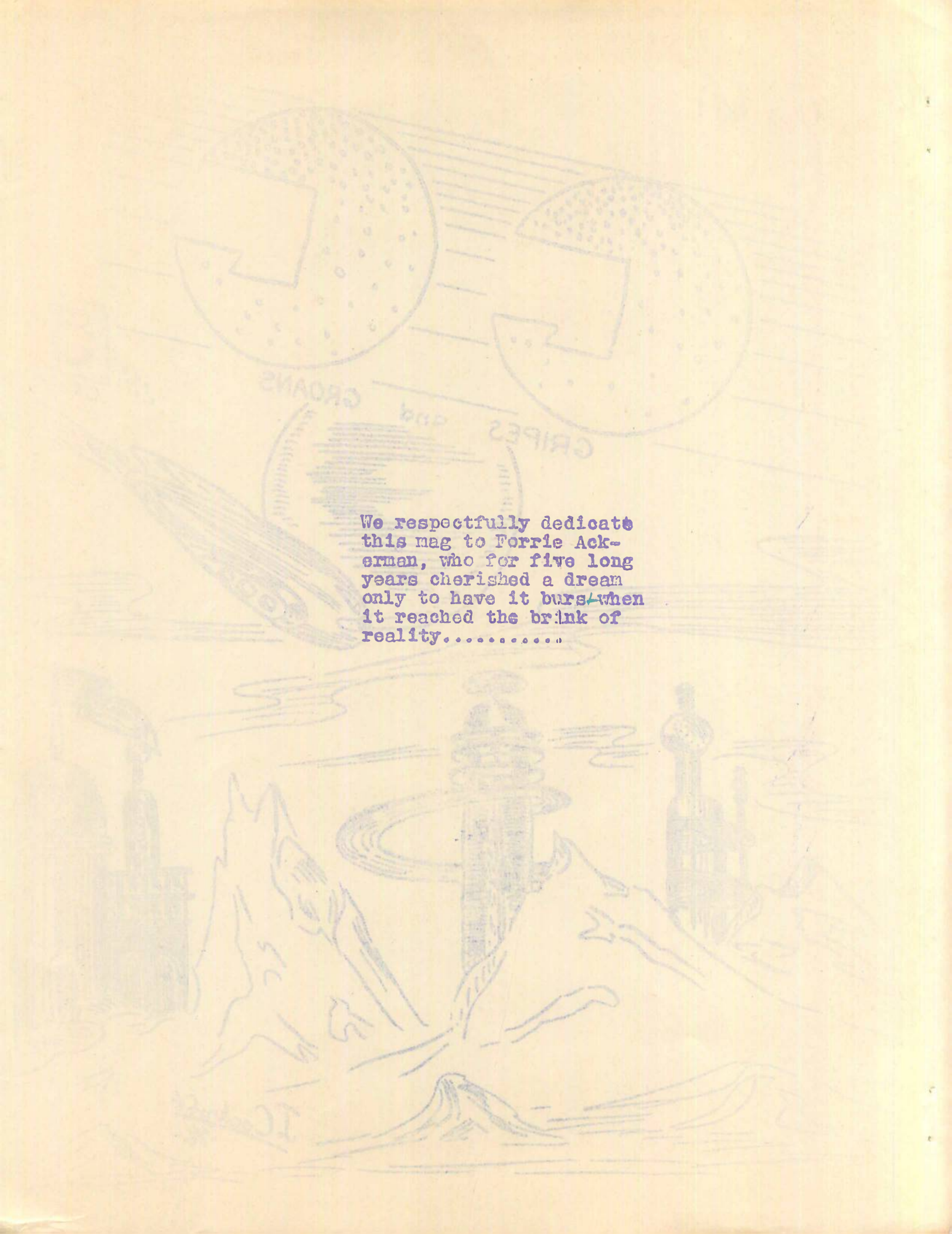


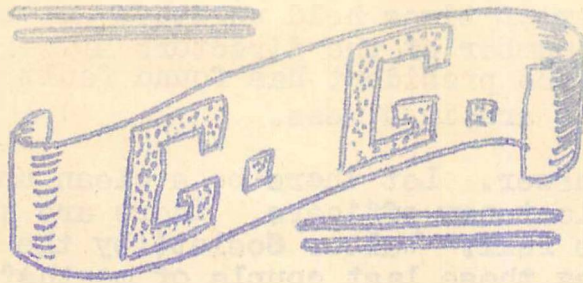
VOL. 1 NO. 1



J. Cockcroft
-96-



We respectfully dedicate
this mag to Forrie Ack-
erman, who for five long
years cherished a dream
only to have it burs when
it reached the brink of
reality.....



VOL. 1 NO. 1

JULY 1946

GRIPEs AND GROANS

Edited by Rick Sneary of 2962 Santa Ana St., South Gate, Calif., and published by John Cockroft of 4 Winship Ave., San Anselmo, Calif. Price five cents per copy. If you don't think it isn't worth it, write in and tell us, we will print the letter (cutting our price is a BEM of a diferent(er different) color tho) GG will come out when ever there accumulates enough letters, time, ambition and money to make it worthwhile. (No cracks on that last word)

~~~~~

And now for the thing you have been waiting for: The editorial.

Well readers, due to the kindness of one John Cockroft who offered to due the hard work of dittoing this thing you are getting what I hope will be the first of a long line of such mags. For I feel that there is nothing so interesting in fandom as to hear what the other fans have to say. And a letter is the best way to achieve that end. So why not a letter zine. I know there is one, VOM, ((there will be a ten minute pause while we pay homage to 4SJ Jo)) but that is slanted more towards the older fan, and then too it hasn't been out for some time ((this was written before the present ish recently showed itself at the Pacificcon)) But I don't mean to try to get any of VOM's readers or writers. There is room for two of us, even more. (((?????????? Jo)))

There is only one thing, to keep this mag going I have to have letters. Lots of letters. Interesting letters. So please write some. I'll print anything. (That can go through the mails) And if you have a Gripe or a Groan or an idea, send it in. I don't care if you are for Shaver or against him, or if you are a weird or science-fiction fan, actfan or neophite, sivvie or servi-fan, you are welcome. ((more than that, you are urgently solicited. Jo))

As for the name, Gripes and Groans was suggested by my friend and former Co-Editor David Mc Girr. Only one guessed the right answer ((in the last ish of The Fanzine Readers Review a contest was held in which the reader was asked to guess the meaning of GG Jo)) how I don't know. I doubt if he ever heard of McGirr or me before he read about us in that last mag. The winner was Paul Cox. But more about him later. (((.A tall due out to J. J.)))

I now want to take advantage of the space I have at my command, and tell you something. As most fans know, the NEFF has done little in the first part of this year and appear to be breaking up. This is due mostly because of the officers in charge. They have let personal differences and troubles interfere with the club.

They have at a number of times held up other members ~~without~~ trying to do something. A number of the directors have found fault with the president, and the president has found fault with the directors. In short things are in a mess.

There is only one answer. Let there be a clean up in the high-  
er ranks. Let us elect new officers. There are a number already  
planning to run this fall. Walter Goslet((by the way Walt, where  
have you been hiding these last couple of months? Je)) and Boff  
Perry for Vice President, Sandy Kadet, and Telis Streiff and my-  
self are running for director. I feel, no I know they will work  
together for a better NFFF. I of course hope you will vote for me/  
And I pledge that I will do my best to make the NFFF a better and  
greater fan club. Also that I am friendly with and will be happy  
to work with any of the above. But no matter who else is elected,  
if I am, I will do my best to get along with others. I will not  
let personal feeling enter into club matters, as has been done.  
I may not be the smartest fan, but I feel that my willingness to  
work, and to carry out my ideas should count in my favor.

So when you vote remember a vote for us, is a vote for a more active NEFF. One that will try as never before to help the younger fan. This, I feel, should be a main purpose in all clubs and should be the duty of all individuals.

But now on to the main part of the neg: **THE LETTERS**

First we hear from Paul D. Cox, of 3401 6th Ave., Columbus, Ga.

GG:

"Rick, I'll take a shot at guessing what GG means. I think it means Gripes and Groans. ((Right R.)) If I am right I won't hold you to the promise of five free issues. It would be robbery. ((Hmmm some of the paying readers may feel it is anyway R.)) The name is too obvious. Any fans who guess the name should voluntarily decline the free issues--If the name happens to be Gripes and Groans---If it's something else it would be OK to give the free issues. ((It seems that it was hard tho, You were the only one to guess it R.))

I agree with you that there is a place for THE FANZINE READERS REVIEW. Why not? It would help some of the younger fans get on to the history of fandom. I announce: Cox will print a mag similar to TFRR, soon((Free plug Jc)) It might not follow your policies exactly but would have some reprint material in each issue. May I use your title?((sure can. To readers: This was written in March and it looks like his TFRR will be quite a while longer in coming out Cox is a busy fellow. But you might rite him and ask to be put on the sub list R.))(((Don't forget me, Paul. Jc)))

Monroe and Herman should reveal their full names. I have an idea they are pseudonyms or else they are relatives of yours and you don't want every one to think that GG is a strictly family affair. ((Their names in full are Richard Monroe and Herman

Brontosaurus. And they are not my relations. Monroe has a letter in here somewhere, but is no longer co-editor as Cocksoft does all the work. R.))

In a magazine of letters I suppose the thing to do is to discuss a controversial subject. It seems, tho, that most of those subjects have been pretty well worked over in VQM, ((Shucks, how about the old question of how many angels can stand on the head of a pin? Or did VQM do that too: R)) so it is something of a problem to think of something that will get the ball rolling.

Another thing to remember in a letter zine is to keep it lively with arguments and discussions. Don't let a letter in unless it brings up some worthwhile remarks. ((you'd sure miss out on a lot of swell arguments if we stuck to this policy Je)) If you follow that policy it will naturally mean that this letter won't be printed unless I can think of something else to say. ((How true.R))

I don't know if this is worthwhile or not, but I'll say it anyway. I have been contemplating writing an article for OTHER WORLDS((readers note: OW is the name of a zine he is planning to put out. R)) in which I advocate adoption of the metric system of weights and measures. It behooves all science-fiction fans to favor the United States adopting the metric system and throwing out that outmoded excuse we are now using. ((This is the first time I know that I was behooved on the metric system as far as I know. Personally the change wouldn't be as practical as you seem to think. It would mean the changing of every single measuring device in use today, not to speak of the retooling of the entire industrial world. And god knows what else..Je))

I believe that it is a proven fact that the metric system is superior to the English system. And the metric system, contrary to popular opinion, is not hard to learn. It is relatively simple. It would be only a matter of one generation before the entire population would know it and approve of it if the government and the school systems took the proper attitude. (( Would that it were only that simple..Je))

I propose that fandom adopt it ahead of the rest of the country. Fandom always favors futuristic, scientific progress, so surely we should favor the sensible metric system. I believe that the United States will adopt it at some future time so we could speed it by teaching some of the population now.

From this point onward I propose that fandom use the metric system for all measurement purposes: in the fanzines and in all personal correspondence. When the occasion arrives to state a measurement always state it in metric. After a time fandom should be well acquainted with the system and it will come without effort. In learning the system it will be difficult at first because we'll probably be figuring in English equivalents, whereas he shouldn't, but think of them in the language he is trying to learn. ((Now he's got us learning language!))

After a time we will know the distance of a kilometer, the weight of a gram, etc. And will automatically understand. We won't even bother to think "What does that mean in miles-- or #'s etc." ((Oh now))

Does anyone agree with me? I hope." ((Well folks,...))

---

Well does anyone? He's asking you. Personally the metric system puzzles me, but if anyone is willing to start the ball rolling I'm willing to do my part. I find the biggest trouble is picturing the size of a kilometer in my mind. Tho as Cox said, once I got it it would be easier to understand. What do you masterminds think? R...

Well now a card from Telis Streiff, of 548 N. Dellrose Wichita 6 Kansas. Don't really belong here but it takes up space.

Join the JR. BMIS. A new Fan club for the younger fan has been started and its membership list is growing fast. Get in before we have to close this offer. Many benefits will come your way in Fandom, if you join this organization of well known teen age fans. For information write to ((See above.R.))

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Some of you have read my letter in the Summer Planet Stories in which I put forward the idea of a group which would report to their head after each issue of the mag and rate the stories. The results being sent to the editor. (of PS) A number of you have said you liked the idea, and have joined the group. Results of the summer issue were gathered and sent in, and the fall issue was being checked. But I have just recieved a letter and a printer's proof of the Vizagraph heading. I'll quote you part of the letter from Editor Payne:

"We had a discussion, the boss and I, about this business of club and fanzine notices in the Vizigraph. We decided, in view of all the stuff we get along these lines and the possibility of annoying somebody sooner or later, to cut it out entirely."

As you can see, or at least I feel, without the moral aid of Planet there is no need of going on. Our reports would be of interest only to a very few. We would get no recruits, except thru other fanzines. There has been no great rush as it is. So as far as I go the club without a name is through. This is my third club to fold. Well maybe now I can do more work for the NFFF.

There is no hard feelings on our part, as Planet has a good point. And after all they did send me that swell Leydenfrost pic that illustrated "The Million Year Picnic." (I won it of course) It turned out to be a 10" by 13" pic. And a lot better than the printed one. Was the only artistic pic in the mag.

Well now back to the letters and my former Vice President:

Jawge Caldwell 1115 San Anselmo Ave. San Anselmo, Calif.

Dear Rick:

Oops, time to turn the page.

Page 4

Gosh, sorry to hear about the unfortunate end to WARR. It was a good idea but unfortunately the fans didn't go for it. Some- how reprint zines don't seem to attract the fancy of the normal fan as much as a zine with new stuff, tho the old stuff is by far much better than most of the crud coming out today. (You ought to know, Lunaacy: Huh! Jo.)

Since your GG seems to be a junior VOM I'd like to open a discussion here about classics. Just what is a classic?

Now every person has his favorite stories, those which appeal to him the most and he favors these stories by calling them classics. But just what kind of yardstick does the average fan use to denote a classic. Just because the story is pleasing to him does it rightly deserve the title of classic? Or should the fan have a yardstick to measure his stories by and determine whether they really are classics or just good stories.

Over the period of reading I have done I have carefully valued each story I have ever read. Out of all those that I marked classics I later went back and weeded out those which fell short of the requirements I had developed at a time prior to this.

Out of all the thousands of stories I had read I found only 3 worthy to be called classics by the yardstick I used. These 3 were "Citadel of Hate"-Francis Stevens. "Palos of the Dog Star Pack" J U Casey. And "Final Blackout"-L Ron Hubbard.

This list will astound and baffle many of you, leaving you wondering how I could have omitted Merritt, Smith, Van Vogt and others.



The yardstick I use to determine a story is an exacting one and the least weakness in a story causes the dropping of it from the classics list. In other words the story must be downright perfect to find its way onto my list of classics.

Below I will give my yardstick of quality and show why Merritt, Smith and Van Vogt and others failed to reach the peak.

1) Clearness..A story must have clearness to pass. It must gather up all loose threads in the story and not leave any of them laying around to trip up the reader. This is where Van Vogt fails.

2) Description..A story must have good description, but this description should be woven into the story in such a manner as not to be noticeable. It must go with the story not merely to be added on. This is where Merritt is left out and a host of other writers.((Dive in boys)) Their descriptions do not blend in with the reading matter. Doc Smith is another one.

3) Characterization..The characters must seem real, they must act human and not just be there to carry out the plot of the story. They must seem to live, not just exist.

4) Dialogue..Must be realistic and true. Must not fall flat on the ears and sound unnatural and overly dramatic--a common fault of Hamilton's.

5) Emotional or Love Interest..Must exist naturally and not be dragged in by the hair--another common fault.

6) Action..The action must seem real and not overdone. Above all it must blend in with the story. Like the description it must not be offensive. Merritt was poor on action and Hamilton overdoes it.

If a story can stand up under all these requirements then, and only then do I consider it a classic.

If I have left anything out let me know, 'cause I want to see if it is possible to eliminate those 3 classics from my list. And if I have roused anyone's Irish, well I'm always ready for a fight.(verbal, that is)

Stefectionately Yerz,  
Jawge

---

And now a letter from the Great Joe Kennedy. How it got pushed so far back I cant imagine.

FANZINE READERS REVIEW #2 arrived today, and was very much enjoyed. I sepecially liked the way this issue made use of the possibilities of the colored hektograph artwork--cover and Cockroft's drawing of the Sarge were particularly impressive. ((I imagine you will like this one more, as all the pics will be worked on by Cockroft. "))) Speaking of the cover, it looked like a somewhat futuristic "Phantom of the Opera". Are my weary old eyes decieving me, or does the heroing have three breasts? ((Gad no, that's her other shoulder. That was supposed to be a robot too, but Cockroft is color mad/// "on't you dare cut this John, I'm watching))

The Editorial: "Sorry to hear that FRR is going to fold after so short a career--tsk, don't be discouraged by the lack of response shown on the first issue. All first issue fan mags recieve less comment than the editor expects! Or at least, this is the case nine times out of ten. GG sounds good, but the idea of an all-reprint fan mag such as FRR still intrigues me. There is a gold mine of excellent fan material in the fanzines of the past--excellent, really first rate material which has unfortunately, been forgotten almost as soon as it appeared. It's too bad FRR couldn't have featured more of this--though, admittedly, the difficulty is to track the stuff down. It's a shame you didn't have access to a GOOD file of older fanmags. FRR might've been hyper. ((We still agree, and wish there was something we could do about it. How about you and Cox working together? R))

"It might have been..." No sadder words in the English language, folks. ((Amen R))

The main contribution of Dave McGirr's co-editorial was the coining of the new word "letteritorial", for which he at least deserves a medal or something equally useless.

Just noticed something interesting. In the editorial. Quote: "If you have something you want to get off your chest send it in." This is to inform you that I have, on what is theoretically regarded as my chest, just four inches above the belly-button, a small brown wart. If you really want things off people's chests, I shall be more than happy to amputate my wart and send it in, provided you pay postj. ((After a long talk with the printer I find that the cost of reprinting 50 to 75 warts is too much, and there would be little point in me getting it otherwise. Of course if you would care for a booster ad...R))

---

Next we have a letter from our dear friend, R. Monroe:

Have you ever done anything or said something and then thot to yourself "what a swell stf story this would make?" Well, it happened to me not so long ago.

I was riding in a streetcar headed towards LA one day and as there was nothing much to see out the window, I was studying my fellow passengers. The thot struck me; what would they do if they were suddenly thrust into an adventure. What if they suddenly became the only people left in the world((Like the two in Last Man in New York R.)) They were not the hero-heroine type. Middle aged men and women going shopping, working, business men, a cop, a couple of sailors, a couple of school girls. You know the kind of people that ride street cars in any big city.

Would the motorman take over as captian of the ship(so to speak) or would the cop, as he has training. Or mebbe one of the few younger men. Would they be cheerful or would all go into a funk. What would the bum do( there was one of them too) I could think of a thousand possibilities.

Plots of late are too much a like. I mean BEM, BUM, BEM.

Hero after villian, villian after heroine, heroine after the hero.  
How many stories have married people? How many tell of back-  
breaking work to make discoveries? I read a story in an old TWS  
called "Race around the Moon" Five rockets start out for the  
first trip around the moon. And big ships, too; about 20 men  
on each. Can you imagine such a thing? Any fool would see that  
only one ship would be used. ((I thot it was a race. How could  
one ship race? Je)) Where would five people get the money to  
build ships? ((It's possible))

((Readers note: In a later letter from Cox, he said that there  
was already a story based on Monroe's streetcar idea. It seems  
that there isn't anything new under the sun. R.))

---

Here is a few words and a plug from that grand old(?) guy and  
friend of all zine editors, Walter A. Coslet, Box 6, Helena, Mont.

Cover: I've seen you do better. Your alien was OK tho.  
Cockroft cover: WOW! Editorial: too small a circ. That poem  
at the end of the DBT and Thankyou Dept: What was that last  
word--it didn't show up, and I'm curious.

((There was a young man  
Who had a horrible pen.  
And when he walked down the street  
Every one said "He mustbe a fan."))

EGBERT FANN: Owww! Phooie! I like Raj's space ship. More such  
and les Rehmites would help from him! ((I heard that. Raj))

GG? Well, how many guesses am I allowed? It could be:  
""Good Ghod"" or something of that sort with various spellings,  
or "Gift of Gab", or "Ghoulish Giberings" or "glug-glug" or  
"Goonish Gabble" or Golden Gloves" or Ghu-Ghu""or Ghu-Gags" or  
"Ghostly Gabbings" or many other similar wowzies. What say?  
((Gad Guy R.))

Hey, all you guys! The Miss. Bureau is still running, but  
not with the help of the majority of fandom. Whatsa matter?  
Are you lazy, or just not interested?? Come on! We need mat-  
erial and need it badly. Send in your stuff--our service is  
waiting and a lot of fanzines are too! Make no diff. if you are  
a N3F'r or not--send in those stories, poems, articles, quizzes,  
jokes, cartoons, and what-not. Also you fanzine editors, let  
us know your needs. We so have a nice stock of art-work on hand,  
but that, unfortunately is all. So if you want material suit-  
able for lithoes,, fillers, fullpage pix or what, we've got it.  
But if you want other stuff, you are liable to find it rationed,  
and that's due mainly to the fact you editors who have an ex-  
cess of material on hand(if any) haven't been sending it in so  
the new editors(they're ambitious too) can get a crack at it.  
So come on you guys--pitch in and do your share--or do you expect  
me to write it all? Get that stuff in to Walter A. Coslet,  
Box 6, Helena, Mont., and get it in FAST! It's up to you. I'm  
doing all I can. ((To which we all an Amen. R.))

---

And here is an article from that Miss. Bureau. I know it's not  
a letter, but it sounds like one.

WHY NOT A H.P. LOVECRAFT SOCIETY?  
by George T. Wetzel

In a few of our large cities there exists today various independent groups of literary people who call their gatherings the Edgar Allan Poe Society. Tho not affiliated with each other in any administrative functions they are nevertheless united in one common purpose: Their interest in Poe. This interest can be summed up in the following functions:

- the preservation of Poe's Mss, effects, letters, etc.;
- the perpetuation of Poe's fame through various expedients;
- the annual observation of Poe's demise with appropriate tributes, consistion of readings, lectures on the man and his works, and the playing of music set to the lines of his poetry.

Thusly admirers and devotees of the "Poe Cult" (as they are sometimes called) do homage to a great man of letters: and at the same time both encourage appreciation of Poe and contribute a wealth of material for future generations to enjoy.

What has been done for Poe could equally well be done for Lovecraft. Quite naturally is the interrogation, "Why?" To that I point out Lovecraft's contributions to American Literature and his great influence on other writers in his genre. In the field of the supernatural tale his legacy is twofold and is destined to be far reaching. First, Lovecraft's works; the excellence of his careful craftsmanship is evident throughout ~~and~~ his tales and poetry. Lovecraft, himself, remarked, "For cash I'll do anything honorable except write original fiction. That one field, with me, has to ve reserved for sincerely disinterested effort,... because experience has shown me that I cannot dabble in pulp cheapness without hopelessly ruining anything I have to say..." For positive proof of his statement one has but to take up any one of his stories. the excellence of his prose style has been such as to dissuade many pulp writers in the weird field to produce something more enduring than their usual, clipped narratives; such writers as Bob Bloch, August Derleth, Duane Rimel, Henry Kuttner. Secondly, the Cthulhu Mythos; Lovecraft's greatest contribution to the archives of weird literature was the conception of this artificial myth pattern, that connects nearly all his tales, and some of his poetry. Many other writers have used parts of the Cthulhu Mythos to add color to their tales, others, have added to its pantheon by creations of their own. So authentic is it that one is almost ready to believe it. Quite amusing is the fact that dealers in rare books are occasionally asked for copies of the infamous Necronomicon--a volume of forbidden secrets used to evoke deamons.

The Lovecraft influence has extended even beyond the boundries of fiction. A few of his poems have been set to music b y a California composer. And an amateur magazine of fantasy fiction, poetry, and articles had as its motto: "Dedicated to the memory of the late HP Lovecraft."

The nucleus of such a group could be built around that small personal group of Lovecraft's friends known as the Lovecraft Circle, while the multitudes of admirers scattered over the land would encourage the formation of similar groups within their respective cities. Or then again the group could be formed by correspondence by the fans themselves. The most logical place for a library of Lovecraftiana would be the city of his birth.

Providence, Rhode Island. The people of that city, if so inclined could set aside a room devoted to all material pertaining to Lovecraft, in much the same way that in Baltimore the Innes Pratt Central Library have done for Poe in establishing a Poe collection therein. The Acolyte(( the late Acolyte )) might possibly be considered the official dispenser of this projected Society's news, providing that its editors are willing. As possible sponsors I would name August Derleth first. Next would come R H Barlow, and other of Lovecraft's friends and those that have done most to perpetuate his fame--in this class I would list Francis T. Laney as a good prospect.

For the time being those are my suggestions, which are of the sketchiest sort. Whether or not you concur with me, kind reader, on then, I would very much appreciate your opinions, pro and con, on the project.

FINIS

---

Well, Wetzel has quite an idea. I personally am a sf fan and don't care for Lovecraft. And thus of course I don't see the point of a society. One thing tho, I don't think Lovecraft is as famous as Poe. Tho I of course realize that a lot of people outside of fandom read his works. It would be quite a job to say the least. I won't say anymore as I might undo his good work. But mebbe Cockcroft, who is a Lovecraft fan, will add a word. Eh John??

---

Well, a subject of this type is kind of touchy to answer. I don't feel that it is up to any one person to say whether it shall or shall not be. I'll leave all discussion of that to the readers. However, I will add a few views.

It seems to me that Wetzel is acting upon a few misguided beliefs. It is quite surprising to note just how few( comparatively speaking) people have ever even heard of Lovecraft, much less rank him with Poe. Personally I like Lovecraft a great deal, but I feel that only a small number of his works rank in quality with that great master of last century. In fact I don't deem it possible to make a comparison of any sort at all with the majority of Lovecraft's works.

Lovecraft is undoubtedly the undisputed master of the weird tale when viewed from the pulp magazine angle. In fact he stands very well in the entire field of the genre. But I fear that he is overshadowed by the works of James, le Fanu, Blackwood and Machen and mebbe a few others. I feel that if a cult should spring up, one of these latter persons would make a better subject to worship.

Another misconception of Wetzel's( in my opinion) is his belief that the Cthulhu Mythos was Lovecraft's greatest contribution to weird literature. Almost without exception the Mythos tales could have made a good showing on their own two feet without having to rely upon such trite objects as the Necronomicon etc.(altho I will admit that they were interesting) It seems to me that the greatest of his works didn't even concern themselves with the Mythos. The Outsider.. the Music of Erich Zann..The Rats in the Walls and the Colour out of Space.

Well to give you a little change, here is a poem by a new man named Jim Love. He said "the first verse is taken from Hamilton's "Outlaw World", but the rest is mine."

"From Mercury to Pluto  
From Saturn back to Mars  
We'll fight and sail and blaze our trail  
In crimson through the stars.

"We'll cram our hold with plunder  
From every world and moon  
From Pluto back to Mercury  
We'll sing our deadly tune.

"The wind that blows around us  
Has carried us from home ((wind in space? tch tch))  
And now we're doomed forevermore  
Through endless space to roam.

"So salute us, mates, and join us  
We pirates of the void  
For we must live and hide away  
On some lone asteroid."

---

Here's a few words from the editor of Groggy, Ron Christensen:

Dear GG:

I hope you, too, are a fairly decent job of hektoing, tho  
I wish you'd make two resolutions(which you won't.)

I wish you'd get yourself mimed if necessary, by the can-  
with-the-stencil-taped-on method, such as the Tartan Press uses.

I hope you don't splurge yourself with different images of  
"Sarge Saturn" as your predecessor did. ((You know Erwin is  
supposed to read this Ron. R.))

GG(gorsh, I don't know your full name), Don't you think it's  
time for another Amateur Press Ass. in fandom. Maybe SFAPA? All  
the newcomers who can't even get on the waiting list of Fapa or  
Vapa, and whose efforts are worth viewing, has no real opportu-  
nity to sport his wares. In fact, mobbé it's time for two small  
APA's; one for the group of newer fans who like stuff like Sarge  
Saturn, etc. and one for those who wish to actually better the  
output of Fapa and Vapa. A matter for thought.....

Let's ask this of your readers, anyway, GG: How many of you  
like Sarge Saturn, and wish he'd keep going strong? Then you fellows  
had better start fighting, because the majority of the fans at  
the Newark-con seemed to agree that the Sarge should be dishonor-  
ably discharged. I agree, do you?

((Yes, but it was honorably discharged if I read the reports right.  
The Sarge has served his purpose, what ever that may be, now let  
him go. By the way folks, Ron bot a jug of the Sarge's Xeno for  
a nickle. Or so it is reported. ( at the Newark-con)

But no fooling his idea for a new APA sounds interesting.

