinating thing they possess is a mimeographed, first draft of The History of the United States Marine Corps. How, or why they have that, no-body knows.

The fun part of writing a fanzine like this is that I'm able to ramble and ramble, and offer myself so many "comment hooks" that I have a hard time killing everything after 5½ pages and winding everything up. I have this trouble when I first draft--and when I don't, it's murder. Several issues ago--the jeremaid--this happened. As if it wasn't bad enough (I sat down at Larry Ivie's typewriter with a bunch of stencils, a hatful of ideas, and no corflu) I found I had three lines left and about two pages of material to push into it...which may explain the sudden halt. (But don't go back to reread it--resist that temptation; it's not very hard!) This time, as I mentioned before, the 63rd mailing came way before it was suspected and caught me with my pants down, so to speak. I'd like to ignore it, and just put in "comments" on the 62nd, but it's got too much stuff I would like to answer.

Mr. Pelz, for example: I am delighted that you are delighted that I "at least look through the mailings", although I'm wondering about this "great deal of doubt" bit. Just your doubts, or have I irritated someone so much they feel I'm important enough to talk about?

Seriously, however, sometimes that's just about all I do do--"look through the mailings". I spotread, and I've done it for years. There are many excuses I could use, but the truest one might be that I'm just not interested in a great percentage of the mailing. No--I shouldn't say not interested, because when I do sit down with a handful of fanzines and plenty of time, I can make it straight through without flinching. It's just that so much of them appear to be ephemeral that I have a "take-it-or-leave-it attitude". Now don't argue with me on this please--it's just that my attitude is far different from yours and there no longer will be any sense babbling about it.

The only question, of course, is why I'm in at all, and all I can offer for a reason is that there still is quite a bit of material that I do enjoy, and there is actually very little that I don't enjoy--it's just that I'd rather do something more important to me. To you, now, I may be an inactive member....to myself, though, I'm not, because I get out of SAPS, FAPA and OMPA precisely what I put into them, and I'm enjoying what I get. Okay, ace?

Mr. Metcalf: I thank you, sir, for your direct invitation to vote in your new Pillar Poll, and I am delighted at your efforts to make it "better". I must beg off, however, for several reasons: These Polls, I assume, are for those who read close to every word every mailing. I can hardly claim that now, when the paragraph before I admitted sometimes I don't do much more than leaf through. Furthermore, I don't have the appropriate mailings, and under any circumstances it would be hard to accomplish without them. And even worse than this, although I can see how hard you tried to apportion the total points among the categories, some of them are thoroughly dead letter, to me...there just aren't many people to "vie for the honors". But I hope the voting is satisfactory; as polls go, it's a good poll, and I hope you get your wish on having people name the contributions of their entries.

Mr. Busby & Others: I was very interested on the answers to your statement about SAPS' missing vitality (mailing 62), and how they stacked up against my own viewpoint. I suppose I'd fit (quite easily) into the category of "those who are all ready bored and just hanging around bitching" but I'll tell you, Buz, I'd like to see SAPS hit what you call a "slump" myself. (And why are small mailings and a smaller membership considered a slump?) All the vitality that SAPS had when I first started hanging around the organizations seems to be gone. Maybe my early mailings

(#49 was my first as a member) weren't quite as I remember them, but I still think nostalgically about my early mailings, and Howard's back mailings which I have read. (And that's yet another story--I drove around Michigan for several months with Howard's collection of SAPS Mailings in the trunk and back seat of my car back in early 1960. No-one

ever tried to steal any, though) If I were to try to pinpoint any one thing which I think has changed the nature of the organization, I think it's the size of the membership. It's been changed several times by fiat since you were OEs, but I wish like hell someone would try changing it back. Of course, maybe all this is because I like small mailings. (I'd rather have a 198 page FAPA mailing, for example, than a 500-pager. I feel too guilty when I have to skim material that I know I'd enjoy if I could sit down and read it.) And I certainly would hate to be the fan bearing the brunt of the wails of frustrated waiting listers--I nominate Howard. He can always run under the slogan "Bring the Treasure Back to Michigan".

I also wish you would name a name, or maybe two, of FAPAns who sneer at SAPS. That seems to be something everyone talks about, but nobody does (aside from a few multiapans who have no intention of changing their status.) If it's a rivalry, it's just for fun.

And by the way, Buz--let's say this issue is dedicated to you--after writing the first draft, I realized it bears out most of what you've said about me. (In SAPS, that I know about, that is)

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#### Most Surprising Statement of the Year, Department

"The recent FAPA election indicates that I need a lot more work in FAPA -- I lost the election for Secretary-Treasurer to Bill Evans by a whopping vote..."

--Brucifer, SPELEOBEM 17

Sure, Bruce, and the recent HUGO awards indicate Forry Ackerman needs a lot more work with Famous Monsters, too.

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And on such a note we end the 7th issue of When The Gods Would Sup. (gad, what a title! The first time I saw it I knew I had to use it!) Art by Dave English and Steve Stiles, stenciled by Bob Stewart and Steve. And I'm hoping BHHoward can find the time to run this off for me. Finito 7Jun63

