

THIS AIN'T NUTHIN' BUT

# ARCHIVE

THE MERCATORIAL OMPAZINE

THAT COMES TO YOU FROM THE SHADOW OF THE  
MALLEABLE IRON WORKS



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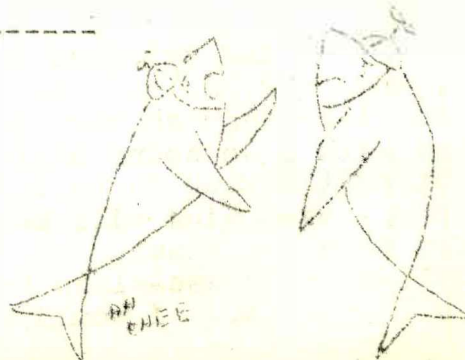
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The Editor is indebted  
to Mr Al Hobson for  
the loan of his ferret.

## EGOBBOO TO THE ANGLO-SAXONS

"LOF - a more or less untranslatable word  
which means roughly the praise and esteem  
of one's contemporaries."

- David Wright, in the Introduc-  
tion to the Penguin edition of "Beowulf."



"That's a nice  
piece of pikelet."

Blank Space specially  
commissioned from B. Kidd

NOW THIS HERE'S THE STORY OF A FERRET CALLED MAX, OR POSSIBLY DOUGLAS. Now at the time of which I write, Max (or possibly Douglas) was a chicken, living in the woods disguised as an acorn under the name of Omega on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and under the name of Carruthers on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, except on nights when the full moon was in its first quarter, when he was known simply as Jack.

Now one day, Jack was sitting under a Torquay palm looking decidedly coniferous when he suddenly found himself impinging on a Column called

# SITTING - IN

otherwise known as DERRY'S DESPAIR, the original ARCHIVE lettercol. Hearken ye then to the immortal words of RON ("Genius") BUCKMASTER (28 Jan 1957) who writes from the wilds of Cyprus: "I went to see Rock Around the Clock only a week ago, at the cinema that is run in a spare hangar at the RAF camp Acrotiri, and afterwards went into the Sgts Mess for a few drinks. I met some old drinking pals in there, French jet-pilots, and if you haven't heard them singing, with me leading, you haven't lived. The odd thing is that they think that us English are vivacious types, and that it is the French who are the stiff unbending ones! Apparently the French never sing in pubs, and they really meant it. They think it is a good thing, and wish they could have the same sort of time when they go out for an evening's drinking. (Do Linards sing in pubs?)

"I have started a new club (Ron continues) the DSRDC, the Dry Shaver Racing Drivers Club - for owner-drivers only. We have three classes of member: the novices, who qualify by owning a dry shaver; the racing driver, who has to have a full day's adult growth, and can go round the course without faults in five minutes, track to be judged before and afterwards by a blonde nominated by the president. Last, and supreme, are the master pilots, who have to pass a really stiff test: drive a faultless course of two days' growth, in the dark, after getting out of bed from an all-night session, and to be fully dressed and ready for judging in four minutes. I expect to organise a racing calendar, and to have rallies, and to annually present a moustache-cup to the champion of Europe. We will of course have a handicap system, based on price, allowing ten seconds for each pound under ten, and of necessity adding ten seconds for each pound over ten. The big event of the year will be the Le Mans 24 minutes, in which reliability will be tested, and general convenience, by using the master-pilot conditions, and adding the complication of two different voltages, and also a DC supply, and five alternative fittings, the various supplies being switched on at random intervals for thirty seconds at a time, and only one at a time, so that those having multi-purpose plugs and multi-voltage shavers can demonstrate their superiority. The day will end with a Concours d'Elegance, for both drivers and machines. The object of the club is to improve the breed, and I expect no gambling, and professionalism will be severely discouraged as it only leads to big transfer fees and slavery of the driver."

(I suggest a special steeplechase-class for elderly drivers, and a closed-circuit lap-race for poodles. I would also like to see a special Ladies' Event.)

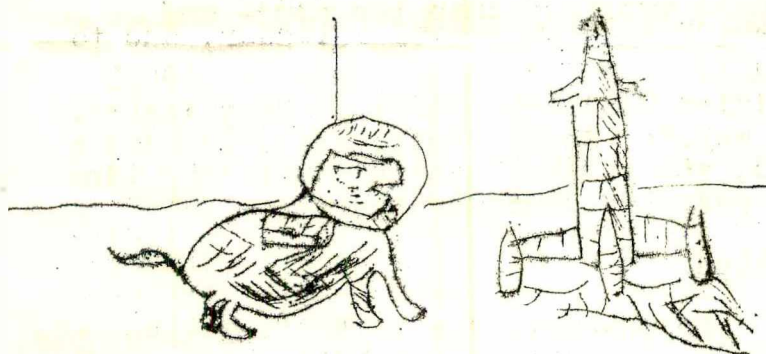


Being of a naturally enquiring disposition, I recently ventured to ask LARS HELANDER to explain himself. This he obligingly did (23 Jan 1957) as follows: "Helander is Greek or something. That ander ending in Helander is identical to the ander ending in Alexander, anyway, that I know; I also know that "ander" means something like MAN, but that "Hel-" part beats me. In old Swedish, Hel is the name of the Death Goddess. Same radical as in the English word Hell. Heh. Seems that I am THE MAN FROM HELL or something. Well, that's a suitable name for a Swedish fan, for in Swedish "fan" means "devil." Haaaa. Thus, "Helander, the fan" ought to come out something like "The devil, the man from Hell". Hohah. I certainly got a fascinating name. As to Lars, it's Swedish for Laur-entius, which is identical to Laurence or Lawrence or Larry. Well, no, "Larry" would be "Lasse" in Swedish. Lasse. Thass what my parents call me. Larry, the devil-man from Hell. Thass me. Beware.

(later - 7 Feb 1957) I used to read English and American comics not so much by understanding the text from looking at the picture but to get exercise, to acquire a greater vocabulary. And in those days I found it all too tiring and boring to read a compact English text, so I turned to comix - in these, there were pictures which helped you to understand what it all was about; if you read a book without understanding half of what you read you're lost. Not so if you read comics. When I started to read English and American comics I was ten or eleven - and I didn't understand more than one third of what I read. But the pictures helped. I remember wondering whether "Spy Smasher" meant a spy who smashed people or a man who smashed spies... but in the pictures the spies always lost so I understood that this Mr Spy Smasher had to be anti-spy if you see what I mean. And so on. Comix are an awfully good help. ~~A~~/A few days ago a pal of mine told me the Greek word helos means "nude", "naked", so apparently "Helander" should mean "The Nude Man". Haah."

(I print the bit about the comics because it strikes me as an extremely good answer to those who condemn them as encouraging illiteracy. Exit to strains of "Heland Lasse.")

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 THE MOST GRUESOME HORROR-PICTURE OF ALL TIME: "ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET  
 ----- THE BOWERY BOYS" -----



"PERCY WAS A PIG" - illo by Jhim.

It was now 10 p.m. in the afternoon, so Carruthers took to his heels (whose names were usually Ferdy and Ned, except when the west wind blew from the south when they were Freda and Susie) and ran away twice as fast as his legs would carry him. This was possible because he ran on his hands. He took to his heels because most people do - those who are not on the best of terms with their heels are in a decided minority. He particularly took to them when they were called Freda and Susie - but then, he was only human after all.

Some time later, having swum across the Straits of Gibraltar in a Thunderstorm under the impression that it was St Pancras Station (which as it happened it was), he found himself off the mouth of the River Shannon. Correctly interpreting this phenomenon as a sign that he was travelling in altogether the wrong direction, he turned around and started swimming backwards. This of course got him no further forward, but Douglas (or possibly Max) was not a chicken for nothing, or a ferret either, so he correctly (in this instance) assumed he must have been a chicken (likewise a ferret) for something. Thus he was not altogether unprepared when he passed under a mythological suspension bridge (for the suspension of disbelief) and found himself in the neighbourhood of

## THE GREAT IRISH RIFT VALLEY EXPEDITION

THE SEARCH FOR ENEY'S FAULT

by Gridban Minor

Part Five

Eney himself has sent a special PHENOTYPE message summoning the Expedition to return "before it is too late." The question therefore arises whether, if they abandon the search for Eney's Fault in order to obey Eney's summons, that in itself might not be Eney's Fault? IS it? Read on:

Mr Bennett looked at me intently. "You have a point there, Gridban," he acknowledged. "I wonder. Maybe," he turned back to Mr Cuchulinard, "you could help us. If we turn back now, would you say that was Eney's Fault?"

Mr Cuchulinard - otherwise the Hound - scratched his shaggy head with a hind leg. "I don' know, Monsieur," he replied with a Gallic shrug. "Bot I know on' sing - whether it is or isn't, you cannot maybe prove it IS - bot you can always prove it ISN'T."

"How come?" Mr Bennett demanded.

"By letting ze expedition proceed notwiztanding of course," replied the Hound imperturbably.

Mr Bennett brought his hand down with such a resounding slap on Mr Cecil's rump that Mr Cecil jumped a good two feet into the air - and returned to earth with a heavy thud and a pained expression at either end. "Of course!" sang out Mr Bennett in glee. "That is the only honourable thing to do, in any case - the Expedition MUST come first. Many thanks, Monsieur Cuchulinard - boys, on your way." So Mr Cecil, still looking a trifle pained, lumbered into the lead, and the Expedition swung into line behind him. Mr Cuchulinard and his pages watched us depart.

"Goodbye, Mr Cuchulinard," I called.

"Euh," returned Mr Cuchulinard. Or possibly "Er - ." And presently he was out of sight.

The next event of note (apart from three more threatening messages from Mr Berry brought by Joey, the text of which was growing increasingly repetitive without actually becoming downright monotonous - though Filthy and one or two others did venture to remark that the way he was churning them out they soon would be) was when Mr Cecil, who was still in the lead, shied violently. Hurrying forward to see what had alarmed him, we espied



a little grey squirrel sitting unconcernedly on the path in front of him.

"A grey squirrel," I mused. "That means it's from America. Perhaps it's hitch-hiked across for the Worldcon."

"Perhaps it's just a nutter," suggested Sid Crockett.

Mr Bennett strode purposely forward, shoving us to one side. "Come out from under that geas, I know you," he ordered. And as he spoke the squirrel started to grow, assuming human form - not to mention uniform, the uniform in fact of a tall handsome United States Marine.

"I knew it," exclaimed Mr Bennett. "You're Ellik. I suppose you've come to the rescue as demanded by Tradition, to lead us straight to Eney's Fault, haven't you?"

Mr Ellik blinked at him - he didn't seem to be properly aware yet. "Is this Tripoli?" he enquired.

"Tripoli nothing," Mr Bennett answered him. "I'll give you Tripoli,"

"Or possibly Tripolets," put in Sid Crockett, not to be outdone.

"Five hundred lines, Crockett," snapped Mr Bennett automatically, and Sid Crockett stepped disconsolately to the rear, unloaded a guitar off Mr Cecil's back, and started to sing the "Rock Island Line" five hundred times. Everybody ignored him.

"Are there any halls of Montezuma in the neighbourhood?" continued the handsome Marine, who now seemed to be becoming more aware of things.

"I think you're under a misapprehension," Mr Bennett explained. "This is the Great Irish Rift Valley, and we're trying to solve the riddle of Eney's Fault.

"That reminds me," returned Ellik of the Marines - "excuse me a moment." He turned to one side, cupped his hands to his mouth, and yelled: "N - A - V - Y - Navee!!!" There was a rustling in the undergrowth, and out stepped another uniformed serviceman, this time wearing the uniform of the United States Navy. Mr Ellik turned back to us. "Meet Mr Charles Lee Riddle," he introduced his companion.

"Pleased to meet you I'm sure," said Mr Riddle with a Leer, which we all rushed to grab and devoured eagerly - for fanzines were hard to come by in these remote parts.

"Ditto," replied Mr Bennett laconically, handing the tattered pages back to him. "But may I ask what this deputation from the UsS. Navy Dept is supposed to be doing here?"

"Oh, it's his fault," said the sailor, nudging his companion. "The U.S. Marines are liable to turn up absolutely anywhere - here, for instance. And wherever they go, it's the job of the U.S. Navy to carry them

- so here we are."

"But now you're here," Mr Bennett asked, "what are you going to do about it?"

"If I told you that," the sailor returned equably, "I wouldn't be a Riddle any longer. You wouldn't want me to lose my identity, would you?"

"Well, do you know anything about Eney's Fault?"

"Eney?" said Mr Riddle disgustedly. "That soldier? Of COURSE it's his fault. You don't think it'd be the Navy's fault, do you?"

This left Mr Bennett - not to mention the rest of us - rather at a loss, because none of us was quite sure just what Mr Riddle was talking about. While we stood dithering, Mr Riddle crooked his arms behind his back.

"Come on, lad," he told Mr Ellik. "Ups-a-daisy." Mr Ellik obediently hitched himself pick-a-back atop Mr Riddle's shoulders, and staggered off into the undergrowth again. The U.S. Navy was carrying the U.S. Marine Corps to yet another far-flung location. "Push on," ordered Mr Bennett, and Mr Cecil took the lead once again as we set off down the trail, to the accompaniment of Sid Crockett singing the "Rock Island Line" another four hundred and ninety-seven times.

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THE MOST GRUESOME HORROR-PICTURE OF ALL TIME - "ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET  
----- THE BULMERS" -----

And so Carruthers (whose middle name, incidentally, was Carstairs) tiptoed silently away flat on his face, thankful to have dodged yet (or once) again the millennium (give or take an ell or an enn or two). He wasn't by any means an ill-informed little ferret (or chicken), and despite his unorthodox disguise as an acorn, knew perfectly well that (a) a sequoia was a landowner in California, (b) more water was to flow under Brooklyn Bridge than ever came out of the Statue of Liberty's torch, and (c) it was definitely The Thing to support SOUTH GATE IN '58. (Advert) But one thing he didn't know - and as I think it's something you OUGHT to know, I hope you don't mind my mentioning it here - and that is, to wit, that:

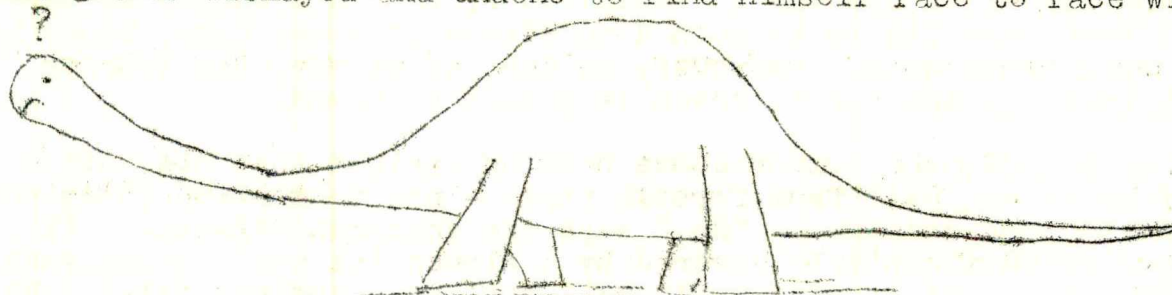
THERE IS STILL PLENTY OF TIME TO CAST YOUR VOTE FOR ENEY AS TAFF DELEGATE TO THE 1957 LONDON WORLDCON.

Voting-papers should be in the hands of Don Ford by the first of July next. If you haven't received a voting paper, same can be had from either Don Ford or Ken Bulmer. And if you're ignorant enough not to know the address of either, you can even get one from ME. And remember - vote for ENEY - then we can find out at FIRST-HAND precisely where his Fault lies.

Balanced precariously on the fulcrum of the Giants' Causeway, Omega suddenly came to a mighty decision. To Blazes with it all! he cried. I'm fed up with being a chicken - OR an acorn either. From now on I'm going to turn over a new leaf - I'll be a ferret or nothing, or my name's not Macgillicuddy. Which as it happened it wasn't, but he wasn't to know that of course. So he turned over the new leaf there and then, and



was altogether dismayed and undone to find himself face to face with



MONDAY THE ELEVENTH

of whom, not unnaturally, he was able to make neither head nor tail. (Can YOU?) Woe is me, he lamented aloud, I am both dismayed and undone. And he cast himself forthwith over the edge of a twenty-four-storey building that happened to be handy, sinking to the ground virtually undamaged owing to the strong counter-pull exerted by the Moon, and to the centrifugal force of the Earth's rotation tending to repel him from the surface - but mainly because he just happened to be wearing a parachute at the time, a wise precaution as it turned out. But his wanderings were by no means at an end yet, he realised despondently as he stepped nimbly aside to avoid getting mixed up in

# OH DIDN'T HE RAMBLE

THE COLUMN WHERE ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN (INCLUDING FERRETS) BUT SELDOM IF EVER DOES

However, I have high hopes that rather more will happen in this particular edition than happened in the previous one, if you see what I mean. So on with the Column, starting with a note or two on the subject of

**LIBERTINES** The novel "I Libertine" by "Frederick R. Ewing," apparently  
**ANONYMOUS** the result of Theodore Sturgeon coming to the rescue of public hoaxer Jean (male-type) Shepherd, has already seen mention in somebody's OMPazine (take a curtsey, Ethel - you're SOMEBODY.) I have since acquired a copy of the work in question, perused it throughout with much enjoyment, and added it to my permanent collection. I wouldn't go quite so far as to say that it represented Sturgeon at the absolute peak of his capabilities - it isn't a mundane "More Than Human" - but it's still very good Sturgeon, and very good Sturgeon is very good indeed.

In an "afterword" at the back of the book, "historically minded sharpshooters" are urged to "draw their beads on this narrative", with a wish of good hunting, so perhaps I may be pardoned for bringing to light a few obvious clangers, apparent to me where they might not be to an American - even to two Americans. Page 3 is as good a place to start with as anywhere, where the hero leaves Holborn in a coach and travels down Oxford Street to Cheapside. Naturally, neither Sturgeon nor Shepherd could necessarily be expected to know that from Holborn, Oxford Street and Cheapside are in opposite directions. Miss Axelrood, who took the long way round at top speed to get in ahead of him, may indeed have passed

along Oxford Street on her way to Westminster, though I should imagine she'd have been more likely to turn down either Chancery Lane, Drury Lane, or the Charing Cross Road. However, be that as it may, the journey supposedly taken by the hero's coach is patently absurd.

Then on Page 9, the author comes hard up against that old, old bugbear of those who hail from foreign parts - not to mention those who don't - the British coinage. "Na," says the coachman Piggott. "Y'ave a look about ye that can't be covered by a slouch 'at and a journeyman's cape, Lanky, and ever' groat's worth will cost ye a thr'pny bit." Maybe so - but if that's the case, master Lanky's in for a spot of good business - for the groat was worth fourpence. However, that may not be "Mr Ewing's" fault so much as Piggott's - for apparently no groats had been minted for a hundred years or so at the time, and he may have been using the term loosely as representing a trifling but unspecified amount.

Page 104 contains another easy clanger - easy to make and equally easy to spot. Mention is made of the "County of London." The County of London did not come into being until 1888, more than a century after the events depicted. The counties of Kent, Surrey and Middlesex in those days marched with the City of London itself.

"Mr Ewing" is particularly mixed up about the English legal profession. Not that I'm at all clear as to the precise status of a learner-barrister myself, but I'm certain he wouldn't be termed an "apprentice." Tradesmen have apprentices. Professional men have articled clerks, if anything. And clerks articled to solicitors (whose status is inferior to that of barristers) have to pay through the nose for the privilege. The author doesn't even appear to be aware of the difference between the two branches of the profession - let alone the fact that (I think I'm right in saying) there were THREE separate branches in those days. I forget what the third branch was known as.

But the angle where I can just go to town on is the precise location of the country house known as "Featherfront."

The book locates it in the village of Titsey-in-Down. Which is an absolute impossibility. The word "in" when it figures in a place-name means literally that - inside of. Henley-in-Arden is in the Forest of Arden. Barrow-in-Furness is in the district of northern Lancashire known as Furness. All that's wanted, then, is a district known as Down. There is one all right - in Ireland. But not in England. Particularly not in the extreme south-eastern part of England, because of confusion with THE Downs.

A down is a chalk hill, ranges of which abound in south-eastern England. The area broadly known as "the Downs" comprises a goodly segment of several counties. With non-downy territories - such as the Weald - enfolded between them. "Mr Ewing" is of course entitled to invent an imaginary district in south-east England if he wants to, but because it'd be - to be a coherent district - part downland and part otherwise, the name "Down" for that district is about the last possible choice.

The name of "Titsey-in-Down", then, is out. Let's examine some



alternative possibilities. For Titsey to be located literally IN a down is of course out of the question. "Titsey-on-the-Down" makes literal sense, but is rendered invalid by the fact that villages in southern England are not built on hills, but at their foot, or in a fold between them. "Titsey-in-the-Downs" would be feasible. But the most likely formula - also as it happens an even more titterworthy version - makes use of the word "under." "Under," geographically, means "at the foot of." Please to remember, "Mr Ewing" - Titsey-UNDER-the-Down. And may the threatened second and third volumes of the trilogy be forthcoming at an early date - even with worse errors of fact and possibility than these.

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 THE MOST GRUESOME HORROR-PICTURE OF ALL TIME - "ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET  
 ----- THE CAMERAMEN" -----

FILM Just as a point of possible interest or complete disinterest as  
 NOTES the case may be, I consider that three films I have seen during  
 1956 were outstanding. These were "The Quiet Man", "It's Great  
 to be Young", and "Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier." Of these,  
 the first and third ones mentioned were reissues - though I hadn't seen  
 "Davy Crockett" before, and hasten to pay homage to a great picture, por-  
 trayng a great man. Whether or not the original Davy Crockett was that  
 way I wouldn't (in fact, don't) know, though I gather aspersions have been  
 cast on his name. But the character as represented in the film WAS a  
 Great man, and I have no qualms at all in paying him said homage.

Which reminds me that Fess Parker's second picture, "The Great Loco-  
 motive Chase", has recently been round, and I saw and enjoyed that too.  
 Not as good as Davy, but still good as pictures go. The basic theme,  
 incidentally, is extremely similar to the famous "Genevieve" - ie, a pair  
 of romantic-looking (to us) antique vehicles having each other a race.  
 Now I LOATHED the Genevieve film - I felt tempted to walk out several  
 times, and by the end I wished I had done - one of THOSE sort of films.  
 By which I seem to be in a tiny minority amongst both the general public  
 and that section of it that prides itself on its superior discernment.  
 And I enjoyed, on the other hand, the romp among the vintage locoes.

So of course I started anxiously casting about for a Reason. And  
 found two.

Reason one: in "Genevieve", the characters were mundane. With un-  
 usual hobbies, admittedly - but mundane for all of that. Too mundane  
 for me, at any event. I detested them, all four of them. The "Loco  
 Chase" characters on the other hand were simply cardboard, their whole  
 purpose being to operate the locoes. So I was left to admire the REAL  
 heroes of the picture in unspoiled comfort.

Reason two - the music. "Genevieve" had an extremely tuneful mus-  
 ical score. One of the rival-car themes would get going happily, then  
 poof - something goes wrong. Car stops. Music stops. And the aud-  
 ience immediately burst into spontaneous gales of laughter. This I found  
 simply infuriating. The "Loco Chase" had background music, certainly,  
 but only sporadically, and never insinuating itself into the foreground -  
 which was taken up with normal train noises and the like. So when some-  
 thing contrived to hold up one of the trains - as frequently did - it was

simply a setback, not a mass-deseccration of an unusually stimulating piece of mouth-organ blowing.

In fact, on the whole, I would be inclined to state categorically that background-music and films don't mix. The more listenable the background-music is, the more agonising it becomes to listen to the way it's mutilated to fit the action. The only worthwhile musical film is the one where it's frankly built around the music, the action being shaped to fit the music and not vice versa. Oh, there are exceptions. "The Crimson Pirate" was one, where a tuneful score was tailored extremely effectively into the action. Or the middle section of "Things to Come," where the action and the music complemented each other in a way that has to be experienced in order to fully appreciate it. But on the whole - either give me a worthwhile film with a wishy-washy score, or else fit the picture to the music.

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THE MOST GRUESOME HORROR-PICTURE OF ALL TIME - "ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET  
----- THE LINARDS" -----

BOYS AND DAMES Every now and again I come across a statement alleging that the elements of what is technically known as "transvestism" or "transvestitism" (my dictionary doesn't give it) that are an inseparable ingredient of the traditional English pantomime can trace their origins straight back to the Roman Saturnalias and beyond. The latest such allegation to come my way is contained in the issue of VAGARY that those of you who are lucky enough to be OMPA Members will be receiving in the same envelope as this'n. Having, as OMPA Assn Editor, access to the thing prior to its general circulation, I will now apply myself assiduously to the thoroughly mean and despicable task of doing my utmost to refute it by the same Mailing.

First, a word for the information of Americans and ignoramuses as to what precisely is involved. Which is two stock characters per panto. The "principal boy," corresponding to what in ordinary musical comedy is termed the "juvenile lead", is almost invariably played by a legsome woman. And the "dame" or female clown is - not QUITE so invariably, but still usually - played by a man. If the pantomime in question happens to be "Cinderella" there are two "dames" - the Ugly Sisters: and Dandini, the Prince's valet, is often taken by another woman as a sort of sub-principal boy. In all other pantomimes one of each is the normal rule.

The notion, implicit in the Saturnalia-argument, of an association indulging in periodic orgies of mutual transvestiture existing unbroken from pre-Roman times up till - at least - some time last century is admittedly fascinating - considerably more fascinating than plausible. Though I agree that, granted the continuous existence of such an association, theatrical society would be a natural place for it to eventually show up in public, whether on or off the stage. But it's still highly unlikely - and to prove it, I shall now proceed to demonstrate how the

Blank Space specially  
commissioned from B. Kidd



two halves of the tradition are much more likely to have come about.

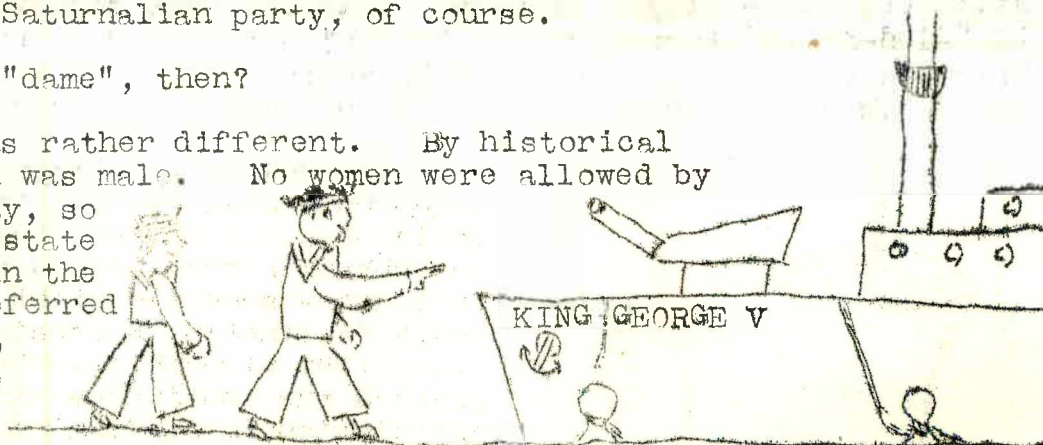
First, the principal boy.

Now it so happens that for hundreds and hundreds of years, right back in fact into classical times, women have always been associated with long skirts. Short skirts may well have prevailed at certain places and times, but the main stream of European history has the female leg concealed altogether from the public gaze. Thus, when women first appeared on the English stage in restoration times, there was no option but to wear the garment of tradition - whether it be a contemporary comedy or a translation from the classical Greek, it was the same. Necklines could rise and fall - and then fall again - but skirts never.

All of which ran in direct disregard of the fact that the women in question had legs, every bit as shapely as those of the women of today or of any other period, and didn't see the slightest reason why said legs should not be admired in public as they were in private. So they not unnaturally took quite a dim view of the long-skirts-only tradition, and looked for ways to circumvent it. And the obvious answer was - dress as a man, play a male role. Men's legs, instead of being concealed, had traditionally been revealed - if not in the flesh, certainly in the shape, and men were as vain of their shapely legs as women were or are. So male roles it was. Shakespeare's "boy-heroines", though designed for altogether a different reason, came in extremely handy at this juncture, but the ladies were not content to let matters rest there - any personable young-man part that came along was always eagerly sought after by actresses keen to display by paradox their feminine charms the better for male attire. So when this light-hearted winter's entertainment that was to become the British pantomime came along, they took to it as to the manner born. And, although modern conditions have since afforded them the chance to display to the maximum whatever they have in straightforward feminine roles, the tradition persists, and pleasantly so. Men who patronise the annual pantomime certainly aren't going to quibble at the chance to see an extra pair of female legs for their money, and the gals certainly don't mind obliging them by displaying same. So everybody's happy. Except the Saturnalian party, of course.

What about the "dame", then?

The case here is rather different. By historical tradition, the clown was male. No women were allowed by law to perform anyway, so this was an obvious state of affairs. Then in the restoration-times referred to, when the embargo against women on the stage was lifted, the newly-emancipated actresses took over all existing feminine



"Look at the trim lines of her - you'd never think she was really a man, would you?"

parts, and the contemporary drama carried on from there. Comic female characters had of course existed alongside the serious ones - but they were, comic or not, definitely feminine rather than grotesque. (Mistress Quickly springs to mind as the obvious example.) And so, when the first writer or producer or whoever it was who was responsible for breaking with centuries of tradition called for a female clown, the woman capable of adequately sustaining the role just wasn't around. So they had to use a man. And the tradition grew from there. Nowadays, of course, there are plenty of comediennes or character-actresses who could take the role of pantomime-dame in their stride - and some of them do. But the having a man in the role tends to enhance the general grotesquerie - and it, too, has passed into tradition. So long as British pantomime lasts, the principal boy will be a girl and the dame will be a man. And the best of luck to both of them. The Saturnalian can go and jump in the Tiber.

(Unless, of course, they care to come forward with an even better argument. There's always that.)

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THE MOST GRUESOME HORROR-PICTURE OF ALL TIME - "ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET"

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"The stalk  
brought you,  
dear."

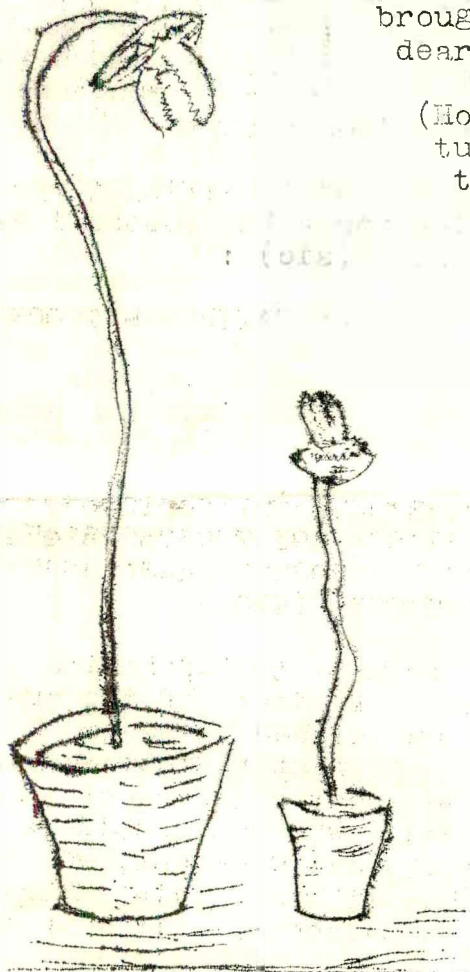
(Horticultural cartoon by  
Jhim)

I DREAM  
OF YNGVI

Can anybody possibly  
help me trace a story?

As I remember it, it was in one of the BRES of the late 'forties. Fantastic Adventures most probably, but I'm not sure, and neither title nor author is known to me. If I'd attempted to collect in those days, I'd have surely kept it - but I didn't, and now it's gone from me - possibly for ever.

The story concerned a bloke who had gone into a dream-world of his imagination, where he lived the life of a Barsoom-type hero. The doctors were afraid that sooner or later he'd work himself into such a situation that escape was logically impossible. In which case his body would probably die in sympathy with his dream-self. So the story's hero had the job of entering this dream-world and shaking the bloke out of it. The result was hilarious. The two dream-companions would be attacked by giant apes, say. So the hero would promptly think up a telephone-booth, and ring for the police. The flying-squad would arrive pdq, and the apes rounded up and loaded on the wagon - and that would be that. By which most excellent means was the original dreamer persuaded to return to reality.





As I say, all the particulars are hazy. The magazine was pretty certainly a BRE of the late nineteen-forties - probably Fantastic Adventures, but possibly Amazing, Startling, Future, SFQ, or even Planet. (I'm sure it wasn't Astounding). What date the original American edition might have borne is anybody's guess. I don't know the title or the author's name. One thing though I do distinctly remember. The pay-off line of the blurb read: "Louse up his dreams".

Could SOMEONE please delouse mine for me? Thank you.

-----  
At which point the Ramble came to an abrupt conclusion and about time too. Ugh, shivered the ferret - lice! I knew these parts weren't healthy. I'll emigrate. I wish I was in Timbuctoo, where the sands are yellow and the skies are blue. So he went to Southern Rhodesia instead, on the grounds that it was nearer to Kettering. This was rather unfortunate, because it wasn't, and he only had to turn round and go back again. Passing over the Tropic of Capricorn - or it may have been the Greenwich Village Meridian - he trembled in his bare ferret feet as he heard what he took to be a lion roaring. And it trembled right back at him. Because, little though he knew it, it was no lion - it was simply

# ROARING JELLY

(or SMASH THE WINDOWS)

The ARCHIVE Kitchen Dept

Goon mording, housewives and housebonds. Happy new OMPA Mailing to you. First off, I know the item you've all been waiting for - the second instalment of ROARING JELLY's Great new culinary serial (sic) :

PIE

(or The Geometrical Constant)

by MATTHEW MATTOCKS

SYNOPSIS: Pie to 440 decimal places.

## Part II.

10511854807446238798347495673518857527248912279381830119491298336733  
6244193664308602139501609244807723094362855309662027556939798695022247499  
6206074970304123669861995110089202383770213141694119029885825446816397999  
04659700081700296312377331342084130791451183980570985 (E&OE)

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT. ROARING JELLY regrets to have to inform its readership that, owing to the unfortunate and untimely death of the author, PIE (or The Geometrical Constant) remains unfinished. We are therefore throwing it open to you, the readers. We want to know the end of this story as much as you do. So we have the great pleasure of announcing our Great Story Competition. To any reader who can provide a satisfactorily happy ending for PIE, or the Geometrical Constant, we guarantee publication at our usual rates, together with a special EXTRA PRIZE PAYMENT. So rally round, housewives and housebonds. It's up to you.

ROARING JELLY ADVICE BUREAU

conducted by "Butch"

- Q: WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO COOK AND SERVE UP A MIKE MOORCOCK? (Mr W, Coulsdon, Surrey)
- A: Prepare the same in every particular as you would an ordinary cock, only remember to mike moor of it.
- Q: WHAT THE HELL DOES: "DON'T BE A Q-BOOB - GO APE" MEAN ???? (Signalman D.W, Droitwich)
- A: Now that's a very good question, and I'm glad you've asked it.
- Q: CAN YOU PROVE THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY? (Mr E.C.T., London)
- A: I think so. Let's see:  
 "I'm gonna wash that man right outta my hair"  
 HAIR = MANE ∴ wash out man: ~~W/XE~~ leaves E.  
 ∴ E = MC<sup>2</sup>
- Q: DUH - HOW DID THAT QUESTION GET INTO THIS COLUMN, ANYWAY? ("Butch", Lines)
- A: OK Butch, your time's up. Say goodbye to the folks nicely. (Editor)

Well that seems to be it for this issue, folks. Don't forget to send in all kitchen queries to me, "Butch", c/o ROARING JELLY, c/o ARCHIVE. Yours till the milkman calls;

Butch

-----  
 Woke up this mornin', greens all aroun' ma bed;  
 Yeah, woke up this mornin', greens all aroun' ma bed:  
 Ah gave them a black lock, 'n' they all turned beetroot-red.  
 - old Blues song

-----  
 And finally, here is a useful recipe that we have just tried out and found to give simply DELICIOUS results:

CREAM OF FERRET SOUP

Take one ferret, skim off the cream and store in a cool, dry place - say, behind the dustbin. The remainder can be thrown out to feed the children.

Whip the cream till it bleeds profusely, then staunch the flow of blood with iodine, a tourniquet, anything that's handy. Blood-soaked rags should be hung out to dry before re-using. Add 3 oz salt, 1 potfl pepper, 2 whole nutmegs, a pinch of non-magnetic coal-dust, and garlic to taste. Stir well and bring to boil in moderate oven at NTP. The result should be enough to feed six people or one small elephant, and tastes exactly like chicken - or possibly acorns.

"BLANK SPACE WITHOUT FERRET"  
 Specially commissioned from  
 Bruce Kidd