

BASTION



Eddie
61



BASTION

No. 2

EDITOR

Eric Bentcliffe

PUBLISHER

Norman Shorrocks

A

HARRISON APPROVED
PUBLICATION

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COVER by eddie jones. INTERIORS by eddie, joni cornell and terry jeeves.

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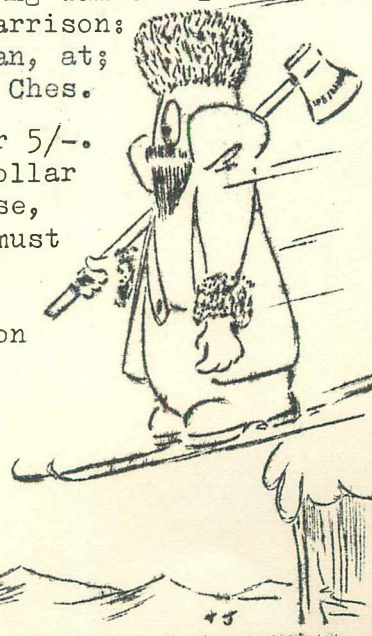
MONEY and MSS. should be sent to EricBentcliffe at; 47, Alldis St, Great Moor, Stockport, Cheshire. Applications for Membership in LiG, appeals on behalf of fair young damsels In Distress -- who wish to be Saved by Harrison: Terms Moderate -- may be sent to Norman, at; 2, Arnot Way, Hr. Bebington, Wirral, Ches.

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STAFF ARTISTS Eddie Jones & Terry Jeeves.



HOUR

OF THE



BY
ERIC BENTCLIFFE

DON'T DILLY DALI

Arriving at a convention, a s-f fan convention, with Masquerade Ball in full swing, is rather like stepping into a surrealist picture. One moment you are travelling through dark, wet-shiny streets; at an hour when the streets are dead - the next you are surrounded by Green-faced Ghouls, Spacemen of varying hue, and Fine Feathered Females.

One moment you are registering at the desk of a discreetly lit hotel lobby, the next you are in a gay hall hung with esoteric slogans and embellished with alien phrases - and filled with a fine welcoming crowd of people. Someone pushes a glass into your hand....another convention has started.

AND ALL THE PORTERS HAD CREWE-CUTS

British Railways did their usual worst for me on the evening of Easter Saturday. I finished work at the firm at 5.30 p.m., caught the 5.32 p.m. train for Crewe by virtue of the fact that it left five minutes late - this was the only time during my journey that BR cooperated! I arrived in Gloucester just after 11.30 p.m. British Railways have now modernised a fair proportion of their system, I hate to think how long it's going to take to get places when they've finished. But I mustn't be bitter about BR, after all if the 5.32 had been on time I would have got to Gloucester even later!

I regretted, as usual, that I hadn't been able to get to the convention on its first day, but as you've probably gathered from the opening paragraph, arriving at a convention in full swing has an impact all its own. Memories of the rather tedious journey soon faded once I got my bags parked in a room, and found out where the parties were being held that night.

I'd met Ron Bennett in the con-hall and he came up with me to my room to hand over some cash he'd collected for TAFF, and to acquaint me with some of the happenings so far. He brought me a glass of Brown Ale, too, which helped nicely to start my re-orientation.

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I didn't waste any time on unpacking, the only items to be dug out of my bag were Camera and Pyjama s (in case I went to bed that night, you know!). My room was way out- so far out that it was probably the only room in the hotel in the Borough of Cheltenham! - but it didn't take me long to find a party. I'm not quite sure who's room it was in, but it was quite a Kettering-style affair with every inch of space, on, besides, and under the bed, fully occupied. Using my flash as a weapon, and the camera as a ruse - " just move over to the left a little " - I managed to make my way from one side of it to the other. It was a single-room and it took me about ten minutes to get across it, that will give you a good idea how many fans were in there.

Many of them were still in fancy dress, and there were some very fine and exotic costumes in evidence. I'd arrived a little too late to see all the ones displayed at the convention, but I've since seen colour shots of most, and it seems that everyone excelled themselves this year. Ina Shorrocks in a Bird-woman costume designed by Eddie Jones (Thank You, Eddie!) was rather stunning; Moulto Beno as the Italians would say (a literal translation means 'Moult Soon'). Ethel Lindsay, looked devilishly dour in a sequined sporran. And some of the men had costumes, too. Eddie Jones had a fine spaceman garb, and Bob Richardson looked eminently alien. I'd liked to have been at the con in time for the grand-parade.

I found myself a firm stance in one corner of the room and proceeded to take photos. Apart from drinking, and talking, that seems to have been my main pre-occupation of the night - now, let's not have any dirty cracks about Bentcliffe Sublimating His Sex Instincts By Photography, please. Don't be nasty to the author! The strange thing about it all is that all my shots seem to have been in focus, and that I took some of the best photos I've ever done. I was drinking, and got fairly high (possibly due to mixing Marsala with Vodka) during the wee small hours, and it seems to have had an excellent effect on my lensmanship. One rather amusing thing happened, at some time during the night someone managed to whack my flash-gun with their elbow, and it promptly fell to pieces (in fact it did this several times over a space of two or three hours). However, each time I seemed able to make a mystic sequence of rapid movements with my hands and it was 'presto' back together again. I've since attempted to dissassemble, and reassemble the thing while sober, and it takes me almost ten-minutes!

This, by the way, in case you haven't realised it already, is a strictly personal report on the convention. I was too involved with things, TAFF, THIS IS YOUR LIFE, etcetra to even attempt to report what other people were doing, or attempt any objectivity.

I had a fine time at the parties on the Saturday night to Sunday Morning shift; Dave & Ruth Kyle had made it and we reminisced a little about Potsdam and Pittsburgh, and said 'My God, is it that long since!' I met Ian McCauley for the first time, and thought this latest ambassador from IF to be an excellent one - he said he'd recognised me immediately, and I wondered if it was from the punched-out silhouette in the Willis attic-wall, the time I played Ghoddminton with John Berry.... From the photos I took I seem to have been to several room-parties that night, and I recall snatches of many amusing conversations. And I wonder what Kingsley Amis was saying in the shot I have of Harry Harrison brandishing a bottle over he and Ted Tubb...

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And then there was the Mini-Bathcon. It wasn't called that at the time, but it seems to be as suitable a soubriquet as I can think of for it. The mini-bathcon had already started when I arrived on the scene with flash-bulbs flaring, it was a small select affair with a membership of three. Norman Shorrock, Bruce Burn, and Keith Freeman. I gather that it all started when Norman (or Bruce, or Keith) got a little tired of the crowded atmosphere of one room-party, and decided to seek solitude in a nearby bathroom. He was shortly joined (in the typical lemming-flow of fan movement at conventions) by the other two. Since there was nowhere else to sit, they sat in the bath. Since all three of the gentlemen concerned have a distinct aversion to 'dry' parties, the taps were turned on. At the time I arrived the bath was about a quarter full and Bruce, Norman, and Keith (fully dressed to shoes and socks!), with a contented look on their faces, were happily watching the tide come in....

Convention Guest of Honour, Kingsley Amis, looked in just after I arrived, but declined the cordial invitation to step into the bath and have a chat.

I'd a pretty full day ahead of me on the Sunday, so I decided to have a reasonably early night and went to bed about 4 a.m., after attending some highly enjoyable parties.

SYPHON SUNDAY

I didn't really feel like getting up for breakfast on the Sunday morning, but I did...probably because I don't like paying for something and not getting it. Britain can learn from America on the matter of Hotel Breakfast's; in the UK you pay for it whether you get it or not, and you have to be in the dining-room by ten at the latest to ensure you do get it. I became addicted to the American fan habit of eating breakfast in the afternoon when I was at Pittsburgh and it's sort of hard to break the habit. One thing, you can say that the British Method breeds a race of hardy convention-goers....even Norman Shorrock has been known to get up for breakfast at a convention! Well, occasionally. But what's it got to do with Science-Fiction, you may well be asking....

As I recall it, I spent the greater part of Sunday morning booking down TAFF Donations, and subs to EPITAFF, and trying to have a word with the Cast of THIS IS YOUR LIFE....and fighting off Alan Rispin's attempts to borrow a sheet off my bed; he had the part of a venerable figure in TIYL. I'd have loaned him one, but if I'd had to go back to my room for it I would probably have missed the BSFA meeting - like I said, my room was rather far-out. The AGM of the B.S.F.A. went off quite well this year, and the Retiring Committee deserve a vote of thanks for their efforts during the year - and for inveigling actual volunteers for office for the new year. My Ghod, I don't know what British Fandom is coming to....Volunteers!!

Ina Shorrock is now Chairman, Terry Jeeves Vice-Chairman, Joe Patrizio Secretary, Ted Forsyth Treasurer, and Jimmy Groves Editor. Other important business was the selection of Harrogate as the next Convention Site over the dead-body of Ron Bennett... I'm joking, of course, Ron was only too willing to agree to investigate the Harrogate hotels.

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And since Harrogate is only a mere two-hour train journey away from here, I'm looking forward to next years convention.

THIS WAS YOUR LIFE - ERIC JONES

Plans for TIYL started almost as soon as last years convention ended. After some thought I decided that Eric Jones would be a most suitable subject, and John Owen proceeded to once more turn out an excellent script. In true fannish manner nothing else was done until a few weeks before the convention! Apart from spreading a few rumours to the effect that Other People - Terry Jeeves, Ron Bennett, Wm Harrison - were actually to be the subject of the programme. I would have started in on producing the show earlier if it hadn't been for a certain journey I made last year....however, it seemed to go over fairly well.

I'm greatly indebted to the cast who, unlike myself memorised their lines, and did a good job at shortish notice. Terry Jeeves took the part of an officer in the RAF Coastal Sommand Squadron which EJ served in during the war - during the period when Eric was 'building the biggest rotary duplicator in the World, in No.3 Hangar'. Bruce Burn, who did an excellent job of portraying a Maharaja Eric had met in India, 'where he discovered Psionics and Hypnotism'. Bob Richardson, as one of the few living survivors of the s-f film made by Eric and the Cheltenham Group 'The Test'....and later issued as the Student Prince' - Bob, managed to resurrect one of the costumes from the film and looked most impressive. Alan Rispin, who played the part of the Keeper of the St. Fantony Archives, and who got rather mixed up (intentionally) with 'Take Your Pick'. Norman Shorrocks, appeared as himself with a wonderful box of electronics specially built for the show by Eric Jones (who thought Terry Jeeves was the subject)....a psionics machine which he had been using as a projector for 35mill films - which explained the picture quality he'd been getting!

Norman also helped prepare the tapes for TIYL, and John Owen lent his tonsils to the cause by impersonating Harrison, and 'Fingers Finnigan (a former school chum of Eric's now fallen on hard times',) on tape. Oh yes, and I'm indebted to the MISFIT Song Book for the version of 'The Bradbury Hate Song' which was used to mislead the audience and Ron Bennett at the beginning of the show. I enjoyed doing the programme....and may publish the script in my APA-Mag WALDO.

By the time TIYL was over my tonsils were feeling the need for something wet, I'd been suffering from a heavy-cold during the week and as I had a TAFF TALK to give a few hours later, I decided to humour them and went in search of Beer. Although the bar was closed I managed to find some, and with a cool glass of lager in my hand I returned to the con-hall to watch Ron do an excellent job on the TAFF AUCTION.

To follow this we had an 'Initial Quiz' conducted by Ken Slater, in which he proceeded to fire the initials of various s-f authors at a panel in the hopes that they would be able to decode them. They did pretty well, too.

As I recall it this was followed by a break for refreshment, and Bruce Burn, Ron Bennett, Bob Parkinson, Ron Buckmaster, and I went out to a Chinese Restaurant for some expresso coffee and, of all things, fruit salad!

(Continued on page 46.....)

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N.B: For background detail on this story we are greatly indebted to Gary Moran Loucks III, Elizabeth McNally Eckert, Enola Nye Mobry, Aaron C. Schmidt Jr, and Lilith Muder-Esperson, of New Babylon, Mass; to Mrs. Mildred van Clapper Chase, Duverne H. Arndt, Anson Reid Pitsenbarger, Myfanwy O'Rourke, and H. Piper Paparelli of Progress (Ala.); and to Mercedes Shaffer McPhail, of Noahs (Ark.)

\$ HARRISON IN Wonderland

By CYRIL FAVERSHAM, MM, and HARRY HURSTMONCEAUX, OBE.

1. Duck !

The surging crowd of idolaters, journalists, pickpockets and beatniks parted respectfully as the Great Man strode majestically through the main concourse at Idlewild.

" But, Sir!" yelled Kowalski of the Tribune-Observer, making an unsuccessful grab at His lapel. " Sir! Isn't there anything er, specific you can tell us ? "

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" Perhaps I can say this," murmured Harrison (and the crowd hushed magically); " I hope to confer with your President later this afternoon. "

" At the White House ?" queried Schultz of the Michigan Sentinel-Globe.

" No, al fresco," replied Harrison jovially, lighting His meerschaum. " I flatter myself (to use your delectable patois) that I'm no slouch on the links....DUCK!!"

A small, cylindrical object clattered to the floor not six feet ahead of Him; fizzed and whirred for a moment or two; and was silent. Striding forward, Harrison stooped, picked it up, and scrutinized it quizzically. " As I suspected," He chuckled, His leonine features features puckered into a smile; " made in Peking." With a light laugh, He tossed the bomb into a nearby cuspidor and strode out of the building into His waiting supercharged Ferrari 375 Millemiglia.

" What A Headline!" cried Marinetti of the Post-Herald-Mirror-Newsday, and rushed screaming to the nearest phone-booth. Harrison, meanwhile, was being whisked away to Akron, Ohio (Security were taking no chances). From there He would be flown to Bellows Falls, Vt., and thence to Berkeley, Calif., where a picked team of FBI men would accompany Him, in a specially-chartered prototype Comet, to the Nation's capital; and thence to the Fairview Golf Course.

* * * * *

11. A Capital Notion.

Their business completed, the men who guided the destinies of Two Nations shook hands and prepared to go their separate ways. " Goodbye, Mr. Murrow," said Harrison; " I've greatly enjoyed our little chat."

" Farewell, Master," intoned Ed from the steps of his beautiful colonial residence; " I hope you enjoy your stay here."

" I'm sure I shall," smiled Harrison, waxing His adieux and entering the cream-and-turquoise Facel Vega that purred gently in readiness for His departure. " New York, Lord ?" queried Hurstmonceaux at the wheel.

" I think not," said Harrison, grinning. " To begin with, they have arranged a little demonstration for me there; some weird rite which entails showering me with tiny scraps of paper from a great height. In addition, General Motors want me to manage their New York Office; Nabisco have requested an interview with reference to putting a tiny plastic replica of my nose into each of their cereal packets; and the British Colony insist that I attend their annual ' Benedict Arnold Pity-You-Didn't-Make-It' Party. No, no, gentlemen; our business here is completed; a full communique is being sent by ICBM to the Lord Privy Seal; and I would suggest we spend a few lazy weeks in congenial enviremont before returning home."

" A capital notion!" we cried warmly, and drove blithely away in the general direction of the Hialeah Track.

111. This Won't Do

But it was not, alas, to be; in Florida, as everywhere else, Harrison was permanently surrounded by sightseers, pimps, and bright young men from 'Time'; and He began to aquire, as He jocularly remarked, 'all the sensations of a tropical fish in a crowded aquarium'. His every action, too, brought a heated reaction: in Boston, The Loyal Sons And Daughters Of Suffering Eire punctured His tyres with pitchforks, while His English accent incensed the McCormack press to unparalleled verbal vitriolics. Las Vegas offered Him a twelve-week stint at the Golden Nugget; MGM and Fox competed in bidding for His life-story, or even little fragments af it; Jack Benny was actually prepared to offer Him money for a TV. guest-appearance. A nationwide 'Harrison Week' was instituted; the American Matrons' Guild demanded He do a series of concerts a la Liberace; and He was mobbed, and stripped nigh naked, by souvenir-hunting teenagers in Bleak Corners (Mich.).

"No, no, gentlemen, this won't do," mused the Great One after a month or so. "We must discover some recondite niche, wherein we may give ourselves unreservedly to utter quietitude and mellow meditation." He was silent for a moment or two (Which we knew to be a sign that All Was Not Well).

"You've doubtless heard of 'Marsh' Mallow, the West-Coast private-eye," He continued; and we nodded. "Indeed, yes, Lord; but what -"

"You've read his books?" the Master queried, and we smiled. "We have, Lord; but what -"

"Then you must know," said the Great Man wryly, "how little business he does - the odd errant redhead, the odd case of murder or blackmail - hardly a paying proposition, one might think. Now, Mallow and I have swapped stamps for many years," He continued, "and this has given me an idea. I intend, gentlemen, to treat Mr. Mallow to a three-week paid vacation and - if the fellow is willing - to adopt his identity during the next chapter. This should ensure a quiet time for all of us. You will accompany me to LA, and, should a spot of bother by any remote chance develop, you will remain always within screaming distance. Now, gentlemen - how does my little plan strike you?"

"Like a sledgehammer, Lord," we murmured feebly.

* * * * *

1V. The Short Hello

I took the bottle out of my desk drawer and poured myself a slug. It tasted lousy. There was a roach crawling across the threadbare carpet, and I watched it casually, as if I wasn't interested. The phone rang and I picked it up, still keeping one eye on the roach. "Yes?" I said.



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" Is this Mr. Mallow, the detective ?" The roach was just coming into range, and I kept very still. I said it was Mr. Mallow, the detective.

" I'd like to hire you, Mr. Mallow," said the voice. A womans voice. At a guess she wasn't above thirty. A blonde maybe. A blonde in a white silk shirt and jodhpurs, holding a long cigarette in a pair of golden tweezers, her hair tied with a small scarlet bow, maybe. Let's face it, Mallow: that's the kind you usually get. . I raised my right foot and brought it down hard on the roach. I felt better. " What was it you wanted done ?" I asked politely.

" I want you to find my husband," the voice said. " He's been missing seventeen years."

I said I would' be happy to find her husband for forty bucks a day and expenses. I was beginning to feel l'usy again. That's the way I am. I took another slug of rye. I lit a cigarette.

" I'm at Room 221, Van Nuys Apartment Building, just down the hill from the Strip," said the voice. " Can you come over right away?" I said yes, I could come over right away, and put down the receiver. I stubbed out the cigarette and lit another.

I shaved and took a shower, and began to feel less like the box the cat had had kittens in. I put on my powder-blue suit with the dark blue shirt and the display handkerchief. I got into my car and drove east along Wilshire. I lit a cigarette.

There was a black Plymouth convertible tailing me as far as La Cienega. As I drove into the curve of the Strip a Packard Clipper took over. At Lost Canyon the Packard turned right and a Lincoln Continental started to follw. I smiled wryly. I was getting to be used to it. I lit a cigarette.



I parked in front of the Van Nuys building. I went into the square barren lobby with its cusp- idors and rubber plants. I got into the elevator.

" Which floor, bud ?" sneered the elevator-boy.

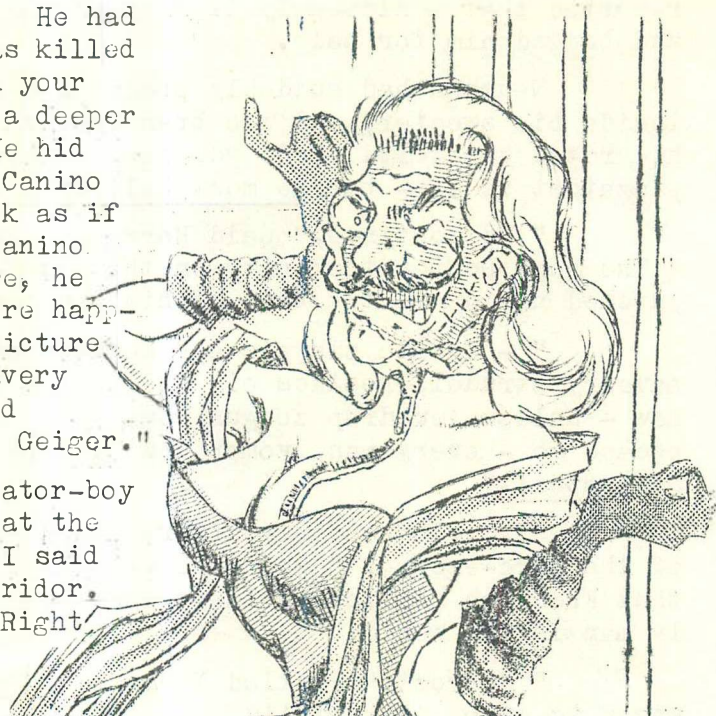
" You ask a hell of a lot of questions, sonny," I said affably. " Now let me ask you one. Why did you kill Eddie Geiger ?"

He paled. " You a shamus or something ? Anyway, what makes you think I killed Geiger ?

" Well," I said affably, " hows this: Geiger got some notes from your sister and he was trying to blackmail your father with them.

George Lavery was behind Geiger. He had something on you, too. Lavery was killed by Degarmo, who was in love with your sister. But Geiger was playing a deeper game than any of you realized. He hid his wife out at Realito and put Canino in to guard her, so it would look as if she had run away with Almore. Canino not only impersonated Mrs. Almore, he was blackmailing her. Mrs. Almore happened to be in the pornographic-picture business, and both Canino and Lavery knew this. That's why they killed Degarmo, and that's why you shot Geiger."

"It is?" said the elevator-boy bewilderedly, opening the doors at the sixth-floor. "Thanks, sonny," I said wryly, stepping out into the corridor. I could take care of him later. Right now I had forty bucks a day and expenses to earn.



I pressed the bell at number 221. It chimed softly. A brunette opened the door. She was twenty or so. She wore yellow slacks and they looked good on her. She had a good mouth and a good chin. She had two eyes. Her hair was tied with a polka-dot ribbon. It was blue. "You're cute," she giggled, and fell into my arms.

I straightened up and pushed her gently before me into the apartment. Then I closed the door behind us. "It won't work, Neumann," I said affably. "Take off the mask." I lit a cigarette and waited.

* * * * *

V. Which Tells Of A Hellish Pie And Mental Cruelty

Needless to say, we had been following our Master with unflagging zeal, and were now listening intently at the dorr of apartment 221. Hearing the name of the arch-fiend von Neumann spoken, we flung open the door without further ceremony and rushed into the room. Harrison, we saw, was covering the 'brunette' with a black oxydised Walther PPK 7.65 Automatic Mk.II. "Take off the mask, Neumann," He ordered briskly; "the wig, too." The 'brunette' swore volubly in Platt-Deutsch for several minutes; then, reluctantly, 'she' obeyed, and we beheld....

Reader, do you recall the last reel of 'House Of Waz', where the villain's mask melts, and - you do? Then we've no need to detail the 'ghastly sight that seared our eyeballs at that moment. Picture it in yellow slacks and mauve sweater, is all.

We shuddered uncontrollably. "Yesr gentlemen," said Harrison grimly; "Neumann, as you see, is very much alive! I will explain. Six months ago, Dr. Ernst Frohlich, the distinguished Swiss plastic-surgeon and cuckoo-clock assembler, ---

reported that a hideously disfigured individual had visited his clinic and begged him for help.

Neumann had suddenly produced a large piece of Pizza Pie from inside his sweater, and was brandishing it menacingly. "Idioten!" he grated savagely. "Do you zis pizzatort see? Vell, no ordinary pizzatort is it - but ze most hellish pizza in ze History of Mankind!!"

"To continue," said Harrison imperturbably, lighting a cheroot, "The good Doctor took pity on this much-battered individual, and patched him up to the best of his (no mean) ability. - And so - "

"- Inside zis pizza," Neumann was bellowing, "instead of ein savoury strudel, resides ein filling of hellish nitroglycerine!! Und now - unless you drop ze gun, out of ze window step, und down ze feuer-escape go - every man, voman und kind in LA vill to Kinkdom Komm be geblasted!!"

"....It was only afterwards," explained Harrison as we descended the fire-escape, "when the fellow had left without paying his bill, that Frohlich realised he'd re-assembled the most dangerous and dastardly man in the world."

"Korrek!" cackled Neumann. "Me!! - Und now - pliss into der vagon to step. Schnell!!"

A large removal-van, its doors ajar, stood parked on the vacant lot immediately before us. We marched bravely forward and entered the vehicle, surreptitiously waving the tiny Union-Jacks which the Master had distributed. "What does this mean, Lord?" we queried anxiously; but Harrison, either deep in thought or paralysed with fright, made no reply.

"Face ze wall!" snarled Neumann; and we did so, anticipating the worst. It came: a blinding flash, followed by a sharp, shooting pain through the head, as if we'd been slugged by a baseball-bat (as, indeed, we had); and then, we remembered no more...

We awoke, tightly bound, to find ourselves on the floor of a rude wooden hut, devoid of furniture save for a superb thirty-inch console-model TV set which stood immediately before us. Neumann was leering down at us, his hideous, piranha-nibbled, etc., features alive with an unholy glee.

"In dis remote shpot you vill die of thirst und famine perish!" croaked the cad; "but before you do, you vill zat you had never been born vish!" He switched on the TV set. "Ein' klein' diversion of mein own devising!" he chuckled. "Und now, farevell; I to der Empire-Shtate-Building moost gespeed....mit mein hellish pizzatort!" And, hurling a final oath at us, he left.

Before us, the image on the screen flickered, then grew steady. And now, with sound matched to vision, we became aware of the full horror of Neumann's hellish 'diversion'. For there, in full, unnatural colour, we beheld the image of a politician; behind him, garish banners reading 'Vote For McGoonigle - He'll Do The Best He Can' were displayed. He began to speak...

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" We can't take much of this, gentlemen," said Harrison grimly. " However, there's a candle on the floor yonder, and if I can but...."

" Liberty, decency and human progress," intoned the figure from the screen; " the inalienable right of every American to his sacred birthright; his hard-won and dearly cherished gift of..."

Harrison, bound hand and foot, had somehow managed to drag Himself to the far corner of the room, where the stub of a candle flickered. Taking the candle between His teeth, He began to crawl laboriously back...

" ...Thanksgiving," the politician continued, tears trickling down his leathery cheeks; " turkey, 'n' Mom's cranberry sauce - nobody makes it like Mom, do they? New England in the Fall; watermelon 'n' blueberry pie, 'n' good old Milwaukee beer..."

" Hurry, Sir, Hurry!" I moaned. " I think Hurstmonceaux's - beginning to crack!"

" I'm coming!"

"Kindly folks...simple homespun philosophy...the gang at the old drugstore, 'n' that freckled schoolkid - you used to carry her books, remember?... 'n' Mom, 'n'"

Harrison, candle between teeth, lowered it to the rope that bound Hurstmonceaux's hands. A few seconds painful effort, and - Harry was free. Bounding to the set, he kicked in the screen and rushed yelling about the room for several minutes before he subsided, trembling, on the floor before us. Then, collecting his faculties, he began to undo our bonds. " A close call," said Harrison, soberly.

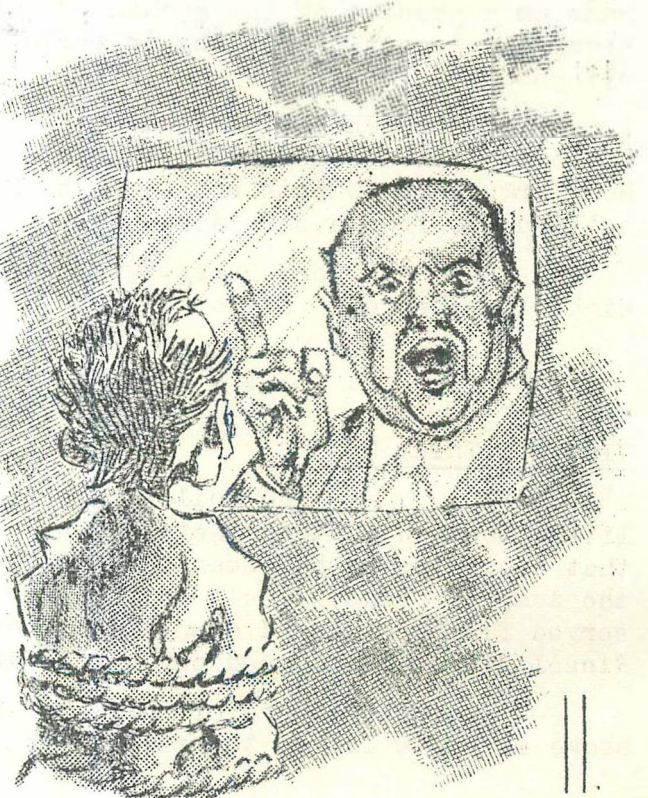
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VI. Gung Ho!

Seconds later, we staggered outside to find the vehicle gone, and ourselves in an arid wilderness. Harrison produced a map and compass; and casting His clear grey eyes at the Pole Star twinkling in the dusk, He made a few rapid calculations. " We are here," He said, pointing to the map. " Bulgaria, Lord?" we queried anxiously; but the Great Man appeared not to hear.

" I've a suspicion," He said, " that Neumann will make for the nearest airport, which is presumably at Ogden, Utah; therefore, gentlemen, our next stop would appear to be Ogden."

" But how, Lord?" we stammered feebly.



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"Voila," said Harrison, smiling, and our jaded spirits rose at the incomparable enterprise and ingenuity of the Man as He produced from the folds of His cloak three gleaming pairs of roller-skates. "Put these on quickly, and - Gung HO!"

"Huzzah!" we roared, waving our Union-Jacks; and gave vent to a chorus or two of 'Vivat Haec Sodolitas'.

Once started, we skimmed across the desert at a steady twenty-five knots, and by midnight had reached the town of Ogden. Skating to the airport, we learned that an 'ugly furren critter' had hired a helicopter not an hour previously. "Did he say where he was going?" inquired Harrison urgently.

"Why, yais," said the man, scratching his pate bewilderedly. "'Fore he left, he bought him one of these Giant Slingshots from the airport store..."

"Good Gladstone!" cried Harrison. "Then there isn't a moment to lose!"

"...An' he asked which wus the quickest direct route to New York, an' ah said, 'Well, ah believe they's a transcontinental jet service from Yuma. An' did I tell you he bought one of these here slingshots...first time we sold on of them since Davy Crockett passed through...."

Official formalities were dispensed with as soon as the Great Man's identity was revealed. The authorities offered us the use of a small jet-plane, but Harrison resolutely refused to take what He described as an 'unfair advantage', and within fifteen minutes we were airborne in our own helicopter. "Decent of these chaps to make us a present of the machine," said Hurstmonceauc, as we whirled above the desert; "but why on earth, Sir, has the fiend purchased a slingshot?"

"His scheme, gentlemen," said Harrison, tight-lipped, "is diabolical in its ingenuity: he intends to hire another 'copter in New York, hover within range of the Empire State, and catapult his hellish pie from a safe distance!"

"B' th' Lord Harry," we muttered; and whirled through the night in silence.

* * * * *

VII. I Think Not

The following morning, we stopped to refuel at a little town in Southern Nevada; and here - joy of joys! - we learned that a helicopter had been seen not long ago, travelling north across the desert. Pausing only for a hasty Crêpe Suzette - unfortunately served flambé - washed down with a bottle or two of Californian Rieseling, we hiccupped our way to the helicopter and hopped north.

Two weary hours of further reconnaissance brought us immediately above a remote little township in the middle of the desert. -

It seemed to be a singularly sleepy little place, even for Nevada, and exhibited no signs of life.. But wait! Hold hard! Stay! In the centre of its wide, deserted main street stood - a helicopter! And from it we beheld emerging - a familiar cloaked figure!

" Huzzah, huzzah!" we shrilled. " And now to land, and entrap the blighter!"

" I think not," said Harrison swiftly, and set the helicopter moving rapidly away from the town.

" But, Lord," we cried petulantly, " the bounder's obviously stopped for tiffin! He's helpless - we can...."

" Silence, minions!" quoth Harrison sternly; and then: "What time is it?" He asked.

" Fourteen minutes to twelve, Sir," said I; " but what - "

" Listen, gentlemen," said Harrison urgently. " I have just consulted the map, and must now tell you that the little community we are so rapidly leaving behind is the dummy township built by the AEC to test their newest and most powerful C-Bomb, which is scheduled to explode at noon precisely."

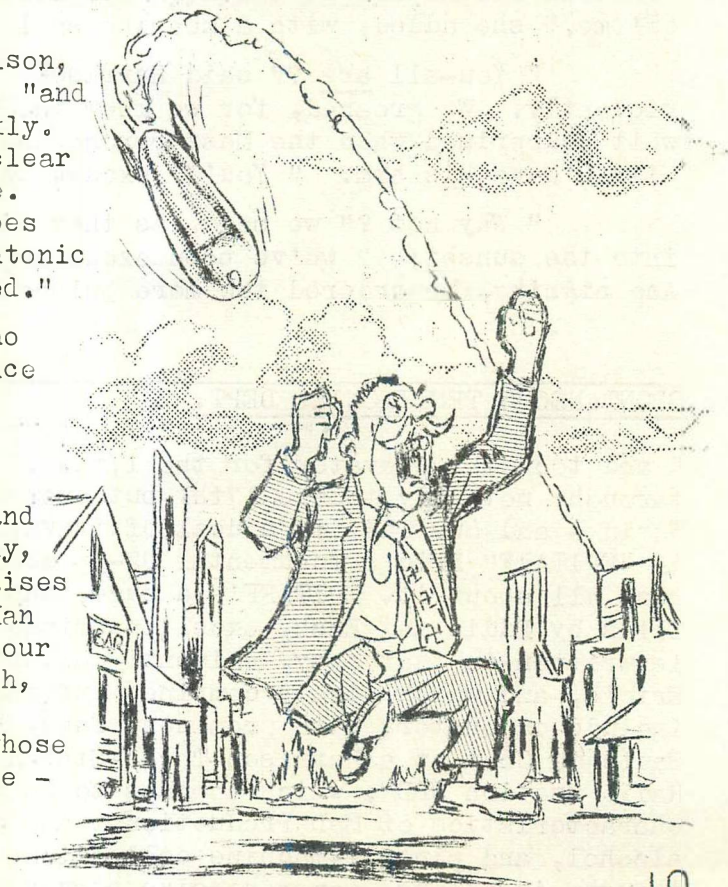
" By thunder!" cried Hurstmonceaux; "then - the fiend is doomed?"

" Ten-four," said Harrison, meditatively igniting a reefer; "and so are we, unless we move quickly. However, I think we should be clear of the danger-zone in good time. But you see, gentlemen; time does not permit us to rescue our Teutonic adversary, even if we so desired."

It was Hurstmonceaux who broke the thirteen-minute silence that followed. " So perish all evil men," he said softly.

" So indeed!" I cried heartily. " And the fiercest and most implacable enemy of Tyranny, whensoever or wheresoever it raises its Cankorous Visage, is that Man who, when Danger threatens for our beloved Islands and Commonwealth, and for those Gallant Allies at whose side we are ranged; and whose Proud Destiny we so gladly share - ah...where was I?"

" Making your customary fade-out speech," said Hurstmonceaux.



" But hark - and see!" he cried suddenly, pointing to the horizon.

We turned; and saw, slowly unfurling in the far distance, the great, mushroom-shaped cloud.

* * * * *

Envoi

The sweet smell of magnolia filled the warm Southern evening; in the chinaberry trees the jaybirds were chattering, and from the horizon came the distant rumble of General Lee's artillery. On the broad verandah, a distinguished, liveried, negro footman was serving us with mint juleps; behind us, the tall colonnade of Tara soared heavenwards, and on the trim green lawns confronting us, the 90th Annual 'Gator Wrestling Contest was in full swing.

We rose, as a young lady in crinoline, pink sunbonnet and yellow gloves joined our party. " Ah hope you're enjoying the contest, suh ?" she enquired, seating herself at Harrison's side; " We-all are most anxious fo' you-all to taste the true gracious flavah of out Southern hospitality...'specially li'l ol' me," she added, with a meaning smile.

" You-all are ?" said Harrison, His left knee trembled violently. We groaned, for we knew the signs; and were no whit surprised when the Master rose, suddenly, and offered Miss O'Hara His arm. " You'll excuse us, gentlemen ?" he leered.

" Why not ?" we said, as they strode off bravely into the sunset; " we've been excusing you for years." And sighing, we ordered two more juleps.

.....Finis.

SPONTANEOUS TESTIMONIAL DEPT.

" I put my faith in Harrison," says Eric, " and took the elevator for the 17th..." Wise man: for Harrison saw him through, not only to the 17th, but everywhere he travelled in the New World - and our lad did a deal of travelling, by all accounts. And now, in "EPITAFF" Eric's monumental 92-pp account of his TAFF journey, you can read all about it. EPITAFF's a huge, handsomely-produced tome - superb illos by Eddie and Emsh, excellent mimeography by Norman Shorrock - and is written in that easy, eminently entertaining style which is peculiarly Eric's, and which nicely combines information with readability. Highlights include encounters with prominent fans, fan-groups and fan-dancers; Kidney Saute du Chef at a Harrison-Three-Star Restaurant in Montreal; a visit to Radio Station WPDL, which appears to be rapidly taking on many of the characteristics of Mad Productions; and an account of Doc' Barrett's s-f, alcohol, and pinball-machine collection. Perhaps most fascinating of all, though, is a long, comprehensive survey of the Pittcon itself - the program, the parties, and the meetings with Heinlein, Asimov, Ellison, et al. EPITAFF's an outstandingly good seven bob's worth, available from Eric, or from Don Ford.

...John Owen.



So much has happened recently in S-F Fandom that I find it difficult to believe that it is only slightly more than two years since I wrote my first article for an S-F magazine. I started it by quoting Ecclesiastes:

"The thing that has been, it is that which shall be . . . and there is no new thing under the sun."

But I still find that many of the younger S-F fans (and almost all the general public !) believe that Science Fiction is largely a post-World-War II phenomenon, or that it dates, -

pto.

at the earliest, from the nineteen-twenties. Under the circumstances it might well be worth while taking as a terminus ad quem the year 1926, which saw the first publication of Gernsback's magazine AMAZING STORIES, and making a survey of Science Fiction works written previously to this.

Of the three S-F authors who are generally accepted figures in world literature, Jules Verne had already been dead for most of a generation, Wells had already written MEN LIKE GODS, his last S-F work of any weight, while, in Czechoslovakia, Karel Capek had already shown his calibre with THE INSECT PLAY and R.U.R., so that "Robot" was an already accepted part of the world's vocabulary, while Englishmen were already chuckling over his observations on the curious habits of the English, as recorded in his LETTERS FROM ENGLAND.

But, before going further, it may be well to reconsider, yet again, exactly what we mean by Science Fiction. Fiction may be assumed to mean an account of events that took place partly or wholly in the author's imagination, so that arguments about the boundary separating Science Fiction from Science Fantasy need not be considered. I propose to take Science as meaning: "Knowledge of the secrets of Nature by which we may alter our environment to our own advantage if we choose."

Now if we consider this from the point of view of people who lived before the rise of "modern science", with its insistence upon experimental duplication as the sole acceptable proof, we find that this definition must necessarily include the phenomena commonly described as "magic".



A Roman, of the age of Augustus, regarded magic very much as we regard the higher mathematics, as something that certainly existed, but with which it was not likely that he personally would ever come into contact - as a branch of knowledge that was of interest only to a rather unusual type of mind, and that required many years of study and the laborious acquirement of a very special mental discipline.

If we accept this definition, then one of the first great works of Science Fiction is certainly Lucius Apuleius' THE GOLDEN ASS, first published early in the second century A.D. - an extraordinary mixture of unashamed bawdry, genuine religious reverence, - pto.

magic, comedy and adventure, all told in a matter-of-fact style set by its opening words : Thraciam ex negotio petebam... " I was just starting on a business trip to Thrace..."

It has long been a source-book for others, supplying material ranging from the exquisite and moving story of Cupid and Psyche, re-told in many children's books to the almost epileptically indecent tale of the copper's wife and her lover, re-told, among other places, in the Decameron. For those who cannot cope with its elaborately stylised Latin, there are several English translations, ranging from the Elizabethan English of William Adlington to the modern translation by Robert Graves published in the Penguin Classics.

From this, we can take all the great epics of magic in succession - the Welsh tales of the MABINOGION and the Irish legends of Bran and of M'annannan, Wace's Anglo-Norman ROMAN DE ROU, the tale of Ogier the Dane and the Queen of Faery, the elaborate and confused mixture of Welsh, Breton and Provencal legends that eventually crystallized under the name of the MATTER OF BRITAIN, and which formed the source material of Malory's MORTE D' ARTHUR, and the ORLANDO FURIOSO of the Italian Ariosto.

Last in this series, but among the greatest of them all, is, of course, Spenser's FAERIE QUEEN, and it is interesting to find it quoted, with moving effect, in one of the greater works of modern S-F, S. Fowler Wright's THE WORLD BELOW.

It is worth glancing aside to observe the attitude taken towards magic in some of the greatest of all heroic tales - the Norse Sagas ; we find that while the existence of magic is in no way doubted, it is both disliked and distrusted. The man or woman who encounters magic is regarded as unlucky and is an object of sympathy ; on the other hand, the man or woman who practises magic is definitely someone to be avoided and distrusted. The hero who conquers by the aid of a magic weapon is not regarded as taking an unfair advantage, but rather as one who has given a dangerous hostage to fortune - quite surely sooner or later the very advantage that he holds will certainly turn to his loss, and very probably to his own death.

From this point onwards, it will be interesting to consider some of the more usual plots of " modern " Science Fiction, and see how long or distinguished an ancestry they can boast.

To the general public, S-F is almost synonymous with space travel, and this again takes us back to the second century A.D., about a generation later than Apuleius, to the TRUE HISTORY and ICAROMINIPPUS of Lucian, both dealing with journeys to the Moon. The Moon, as our nearest neighbour in space, is, naturally, the subject of most early space-travel stories, of which the next appear in the seventeenth century; Kepler the astronomer set the fashion with his SOMNIUM, followed by Godwin's MAN IN THE MOON, Bishop Wilkin's DISCOVERY OF A WORLD and Cyrano de Bergerac's VOYAGE TO THE MOON AND SUN. The eighteenth century supplies only one contribution to the field, but that by no less a figure than Voltaire, with MICROMEGAS.

The nineteenth century brings Jules Verne's FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON and HECTOR SERVADAC, Achille Eyraud's little-known VOYAGE TO VENUS and Laszwitz' ON TWO PLANETS, ending with Wells' interplanetary gun-shots in THE WAR OF THE WORLDS, while the first quarter of our own century brings Wells again, with THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON, George Griffiths with A HONEYMOON IN SPACE, Hugo Gernsback with RALPH 124C41+ and Thea von Harbou's book of the UFA film THE GIRL IN THE MOON.

Time-travel has to wait until a much later date for its first appearance, which is with a quite unexpected work, and an even more unexpected author - Mark Twain's A YANKEE AT THE COURT OF KING ARTHUR. The next tale in order is the mechanical time-travel tale par excellence, Wells THE TIME MACHINE, followed by a story completely different in spirit, mechanism and atmosphere, E.L. Arnold's PHRA THE PHOENICIAN, in which the time-travel "mechanism" is personal immortality, as in the mediaeval legend of Matthias Battadios, the "Wandering Jew." A rather similar story, of time-travel by successive re-incarnation is George Griffiths' VALDAR THE OFT-BORN. Travel into the future by long-continued cataleptic trance is the next theme, that of Wells' WHEN THE SLEEPER WAKES (I wonder how many people noticed that this is the first book to bring in the use of broadcast "news" as a potent political weapon !), followed again by time-travel in a trance induced by pain and exhaustion, in Jack London's THE JACKET.

Drug-induced time-travel - or at least time-distortion - what the author called "slipping through the interstices of time" next made its appearance in Wells THE NEW ACCELERATOR, but was followed up on the grand scale by Rider Haggard, using the African narcotic drug "Taduki" which he had introduced in his adventure story THE IVORY CHILD; Allan Quatermain, who saw it used in that tale, twice afterwards used it on himself, and is transferred to two of his own previous existences on earth (Haggard's beloved theme of re-incarnation again) to the Persian conquest of Egypt in THE ANCIENT ALLAN, and to the late ice-age of some twenty-thousand years ago in ALLAN AND THE ICE-GODS, which I would rank, both for detail and for general atmosphere, as one of the best stone-age stories I have ever read, well worthy to stand beside Jack London's BEFORE ADAM, also a tale of the stone age, involving time-travel in dreams.

Contemporary with Jack London's tale, and earlier than the Haggard stories, come two more accounts of time-travel in dreams, told by one of the greatest British masters of fantasy, the sea-captain William Hope Hodgson. In his terrifying supernatural romance THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND the hero is hurled helplessly along a fantastically accelerated time-sequence through countless ages to witness the end not merely of the earth, but also of the sun and the entire solar-system, while in THE NIGHT LAND, one of the longest and most exciting of fantasy tales, he "wakes" into the far future, after the final extinction of the sun, when the last millions of Mankind on earth are eking out a grim existence in a great fortress-refuge, surrounded and attacked by fearful monsters, and by embodied powers of evil which rash experimenters with spiritualism and "psi" powers have let loose in the world.

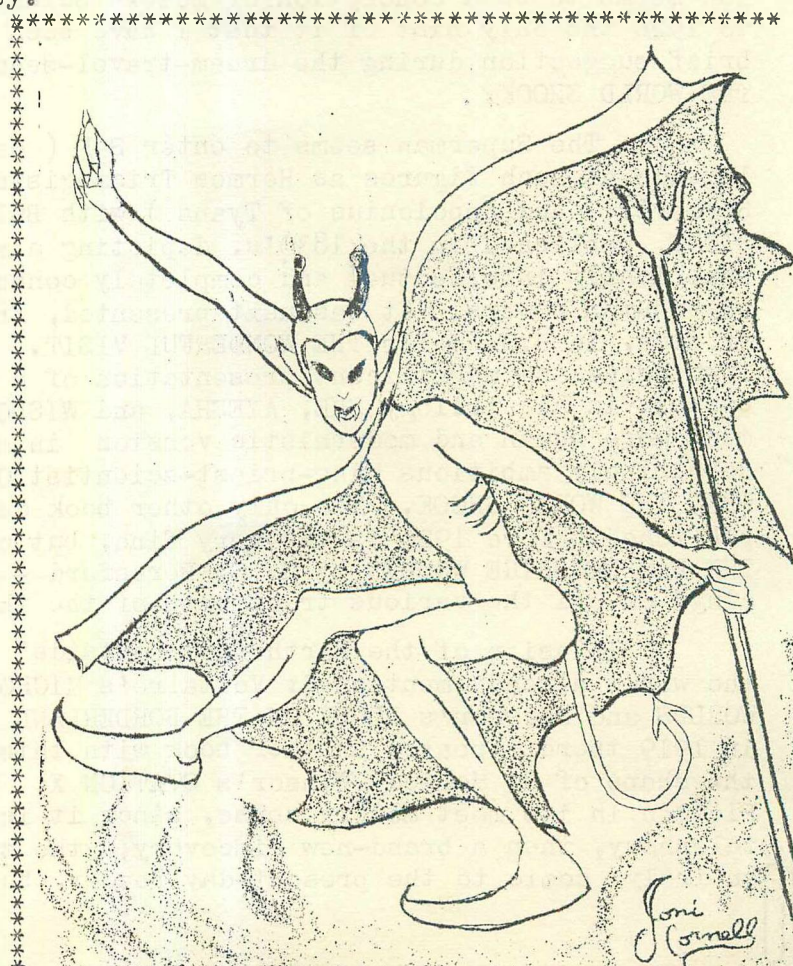
Several S-F authors have used the medium to portray an idealized future society, and this theme has the longest and most respectable pedigree of any, going back to the beginning of the fifth century before Christ, with Plato's CRITIAS ! The early sixteenth century saw the almost simultaneous publication, in England and Italy respectively, of Sir Thomas More's UTOPIA and of Tommaso Campanella's CITY OF THE SUN, followed, after nearly a century by Francis Bacon's THE NEW ATLANTIS. In the eighteenth century Swift, concerned in GULLIVER'S TRAVELS to show the follies of mankind, introduced, for contrast, in the VOYAGE TO THE HOUYNHIMS, an ideal state peopled by horses, in which human beings were a particularly loathsome variety of wild animal.

The nineteenth century brought several such depictions of an ideal society: Lytton's THE COMING RACE, William Morris' NEWS FROM NOWHERE, Samuel Butler's sardonic EREWHON and the nostalgically beautiful world depicted by the naturalist W.H. Hudson in THE CRYSTAL AGE. In the early years of our own century the French astronomer Flammarion wrote URANIA, and H.G. Wells his curiously restless and dissatisfied IN THE DAYS OF THE COMET.

The obvious counterpart to the presentation of the ideal society is, of course, anti-utopia, or " How loathsome can our society become ?" This was depicted with savage glee by Swift in the other travels of Gulliver, in which the VOYAGES TO LILLIPUT, BROBDINGNAG, LAPUTA AND BALNIBARBI each in turn pillory one or other of the less lovable features of society.

Voltaire's MICROMEGAS belongs here too, since its space-travel is only incidental to the main plot.

In the late nineteenth century Jules Verne gives the first glimps of what we now call the totalitarian state in THE BEGUM'S FORTUNE, but it was developed at far greater length and with frightening accuracy in Jack London's UNDER THE IRON HEEL, some thirty-five years later. Meanwhile Wells WHEN THE SLEEPER WAKES had depicted the "welfare" state brought to its obvious development of state-owned and state-exploited slavery. while in his FIRST MEN IN THE MOON he had carried on, to its logical and hideous conclusion, - pto.



the present day trend towards "vocational specialization" in a society in which several thousand types of Selenite, each incredibly beautifully adapted to its own specialized task, are produced ~~to~~ order by a program of deliberate breeding and mutation, ruthlessly supplemented by surgical vivisection!

Karel Capek showed, in THE INSECT PLAY, how a society composed individually of kindly and well-meaning people could yet, as a whole, behave like a viciously destructive lunatic, and then re-studied the theme from a very different standpoint in his Biblical play ADAM THE CREATOR. Gilbert Frankau rollickingly lampooned the Socialist State in the SEEDS OF ENCHANTMENT, while, just before our deadline date of 1926, Thea von Harbou produced another screen-play-novel of the capitalist slave-state in METROPOLIS, which obviously owed much to Wells SLEPPER and TIME MACHINE.

METROPOLIS was also one of the earliest S-F works to exploit the "Synthetic Human" hitherto only treated by Mary Shelley in FRANK-ENSTEIN and by Capek in R.U.R. Another theme belonging largely to modern S-F is that of a civilisation achieved by some non-human race, which, previous to 1926, seems to have been envisaged only by Kepler in his SOMNIUM, Swift among the HOUYHNHMS and Wells in THE EMPIRE OF THE ANTS and in THE WAR OF THE WORLDS and its associated short story THE CRYSTAL EGG.

It is interesting to note that the theme of Galactic Civilisation seems to be a conception of modern Science Fiction only, previous to 1926 the only hint of it that I have been able to find has been a brief suggestion during the dream-travel-sequence in Haggard's WHEN THE WORLD SHOOK.

The Superman seems to enter S-F (omitting the vague mediaeval legends of such figures as Hermes Trismegistus, Virgilius the Sorcerer and Appolonius of Tyana) with Bulwer Lytton's A STRANGE STORY, published in the 1830's, depicting a marvellously handsome, brilliantly intellectual and completely conscienceless being armed with superhuman powers. It was next presented, from a very different point of view, in H.G. Wells THE WONDERFUL VISIT. Rider Haggard gave us an impressive and magnificent presentation of a figure not altogether earthly in his trilogy SHE, AYESHA, and WISDOM'S DAUGHTER, but also a much more human and modernistic version in his portrait of the devouringly ambitious king-priest-scientist Oro, the central figure of WHEN THE WORLD SHOOK. The only other book dealing with the superman published before 1926 is the very fine, but comparatively little-known THE HAMPDENSHIRE WONDER by C. S. Beresford - perhaps the most "convincing" of all the various treatments of the theme yet produced.

Invasion of the Earth from "outside" is depicted in four of the works already mentioned: Voltaire's MICROMEGAS, Wells' WAR OF THE WORLDS and Hodgson's HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND and THE NIGHT LAND, but in 1919 there appeared another book with this as a central theme, in the shape of G. McLeod Winsor's STATION X. This book is Science Fiction in its most modern sense, since it is written around wireless telephony, then a brand-new discovery; the technical details sound entirely comic to the present-day reader, but the author cannot -

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be much blamed, since the book was written under the 1914-1918 war "security" regulations, under which the mere mention of such things as a direction-finding loop or a thermionic valve was punishable with a long term of imprisonment ! It is, however, the first book I have ever found to suggest the idea of invasion by psychical possession; space travel is regarded as flatly impossible, and the action is a joint struggle of the inhabitants of the Earth and Venus to prevent the "taking-over" of the Earth by Martians transferring their personalities into earth-human bodies.

Stories of lost races or lost civilisations have long enjoyed widespread popularity, and it is extremely difficult, here, to draw the boundary between Science Fiction and Exploration Fantasy; of the tales already mentioned, Lytton's THE COMING RACE, Haggard's WHEN THE WORLD SHOOK and Frankau's SEEDS OF ENCHANTMENT all belong in this category, as also do two first-class S-F stories not yet mentioned: Conan Doyle's THE LOST WORLD and A. Merritt's THE MOON POOL.

The last class of S-F that we shall survey is the cataclysm story: the End - or Beginning - or Beginning Again - of Mankind or of Civilisation. The first story of this type is Mary Shelley's THE LAST MAN, dating from early in the nineteenth century - here the human race have long been slowly declining in numbers and it is epidemic disease that brings about their final extinction. For further treatment of this theme we have to wait for our present century, when we have, Camille Flammarion's THE END OF THE WORLD (by collision with a wandering asteroid), Wells' THE WAR IN THE AIR (the collapse of society under widespread bombing), London's THE SCARLET PLAGUE (mankind reduced to a few stone-age survivors by a virulent epidemic disease and M. P. Shiel's THE BLACK CLOUD (almost all mankind poisoned by volcanic gases).

Wells' second apocalyptic novel, THE WORLD SET FREE, 1914, saw our civilisation destroyed by the up-to-date method of the atomic bomb, but within a few weeks of its publication civilisation was undergoing an actual test of such gravity that few people found time to read it, and when it was re-published in the 20's it bore such an ill-conceived dust-jacket that it was taken for "just another" war novel. Haggard's WHEN THE WORLD SHOOK depicts mankind being all but exterminated by a terrific deluge, artificially brought about, while in 1924 J.J. Connington's NORDEN-HOLT'S MILLION portrayed the near-extinction of mankind by starvation, caused by the death of all vegetation owing to the ravages of a mutated bacterium that destroyed all the nitrogen compounds in the soil.

And yet - after all this - some people still believe that Science Fiction is quite a recent phenomenon ! Lumme !

Arthur R. Weir.



One of the most Quietly Fabulous people I've ever met," is as good a description as I can think of for Avram Davidson. I met him in New York, I met him again in Pittsburgh - he was quietly fabulous on both occasions. This is the address he gave to the Pittsburgh Convention attendee's, when he appeared on the 'WHO KILLED S-F ?' Panel. I've deliberately left it in it's spoken-form for I think it would lose something if converted to 'written-English' so, read it aloud, like.

EXIT ORCS

By
Avram Davidson

" Boors, jerks, clods, oafs, orcs, and girls who only came here to ogle Ted Cogswell, will kindly file out, quickly and quietly. Please, no violence.

According to Earl Kemp - and I am assured that 'Earl Kemp' is not a pseudonym of Sidney Coleman - according to Earl Kemp, I was supposed to speak on "The Future Of Science Fiction". However, according to the program, I was supposed to speak on "Who Killed Science Fiction". In the face of such confusion, worse confounded, I reacted in my usual cowardly fashion; and have prepared a capital address, entitled, "Some Observations On The Migratory Patterns Of Atlantic Coast Lepidoptera."

Recently, in the desperate search for truth, beauty, and a fast buck, I wrote a non-SF story on the death of Shelley. Ostensibly, you know, Shelley was accidentally drowned at sea when his boat was swamped in a storm. But the thought occurred to me, Suppose, a couple of nights before, there had been a bull-session down at the Villa - Byron, Leigh, Hunt, the whole bunch of dirty pro's - and someone had complimented Mrs Shelley on her authorship of FRANKENSTEIN; whereupon Percy, with a drunken guffaw, said, " FRANKENSTEIN! Sheest! What a lousy Gothic novel!" After which, of course, there was nothing for it but what Mary Shelley crept out at night in her bare and lily-pale feet, and planted a small bomb just abaft the mizzen-mast or under the poop-deck. Exeunt,* Shelley, with a fish in his mouth; a beatnik before his time. (* Bob Silverberg informs me that I can't say, "Exeunt, Shelley" on account of "exeunt" being third person plural. Plural of majesty, or majestic plural, Bob: " Exeunt", by G-d, "Shelley"!)

" Who Killed The Gothic Novel?" or, " The Future Of The Gothic Novel", anyone ? Is (Was ?) SF merely a baroque art-form, having its hour of gaudy glory, and then doomed to vanish forever as a literary medium, even as the Gothic tal did ? Not to be revived perhaps, for over a century, until by some future Isaac Dinesen or Mervin Peake ? I think we must admit this is possible. Fashion - or is it 'Fortune' - is notoriously a fickle jade; she may be tired of seeing us flutter our damp, roccoco wings in the idle breeze. A leap, a pounce, a few seconds of agony in the killing jar, and there we are, pinned securely to the display board, with a label under us.

" It may be so. I do not know".

Thirty and more years ago we used to read in the old Gernsback Science and Inventions that the energy contained in a single cigarette, if atomic fission could only be achieved, would be sufficient to supply the power needs of New York City for a hundred years. Now atomic-fission has been achieved, NYC continues to get its power in the same old way, and all that the energy in a single cigarette does is to give us lung cancer.

Many years ago (though not that many), when most of you here were still weans and sucklings, when the great crash caused by the suspension of Unknown Worlds (olav ha sholem) still echoed in our ears; I found myself in the Navy - to my great surprise - and, doubtless to the Navy's infinitely greater. One morning the Naval Air Station which I then graced with my presence, was thrown into a panic which would have done credit to an enemy invasion. It was, in fact, an invasion - though only the old Navy hands: uncouth fellows with shaggy shoulders and tattooed arms - regarded the invaders as enemies: They were, in truth, the first detachment of Waves .

The Commanding Officer of the base, caught in a rare moment of shaking sobriety, was not sure just what he ought to do first. So he decided to navigate by the book, he had the Waves lined up and deputed an old Chief Gunner's Mate to read the girls the " Rocks and Shoals" - officially, Articles For The Governing Of The Navy In Time Of War - four hundred and twenty-odd tremulous young popsies, with sweet-smelling, bifurcated bosoms, did their best to stand at attention whilst old Chief Briney-grommet warned them, in his big, hoarse voice, that if they "struck, or attempted without authorization to strike (their) flag (sic) to any enemy or rebel," or if they "pusillanimously cried for quarter", they would suffer death - "or" - for there was a bright spot even in "Rocks and Shoals" - " or such lesser penalty as a court-martial may see fit to direct..."

I cannot, now, alas, undertake to tell you how many of these nautical nyads ever did strike their flags or pusillanimously etcetra. But is there not a lesson therein for us ? Are we not, are not some of us, too many of us, striking our flags and pusillanimously crying for quarter ? Ought we not, perhaps, to remember the words of the great and pious Sir John Hawkins, who smote the Spanish, hip and thigh, with the cry of, " Jesus! And no quarter!" ?

(Probably Spargue de Camp will inform me, later, that it was not Sir John Hawkins at all, but Sir Jarvis Glutch; but I say it was Hawkins, and I say the Hell with it.)

No, Virginia, Science Fiction is not dead, and, yes, it has a future. It has a future and the reason is, that the frontiers of the human mind have no limits. The universe is probably not infinite, but it is infinite enough for us, in the foreseeable future. What some have mistaken for defeat is really just a mere lull in the battle, in which we hear - and foolishly cower at the sound of - the distant thunder of the heavy guns of Science Fact - and wrongly think that every shell has our number written on it. Pause, if you must, a while. Rally your forces. Wait the propitious moment. And then - Advance!

Now we come to THE BOOM.

If you listen to some of the old and semi-old pro's talk, you will gather that the early middle-fifties were a time when four-cent-a-word cheques grew on every gooseberry bush; and that, such were the hot assaults made on us authors by editors panting passionately for material, so strongly did they urge and press us, that we were able to prevent their forcibly undoing us only by our ready acquiescence.

To which I can only say, "What boom, where boom?" I sold my first stories during this period, and I never knew there was a boom going on. Nobody told me! During each of the so-called boom years I sold one count them one story. The rest were rejected. I am happy to say that I have since sold all the others. Well, almost all. So, never having been courted when their were roses in my cheeks and my shape was slim, I am able to appreciate the more subdued attention paid me now, when I am fat and fallow.

As for the Sense Of Wonder, fellows, it, too, is still with us. I saw it only this morning, when I offered Doc' Smith a baigel.

Boors, jerks, clods, oafs, orcs, and girls who only came here to ogle Ted Cogswell, may now file back in quickly and quietly. Please, no violence.

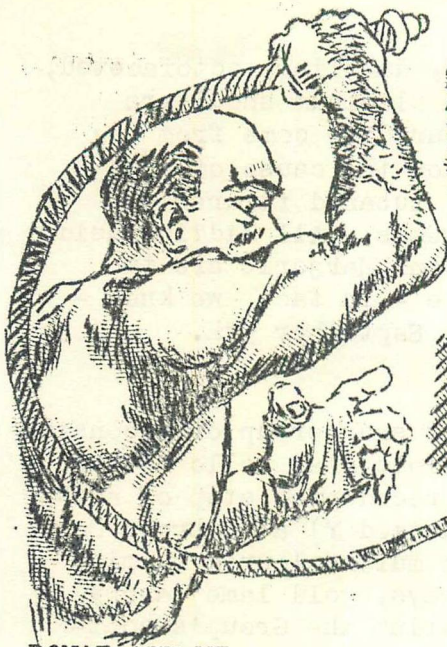
.....Avram Davidson

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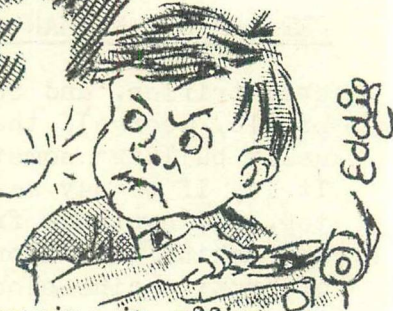
It isn't often that someone of Arthur Weir's learning and education enters Fandom, and it is even rarer for such a person to become active within our sphere of activity.

Because of this, it is an even greater loss to hear of his death. I've had the pleasure of corresponding with Doc' for several years - since he entered fandom via the B.S.F.A. during my term of office in that organisation - I'll miss him. I'll miss him both as a correspondent, and as a very valued contributor to first TRIODE, and later BASTION, but I'll miss him most as a friend. Doc' was a person who despite constant ill-health, contributed a great deal to British Fandom these past few years. We'll all miss him. Rest Well, Doc'.



DRUMS ALONG THE MARCH

By
JOHN OWEN



DON'T ASK ME

February dusk; a few lights still glimmering in office windows; 'rush' hour traffic nudging its slow, ill-tempered way down Dale Street. Passengers on the upper decks turn their heads idly and gaze in through the second-storey windows of "Liverpool Stamp Sales"; and they continue to stare, their attention riveted, their eyes glazing with horror. For there, within the brightly lit room, a huge, Herculean figure can be seen, stripped to the waist and cracking a six-foot bullwhip over the heads of five cringing, terrified typists, including - unbelievably - a six year old tot, who is pecking away painfully at a toy machine. What impression these savage, fleeting images produce on the passengers' minds can only be conjectured; you and I, however, know (at least you do if you're a regular reader) that the whole singular business was just another set-piece for Mad Productions' film, "Room At The Top". What the sequence has to do with science-fiction - or indeed, anything else - will doubtless be made plain on that Day when All Is Made Plain: i.e., when the picture is premiered with fully-synchronised sound. Until then, one can only report the facts.

SOCIAL SECTION

With the greatest possible pleasure, we are now able to announce the engagement of Mr. H. Stanley Nuttall (known also as 'Old Nutters', 'Bunny', and 'Hey You'), of The Towers, Melwood Drive, Liverpool, to the delectable Miss Marjorie Denton (see BASTION 1 for brief character-sketch and vital statistics), of Southdene, Kirkby. This happy news, anticipated for some time by the local Smart Set and Logan Gourlay, was made public at the beginning of March, and congratulatory telegrams poured in from all parts of the world and Shepherds Bush. Harrison, who received the news in the Cocktail Lounge of Pepe's International Strip Club, Barcelona, said, with assumed bleariness: " A man could die of thirst in this -- place, and no --- 'd lift a finger to save him ", He then fell flat on His face, or as near flat as His nose permitted. This superficially cryptic comment (it was, of course, a coded message of goodwill) was reported to the happy pair, who were enchanted - as ever - by the Master's puckish humour. -

And now, a word about the ring. A trio of large, dazzling, octofaceted, first-water diamonds has been hand-set in plain, platinum shoulders on a 24-carat band; these stones, which are rumoured to come from the forehead of a Brahmin idol in Bangalore, have been the cause of some speculation, and may explain the three sinister, tubed figures who have been shadowing Marjorie for the past five weeks. All kidding aside though (there aren't really any Indians), Stan and Marjorie are two extremely pleasant, easygoing people, and we hope - in fact, we know - they'll be very happy together. The big date? September 9th.

SET 'EM UP, NORMAN

Guided by Jeff Collins, that snapper-up of unconsidered trifles, and our newest layabout George Elliott (say hello to the people, George), the Group's been taking the unprecedented step of actually building something - in this case (you guessed?) a clubroom Bar. It is, if we say so ourselves, quite a Bar, with multicoloured formica top, red synthede fronting, Venetian-glass ashtrays, gold lame canopy, and behind this frontage, an original work depicting the Group's coat-of-arms: a cine-spool argent with bottles rampant over noses gules, and the heartening legend: "Double Diamonds... Are Forever."

A BRIEF TRIBUTE, EGAD

No mention of the Group's gastronomic year (1960, in case publication dates should prove flexible) would be complete without some mention of some of the succulent dishes we've drolled over during the twelve-month. And their cooking's so good, too: one thinks particularly of Ina's fiery curries, piquant salads and subtle pizzas; of Patty's legendary Risotto au Gin; and of Marjories famous Combustible Damson Punch, in which the Institute of Rocket Propulsion has recently shown interest. On behalf of all who have savoured these delights, ladies, and in tribute to your continuing hospitality, we salute you. To Mr. & Mrs. Ted Collins, we can only say: thanks for a great New Year Party - and what was the name of that blonde again?

'GUILTY', SOBS SCOUTMASTER

We consider it our duty (albeit a melancholy one) to give the following extract from the proceedings at the Old Bailey, which have followed upon the arrests reported in the last issue of this magazine. We should add that we have severed all connection with our London Chapter while the matter is sub judice. (Personae: Justice Willoughby Dunne; Sir Hector Proudpiece, for the Crown; Mr. Prune, Defending; and Divnl.-Inspector Blunt, 'C' Divn.)

Proudpiece: Now, Inspector, will you tell the Court how you first learned of this Society's existence?

Blunt: I was duly informed by PC Dixon of 'C' Division, sir; Constable Dixon 'aving observed an 'ighly suspicious advertisement in the window of an East Finchley fruiterer, sir.

Proudpiece: I see; and have you a transcript of this advertisement?

Blunt: Hi 'ave, sir. The advertisement read as follows - ahem: "The Liverpool Group, London Chapter. Interesting diversions for adults. Vibro and 'and massage, -

English governesses, French maids. Contact Miss Wanda Whipwell." And then there was a 'phone number, Sir.

Dunne: Whipwell ? Is that a pseudonym for one of the defendants ?

Proudpiece: It is, M'Lord. It is designed to indicate the, ah, rather specialised services he renders.

Dunne: He ?!

Prune:M'Lord, I must protest most strongly at these unwarranted assumptions concerning my client's activities!

Dunne: Sustained. Sir Hector, I suggest that you change your line of questioning; these matters do not directly concern us. (Goat whinnies) What the devil was that ? Is there a goat in this courtroom ?

Proudpiece: Ah - just so, M'Lud. With your Ludship's permission, the animal is to be introduced later as evidence for the Crown. Exhibit 8, if your Ludship pleases.

Dunne: And may I enquire precisely what connection a Goat has with the case before me ?

Proudpiece: If I may remind your Ludship, these details will form part of the evidence to be given later in camera.

Dunne: Ah, yes, of course. Hee-hee! Well, proceed, proceed...

Proudpiece: Inspector; when formally cautioned, did the accused make any statement ?

Blunt: 'E did, sir, but I couldn't rightly make 'ead nor tail of it. 'E said, 'It's all in aid of Taff', or something very like that, sir.

Dunne: Taff ? Am I to take it that this is some sort of Welsh Nationalist cell ?

Prune: Indeed no, M'Lord! TAFF is a high-minded organization devoted to the propagation of international friendship. It is composed of the followers of such men as Ray Bradborough, Olaf Staplefield, Theobald Sturgeon...

Dunne: Are these people in Court ?

Prune (Shocked): No, no, M'Lud, indeed they are not! They are highly distinguished literary men. I was merely attempting to establish...

Dunne (testily): Tut, tut, Mr. Prune, this is not a literary debating society. And you really must not interrupt too often. Proceed, Sir. Hector.

Proudpiece: Thank you, M'Lord. Your Lordship is very good.

Dunne: Judging from my unfamiliarity with these technicalities of vice, it would appear that I am! (Light laughter; Dunne beams happily over the Court)

Proudpiece: Inspector; did the accused have anything else to say when cautioned ?

Blunt: Well, yes, sir; but that didn't make sense either, sir. 'E said, 'I am a member of a hinternational organisation known as Fandom.'

Dunne: Fandom ? Is that another technicality for some form of vice ?

Blunt: It's... very 'ard to say, M'Lord.

Dunne: Hard to say ? Not only does this case appear to exhibit every aspect of depravity, it is also the most confused I have ever had to preside over. What exactly does the term mean, then ? Can anyone inform me ?

Prune: M'Lud, fandom is a brotherhood of high-minded individuals dedicated to the imperishable concepts of...

Proudpiece: ...M'Lord, I must object most strongly to these constant interruptions by Defense Counsel! It will be the business of the Prosecution to prove conclusively that the defendant is a disciple of the notorious Alastair Crowley!

(Goat whinnies)

Dunne: Crowley ? The rock-and-roll singer ? (Laughter; Dunne peers over his spectacles, frowns). I must remind members of the public that this is a Court of Law, and not Daly's Music-Hall! I shall have no compunction in treating any further interruption as a Contempt of Court! (Shuffles papers). Hmm! I have heard enough for one day, and I have no doubt the jury has, too. This Court will adjourn until ten o'clock tomorrow morning; at that time I shall expect succinct definitions of both 'Taff' and 'Fandom', and whether or not they are connected in any way with vibro-massage. I shall also expect both Counsel to confine themselves to the facts, and not indulge in idle speculations about rock-and-roll singers, fan-dancing and Welsh Nationalism. And get that damned goat out of here!

(Proceeding)

AVAST, YE SWABS

News at once pleasant and sad: Jeff Collins, one of our most regular and durable members, is setting sail almost immediately for the far Balearics - wherever they are. He is, in fact, exactly one-third of the crew of 'Frolic', a 20-ton, 55-foot, Bermuda-rigged vessel which not only boasts 1400 sq. ft. of sail, but is fully equipped with spinnakers, bowsprits, masts, flying jibs, and other nautical bric a brac. Jeff tells us he'll be away for about three months at a time; he and his fellow adventurers hope to do a little g-r-r r-nn-ng, w-w-ite sl-vi-g and the like around the Med.; as well as organising trips for tourists during the summer months. At present they're over at Birkenhead taking on tinned bird's-nest soup, cigars, Marsala alla Uovo and other essential supplies. Bon Voyage, mate.

Letters: Commence....((EB))

Dick Eney, 417 Ft. Hunt Rd, Alexandria, Va.

BASTION No.1. Not, you understand, by the tales of the Liverpool Group's activities, because I didn't believe a word of that; Gott strafe me pink! Is this the British fandom we used to speak of as using grey ink? And, MARGINS. As the old gag-line goes, "what can you do for an encore?"

One nice touch - and I do hope you meant it as self-criticism - is having your editorial announcement of the LiG's ceasing to be a sfan club and becoming a Fringefan lot followed immediately by two uncommonly fine Serious Constructive Articles. Inconsistency thou art a jewel, like. ((As far as I am concerned, S-F Fandom is still my main interest, and that apply's to several other LiG Member's, but t'was decided we might attract more fannish types into the club by being subtle about it....first the newcomer is introduced to our Champagne-drinking members, and once they have him/her in a ~~drunken~~ happy mood he is insidiously inveigled into fandom. At least that's how the intentions go...so far, however, our Champagne-drinking coterie are having trouble keeping sober enough to talk of s-f themselves. They are practising hard, though.))

Doc: Weir's letter brought up a point that's been discussed elsewhere: namely the illustration of the Tolkien stories. You know about the speculative articles Ted Johnstone & Company have done about turning the Ring tetralogy into "The Greatest Movie Ever Made". -

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I've raised a more real-izable idea, that of Grangerizing the things. Grangerizing - I hastily add before John Roles beats me to it - is the illustration of a story with privately-drawn pictures, and as the idea took form (during a discussion at the last Disclavo) it occurred to me that with the resources of fandom, we could do a job of Grangerizing like no job of Grangerizing that was ever done before. Hal Lynch and the Philadelphia crew were thinking of doing some illustrations using photography and live actors ((Over their dead-bodies?)), but thinking how few fans (professionals would be prohibitively expensive) are, shall we say, suitable for portraying heroic characters... Well, I had the thought that we could manage the business by using different fan artists to portray the various races. That's a sort of funny-hat characterization, I admit, but subtle enough to pass muster. Perhaps Bjo to draw the Elves, Atom to depict the Hobbits, and so on - gad, Eddie Jones' rugose figures are perfect for Dwarves! ((Do you mind! He's been using me as a model...)) And I think that, unlike Ted Johnstone's project, it isn't impossible of achievement. ((Sounds like a good idea, Dick, and I'd be more than willing to publish any such composite drawings, even though I feel that they really should be published in I PALANTIR. But I would.))

Ron Ellik, 2315 Dwight Way, Berkeley 4, California.

I suppose that as I sit down to comment on BASTION No.1 you are still recuperating from your little jaunt ((I was.)) - I know that I'm still recuperating. We drove over 5,000 miles to Pennsylvania and back, and it's very difficult for me to sit down to write at all. If I never see the inside of another Hillman Minx it'll be too soon; and I'd take an unbreakable oath on a hecto jelly pad to that effect were I not contemplating a trip from LA to the Seacon next Labour Day...a round trip of some 3,000 miles. Sigh.

When you showed me your sample copy of BASTION at the Pittcon I just glanced at it - turned to the reviews page to read what you had to say about FANAC, and went into the next room to applaud the HUGO Awards - but I sat down just now (a painful process, as I explained) and read it through. Admirable work in repro, art, and content. As I told you when you showed me the sample, I find it hard, indeed nigh impossible, to believe that Eddie stencilled that cover himself; it is very tempting to doubt your veracity and think my own thoughts about photographic stencilling processes. Great. ((The lettering on the cover was done by photo-stencil, but Eddie hand-drew the illo' onto stencil. Norman still keeps finding pieces of it still in his duper, if you want further proof!))

John Owen's column gave me an idea regarding MaD and Unicorn Productions. They represent amateur film productions in fandom to my knowledge (with the possible exceptions of the Dietz' more newsreel-like efforts and Duane Avery's RayVen Productions in LA which is not really in Fandom) and I was thinking of the possible outcome should they engage in a duel. Now, I don't mean they should shoot at each other to gain a fan film monopoly. Since playing Wrai Ballard (('Musquite Kid')), I've had enough of that kind of duelling. I was thinking, what would happen if they were given identical scripts, with lots of leeway given in things like costuming, bits-of-business, maybe even the actual dialogue left up to the individual directors; just specify the length and an outline of plot, and see what the two companies come up with. -

If they were given six months, they could send an extra print to each other, and play both movies at a big party or a con or something... ((Personally, I like the idea very much, Ron, and I've passed the suggestion on to MaD Productions. Currently they are busy producing Something for this years Eastercon...they'll probably need to rest for awhile afterwards, but I'll remind 'em of it whenever the occasion allows. I hope something will come of it.))

((As you've probably noticed, these first two letters are from the two current TAFF Candidates; one of whom will, under the auspices of the Transatlantic Fan Fund, attend the 1962 British Convention. Since I'm now administering TAFF with Don Ford, BASTION must remain neutral on who is the better candidate. I met both Ron and Dick at Pittsburgh and consider that either will make an excellent TAFF Delegate. I realize that this doesn't help you make up your mind, but I'm extremely glad that I am neutral, for I can't make my mind up either.... When you've made your mind up, send your vote to Don Ford, Box 19-T, Wards Corner Rd, Loveland, Ohio. Or, to me, please. EB.))

Dick Schultz, 19159 Helen, Detroit 34, Michigan.

To get to BASTION. I saw that one copy at the Pittcon, of course. (Lovely con wasn't it? The program didn't strike me as much, but the people and the parties there..! Remember the party at Pavlat's, Monday Night, when everyone mobbed the 4e was trying to rest on? In the words of Buz Busby (or was it TEW?), "never before have so many did so much for so little return." The gals poppa did sorta look like Villy Ley, tho, didn't he? ((If it was Willy, this is one aspect of his researches that won't get into Galaxy!!)) And the cake at the Philly Party. The Home Brew at the Curtises. Harlan Ellison discussing Jazz as butchered in Detroit and elsewhere, at the Kyles party ~~Sunday night~~ Monday morning. Your piano playing Sunday night. The speeches at the Banquet. Yakking with Emile Greenleaf and myself Friday night, in the Sky Room bar. That long scroll near everyone must eventually have signed. Don Ford's slides of his trip to the Foggy Isles.

A nice bunch. And Harlan was more, "one of us" at this con than he was at the Detention, and I understand even more so there than he had been since his first MidWestCon. But we were talking about BASTION, weren't we? ((And how do you expect me to get on with stencilling your letter when you keep evoking memories like this? Anyway, thanks for The Trailer, Dick....and if anyone wants to read more on these topics, well, there's always EPITAFF. 7/- or One Dollar, from either Don Ford or myself. 92 pages, with some excellent Eddie Jones illos, fine duping by Norman Shorrock and words and music by me... The profits go to TAFF, otherwise I shouldn't be unashamedly plugging it like this. But we were talking of BASTION, weren't we!))

At the Pittcon I stated that the zine had wonderful artwork and layout. That statement still holds true today, in the cold light of dispassionate reasoning. -

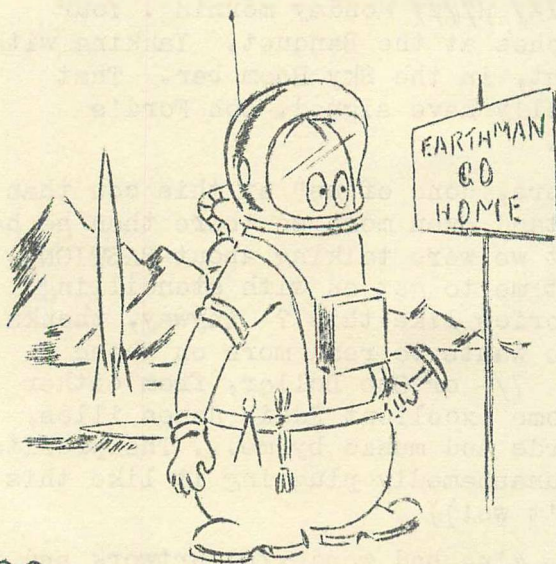
Eddie Jones is simply fabjucous, in every sense of the word. While Barr reminds me of nothing so much as an embryo Finlay, who might well surpass this great, Eddie reminds me of nothing so much as Emsh. Just picture an Ed Emshwiller who turns his creative talent, when not drawing his already quite decent draughtmanshiplike covers for money, into a field of imaginative representative art. He, as you know, does, instead, turn to abstract art to express his artistic yearnings. Just think of the covers and black-and-whites he could turn out if he cut out the bosomy-babes and square-jawed-heroes from his covers. If he really felt free to express himself in the same style he uses to earn a living...! This is the type of high grade stuff Eddie Jones turns out for the fanzines. And I admire Ed Emsh's work, believe me. To compare him favourably with one of my most admired professional artists is one of the most sincere compliments I can give to him. ((Your praise sort of ties up with the experience I had with EPITAFF. Ed Emsh very kindly did me an illo for this, but Eddie Jones did one so much better that I had to relegate the Emsh to the contents page from the cover. It's the old case of the enthusiastic-perfectionist-amateur.... And, alright, Eddie Jones, stop slavering and get cracking on the cover!))

DRUMS ALONG THE MERSEY was certainly the most interesting thing in the issue, with Sid Birchby coming up a close second on THE SONGS THAT STUDENTS SING. Gads. Fanzine articles on the value of Gold Currency and the poor class of roustabouts we're turning out today. And some fans say sports-cars and jazz shouldn't be discussed in fmz!

Frankly I wish Sid had talked more on the old songs. He might be interested to know of a little old-worldish inn in Heidelberg, The Golden Rooster (a real student hang-out, though you have to wait for the tourist season to end to find them there), the students still sing their old songs, along with a few more recent imports like a German version of Barnacle Bill (unexpurgated, unless I heard wrong). While I was there, a crowd lifted one of their number to the rafters to carve his name on the darkened things. From the looks of the rafters, it must be some sort of student tradition. It was pretty badly carved up. A pair of

chess-players were sat at one table, and the students hoisted their man onto the table, and then hoisted the table. If they're this informal now, I wonder what they were like when they were all rich and noble, and few dared say nay to them? It must have been fun...

It's sad to think that at last THE GREAT WILLIAM HARRISON series is finally going to end. Though it seems to have started out rather slowly, the series is now one of the main attractions of the Liverpool-Bentcliffe fanzine presses. ((Well, there is still another episode to come. And who knows what the future may hold, like. HE, has lately been called to Katanga Province to sort out a little mess there, and I hear that Lord Greystoke is helping Him...))



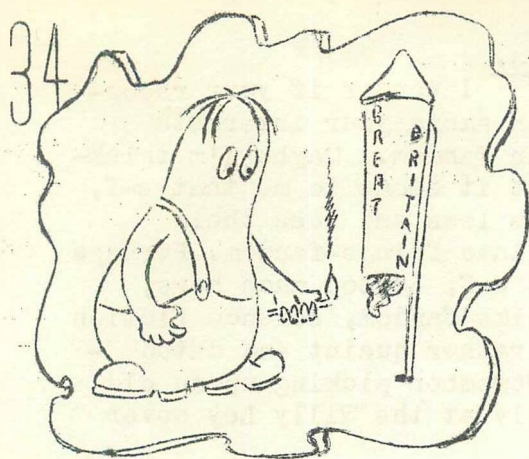
Andy Young, 265 Concord Ave, Cambridge 38, Mass.

I wonder if your recognition of the non-centrality of science-fiction among your interests isn't the avante garde of a growing movement in Fandom. Maybe I'm thinking too much of myself and the others here, but it seems to me that s-f, while it remains an interest shared by fans, is less and less their main interest. Perhaps I too am drifting off into fringe-fandom. Perhaps it's just that space travel, long the heart of s-f, is too much here, and too far ahead of the writers of fiction; like fandom, science fiction has no focal point, and the old s-f now seems rather quaint and dated - even things written only a few years ago. I remember picking up an old issue (1952) of GALAXY and laughing irreverently at the Willy Ley cover heading: "SPACE TRAVEL BY 1960 ?"

More and more I think Bogg's was right: that the coming of space travel does mean the death of science fiction as-we-know-it. The prolonged death agonies are simply the mirror images of the lengthy birth pains of actual human space travel; perhaps s-f will live on another ten years or so, dribbling slowly away....in a way it's sad, of course; but some of us are now able to replace the dream with the reality. Just the other day Dr. Menzel asked me what sort of instruments I thought should go into a lunar probe - he thinks that equipment can be built that can stand a hard landing (another possibility which the s-f writers never considered). Hard means no deceleration until you hit the surface of the moon itself. Like, CRASH ! ((You're in a pretty fortunate position, Andy, in that you can trade the dream of space-travel for reality. I'd say that it's extremely unlikely though that more than one percent of the s-f reading public are in a position to share in the beginnings of space travel in anything other than a vicarious way. So, logically, s-f could continue to cater for their needs....if it continues to expand beyond the known frontiers.))

Mike Moorcock said much of what Blish said in his highly-complimented speech at the Pittcon Banquet. ((Remember! You read it first in BASTION!)) The element of stimulation, the something which the author had to say, instead of just writing a story - these are the missing ingredients in current s-f. Why? Perhaps we've lost many of the people who had something to say. Some have died, some have moved to greener fields. It comes to the same thing: not very much really good s-f is being written today, because the people who are still in the field either have little to say or haven't yet developed the ability to say it. We lack good writers, not good editors.

The ICE FAN COMETH was clever, in spite of the weak beginning. The end was much better written, much less artificial, it seemed to me. It actually made me smile. One wonders what to say about Doc Weir's article on WHEN THE WORLD SHOOK. From his description, it is obvious that the book is effectively written, that the ending is pitifully weak, and that this is the sort of thing that makes many people tire of science fantasy. It is, I think, a mistake to return characters from such a fantastic setting to the mundane world. ((Agreed. A pitfall which Tolkien avoided, but all too many lesser writers have fallen into. Presumably in their desire to establish reader-identification. If a fantasy-world is well enough conceived it shouldn't need the 'bolstering' of a character from the present-day.))



Speaking of Castles (as Doc Weir was in the letter column) we seem to have one at the top of our street. It's at the top of the hill, and can be seen for miles around. Although it's only a few hundred yards away, I've not yet gotten around to visiting it; Joan has, and says it's just standing there in the middle of a little park. ((You mean, not satisfied with having a Castle At The Top Of Your Street, you expect it to get up and move around ?))

Harrison. Wonderful Man. Ought to stand for TAFF.

Buck Coulson, Route 3, Wabash, Indiana.

I agree with the reasons for officially opening the Liverpool Club to non-stf members; if an organised club is wanted there must be some sort of program, and stf doesn't provide enough basis for one. This is one reason I've never gone in too much for organised clubs; most of the stf clubs I've belonged to have been just "a party of friends", no more and no less. Whenever someone had ideas of organising and having Business Meetings and Prohrams and the like, I quit attending until the organiser became depressed with the general apathy of the rest of the members and either resigned himself to attending a regularly scheduled party, or dropped out.

I grimly doubt Mike Moorcock's comment that a greater percentage of the stf of "ten years or less ago" was stimulating. From eight to ten years ago in this country - better make that 7 to 10 years ago - we had the pulp AMAZING and FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, PLANET STORIES, VORTEX, COSMOS, ORBIT, OTHER WORLDS, IMAGINATION and the early issues of FANTASTIC UNIVERSE. Sure, ASTOUNDING and GALAXY were better, F&SF just as good or better, and we had some of the good short-lived mags; WORLDS BEYOND, FANTASY FICTION, SPACE SCIENCE FICTION and the del Rey edited ROCKET, SPACE STORIES, SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES, plus THRILLING WONDER STORIES, and STARTLING STORIES (but we had a dying WEIRD TALES, too, publishing some godawful crud). Percentagewise? Certainly no better than today. In England you had NEW WORLDS and I think SCIENCE FANTASY, but you also had AUTHENTIC and some of the cruddy little mags like TALES OF TOMORROW and WONDERS OF THE SPACEWAYS, didn't you? ((And the VARGO STATTEN MAG!)) In fact, I'd say that British stf mags have never been better than they are right now.

I agree, more or less, with Mike's magazine ratings, but I think he's counting Campbell out of the editorial race a bit early. Sure, he's in a bit of a rut - but he's also developing new authors as fast as anyone in the business. The authors in F&SF aren't new, except to stf; Mills is luring mainstream authors, while Campbell is building from scratch. I won't say which is the best policy, but at least I'll go so far as to predict that what Campbell did once he can do again. If Poul Anderson, Christopher Anvil and Randy Garrett can keep him supplied with enough good stf until writers like Mark Phillips, Pauline Ashwell, David Gordon and Larry Harris mature, he'll have his stable of high-quality writers again. -

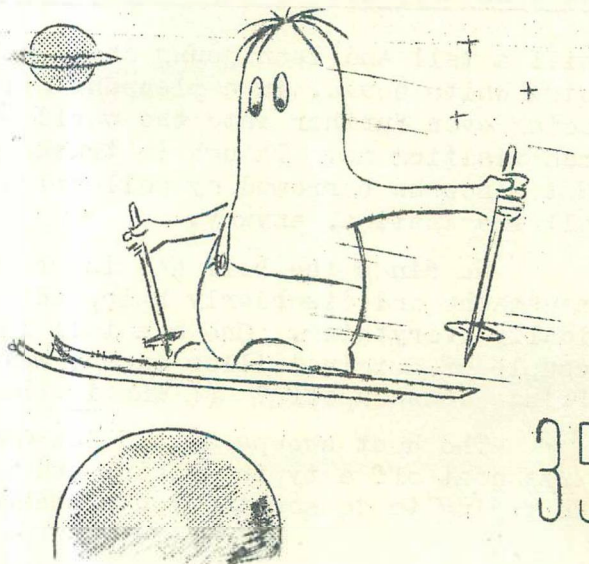
(Of course, the whole thing could break down too soon; Garrett is certainly not a great writer, though his stuff is readable, and I sometimes wonder if Christopher Anvil isn't a pseudonym for Anderson, but still.....like a lot of other convention members, I wouldn't object if Anderson wrote the entire mag.) ((Most people I've mentioned the topic to, think that Anvil is Eric Frank Russell - are you Anvil, Eric ? Is it you who's busy beating science-fiction into ploughshares ?))

I put forth the name of Robert Lawson as a Tolkien illustrator, if you have to have one. Those of you who have only seen his juvenile stuff will probably throw up your hands in horror - he's a sort of combination of Disney and Dr. Seuss - but I saw one book illustrated by him (I think it was the "Inferno" but I'm not sure) in which the illustrations were the most truly terrifying things I've ever seen. I don't know how he'd be on animation, but then I don't suppose Weir knows how Rackham would have been, either, and Lawson, at least, is alive. ((That would seem to be an advantage!))

Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis 17.

Mike Moorcock's categories of stories interested me. I would add a sort of number 1½: books etc which have been well-written and leave me quite unsatisfied. These are the entertaining, the good-to-pass-an-hour-with books that should be so much better. An example of this is Poul Anderson's novel "THE HIGH CRUSADE" which ran recently in Analog. It was funny; it was fun; it was thin. It was thin because it didn't seem to me that he was really working. It should have been a sharp satire, and a sharp examination of the motives behind the men who go questing off to the crusades as well as an entertaining novel...and wasn't. ((Think I agree with you on this one, Ruth, it was a pleasant romp but no more. I fancied the theme of the story when the issue carrying the first installment came in; waited the necessary three months so I could read the whole thing at one fell swoop; and then was more than somewhat disappointed in it. It seemed that Poul couldn't quite decide whether he should write a serious story or a funny one - if only it had swashed a little more, I wouldn't have minded.))

You know, I often think it might be the best for the genre if stf stopped having magazines which specialize in stf. With our close knit group we get all the the freedoms and restrictions of ghetto life, and we also set up certain conventions in plots, characters, plot devices, which make it hard for outside readers to appreciate the literary qualities of stf. If we were forced into the general magazines we might lose this "inness" which would be quite hard on fandom, but nice for the writers. That is, we might if the general magazines would allow the freedom of ideas, -



and the concentration upon ideas which stf demands. Which, in turn, suggests that we will be better off to keep stf in its ghetto, if we can do that and still keep it going. ((Science-fiction is appearing more and more in the general-magazines, of course, and this might possibly be one of the reasons why less s-f to our (aquired) taste is being written. Mayhap some of the stories which have so disappointed of late were written for SatEvePost and the ilk, but being rejected have found their way into our ghetto by the back-door, as it were. I've just finished forcing my way through a pb titled "STARFIRE" by Robert Buckner, which was originally a serial in SatEvePost, and if this is a sample of what s-f may turn into if it ceases to be a specialized media I want none of it. Sure we want wider recognition for science-fiction!!!))

The Bacover fascinates me. I want to colour it. I don't have time to - but I want to, even so. Well, comes Columbus Day soon. I shall colour it then. ((Santa Maria!!))

Arthur Hayes, R.R.3, Bancroft, Ontario.

To me, there seems to be a lot of talk about Fandom's duty being to support Prodom. This I would like to disagree with. S-F Professional publishing houses, are professional, financial ventures, on the most part. They are, therefore, similar to other professional ventures. If an auto-manufacturer in England, finds his sales slipping, he doesn't groan and say that it is the DUTY of the public to buy his wares. He digs in and changes his product until it again induces increased sales. This applies to all commercial enterprises. The only groups that do not operate this way are the charitable enterprises, who ask for Charity, by claiming that it is your duty to help them. S-F Prodom, it seems, has adopted the attitude of the Charitable institutions, by claiming that it is the duty of Fandom, the readers, to buy, buy, whether they are satisfied with the wares or not. I don't like this attitude, and it is not going to get me to buy more, probably it will get me to buy less. It is up to them to please me, not for me to please them. ((I see what you mean.))

Rick Sneary, 2962 Santa Ana St, South Gate, California.

Imagine if you will a tall and lean young chap, walking up to the door of a middle-size white house, in a pleasant middle-aged suburb of a great city. Going even further into the world of make-believe, say it is Bob Lichtman visiting me. Though in truth, he hasn't been here for six months. Not since he borrowed my collection of SLANT and Quandry. But this is all imagination, anyway.

He rings the bell and is greeted by a little man with a weedy-moustache and disorderly hair, and ushered into his bedroom-cum-practically-everything. One can tell it's a fans room because it has a couple of original illos on the walls - but what's with a picture of Prince Youssouppoff? ((Who is Prince Youssouppoff ??))

The host sweeps an old Ken Chapman book catalogue, and an old coat off a typing chair, and offers to let the guest sit down. In trying to do so, the youth backs into the dusty typewriter, and -

rolls one leg of the chair into the dustier row of record albums on the floor. He contents himself with putting his feet on two year-old Sears catalogues, on the floor in front of a board on which are mounted two crossed short swords. His interest is caught by a vanity-bench setting by the swords at the foot of the bed. It is piled high with an assortment of books and papers. As the host is moving another pile of papers, that almost completely cover the bed, in an attempt to find somewhere to sit down, the pile topples and Bob looks into it. The papers appear to be weekly newspapers dealing with the world of stamp collecting. A stamp album and catalogue have also fallen into the pile. There are two books on bookkeeping, and something that looks like a hand-made ledger, plus a small shower of ruled bookkeeping forms...

Bob is quite embarrassed, but the master of this mess assures him it is all right, they weren't in any order anyway... He gathers them up and forces them onto the dresser top, covering up notebooks and books on U.S. Government and American literature. Also a couple of recent issue fanzines. Bob starts talking about them, and asking the dweller in his confusion what he thinks of them. He is answered by his host who picks them up and starts prying the staples out of them. As he flattens them out and cramps them into a large box sitting on the room's other chair - after first determining the order they should have by some reasoning that defies explanation - admits that he hasn't read them, having been reading a new John Dickson Carr mystery. But someone had been talking about them down at LASFS, and while he had been too busy collecting dues to really listen, he thought they were pretty good.

Just as he mentions this, the host notices that one of the fanzines is edited by Lichtman. He quickly slips this under the stack of Prince Valiant strips, and starts moving things around on his desk as if to try and find something. Moving the boxes of sorted stamps, coils of wire, Commando knives, feathers, and copies of PLAYBOY onto the bed (into the spot he had been planning to sit on) he whips out a twelve-year old fmz he had found just the week before while moving his 20 year collection of National Geographic from one shelf to another.

Of course, Eric, my room isn't really like that....it's WORSE! But I weave this fantasy of orderliness not to shock or impress you, rather to lead into the reasons I have not written to you before, and haven't written to many fanzines at all of late. It is not that I have been so frightfully busy that I haven't had the time. My health remains in such unsure state that I have not been able to think of even working part-time. Thus I'm left with all the time I want for fandom. But the truth is, that while fanac and fandom make a very fine hobby, it all gets rather dull as a way of life. After being a fan, off and on, since '45, some of the sense of wonder has worn off, even seeing your own name in mimeo-ink. As others have all but given up reading the promags, I have all but given up reading the fanmags. Not that their material suffers to the same degree, but that I'm old and tired, and most of the tempests remind me of other tea-pots I've known.

But the new year has brought me a somewhat heightened degree of energy, and I'm trying to make up a little for my laxness in the past. I feel very badly about getting fanzines and not writing words of thanks and encouragement. What I do hope is to keep in touch with the

few top or key fanzines in the field, so that I may remain informed and in touch. In England, Bastion and Orion are the ones I feel I must have, even if it means sending money. I like others, such as Smoke. But this is part of the trouble, there are too many good zines, that even if you read only them, there would be too many to read. ((Probably what fandom needs is a sort of Chiltern Hundreds for people in your predicament, Rick. Anyway, you're assured of getting BASTION within the foreseeable future...shall we say to 2010, at least? And I'm sure that most of British fandom joins me in wishing that you recover fully from your illness.))

Doc Weir, who I'm seeing in print more and more often this past year, is well on his way to becoming Englands answer to Harry Warner. Here is a scholarly article on a subject that I know nothing about, and I enjoyed all of it. While I would not care to see a fanzine devoted completely to this form of article, it is definitely something we don't get enough of. And this is especially true of articles of this calibre. The cover was easily one of the best of the year, and one of the best over the years. The balls had almost three-dimensionality about them. ((The result of many visits to the local pawn-brokers by the artist!)) The interior illustrations were magnificent. If it were not for Barr, I'd rate Eddie as the best fan-artist of the year. And you got him.

Chris Miller, Christ College, Oxford.

About tapers...this poor fool has the use of his father's taper, when he is in a good mood. 'Tis a Ferro-graph. A dirty great big lump of assorted valves, motors and whatnots... lots of these. Oh, perhaps ye can help me....if I remove the erase-link from the back of the machine, will I, on recording something else, get the two superimposed, and if so, does this damage the machine at all? ((The erase-link is merely a device to prevent accidental erasure, you can't get superimposure this way, though if you fit a suitable doohinkus to it you can fade-in-and-out on an existing recording. Another way of achieving erasure is to stick both fingers in the socket after removing the plug!))

I really feel a bit odd about the Metamorphosis. Y'see when I got interested in fandom, I thought that they discussed s-f, at least now and then, and that this was the main thing. I was soon disillusioned, and became resigned to the fact that, at least, fan read s-f, even tho' they never spoke about it, or wrote about it in their fmz. And then ye lot come along and start a club with NO S-F! This I can't get accustomed to tho no doubt I will in time. What happens at a con, when one of these taper, or cine fans, but not s-f fans, gets collared by someone who starts talking s-f? ((Heck, Chris, it's only the name of the group that has been changed, and it is hoped to suitably indoctrinate any bods who join through their interests in 'other things'. At the time of cutting this stencil, I think the only new member of LiG joined through a mutual interest in limbo-dancing with an existing member....this may not have anything to do with s-f, but you have to admit that it's fannish!))

Heeeyyyy, you can't just finish off Sir William, like that, by giving Him only two more adventures. Could ye make 'em twenty-part serials? ((One can only hope that the Min. of Ag. & Fish, for whom He's investigating a rather fishy business, will give us clearance.))

John T. Phillifent, 41, Ongar Rd, London, S.W.6.

Thanks for the copy of BASTION. Readable, in spots. Would like to pick out the one meaningful item, by Moorcock. I disagree entirely with him as to what is wrong with SF. There's nothing wrong with SF, as such, but with fiction as a whole. For instance, publishing-house take-over bids. Fiction, your spare-time pursuit and mine, is now almost entirely big business. Read reviews. How many 'ordinary' books do you see? None, any more. Best-sellers, or nothing. Every book a masterpiece, according to the ad. Whiter than white, better than best....so on. Commercialized fiction, in fact. ((So was Hamlet!)) Got to sell, or fail. Competition grim.

All magazine fiction is feeling the draft, ((Do you mean, postal-draft, call-up, or 'DRAUGHT' ?)) except one field. Women's mags. Direct evidence from publishers, to wit. Between them, the three leading femme mags sell more than twelve million copies, every Thursday, in London alone. Look hard at those figures. More femme mags sold in one day, in London, than the whole SF output, all over the world, ever since the first Gernsback, all put together. And this is money. The big stuff. ((This would be very impressive, if true, John. Audit Bureau of Circulation figures for the Big Three 'Femme Mags, July-December '59 totalled 6,868,143 for the entire country; (The latest figures available, March '61, 6, 928, 439.) allowing London one-fifth of this figure, you are wrong, sir, by a factor of ten. Galaxy is currently selling 90,000 plus, per issue; ASF, 74,000...adding up to well over the million per year for these two mags alone. Shall we dance ?))

Money again. Writer's rewards. SF stiff to write. Needs thought. Payment, 42/- per thousand. So ! Like this, 3,000 to Nova gets 6gns, Same to the 'Woman' gets 35gns. Who argues with that ? Eat better, say sorry. And say you do work hard, write stiff story, plenty of thinking, controversial, current issue....who reads ? Who wants ? Rather be told, by Gilbert Harding, or like. Public not eager to think, now. Want it quick, snippets, predigested, plenty of pictures. ((So, haven't they always ?))

And that's the answer. Changing pattern of life. Wells, Burroughs and the rest, even Haggard, couldn't sell, today, except to kids, and not many of them. That, plus the paperback flood. ((Of Wells, Burroughs, and even Haggard...)) Who's going to pay 2/- for a magazine ? You can get a whole book for that. ((So all books are better than all magazines ? This is a dogmatic, almost Hegelian, piece of dialectical presumption. / This letter was answered by the currently sitting LiG Committee for Literary Moaning in Bourgeois Writings! Thanks for the fight, John.))

Archie Mercer, 434/4 Newark Rd, North Hykeham, Lincoln.

First off, this strikes me as the best issue of anything you've ever put out. The material may or may not be better than the TRIODE norm (I think it is) but now I'm brought face to face with the matter, I think that in truth there's some little thing about Norman's duplicating that is over and above most people's. It isn't exactly NEATER - Terry's, for instance, could hardly be bettered for impeccability. But Norman's is somehow MELLOWER. (Mellow old bastion). Eddie, too, is improving. He's still too Freas-influenced, but is improving nevertheless. -

I think this stuff of his in here, by and large, is his best yet. That tower in the top right-hand corner of the cover, for instance - superb artwork, on stencil or off. Atom's in top form, too. Take his Bacover - it's attractively ATOMIC, at first glance - albeit it takes a second (and considerably more penetrating) glance to divine what it IS, which is the fault of overcrowding a trifle - still, it's good to look at even without knowing what it is. I found it so, anyway.

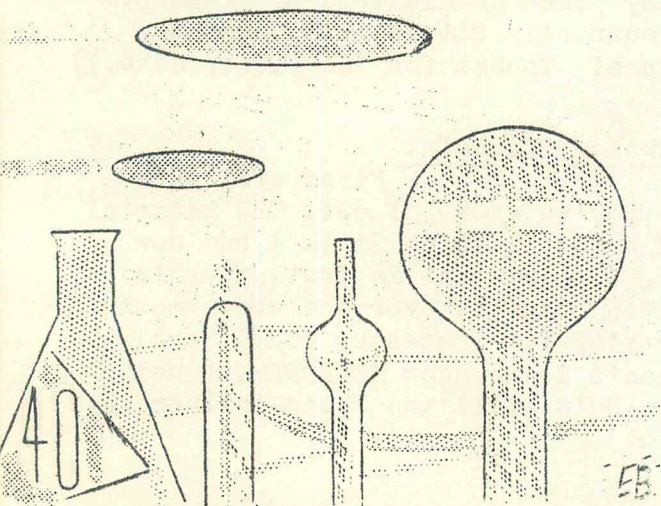
I still think John Owen's a fabulous fannish natterer. That last item of his, would the newspaper report be straight as quoted, or is it just a gag? ((We regret that we are unable to comment as the trial is still proceeding.))

Mike Moorcock's article was a real surprise to find in BASTION, highly interesting and well-written. I think Mike is beginning to fill the place once held by John Brunner in the fanzines. Then Jhim with a most disturbing little piece....now I DAREN'T become a pro.

Len Moffat, 10202 Belcher, Downey, Calif.

In a recent letter somewhere I suggested that it would take two items to ensure the continuance of s-f mags on the stands: (1) Money. (Publishers must be willing to risk more money in the promotion of s-f mags if they want new mags to "catch on" and build up a readership, and if they want the old mags to continue with an increased readership.) (2) Better Stories. Put the Wonder back into s-f to regain the attention of new readers. I suggested that perhaps there were no "new" ideas for s-f stories, that all of the basic ideas have been used and re-used, BUT (as Mike so ably points out) new approaches, new angles, and fresh treatment are needed. I too used Aldiss as an example of a comparatively new s-f writer who has used old ideas or themes (as in STARSHIP) with a fresh and interesting approach. In discussing this with Rick ((Sneary)) he reminded me of a very important factor, which I had forgotten: Advertising. Not the advertising of the mags themselves, which I had strongly suggested under Item One; Money, but the ads used in the magazines. I don't know about British mags, but most American mags are supported, not by subscriptions and newsstand sales, but by the advertisers who buy space in the mags. But of course advert-

isers won't buy much space, if any, in a mag with a doubtful circulation, which adds strenght to my argument that s-f needs publishers who are willing to really promote their mags. Rick suggests that s-f mags are ideal for the circulation of specialized advertising, that is, ads for books, gimmicks, gadgets, training courses, etcetra, which might appeal to those who have the imagination to read and enjoy s-f mags. This is done to some degree, of course, but there doesn't seem to be as many ads of this type as there should be. -



41

Too many of the ads found in s-f mags are exactly the same ads you see in other magazines. But we feel that more money could be brought into the field if the publishers sold more ad space - not to 'junk' dealers, but to quality manufacturers, publishers, etc. Then the publisher could afford to really promote his mag, as well as pay better rates to the writers - who, with this incentive, should be willing to work harder at turning out something more than the average hack piece. Sure, a writer who loves s-f will do his best on each and every piece he writes, regardless of the word-rates - or so we like to think. But if he knows he'll get paid more for a truly well-written story he is more likely to attempt to produce Something Better. ((Higher word-rates should mean more competition, and enforce a higher standard, too. As to the apparent lack of specialized ads in the American mags, I would hazard a guess that this is due largely to the fact that most Stateside s-f mags are published by firms who also publish other magazines - and probably employ only one space-salesman (or have one department) to encourage ads for the whole chain of magazines.))

Rory Faulkner, 7441 E. 20th, Westminster, Calif.

While not losing my delight in fandom, I am sorry to say I become increasingly bored with s-f as it is now written. When they changed the name of the old and revered ASF to ANALOG I felt as if we had come to the end of a delightful era. I don't quite know whether it is the s-f writers who have lost the sense of wonder or just that we fans have aged and become blase, what with all the crap about the New Space Age being put out by government stooges. I do know that I doubt if the highly organized teams will accomplish much along that line. I am waiting for some little back-yard Edison, working all alone, to build himself a proper spaceship and hit Mars and return. No one hampered with all the govt. restrictions and red tape will get anywhere in time to escape the next war! My Slogan: Down With Knowledge - it hampers good s-f!

I was quite intrigued by the tape idea. But I failed in my efforts to produce anything on my steam-iron, which also has a knob which adjusts to "Linen, Wool, Silk, Rayon and Cotton" so would like instructions on the technique. ((It's obvious that you are not getting sufficient amplification. Would suggest that you try plugging in your present equipment to a steam-radio.))

Rolf Gindorf, Wulfrath/RHLD, Hans-Böckler-Strasse 52. Germany.

In his analysis of contemporary s-f Mike Moorcock mentions his interest in theological s-f themes. I can't help being extremely wary of such statements: S-F - if I may attempt a definition by combining a modified remark by Robert Heinlein with an idea of my own - is the type of literature that concerns itself primarily with the movement of man and society through space and time, in the full realization that no stage is definite and no set of values absolutely valid. Hence true subscription to any metaphysical system, any belief in 'god' is incompatible with true understanding of genuine s-f. We've had long and interesting discussions about that point in our fanzines, but so far I've found nobody willing or able to refute this reasoning! -

As for Sid Birchby's article about student songs I can confirm that these songs, or rather the practice of singing them in the 'Bierkeller' or 'Paukboden', is definitely waning. Today's University students have little in common with their counterparts of fifty years ago: the majority are a hard-working lot, eager to finish their studies as fast and as successfully as possible, with little time to spare for 'Kommerze' and drinking bouts. Of course, tradition is still going strong among certain students, and the 'Verbindungen' (a sort of Fraternity), and among them the "Fighting Fraternities", still have their uniform-wearing members, but all this is by no means comparable to what things used to be like in the days of our fathers and grandfathers. Incidentally, you may know that the German educational system is much more rigid and 'academic' than the American, and possibly even the British one; the German student is always a 'graduate student' (the undergrads are 'pupils'), and there's no German student that doesn't read Latin.

Mike Deckinger, 85 Locust Ave, Millburn, New Jersey.

I would not like to see more s-f stories written on theological themes, as Mike suggests. Doesn't he realize that with so many people differing in regards to theology and religion, any one of these stories is apt to cause a commotion, and be shunned by some group. A writer can't very well write a story putting a Protestant or a Catholic or a Jew in a bad light, for he's bound to receive angry condemnations. And an editor won't carry anything by a writer whose public is against him. I tend to think that as our knowledge increases religion will become less and less of a hindrance, and consequently will appear as a factor in fewer stories published. ((It's certainly extremely doubtful that many magazine editors will be prepared to publish stories with a religious theme, there is too much likelihood of alienating some part of his readership.))
// I really enjoyed the whole issue, and I consider the cover to be one of the finest fanzine covers I've seen all year. I used to think that Jim Cawthorne was the only British fan-artist of any quality but I'm rapidly being made to change my mind.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM DEPT.

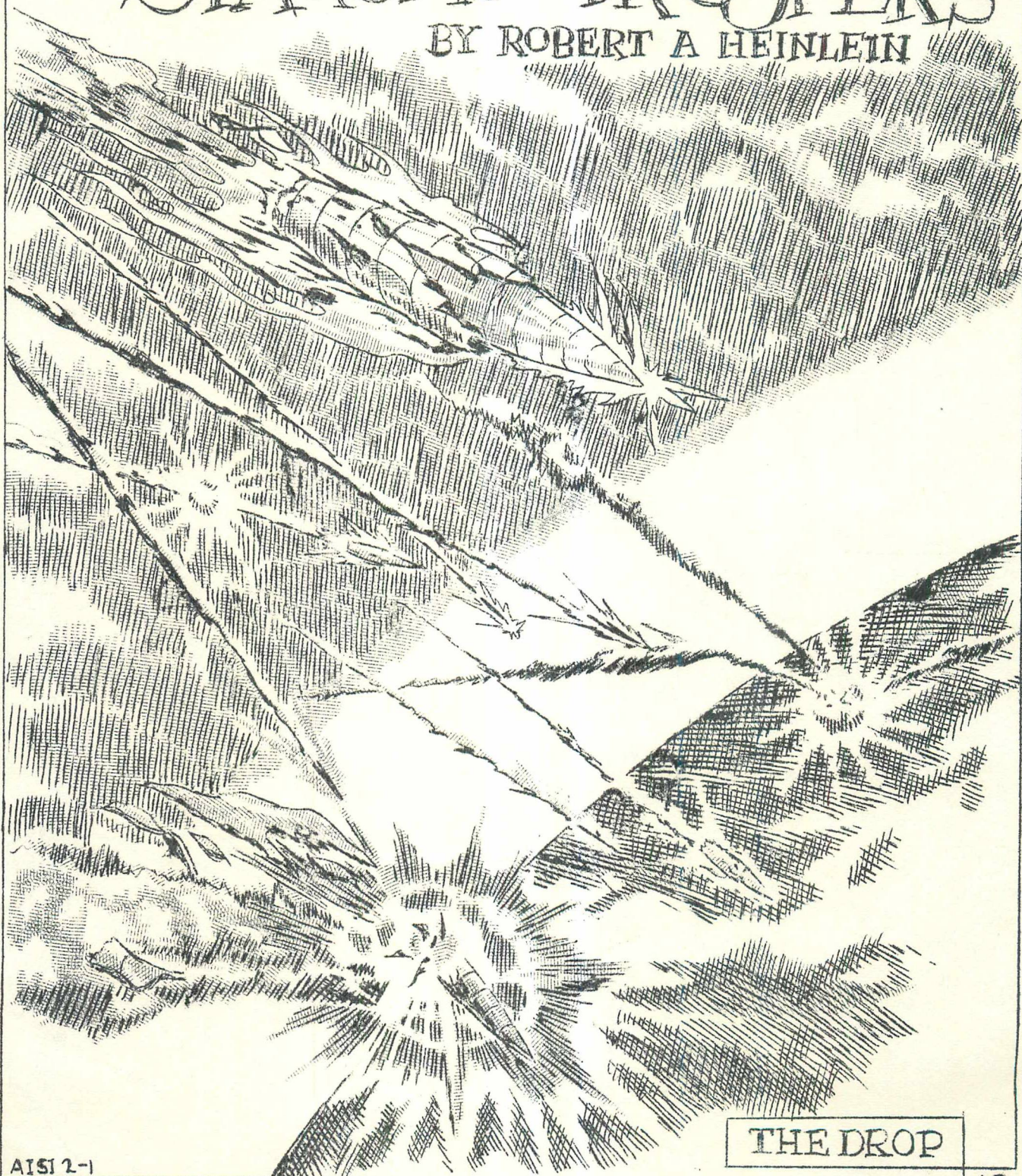
BASTION ONE brought in the biggest load of letters of comment on any fanzine I've put out - although this may be partly due to my TAFFing around that time - which makes me feel all the more guilty at the lateness of this issue. Write again, eh, and I'll do better, like I'm not going to America for the hols this year! THANKS Dick Ellington, Jim Cawthorne, Emile Greenleaf, Walter Breen, Bart Milroad, Betty Kujawa, Gregg Calkins, John Foyster, Jimmy Groves, Terry Jeeves, Bill Donaho, Harry Warner, Ken Cheslin, Jhim Linwood, Alan Rispin, Phil Rogers, D.J.Hale, Jill Adams, Doc' Weir, Alan Burns, and Mike Moorcock; the temptation to make this issue an all-letterzine was high.

eb.

AS I SEE IT by EDDIE JONES. Nº 2

STARSHIP TROOPERS

BY ROBERT A HEINLEIN



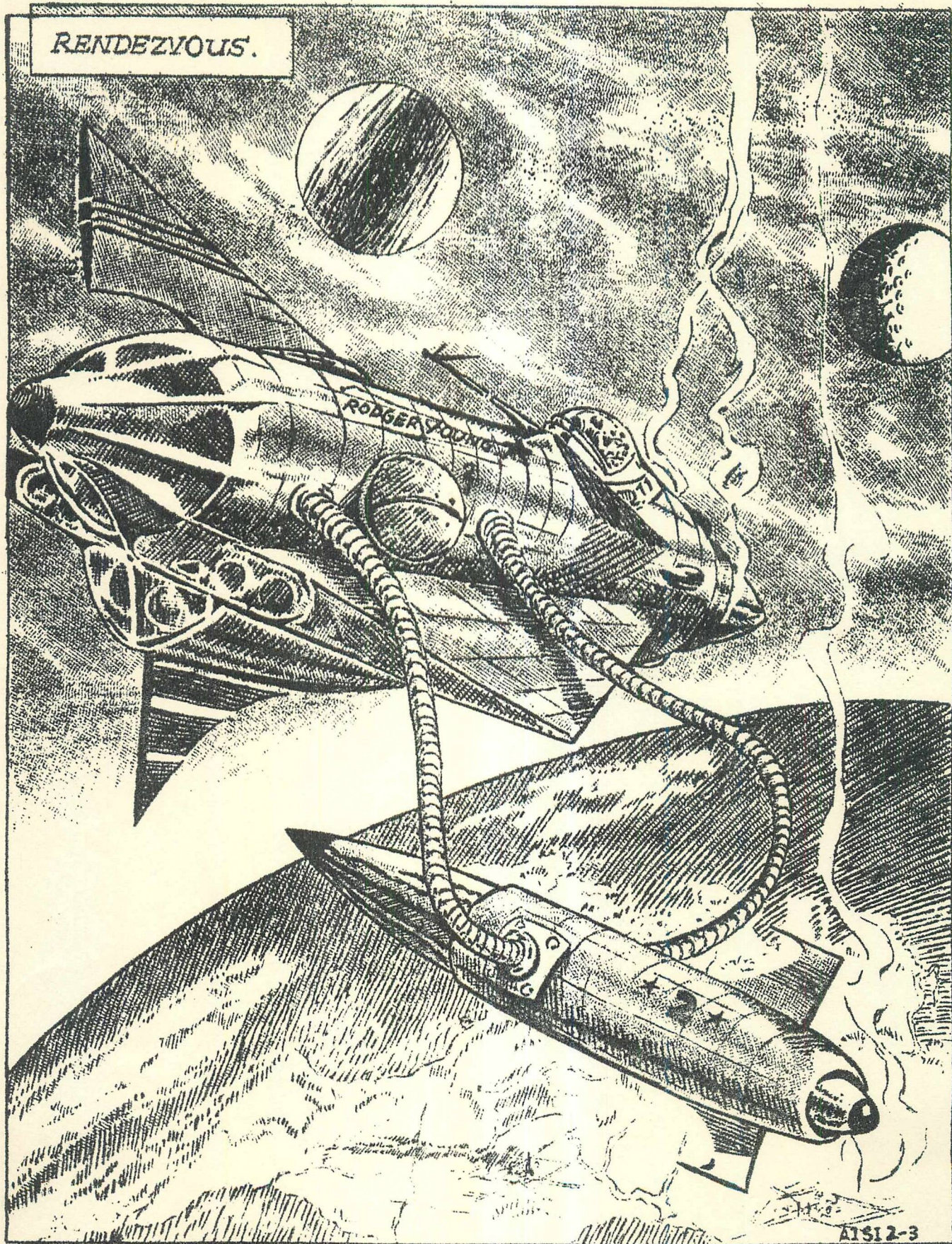
AISI 2-1

THE DROP

RASCZAK'S ROUGHNECKS
IN ACTION



RENDEZVOUS.



HOOR OF THE 13TH GREEP Cont.

Strolling back to the hotel we met several groups of people who had just decided that they wanted something on their stomachs before hearing my TAFF Talk....I was quite pleased about this for my voice was suffering badly from wow and flutter and a few extra minutes might help. We also met Brian Aldiss, who was already crying forth slogans for next years convention, " See You In Harrogate, Mate". Brian seems to get more fannish (if he'll forgive the word) at each convention, and it wouldn't surprise me to see him ultimately give up professional writing and start putting out a fanzine. It's about time someone reversed the useful order of things.

The con-hall didn't seem in any immediate danger of filling up and clamouring for a TAFF TALK, so Ron and I ducked off up to my room so that he could see some of the photos I'd taken in the States. We talked, all too briefly, too, of the parallel's in our respective trips - which will have become apparent if you've read both COLONIAL EXCURSION and EPITAFF. " And I knew Sylvia before Ted had cornered the market..." A pleasant interlude, and I must try to get over to Harrogate soon so that we can finish the talk.

In typical Bentcliffe manner I hadn't prepared any notes for my talk on my American Experiences, however the trip is still so clear in my mind that I can talk about it at length at the drop of a hat - and I've noticed a distinct tendency amongst my friends not to drop hats in my preconce of late! I don't recall now what I said, but I briefly (I had to keep it breif otherwise I'd have equalled the running time of 'Forbidden Planet') mixed in my route with a few reminiscenses, and it seemed to go over alright....apart from the fact that my voice did keep petering out on me. Keith Freeman came to my rescue with a bottle of soda-water and a glass, and this helped, but as I said at the time...I hope nowone got the impression that I'm in the habit of drinking soda-water neat.

Ever since Pittsburgh I'd had the idea of running an Auction Bloch at a British convention on behalf of TAFF, and this I was able to do after my talk. Authors Brian Aldiss, Ken Bulmer, and Walter Willis had previously agreed to allow their time to be sold for TAFF, and I'm most grateful to them. Walt had also sent over one of the few remaining copies of the 'Harp Stateside' to be auctioned off, and Bruce Burn and Bob Parkinson had volunteered to have their beards auctioned for TAFF - I was rather amused when Alan Rispin bid for and bought Bruce Burns Beard, and can only assume that he is trying to whittle down the oposition! The big surprise of the 'Auction Bloch' session however, came from Kingsley Amis. Just prior to my going on stage he'd asked me to let him have a few minutes to say thank you to everyone for having him as Guest Of Honour. This I did, gladly, and immediately afterwards he volunteered to be sold for TAFF himself. Thank you, Kingsley, and all you other people for so helping to aid the TAFF intention of having two fans cross the Atlantic (one in each direction) in '62. Don's and my thanks go also to all of those of you who were kind enough to bid for our respective 'lots'.

The TAFF receipts from the Lxicon were an all-time high for a British Convention. The TAFF Auction, with Ron Bennett autioneering raised the grand sum of £18.0.0., the 'Auction Bloch', £ 7.5.6., and the collection after the showing of the 'Musquite Kid', £ 3.13.6. And then there was the 'Cecil Knocker Auction' (!) which brought in a further ten shillings.

pto.

'GUARDIAN' ADOPTS FANNISH SPELLING

One of the first things I seem to have done on the Monday morning is to have read Geoff Doherty's report on the convention in the aforementioned paper. On an empty stomach, too. The nights parties had been well up to the standard of British Convention Parties, and I think it was about tennish when I groped my way towards the dining room - to be met en route by Tony Walsh peddling copies of the Guardian. I was still somewhat bemused, but the fact that the report referred to 'Faans' (with two a's) pierced the fog and helped to clear my mind. I felt like sending an immediate air-mail postcard to Boyd Raeburn, and I'd have done it, too, if it hadn't been for the fact that I felt I needed breakfast more!

The Lxicon was fortunate enough in receiving quite favourable press coverage, due in no small part to the fact that all the reporters were actually people who attended the convention, and not just reporters who had dropped in for something 'silly' to write about. There were criticisms of course, but they were valid ones from the viewpoint of the writers, and the general public. One quite good criticism made in the Guardian report, and stemming from Amis' speech, was that fans (presumably this was intended to mean the general s-f reading public since it was spelt with only one 'a'!) had come to accept the trappings of Time Travel, and such as an integral part of s-f, and that this was a somewhat pernicious influence. Pernicious, in that we accepted such things without thought. This is quite true, I think, but if we need to look for a parallel it can be found in most other forms of popular 'literature' as well. Particularly in 'westerns', where such assumptions as the 'fast draw' are readily accepted by author and reader. Personally, I'm quite willing to go on believing the s-f authors 'inventions' possible (so long as they seem logical), for the sake of the story. And nowone can prove that they are impossible, can they?

Monday, was a day of reluctant leave-takings. I sat around in the main lounge until time for my train home, talked with Brian Aldiss about s-f, Dave & Ruth Kyle about their plans to live part of the year in England (a plan which I'm wholly in favour of), and with just about everyone else left on how good a convention it had been. And it had been a Good Convention, one of the most enjoyable I've attended. Eric Jones, Keith Freeman, Tony Walsh, Ethel Lindsay, Bob Parkinson and the Cheltenham Group had put on the best all-round affair since the London Worldcon.

I reluctantly said goodbye to everyone shortly after noon, and left to catch the 'Pines Express' for Manchester. Just before I left I'd been talking to Dave Kyle about England. He'd said he preferred the slower pace of living here, and I'd said yes, this extended even to the railways; "For instance you can get to the station only five minutes before your train is due to leave, and still have half an hour for a coffee!" The 'Pines Express' was running some twenty-five minutes late, and I did have plenty of time for a coffee..... Many a true word spoken in jest department.

The weekend after the convention, Dave and Ruth came up to Liverpool, and we all started celebrating again.....but that's another story. See you next issue, eh.....

Eric

Bleep, bleep, bleep,
said the Thing in the night
As it climbed up the hill so steep.
It was going to a fannish appointment
At the Hour of the 13th Greep.

Bleep, bleep, it said as it
reached the top
In a tone both rich and deep,
Where is the fan I'm supposed to meet
At the Hour of the 13th Greep ?

I'm here, said a voice
from out of the dark,
My appointments I always keep.
But why did you want to meet me here
At the Hour of the 13th Greep ?

Come closer and see,
said the Thing in the night,
Oh bleep, Oh bleep, bleep-bleep!
Said the fan, this hill is a dismal place
At the Hour of the 13th Greep.

Not dismal for me,
said the Thing in the night
Now closer to you I'll creep....
Say, you're not a girl! cried the poor young fan
At the Hour of the 13th Greep.

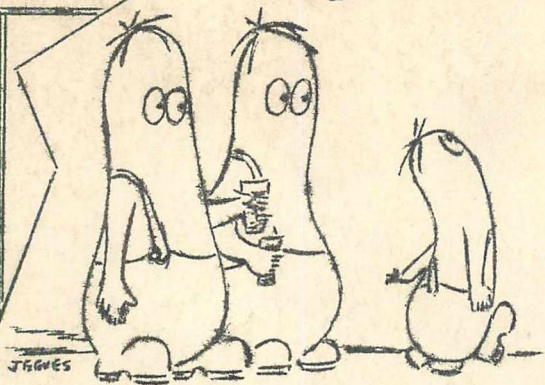
I'm not even a fan,
laughed the Thing in the night,
But I'm thirsty as hell - bleep bleep !
Have some Blog, said the fan, it tastes the best
At the Hour of the 13th Greep.

Why, it is better than blood!
cried the Thing in the night,
Gurgle-gurgle, gurgle-gurgle, bleep-bleep,
Gurgle-hic-bleep-hic....Thus the young fan escaped
At the Hour of the 13th Greep.

.....Len Moffat

COMING NEXT ISSUE

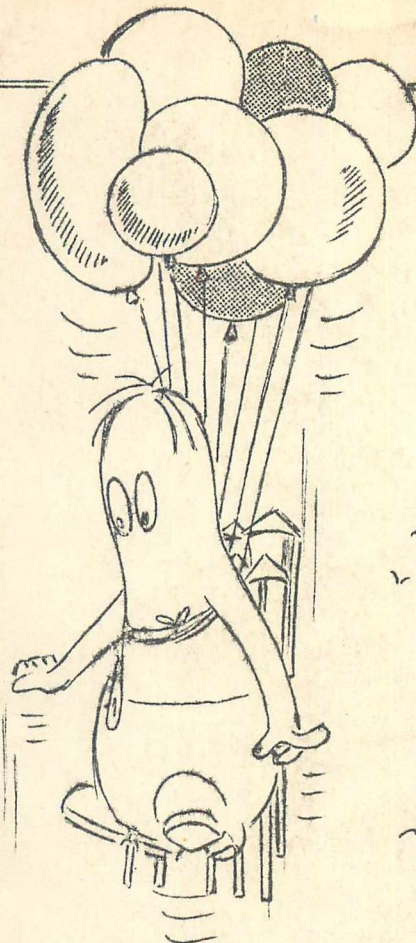
There has been an inordinately long gap between issues number one and two of BASTION, due in the main to my very enjoyable Stateside Trip. I'm contemplating no such delay in getting to work on No.3, let it be known, and this may well be out before another six-months have gone by! Already on hand is a re-write of Geoff Doherty's LXICON speech, and 'CRY OF THE MOORCOCK', a column by Mike Moorcock. Further mss will be received with joy....Ho! There! Tucker, Grennell, Warner, Birchby, Ashworth, Carr, Ellik, and Other Writers Of Fine Material.



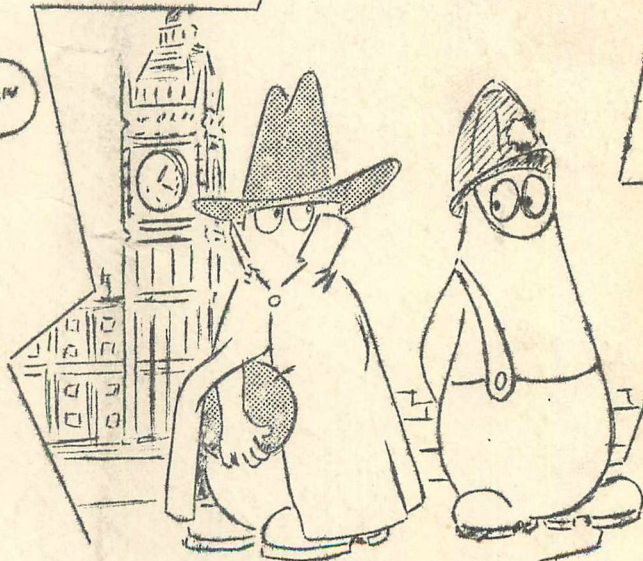
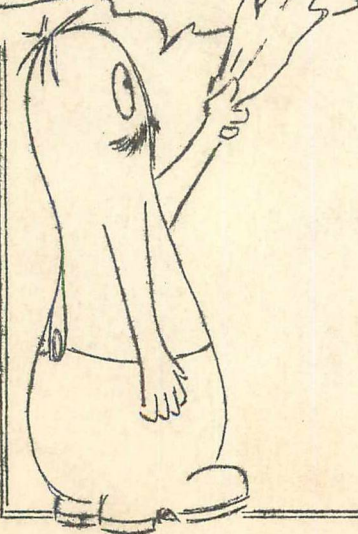
JESSES

"HE'S BEEN LIKE THAT EVER SINCE THE
LEICOM, WHEN KINGSLEY AMIS BOUGHT
HIM A DRINK"

Terry's Assortment



"DON'T LIGHT THE ROCKETS
UNTIL 20,000 FEET, AND
YOU'LL BE THE FIRST ENGLISHMAN
INTO ORBIT"



"GOT A MATCH CHUM?"