

AS WE LOOK DOWN from our teardrop spaceboat, all those li'l numbers with the circles around them, down there, signify the following features of terrain: (1) OAKLAND, downtown sector, location of the Leaning-ton Hotel, the Pacificon II (the 22nd World Science-Fiction Convention) and multitudes of fans.

(2) OAKLAND AIRPORT, and (3) SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT for you long-range and jetborne commuting types. For others, there's (4) ROUTE 101 north from San Jose, the best approach to the area (wider Freeways) in my opinion, or (5) ROUTE 17 north from San Jose ... in fact, I'd recommend taking 101 all the way up to San Francisco and crossing over the Bay Bridge to any other route.

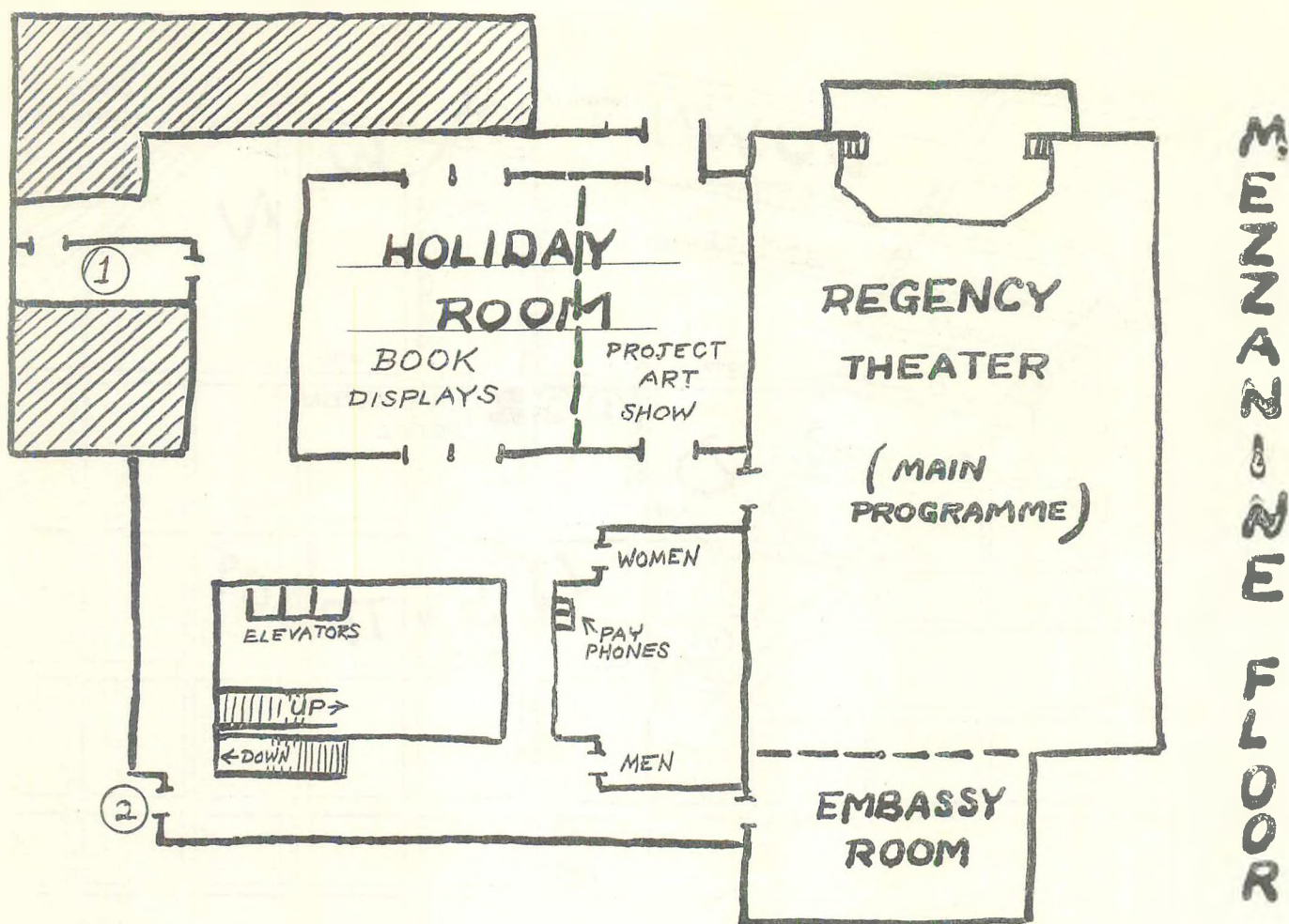
And of course there's (6) ROUTE 40 coming in from Sacramento and points East, or (7) ROUTE 101 again, coming south from such quaint and peculiar places as Seattle. Persons descending upon this last route must make their own decisions as to taking the San Rafael/Richmond Bridge (75¢ toll) or

(8) THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, and city-trafficking thru (9) SAN FRANCISCO to take the Bay Bridge (provided they've turned off at all the right turn-offs) to Oakland.

And in case anyone wonders, (10) there is Berkeley where some small group is rumored to be having private parties or something.

Now, let's climb back into our spaceboat and have a look at some sketches I've made of the immediate Blast Area. First, the Ground Floor (by Jove, it's right up here on this page) is self-explanatory, but I might add that the Troubadour Room is colorful as a carnival, the coffee shop has prices you must expect in a hotel coffeeshop (both it and the Lobby have the only indoor swimming pools I've ever seen in a ceiling) and apparently the arrangement at the Cigar Counter is that if Room Service is tied up, you can come down and buy your bottle there and pack it upstairs, yourself, between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. -- and I should mention that the coffee shop's open 'til 10 p.m., too.

Of interest to far too many of us, naturally, is that the bar's open from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



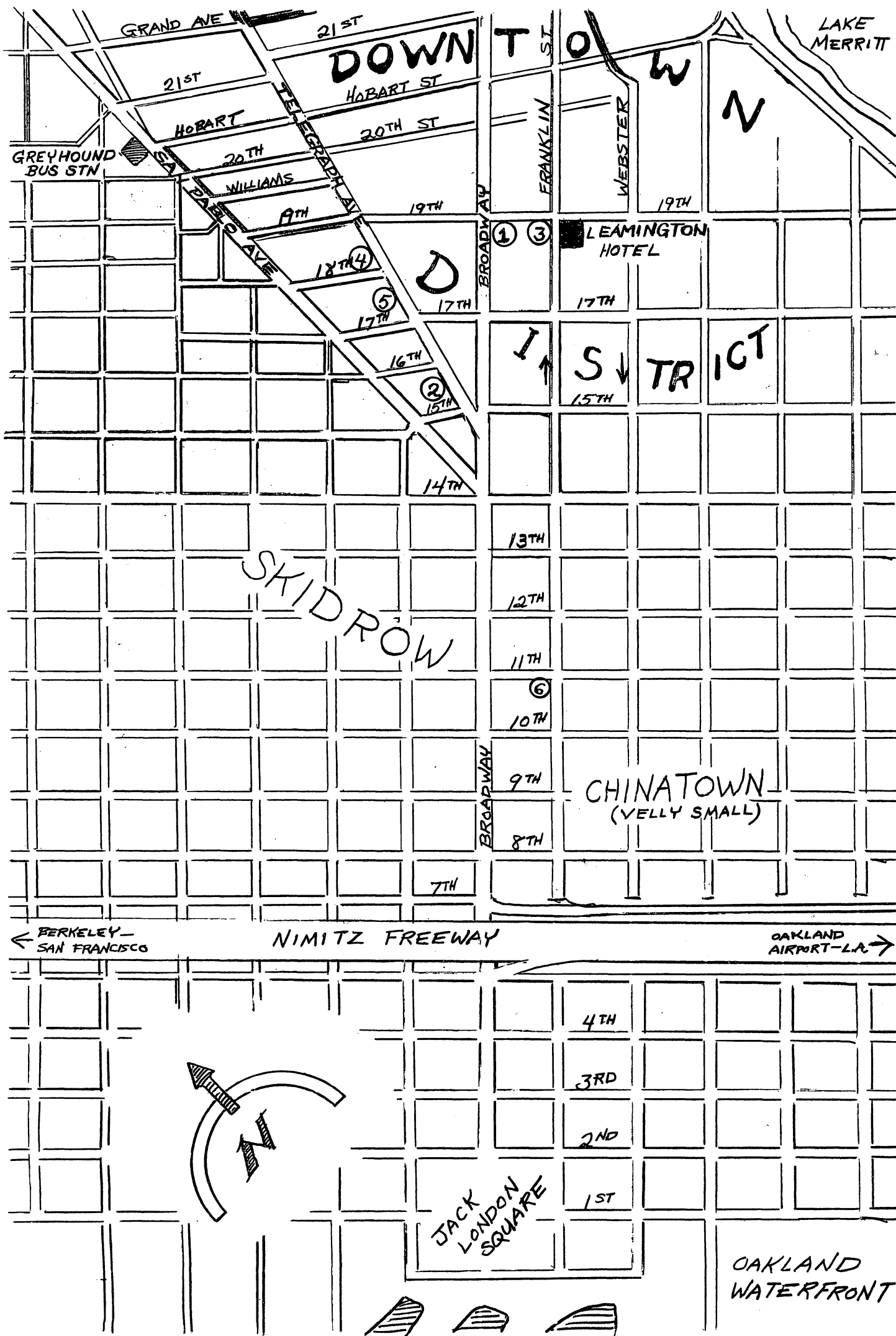
The bar -- pardon, I mean the Red Lion Lounge -- has a decor that may be thought eminently suitable by the staunchest Sword & Sorcery fans; and if the heraldic designs behind the bar may lack something in authenticity, at least they're there.

As to the Mezzanine Floor, everything's fairly self-explanatory except (1) the COUNCIL ROOM, which is the NFFF's room, and (2) the doorway off to various rooms where other fan-groups, such as the Cleveland/Detroit mobs, will have open parties. And then there's the Embassy Room, but what's been planned for that is of course Top Secret.

Now we've lost a bit of altitude, have a look at the spaceboat's viewscreen -- that's Oakland, there's the Leamington at 19th and Franklin -- and there're those little numbers in circles, again. Okay, here's the list:

- (1) DAY & NIGHT DRUGS at 19th & Broadway, open 24 hours (including Labor Day) -- liquor dept. open 6 a.m. to 2 a.m.; nuff sed?
- (2) MANNING'S COFFEE CAFE at 1615 Telegraph Ave., cafeteria with reasonable prices, open 6:30-8:00 weekdays, 7:30-7:30 Sundays & holidays (also including Labor Day) the only good place we found that will be open (other than a Doggie Diner nearby or a greasy spoon on Webster & 14th).
- (3) AL & LARRY'S Theatrical Fabric & Shoe Co., directly across from the hotel, is a goldmine if you have trouble with that masquerade costume -- or suddenly want a costume! Or...
- (4) LOUISE ELLA, Intimate Lingerie, and --
- (5) FREDERICK'S of Hollywood, both on Telegraph, have quite suggestive window displays for the femmefan who knows the best costume displays the most; or for guys who don't want to hike all the way down Broadway to the burlesque theaters!...
- (6) JIM'S ORIGINAL BAR-B-Q at 11th & Franklin will not be open Sunday or Labor Day; but for Friday & Saturday between 11 a.m. - 10 p.m., you might like to know we've found this little spot has absolutely delicious barbecued ribs. Sandwiches from 50¢; dinners \$1.50 - \$1.75.

About Jack London Square, we've had unanimous reports that the prices are atrocious in all the fancy restaurants & seafood grottoes clustered round it, and diverse opinions as to the quality of food & service. For those with Mad Money and a yen to explore -- or if you merely want to see the local tourist traps -- they're right there. But I should caution young ladies unaccompanied or unescorted not to walk down there -- not unless you aren't bothered by being propositioned in indecent terms on the street.



As I mentioned lastish, it was Robbie's idea that we check out the Leamington Hotel area on July 4th -- because any restaurants, drug stores and liquor stores that were open on July 4th would also be open on Labor Day. I was hoping Robbie could write this part of our "precon report" because, on July 4th, we walked into the midst of a Magicians' convention in the Leamington and she darned near flipped with con fever right there -- just looking at those oldtimers of "sleight-of-hand" and the "goshwow" youngsters and the little undercurrents of excitement running through the crowd ... Robbie could tell it better than I can, but she's in Idaho with her Mom, who's just out of hospital.

The Leamington has been thoroughly renovated in the past year or so -- with the exception of the Mezzanine Floor, where we even found the old blackboard upon which, one darkly Westercon night, I scrawled the words, "'64 'Frisco Or Fight!" -- and there's nothing drab about the Ground Floor accommodations or the rooms and suites on the upper floors (where many of us will spend most, if not quite all, of the con jam-packed into smoke-filled room parties).

The area roundabout is simply the "better" downtown district of Oakland, and the hotel's fairly in the center of it. But Oakland's a city in transition. A year ago (about when the hotel was renovated) the city taxes were raised on commercial property in this sector; consequently, you'll notice a number of small shops vacant where once there were pawnshops and cigar-candy-newsstands and snooker parlors. The thing is, after a year's time, no more prosperous businesses have been found to move into those vacant, highly-taxed premises. Sometimes a city's just in the wrong place or the wrong time to attract business even if it "betters" itself.

Another district we skimmed through was Oakland's Chinatown, which might best be described as a neighborhood for Asians, not for tourists (who should go to Grant Avenue in San Francisco where Cousin Chang have nice gift shop, support all poor relatives) but we did have lunch at one of the Chinese restaurants on Webster between 8th and 9th -- the Silver Dragon, where the common "chop suey" fare's fair (we did not try their roast duck in pineapple) but they did serve the best won ton soup I've ever had, which is enough to make me curious. Still, one can't make a very big thing about won ton soup.

In discussing this report with several others, I've had suggestions to make a much more accurate and comprehensive survey and to extend the territory I covered to include some commendable establishments just a bit farther on -- even including some good spots one can reach by car. I have carefully ignored such suggestions.

To me, the data given here covers points of immediate concern to most con attendees, with but a few items tossed in that will be of interest to some. And I haven't laid it on so thickly that anyone can consider this any thoroughly comprehensive and authoritative document -- there's plenty left for them to seek out, themselves.

And for those of you who won't make it to the Pacificon, perhaps this will give you some feeling of the place, the better to comprehend some of those rambling Con Reports which inevitably follow.

One thing I can say about the convention which the Pacificon Committee has planned: it should be a good show for fans who are fans to enjoy science-fiction fandom. This might be otherwise if they had postponed action on a bad situation until just before the convention. But Bill Donaho took action months before the con, and the inevitable blowup has done its blowing. (Actually, Al Halevy had tried to get it settled much earlier, quietly and locally and without such furor -- to be laughed at by some of the same ones who're now claiming that's what should have been done. And guess who wrote a letter gloating about it! But I digress.) And while I'd never beg anyone to give me license to misbehave at a convention -- it would never occur to me that I needed any -- I have reason to suspect that any dirty work at this convention will be so brief, you might not even hear about it. Until they publish.

But that's not gonna bother my fangabbing and boozing and girl-watching and snogging convention one damned bit, I assure you!



....and BettyK herewith commenting on a movie, a flick, which she undoubtedly did not consider that I would consider publishing in g2. (As I type this, we don't know whether Betty&Gene will be coming West or not; Betty's father is in hospital.) + But the first thing I better do here is get behind this +-fence where my diatribe belongs. My + reasons for publishing Betty's flick revue will + become obvious enuff in my response to it -- 'n' + for this once, Robbie's not here to censor! So + let's be at it:

BETTY KUJAWA, 2319 Caroline St., South Bend:

Hey, hey, hey!!!! I saw about 200 girls last night who can wear topless swim-suits and look damn fine in them!!! Went to drive in to see "Zulu"...don't miss it. About 110 British soldiers (80 okay and 30 from sick bay) against 4,000 or 5,000 Zulu warriors led by one of the greatest military tacticians in the history of warfare anywhere..

In Province of Natal, So. Africa in 1876....filmed there...and it had some of the most magnificent scenery and photography (and fighting 'action' shots) ever put on film...actors all outstanding... gripping exciting overwhelming movie, quite lengthy, that is NOT the Hollywood version of battle.....decidedly not... it was so real, and the actors so convincing and the odds so great that your involvement was total....you were there....

Plus the fact that 5,000 Zulus in rank after rank, and attack after attack, and diversion after diversion showed us not African savages ((+You mean like Edgar Rice Burroughs would do? But a moment; + a tactical diversion usually means an assault on some different front to relieve pressure on a front that's got a bit too active -- + yep, you could mean that, instead of "division after division"..+)) but wholly trained fighting units brilliantly deployed and managed and used....they had massacred an entire regiment the day before so they had all the guns and rifles and ammo for World War Two...((+Wrong war; + they had black powder cartridges in '76 and breech-loading rifles, + but no automatic weapons other than Gatlings, to speak of..+)) and the lads knew how to shoot and use it. Unlike American Indians these did attack at night ((+Unlike Hollywood "Indians" so did the Comanche; + our Amerindians wouldn't fight in winter, which is precisely when + they got butchered in their villages -- the ones smallpox hadn't + killed off..+))...wave after wave after wave...thing lasted one whole day, one night, and about half of next day....

And after final slaughter (all you could call it was slaughter, corpses piled up hip-high from here to yonder) the head Chief acknowledged the Limeys courage and defense-tactics, withdrew...lined the armies up on skyline of hills all round the tiny station and saluted the survivors below with African yells (from one warrior to another) and then went on home....

In all the years the Victoria Cross has been given (and it's not been given very often) ((+That's for damned sure!...while the + one-tenth who survived in our First U.S. Ranger Battalion all got + the CMI...among the several things the British learned long ago, + perhaps one was that merely pinning a medal on a man isn't going + to make up for everything..+)) never did one engagement before or since receive so many...eleven in all from the two officers, the blood-soaked surgeon, the wounded crippled Boer scout and the two badly wounded Welshmen who crawled and dragged the box of ammo round and round the stockade, down thru the regulars (Welsh regiment, so many Jones's that they called each other by numbers) ((+Welsh!?? My + ghod, girl -- where d'you think the longbow came from?+)) to Hook the scruffiest bitchingest most malingering goof-off any army has ever seen ((+sounds like my old outfit+))....guy who played Hook was mar-velous.... lousiest damn sunufabitch y-ever saw, mooching, no-good who fought and saved pals like a house afire once things got started.

Point of this, I think, was that it was factual..based on records and the men were like that... some airy-fairy, some heroic, some hardly out of childhood, and some rotters to say the least....

nobody was Errol Flynn-sh and the cavalry did not come to the rescue in the last reel, and the stock-characters (the farm-kid, the wise old retread, the flip hipster from Brooklyn) were not utilized. You plum forgot these were actors...

Heh, Kuj and I both voiced dismay at bright red uniform jackets (seen for miles, am sure) and the tactics of grouping for the attack.. and standing at the ready hours before it began (thereby tiring the men) and the usual British Army way of doing things...then came the two-row-deal of marching, shooting, kneeling whilst the row behind you shoots (you are down on one knee re-loading) then back now steps ahead of you and kneels to re-load while you stand and fire again....and on they went doing that, going forward and forward and forward till the umpty-leven hordes before them broke and ran.....whoosh... I'll take a foxhole or play redskin behind a boulder or tree, thank you.

+ Had you forgotten that there are damned few boulders or trees for
+ something like a thousand miles across the Great Plains of central
+ USA? Had you forgotten that disciplined crews of beaver-trappers
+ crossed these Great Plains, leading pack-mules with their gear, at
+ a time when settlers' covered wagons were just rolling into Ohio?
+ How in blazes d'you think they stood off the massed attacks of all
+ the mounted, experienced Plains Indian cavalry -- possibly the best
+ the world ever knew -- with muzzle-loading flintlock rifles?? Till
+ the Plains Indians learned to give no trouble to a sharp, well-
+ managed crew of Mountain Men. The British were still using muskets
+ marching to attack by drumbeat, and firing volleys by regiment in
+ their current Napoleonic Mess. We learned some things, too...some
+ of us....too few of us, maybe.

+ And had it occurred to you how the Union of So. Africa must feel
+ about all those Zulu movie-extras with all that excellent training
+ in military tactics being just across the border, now???

+ When you get foxholes, then you've got tanks and high explosives and
+ automatic weapons that make even trench warfare completely suicidal.
+ When you've got heavy bronze shields and short, heavy bronze spears,
+ you'll get phalanxes....but I was in the toy section of a department
+ store recently, looking at all the noise-making, cap-firing automat-
+ ic rifles, submachineguns, light&heavy m.g.'s, mortars, hand grenades
+ artillery field-pieces, messkits, canteens, booby traps, camouflage
+ helmets and ponchos ... and I says to myself, "Not a single, damned
+ shovel in the whole mess!" says I; "They just aren't giving the kids
+ the real picture at all!"

+ Movies can't give "the real picture" either, or books -- not even
+ the best of them. You simply can't communicate it. The best you
+ can do is show the horrible tragedy of it, by piling incident onto
+ incident, then merely report that the men it happened to were just
+ too numb to feel it anymore or have them act it out on a movie set.
+ I can't communicate it. I could describe the place where men had
+ butchered each other a month before, where the shells come shrieking
+ over from the enemy's heavies to knock out a supply road, a fuel or
+ ammo dump, or just to kill somebody. Then there's the place someone
+ got it just a week ago; the shells come in heavier doses from light
+ guns, in barrages, and you learn the zipping sound schrapnel makes.
+ Then you're where some guy got it just an hour ago, that's him lying
+ over there, and you know what a sniper's bullet sounds like. Then
+ maybe you see guys killed, but you're too busy. This just speaks of
+ horror. The thing you can't get is the fear. Always having it.
+ You ought to be paralyzed with it, but your belly gets hungry, you've
+ got to crap, you get dogtired and you've got to sleep, and you wake
+ up wondering. The fear's always there. You work yourself into a
+ madness of rage and hate to forget it, and it stares back at you
+ from another man's face. And it affects every man differently,
+ deep inside, and sometimes each one will crack open. But most times
+ all you think about it is just get the dirty job done, get it over
+ with. Sometimes getting badly chilled brings it back to me, some-
+ times just something I heard or read; Robbie says she can always
+ tell, because I mumble and twist about in my sleep. I've certainly
+ got a guilt complex there; maybe that's why I talk about it, why I
+ have those Whoary Old War Stories. It's probably just that I never
+ got hit at all badly, never more than a scratch or bruise or bullet
+ burn, in all of that.

+ But even with that, I never had it really bad. I had fantastic good
+ luck! Perhaps a battery of monster howitzers I hitched a ride with
+ would get cut off, run out of gas and have to set its Dig Berthas in
+ a defense perimeter, ready to throw 8-inch shells direct fire at
+ enemy tanks prowling the sector. But then we'd never see a tank.
+ It'd be some anti-aircraft outfit 5 kilometers away that got wiped
+ out, one with rapid-fire 90mm's and far more ammo than we had. But
+ again, I'm only communicating the horrible tragedy of it.

+ An audience can feel momentary fear or dismay or relief or birth or
+ exultation. A movie or reading audience can be kept continually in
+ suspense. But it can't be kept in constant, unending, never-lesser-
+ fear -- not unless somebody makes a bombing run over their house or
+ the theater until the book or movie is finished, not to mention the
+ audience. Even that wouldn't tell about living with such fear, or
+ staying alive in spite of it -- and if you could tell one guy's bit
+ of it, it wouldn't count; it's different for each one of them.

+ I found some passages to be rather odd-sounding in Heinlein's STAR-
+ SHIP TROOPERS -- but the jacket blurb on one of his books mentioned
+ the rank and time of his naval service, and that explained some of
+ it. He just didn't know why you can't create veterans with a book.
+ As for "The Lieutenant" and his Irregulars in Hubbard's IF THIS
+ GOES ON-- there've been rifle platoons that could wipe that bunch
+ out in a few minutes....but if two such platoons met in any war-
+ devastated, plague-ridden world as Hubbard depicted, they wouldn't
+ fight. It wouldn't be suicide, it would be far worse -- it'd be a
+ waste of time. Someone like Hubbard would never believe you'd have
+ this happen most of the time, not just on rare occasions.

+ It takes some ignorant little bastard who's weak and afraid and con-
+ vinced he must prove he isn't to start the killing. Now we've the
+ prospect that all he has to do is push a button and the whole thing
+ goes off automatically. But while most of us have been quaking in
+ our boots about that, I've noticed the ignorant little bastards are
+ strutting around as if they were suddenly Big Shots in human af-
+ fairs. As if they'd already found a psychological button to push.

+ I'm all for the "war scientists" who're wading armpit-deep through
+ public ignorance and official chicanery to get us spread out onto
+ several worlds as quickly as possible.....

WIM STRUYCK, Willebrordusstr. 33D, Rotterdam:

No, the fact that Mrs. Roberta Gibson has been a policewoman does not
upset me. I'm too far out of her reach ((+now, who is it we know in
Interpol?+)) and I've been told she's sweet. ((+Oh, all right -- and
anyhow, who ever heard of one where it was the piano player that did
it?+)) So I'll still call her Robbie.

+ You weren't being asked, really ... but no, the fact was that Robbie
+ was only an office girl in a local police dept.; just don't ask me
+ how that got her into things like being police matron for a young
+ negro girl who'd been the victim of a mass-rape. No, Wim, it was
+ just that when the recent mal au cocur began in local fan-circles
+ we had friends who've had to handle such cases, who knew what they
+ are -- this was before such dirty phrases as "69-ing" were known to
+ most of fandom, months before some creep in New York put the term
+ "child molester" into a fanzine. But it was fortunate that this
+ got dragged into the open so early. This particular type always
+ tries to solve his problem by marriage, and stays married when it
+ fails -- but is far more secretive then, with uglier desires, and
+ is as hard to catch as any dangerous sex criminal. It's not the
+ man, it's the growing thing that enslaves him, the urge he must
+ satisfy. We learned this, and more. But we'd much rather have
+ never needed to know any of it. I'm not in fandom to play doctor
+ to abnormal creeps or to argue with "do-gooders" who demonstrably
+ haven't the guts to go find out exactly what they're playing with.
+ I don't wonder that most fans have no desire to know any of it,
+ tho; it's damned ugly.

+ And those who "knew of his proclivities, but so what?" -- those with

+ the quaint attitude of "everyone in fandom is trash, aren't we?" --
+ have not made it any less ugly.

+
+ I should add, for the very few who may feel seriously concerned
+ about this, that only a blind fool would take my word for what's
+ said here -- that it can be checked and verified. It already has
+ been, several times. All fans aren't gutless wonders.

I'm writing this from Vlissingen (Flushing). Not Rotterdam. I'm working here this month. (By night of course.) ((+For Interpol? Or just playing piano?+)) Once a week I go home to Loes. For the rest I'm being lonely. ((+I know exactly what you mean.+)) So I intended to write a lot of letters, but so far the weather has been very nice, and as I didn't know this neighborhood very well (south coast) I've been riding around on the motorbike instead. Exploring. ((+I envy you that. My neighborhood is a vast, surrounding mass of new house subdivisions; but I've been out, too, even tho the little Fiat sedan has a chronic rattle in the tailpipe and cross-ventilation in the after-burner -- I know the engine is broken in as I want it, anyway, with a steady 140 psi compression in each cylinder.+)) And I found some very nice places. Beaches, woods and very old little towns. With streets and houses built between 1500-1600. In 1944 (I think) the dikes here were bombed by the English. ((+Well, yes, they did some of that,+)) Result, a big flood, which destroyed much. And which made it rather difficult for the Germans, true, but even moreso for the Dutch. The Germans are back now, enjoying the beaches (spending a lot of money, which first they stole away) the villages have been rebuilt, so the whole thing now seems to have been rather useless. ((+It was worse
+ than just "useless" -- I met Wehrmacht veterans with as much hatred
+ and loathing for some of their own people as anyone else could have.
+ They meant it. We had to isolate one of their group from the rest
+ -- he liked Hitler. But the little towns you saw were built after
+ the Hundred Years' War, or were they rebuilt, too? And weren't you
+ the lad from Iberia I met back when Gaul was divided in three parts:
+ those beating our brains out, those we had whipped, and those who
+ hadn't got round to fighting us yet???? Seems I saw you there.+)) Only, there are many modern villages now. (All new.) Which may be very good to the villagers, but very much of the atmosphere has disappeared. These places have no character. Still, some places have been spared, and there you can imagine yourself in the old times. (As long as you don't see any cars or mopeds.) Wonderful, quaint, little old towns. Dreaming of the past -- there's Veere, Middelburg, Goes. Names you may have heard. ((+No, Wim, those wouldn't be the ones whose names I heard. That was Monty's sector, too, I think. I crossed down about -- oh, what was it, now? -- Liege, and that area.+))

What you had not heard was the expression: Make yourself some bread! Well, my fault. Of course, it's just like making tea. You don't actually make it. But you do everything else, in order to see a steaming cup before you. Making bread is slicing (cutting) the loaves, put butter on it and meat or whatever you put on it, and make it ready to get a meal. ((+It would never catch on in the States, I'm afraid.
+ You don't know the gummy, pastey mess we have for bread -- it's
+ like our so-called beer, a poor imitation. However, I can happily
+ report that California wines are as good (or as bad, if cheap) as
+ any highly-touted wines elsewhere. But I was rather startled to
+ notice, recently, that wine actually costs less here than canned
+ orange juice!

With the motoped everything came together again. Thank you. ((+Glad to help.+)) It stays in Rotterdam for Loes to use. Next month I'll be in Rotterdam again too. Maybe we'll take a little holiday of one week then. With the money earned in Flushing. Just now, I'm looking at General John J. Pershing. (On your stamp.) Did you ever hear about our famous Admiral Michiel de Ruyter? ((+First, now, who was that chap Pershing?+)) He was born here in Vlissingen ((+I don't fancy 'Black Jack' came from Flushing+)) and as a boy (the story goes) he climbed the Church tower (from the outside) to look over the sea. He wanted to become a sailor. But he only got to be an admiral. The tower is still here, and how he ever got up is beyond me. Well, it was a long time ago, and maybe the story isn't true. ((+Oh, no, Wim -- it's just that the ground got worn down so far from people coming round to look at the place!+))

RUSS BRAHMIN, 216 S. Macomb St., Tallahassee:

I have one question (I have just recently read my first G², borrowed from a friend.) . What topics may one discuss ?

((+McQuown, was that you, again??+))

After asking this, a whole mountain of questions enter my mind. What are the rules? ((+I'd been meaning to think some up, actually!+)) Are there any requirements? ((+Well, now you mention that, I suppose Walt Willis or some of that crew must've already done the thing, somewhere, by this time.+)) Is there any dictionary for the jargon which is displayed in your publication? (It is quite difficult to follow some of the conversation without definitions for some of the terms ... or does this have a specific purpose for said situation.) ((+I'm not quite sure what you said, there.+)) Would it be unforgivable to mention such authors as Wordsworth, Keats, or Byron (sometimes they differed, ever so slightly, from the general public in offering their insight in the modes of living of mankind ... only in their cases, certain large portions of the general public took up their cause and they are no longer greatly out of tune with the vulgar masses..... certainly this fact does not eliminate what they have said from being a Truth.)

+ Assuming we've got that far, do we now sit on our hands with no
+ further need for any new Byron, Wordsworth or Keats? I don't think
+ you meant to imply that. But you've yet to realize it was small
+ (but literate and responsible) portions of the general public who
+ took up their cause; it was all that was needed then, they were the
+ "ruling class" then. But while we've raised the standards of living
+ for the vulgar masses by as much as 200% in the past 50 years, our
+ US millionaires now have about the lowest standard of living of all
+ the millionaires on Earth. Maybe it's better this way, but this
+ isn't the market Wordsworth, Byron and Keats were writing for --
+ and influencing small portions of the new generations coming up,
+ now, is not enough. Truths can get buried like that slab of rock
+ in the desert with Hammurabi's Code chiselled on it.

Before I even attempt to go further, I ask for the rules, customs, and terms.(if such are available)

+ The FANCYCLOPEDIA II is probably out of print and somewhat outdated
+ by now, anyway. But Russ, science-fiction fandom isn't much different than amateur radio "hams" or, for that matter, baseball fans
+ so far as having evolved their own peculiar jargon goes. The only
+ way to "dig this' jazz" is simply stick around long enough to start
+ picking up some of the natives' quaint phrases and terms -- and the
+ same, of course, for customs.

STAN WOOLSTON, 12832 Westlake St., Garden Grove, Calif.

About this halo: to some degree a distorter could possibly rearrange the narrowing band of visible stars . . . to at least widen the band some. ((+Stop right there! You're frittering around for some
+ simple little answer that would cheat us out of the rich plunder of
+ a whole, new concept. Concepts are as priceless as whole worlds of
+ plunder and loot, man! But let's see you diagram up the short-thru-
+ long waves of radiant energy totally across the entire spectrum,
+ heat thru visible light on into radio and cosmic rays. Just like
+ it is on Earth and like it'll be inside our starship where "time
+ dilation" affects everything. Now, note that our instruments that
+ detect stuff outside the ship will, thanks to "time dilation" effect
+ on the instruments themselves, make them take years to register a
+ reading in what seems like minutes to us in the ship. Now, what
+ can those instruments detect? Why, only wavelengths that last long
+ enough to register at all on them! But now, get this: Just becuz
+ we're gallumping out across the star cluster like a pack of fools,
+ all the rest of the radiant energy in the Universe isn't going to
+ cease to exist! It's still out there. But what kind of energy
+ will it have become to us?

+ It's not just a problem of can we build new instruments to detect
+ it. No sir. Can we reproduce it if we're sitting on a planet?

+ And what will it be like then? What does it do? What can we do
+ with it?
+
+ Build a distorter, he sez! Widen the band some, he sez! Oi.

While reading the June ('64) ish I felt your way of looking at Einsteinian ideas was clearer than most, and as you say, there can well be a tendency of people to look at things in the most complex way. Complexity can be ego-boosting, just as religious creeds could bring a "believer" to feel he's mighty important, and "the right hand of God."

...I believe in speculation, and not the duller dead-end sort of repetition that seems too prevalent today. To me magazine SF has the advantage, when it includes real speculation, of attracting the minority of people who will let their minds pour over "possibilities" and theories, not being too trammelled by immediate theories--and Fritz Leiber said what I'm saying. The human mind can combine, subtract, evolve, and play with space, time and humanity to develop something that has more flavor to me than most of the "novels" found in the original paperbacks, for example. And still--

I read paperbacks. I read flavored-down "SF" which is based on one idea, with humans in it to serve as a catalyst. I still read magazine SF, but because there seems to be less of it I like very well I've not been reading it all, and may have missed some very thoughtful stuff. I wonder how many others have been in this state in recent years. There are those who aren't readers of SF at all, who are still fans, of course--((+Stan, I am very curious to know why you've said that, what you know about such fans, how many of them there are, how long they stay in fandom individually; have you any answers?+))--but there are those like me who read less because it seems fresh approaches are being pushed aside or the "mix" made less rich.

Someone has suggested the Lurroughs resurgence indicates a need for a hero. Maybe so. SF could use more real heroes. I've had the idea that there's been too much anti-hero emphasis--making main characters a wishy-washy guy who finds decision-making impossible so events just happen to him. Well, this is what fear can do to someone. So maybe the propaganda in newspapers about the dread bomb is what is the real foe, and maybe if SF authors started writing about heroes and let the heroes speculate in new ways (a renaissance newness) the result might be fresh and invigorating.

+ I don't think it's just the Bomb Dread that's to blame -- it's the
+ idea that's closely associated with bombs and war, that certain men
+ started all the wars we've had and we still have such men. They
+ are what's dreaded, not the Bomb itself.

+ So now we're all supposed to be helpless, trapped, with no way out.
+ The vulgar masses don't seem to act that way (hell, they'd have to
+ think!) so every sensitive little longhaired writer has decided he
+ simply must make them act that way.

+ I don't believe for a minute that science-fiction is any "training
+ ground" for budding scientists or engineers, any more than detective
+ fiction is any "training ground" for cops. But as a speculative
+ kind of literature, it's the only one that can discover ideas of
+ social and ethnical development, not just of gadgets, that will be
+ of any damned use in the kind of future we're headed for -- or even
+ in reaching that future. Ideas, concepts and convictions are the
+ cause celebre of literature -- if you want to train somebody, go get
+ a textbook -- and literature about the future is what we call science
+ fiction. Where else might you discover ideas for the future? Where
+ else do you speculate about the future?

+ And the heroic angle is only part of the whole thing; there's some-
+ thing else, too -- all this goddamned "realistic" and "believable"
+ crap today just isn't romantic. It's drab, not colorful. Too many
+ editors saddle themselves with a big, fat worry about "what the
+ readers will believe" and downgrade everything to the level of the
+ most unimaginative morons in their reading public. Or maybe things
+ just aren't supposed to be colorful or romantic to trapped sheep.

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