

FRONT COVER

LISA CONESA

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Lisa Conesa 5; 20.

Mike Meara 7; 13; 23; 31.

George White 18.

Ian Maule 29.

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Skel 16.

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"Fear not!", said he, for mighty dread had seized their tiny minds. "I have..." he said, "...a magic charm, so ensorcelled, that it will ensure the safe and speedy return of all future electro's. All thou needst do...", he said, collapsing into the most cliché-archaisms, "...is send them by the messenger of the gods, at the same time offering up a prayer to the deity Returnof-post, and all will be well!"

On The Perils of Prognostication. Alternatively titled "The Wrongs of Spring"... A quick glance through this issue will reveal our failings in this department. Conspicuous by their absence are:- Kenneth Mardle's cover (a Problem In Translation), Imogene Eustace Nogg's "A Programmed Guide To HELL-Reading" (nextish, honest!), the Secrets of Cheap Drinking In Bars (we were beaten into print with this by the University of Exeter who presumably have the same computer manual - they included it in their 1972-Rag Mag), and book reviews of the two Ballantine anthologies by Silverberg (Uncle Skel has been reading the wrong books!).

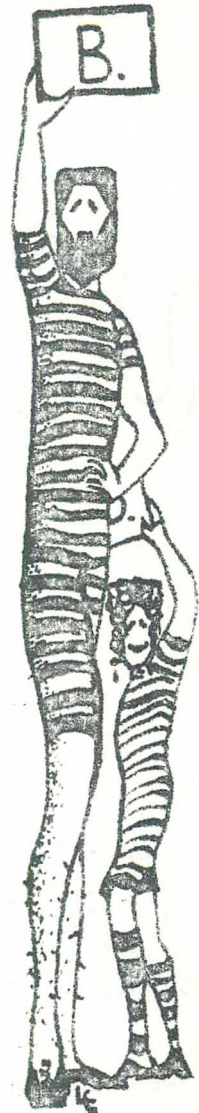
I WOULD HAVE PSEUD Dept. In answer to all those queries we have not been receiving about 'The Complicat Pseud' I shall state our position on this subject. 'TCP' has not repeat not fallen by the wayside. It is merely a temporary victim of our recent shifts in priorities. It grew far bigger than we had envisioned it could....."Let's start with a nice little checklist, say, on pseudonyms, huh, Brian?" Well, now that it's over forty pages, we've had to push the prospective pubbing date back a year, after the next Eastercon in fact. We will start working on it once more after this Eastercon. Therefore, we are still interested in any information anyone can supply on this subject, so there.....

I am saddened by the way John Schoenherr has deteriorated as an SF artist. His recent work for Analog is not one tenth as good as his earlier work for that magazine. This is a shame, because he was my favourite artist. I always found that his covers managed to convey a sense of something alien, a sense that touched a chord of yearning within me. This is no longer true of his current work. The best artwork in the March issue, for instance, are the Freas illo's for the Schmitz story 'Child Of The Gods'. If I could draw stars in black and white and make them shine like Freas does, I would count it an achievement.

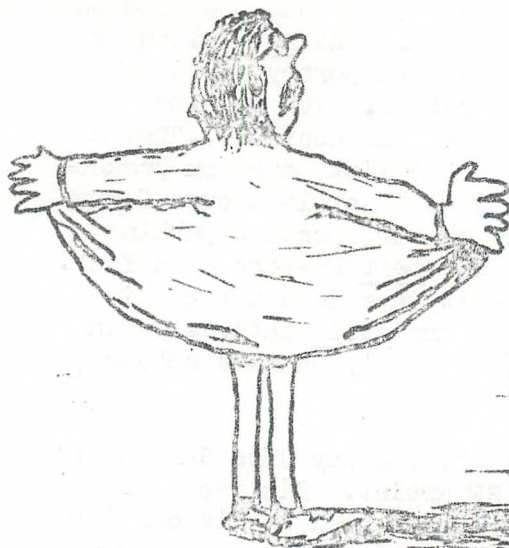
We are not really satisfied with the quality of reproduction from these electrostencils so we may yet go back to our original supplier. He may take longer, but he provides a better quality stencil and it's results that count. We are suspending judgement until we see how the cover comes out. I tried to get it run off on the new ronco at work, but that had just been inked up and this proved too much for the large areas of black on the cover, result :- every sheet adhered firmly to the stencil, and had to be wrenched off by hand, forcibly. This did not make for good reproduction, so we are going to try again on the Gestetner at Brian's place. Luckily this has controllable inking so we are keeping our fingers crossed, which makes typing bloody tricky, believe me.

Gas isn't really fat, as I implied elsewhere in the zine. She insisted on a disclaimer, on pain of having my stencils censored in future. I would like to close this editorial with a quote from a track on the new Joan Baez album 'Blessed Are'. --The track is 'San Francisco Mabel Joy' :-

"Growing up came quietly, in the arms of Mabel Joy. Laughter found their mornings, brought a meaning to his life....."



Robinson



EXPOSED!!

I fear that I erred last time, when I promised Paul, mesel', and half-promised you, the reader, an expose on little me similar to Paul's in No. 3. No, cowardice has nothing to do with my regret - my faults, few though they be (sickeningly inmodest, aren't I?) and virtues are open to inspection - but the difficulties of the task only became apparent after 4 attempts had been made of this excuse for an editorial.

Y'see, Paul and I share so many interests - the common ground between us embodies more than mere SF, if I may be forgiven the word 'nere', and to write too much about me would sound too much like Paul. It's not really much wonder that several people think that Paul is a pseudonym for me.

He talked about music: looking back I can't think of anything that wholly interested me before the age of about 15. But I then graduated to Halle concerts, which remained my one great musical expense for about six years. Great fun, too, especially meeting some of the famous soloists that played at the Free Trade Hall. But I slipped away from the classical pieces some four years ago, and have since devoted time to just about every type of music. Yet throughout this period the one underlying devotion has been to jazz. I was knocked out by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, left incredulous by Venuti and Lang, and finally transported into paroxysms of delight by Dave Brubeck's polyrhythmic music. I like to think that I inherited a sense of rhythm from my father, who once played drums in a dance band. He denies it.

con't on page 37.....

BRITAIN
IN
THE
SPACE
RACE

D. S. SEALE.

Achtung!! Achtung!! This is a serious article !

Britain's main rockets, SKUA and PETREL, are launched from the back of a lorry. Don't laugh, I told you it was serious. I will deal with Britain's space achievements in three separate sections :- Rockets, Satellites and Miscelan...Mischela..... Odds and Ends.

No. 1.....ROCKETS.

SKUA
PETREL
BLACK KNIGHT now BLACK ARROW
SKYLARK
BLUE STREAK

SKUA and PETREL are two of Britain's cut-price rockets. In fact PETREL costs only about £800.00. It can reach the fringes of space with a payload of 30 lbs. SKUA is used mainly for weather research 60 miles up. Both rockets are launched from the back of a lorry or turntable fitted with a 33 ft. long tube. The rockets (Both made by Bristol Aerojet) are propelled by a small booster for 2 seconds, lifting them clear of the launching tube, then the main motor takes over.

More than 20 BLACK KNIGHT rockets have been successfully fired from Woomera. It was designed originally as a warhead carrying rocket but was used for testing the effects of friction on re-entering the Earth's atmosphere.

BLACK KNIGHT was developed into a more powerful rocket called BLACK ARROW in 1964, but it wasn't until 1969 that the first Test Firing took place. It was a failure, being destroyed after only one minute because it "Wobbled". Since then however, BLACK ARROW has proved itself and is to be used to put a satellite into space this year.

Built by the British Aircraft Corp., SKYLARK has had 230 successfull flights. It is used for all kinds of experiments in space research. It has been used



by the 12 nation European Research Organisation and by Americas' N.A.S.A. SKYLARK can travel 200 miles at 5,000 m.p.h. carrying 600lbs. of equipment. Six out of seven were successfully fired in one night, at intervals of 90 minutes, loaded with experiments for British Scientists and making a marvellous fire-work display seen 200 miles across the Nullarbor Plain to Adelaide.

Built originally as a medium range ballistic missile, BLUE STREAK is Britains biggest rocket. It is 60 $\frac{1}{2}$ ft. tall, has a girth of ten feet and weighs 90 tons. It burns kerosene and liquid oxygen with its two Rolls Royce engines. The first firing of BLUE STREAK took place in Cumberland, on a specially built testing establishment. The first launching from Woomera went well and since then, not one BLUE STREAK has failed. Because of its success it has been incorporated as the first stage of Europa I., the 12 nations rocket.

No. 2. SATELLITES.

ARIELS I, II & III.
IRIS (ESRO)
AURORAE (ESRO)
HEOS I. (ESRO)
BOREAS. (ESRO)

It was through the EUROPEAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION (ESRO), that Britain sent most of its experiments up into space.

The first four satellites we, (We, being the British Taxpayer), took a hand in with II other countries. The first of which was IRIS, launched from Wallops Island, Virginia, to measure radiation levels around the earth. It was still working in 1970, although when it was sent up in 1968, it was only for a six month period.

The second, also launched in 1968 was to study the 'Northern Lights'. AURORAE too is still working.

Another satellite sent up in 1968 was HEOS I., travelled in a huge egg shaped orbit, reaching two thirds the distance to the moon. Its job was to study magnetic fields between the Earth and the Moon.

ESRO's fourth satellite, BOREAS, had the same job as AURORAE, to study the Aurora Borealis but fell to earth and burned up after 835 orbits.

The first two ARIEL satellites were built in the U.S.A. and launched by an American rocket but the experiments inside were completely British. The third was designed and built by our scientists and the experiments in it were for university scientists.

As well as those experiments, Britain has other apparatus in the American 'Floating Space Laboratories, the Orbiting Space Observatories and British firms have won contracts to build complete satellites for the European Space Project.

REVOLUTION? ROLL ON BY!

A Reply to Peter Linnett

by

Mike Meara

"All science fiction today, or at least practically all of it, is commercial. That is, it is written for a market, for financial remuneration. In most cases it is written for an editor who serves a publishing house, who in turn caters to the dictates of his reading subscribers. If the average fan would only remember this, he would be a little less severe with some of his criticisms and less glib with others.

"Again and again I've seen a poorly written, poorly constructed science story rated "tops" simply because it had a new theme. Again and again I've read unfavourable reports from readers regarding a story by a prolific author that was beautifully written and adroitly handled in development, simply because it was conservative."

Carl Jacobi in "The Fantasite", May-June 1943.

Having obtained the editors' permission to write this reply, I now find myself unsure how to put my ideas down on paper without committing the same excesses that Peter did, only in the other direction. My first reaction to Peter's piece was one of speechless fury at such a short-sighted attitude. Re-reading has led me to think that any point he may have made has been swamped by exaggeration. The thousandth story about time-travel, indeed! I doubt if that number of pro-written time-travel stories has been reached in the whole history of the genre. (Over to you, Norm Metcalfe...!)

If you read S.F. just for ideas, Peter, then you really are in a fix. Just as there are only four or five basic jokes, so there is only a limited number of themes or topics in which the S.F. author can express himself. You've stated quite a number of them in your fifth paragraph. What counts is not the topic itself, but the way the author uses it to portray his characters in relation to their environment. This is mainly why I read S.F. (Occasionally I'll read one of the old super-science yarns out of a combination of "escapism" and a kind of nostalgia for something I never knew at first-hand, but this type of story soon gets boring because it doesn't say anything.) You know as well as I, Peter, that nearly all the current themes of S.F. were invented by Wells and the other early writers. If later authors haven't been as successful in dreaming up new ones over the years, I'm sure it's not for a lack of effort.

I only read the current S.F. magazines occasionally, due to lack of time and money, but I don't think this affects the validity of the point I'm trying to make in any way. If what you're saying is that, in the current magazine stories, the majority of writers are using the "old" themes in a non-creative way, then you have a valid point. But I don't think you are. I think you're objecting to the themes themselves, which in my view is not valid at all.

I agree that nearly all non-readers of S.F. still seem to have this old-fashioned, "space-opera" view of the medium. I think this is largely because this conception is fostered by the makers of films and TV serials, in the mistaken (I hope) view that this is all the general public can appreciate. Things like "Dr. Who" and, to a lesser extent, "Star Trek", are just another form of mindless entertainment, like "Coronation Street". So the spectre of pre-1939 S.F. haunts us still in 1972, and people who would perhaps enjoy reading, say, "The Space Merchants" are turned off by the very publicity designed to attract them. Even the title of the story I have quoted seems bent on giving the prospective reader the wrong impression. So whilst a picture of (e.g.) a man in a spacesuit on the cover of a pro-mag is not in itself a bad thing (your friend can hardly call that improbably, might I say, it's already happened!), it does act as the springboard which keeps the old, bad image flying.

As far as the New Wave is concerned, I don't want to join in the hysterical condemnation of it, as indulged in by some others. Most of what little New Wave I've read was certainly interesting, if not always understandable. Ballard, for instance, with his "inner space" stories, has a valid and fascinating approach, but it is not SCIENCE-fiction, it's SPECULATIVE fiction, a different thing altogether. It's absurd that "The Drowned World" should have made its first appearance in the magazine "Science Fiction Adventures", because it ain't what I call science-fiction. When "New Worlds" allowed its writers to go as far as they liked, they didn't write science-fiction anymore, at least not in my experience.

Harlan Ellison typifies for me the modern S.F. writer who is using old themes creatively, and saying something new and different. Let's look at a few of the stories from his Avon collection, "The Beast That Shouted Love At The Heart of the World":-

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>THEME</u>
The Beast That Shouted Love...	1968	Insanity Rays
Along the Scenic Route	1969	The Super-car
Phoenix	1968/9	The Lost City; The Trick Ending
Asleep: With Still Hands	1968/9	Worldmaster; Peace Rays
A Boy and His Dog	1969	After The Bomb

All recent stories, all using established themes, but all "saying something", making me think. This book contains an equal number of stories using themes new to me, and those were equally enjoyable, but that's not the point. What I've tried to say is that any SCIENCE-fiction story must perforce use some of the trappings of present or future "science", but it's not the scientific ideas themselves that matter, as in space-opera, it's the way they're used in relation to people. If the thousandth story about time-travel can say something new to me about people, human or alien, then I'll read it as eagerly as I did the first.



OFF TBAILS 64 (The Kon)

(@Uzzz)@

A bit late to mention it now, we suppose, but don't you think it would have been a good idea to bring the date of the year's first mailing forward to about, say, the second week in March, so as to give yourself time to get the mailing out before the con? How about a vote on this for future years? Maybe not though, if the voting response is as feeble as you infer. More on voting later. We hope that enough members will, by now, have extracted their index digits and sent in a contribution to the conbozine. Last year's was fun and should be repeated, though preferably with a uniform zine if possible. Hmm..... we appear to be living on a hand to mouth basis again (Is it ever otherwise?). Couldn't we perhaps take the pressure off slightly by raising the membership fee/subscription to a nice round pound? No OMPA member would have to go to the poorhouse for want of an extra 20p.....would he? Besides, it shouldn't be too long before such an increase is forced upon us by increased costs. Let's try to get ahead by anticipating the next increase. According to the balance sheet the next purchase of Jiffy-bags will leave us almost destitute. Sneaky this....notice how an increase of 20p will only cost us 10p each...a financial coup, a masterstroke of economic bril....or, hmmm, or yes, the voting issue. It should be compulsory for constitutional amendments and change of officers to be voted upon. Everything that deserves or needs a vote affects us all one way or another. As for the Egoboo poll, we won't go so far as to say it ought to be compulsory but if you get any egoboo at all then there's absolutely no reason for not voting except apathy or sheer bloody awkwardness. If you don't get any egoboo then why are you still here. Voting in the Egoboo Poll is really a members' obligation. What's the point of staying in OMPA if it's not doing you any good. You should be sufficiently frustrated to go and try something else for your kicks, like sky-diving or glue sniffing or Fouler reading, or something equally mind-blowing. Jiffy Bags? Keep 'em, and play hell with anyone who doesn't send 'em back.

MESCIFIC 30 (Fred)

-(Brian)-

Cover looked something like a maze. Where do we have to get to and from where. "Full Circle" I read, and.....well, let's just say that I did read it. I liked your view of Worcester, short though it was, dealing with merely the Sunday. Were you only there the one

day, or is it continued in 31 which I haven't yet read? The quiz had no hopelessly beat. I plead the lethargy of late evening. I'll look forward to the solution. Why not do coloured covers? I can think of no good reason for not doing so. Paul and I are lucky in that a neighbour of mine occasionally turns up with a ream or two of green or blue paper, and who are we to look a gift horse.....? Several people have said that the cover of HELL 3 should have been done on white paper: it would have looked better that way. Take my word for it - it didn't!! If you want to use coloured paper, then for heavens sake do so.

ERG 37 (Terry)

@@@Skol@@@

Hey! The cover for thish may be adequate, but it's nothing like the standard I've come to expect from you. This is exactly half-way between an interior illo and a cover illo. Don't let it happen again humph grumph.

Seriously Terry, there isn't enough good artwork in OMPA that we can afford to do without any of it. Speaking of good artwork.....how dare you question the all-my-own-workfulness of my cover for HELL 2? Still, I'm basking in the warm glow given off by my own blushes.....thanks. How can anyone (barring Rotsler of course) get that much expression out of just a pair of eyes? I am of course referring to your soggy on page 10. I agree re: mailing comments. When a mailing comes in the very first thing we do is go through it and wallow in the mailing comments. This is not usually a mammoth undertaking. Brian recently opined, with much smug, that we must be one of the few British zines to go four issues without a single Jeeves illo. "Not So", quoth I sagely,... "...remember the illo's for 'WE'LL TRIODE ONCE'?" He insists that this is not the same thing at all. Meanwhile, back at the Ergitorial.....I have only seen three episodes of UFO myself, but it seems to lack direction. I laughed myself silly reading about your misfortunes on the motorway. Why do we laugh at others misfortune? Relief that it didn't happen to ourselves perhaps?

Still, one should be able to sue over something like that. Croops won't let you sue them for anything these days. Down Memory Bank Lane was pretty good this time around.... Those footnotes used to drive me mad until I hit upon a rule of thumb which still serves...If it's got footnotes it probably isn't worth reading....so I don't. OK, so I miss the (very) occasional good story, but most of them are definitely of the 'Amazing' (read:Crud) type. Another annoyance was when they included a



sentence out of the story under the illustration by way of explanation. We would get a full page illo of a spacecraft flying past a jelly-baby and underneath would be the legend "...the spacecraft flew past a jelly-baby." Boy, but they must have thought we were cretins, and wouldn't be able to recognise from whence the illo was inspired. Somebody ought to tell John Piggott that he isn't allowed to write LoC's to ERG unless he mentions me in them. Lisa and Brian obviously have done their homework in this respect. You always say you can't afford electro's, but at 3 for a quid I wouldn't have thought this was so. If used for covers £1.00 would cover three issues.....I just want to see some Jeeves artwork that didn't have to be carved onto something as intractable as a stencil. Could it be that you are just plain old fashioned and don't think an illo is worthy of the name unless you spend thirty painstaking minutes getting it onto stencil?

THE NEW MILLENNIAL HARBINGER 1

(John) A reprint? Is this really allowable?

-(Brian)-

I thought not. Still, top marks for the excellent cover. I was watching summit or other night which reminded me of it

very strongly, though there was no direct connection. I think it was the B.B.C. series "The Shadow Of The Tower". Lucky you, having two hours of Flash Gordon to chuckle over. The ones shown at the convention last Easter were truly crap, due to it being the wrong idiot playing the lead role. But for a damn good laugh it was well worth watching. I saw one episode of the "Flying Disc Men Of Mars" at the Delta Group H.Q. some time ago, which was very much in the same crappy vein. You know the sort of thing.....car crossing a bridge is blown up just as the episode ends with the hero still within and next week????? I'm astounded the way these heroes can dive out of a car moving at 50m.p.h. when they only have about 1/10th second warning. What astounds me even more is that I used to like this stuff in all seriousness. What must I have been about? This N.M.H. was good reading, but something original next time please.

FOR FUN AND PROPHECY.

(Dick)

This boils down to a sort of 'do-it-yourself' science fiction story, snag being that I like my science fiction ready written. The idea of collecting these prophecies is basically a good

@@@Skol@@@

one but this attempt has one drawback as far as I am concerned, namely the fact that the prophecies were all made by U.S. citizens, so that even the forecasts regarding foreign countries or the world as a whole were looked at through stars and stripes tinted glasses. I wouldn't mind betting that any American reviews of F.F.A.P. tend to be generally more appreciative than, say, the British ones. Could be, I suppose, that I just haven't got the time to really dig into this and unearth the nuggets it no doubt contains. However, definitely a negative trend to this one.

(($E = Mc^2$

(Carey)

When is EMc^2 going to reupt into a real flyer.

@@@Skol@@@

U1 26

(Norm)

I bet Kench found this fascinating, that is if he could remember what the hell it was all about.

OSTEEN UNIVERSITY REVIEW 5 (Sam)

--(Brian)--

Not bad, not bad. The reviews were well done. I see you were one of lucky ones who got two pp29/30 in HELL. At least you didn't get the dreaded blank page, as did Skel's mother. Really enjoyed "On The Road To NF3", but a word of warning -- don't read it on a Manchester bus. The other passengers seem to resent the fact that you aren't in as miserable a mood as they are. Poor tired hard-done-by commuters! If looks could kill...! Here's where I show my abysmal iggerance and admit that I don't know these people that you mention; A.White, D.Cohen and A.Lowry. Live in this area they might, but they don't make their presence known.

SPECULUM 7 (Tom)

@@@Skel@@@

All I can really say of this is "Hi." I know you have been in OMPA a year, longer than we have, but what else can one say after you introduce yourself? Just one moment though... I LIKED 'IS 1'. What does that make me? On second thoughts, maybe you hadn't better answer that....

PSYWAR 5 (Keith)

--(Brian)--

I started to read 'Signs Before Death' with a certain amount of anticipation, and gave up around line 8. "Fate is not so kind (?) as to grant pre-knowledge of death..." or summat like that. By using the word "kind" is the writer saying that he actually wants to know just when he's going to expire? This is, of course, all right if he has the courage to calmly cross off the days on a calendar, a la condemned prisoner. "Eight years, three months and fourteen days to go" may be okay for him, but I prefer to remain in blissful ignorance of such things. Regret for ones death can only ever precede the event. As long as I have no warning, I don't give a single damn when I go, for the simple reason that I'll be oh so uncaring about it afterwards.

Fifty seven questions to sort out a personality is surely not enough by a long way. Some of the questions are just too nebulous for words. Try No. 35 for starters. Do you mean attacks of jrembling etc. during illness, normal health, fear, sex? Or are you suggesting that such attacks mean the same whatever the immediate cause? I feel that certain questions, too, can only have one answer. Nos. 12, 13, 18 (particularly No. 18), 42, 45, 48 and 54 are the ones I'm thinking of. Anyone who gives a definite "NO" to these is tempting me to call him/her a liar. Now that I've got that off me chest, I ought to say that the idea of the questionnaire was a good one, though I didn't like the way in which it was done. For the record (it'll save me sending the darn thing back to you) you can classify me as either a schizothyme, or an ectomorph rated at 3:3:5. Okay?

CAPTAIN KANGAROO'S FLYING CIRCUS 1 (Dave)

@@@Skel@@@

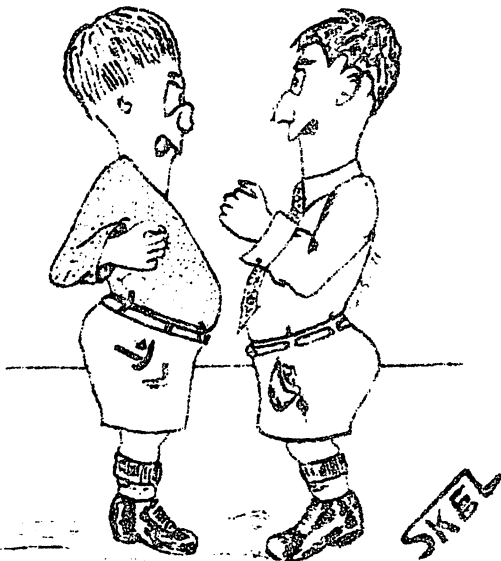
Another business missive. How come Australian zines tend to be rather flimsy, with just one staple...in the top left-hand corner? I presume it will explain inside that it will be thicker next time, when finances/time/etc will doubtless have improved.

Most of these zines seem to do this, being ashamed of themselves. If you numbered your pages I would have seen instantly that this was a six page zine, with pages 3 and 4 unaccountably missing. (Come to that, I suppose it could be a 40 page zine with pages 3 through 38 missing). Let's face it, 'page 3' certainly doesn't follow from 'page 2'.

GAMBIT 1 (Lisa)

-(Brian)-

One of the trouble with stories about time travel is that almost every author has his own ideas about the paradoxes involved; so much so that the reader can easily become confused. You mention Heinlein's "By His Bootstraps" as being confusing. I agree with that. But what about his "All You Zombies..."? That is what I call really confusing, though in retrospect it's one of the most beautifully worked out pieces about time travel I ever read. "By His Bootstraps" was little by comparison - a mere bit of foolery that went nowhere. Phil's report of the Novacon was fine. I wonder if he's still using that same car in which I once got a lift? I thought it had been written-off on the way back from Worcester. "A Visit" was...amusing. I don't think there is much more that could be said about it. Don't remind me of that time spent creating GAMBIT - you can blame the typos on the ale. I'm looking forward to seeing Tom's story in the nextish - some bits stuck in my mind. I confess I know nothing at all about Houseman's poetry, but I loved that one you printed. Here is a second poet with whom I feel a definite rapport, Yeats being the other one. Any more where that one came from?



"MYARRGH" BET MY EUSTACE CAN BEAT YOUR EUSTACE, ANYDAY!"

MESCIFIC 31 (Fred) @@@Skel@@@

An odd beastie this one. Like walking into a party where everybody already knows everybody else, except you. I get a definite feel of being left out, or being come late to the feast. I suppose it's understandable really, as this is exactly the case, but usually I can pick up a zine I haven't seen

before and feel at least partly at home. Do you have to put the whole zine together on paper first, or do you run off half a sheet at a time? AMES illos were excellent, especially the one on page 21, but the others were, while acceptable, rather nothing-y.

I am a bit marked at 'The Chopping Block'. The Star Trek part is very similar (but better I think) to/than a piece done by John Alan Glynn for a future ZIMRI. Snag is I illustrated that one (beautifully, I assure you) but it will

now probably not see print as Lisa (Hi there) will have seen it in Mescific. I hate wasting illo's. It was probably just such a cruel intransigency of fate which really caused Van Gogh to cleave off an ear. Hmm, now if I could find another 34 people prepared to lop off an ear I could send it out with the mailing. Ignore me, Fred, I am after all somewhat less than a half-wit.

YSELF 2 (Carey)

-(Brian)-

For a moment there I thought Ethel had taken to a bike. Oh the disappointment. Mr. Lindsay makes a good case for either not attempting a trip like that, or making damn sure of every piece of equipment on the machine before setting out. I recall a tv programme in which was mentioned the case of a chappie who set out for a 90-odd mile drive in the out-back, thinking that it wasn't far, and so took no food or water. The fact that there was absolutely nothing between points A and B bothered him not at all. Maybe his sun-bleached skeleton and wrecked car would have other ideas. Anyway, an interesting story - I take my hat off to him.

MOTH 8 (David)

-(Brian)-

I really dread to think what Paul would say about it. Me? Er.....shall we settle for.....speechless? Where's me ale?

UL 37 (Norm)

-(Brian)-

A complete page, yet. Gee wizz. Many thanks, though, for the kind words on HELL 1. Dave Seale was of the opinion that nobody loved him.

THE GERBISH CHRISTMAS COMBO 1971 (Gerb) (Who else!)

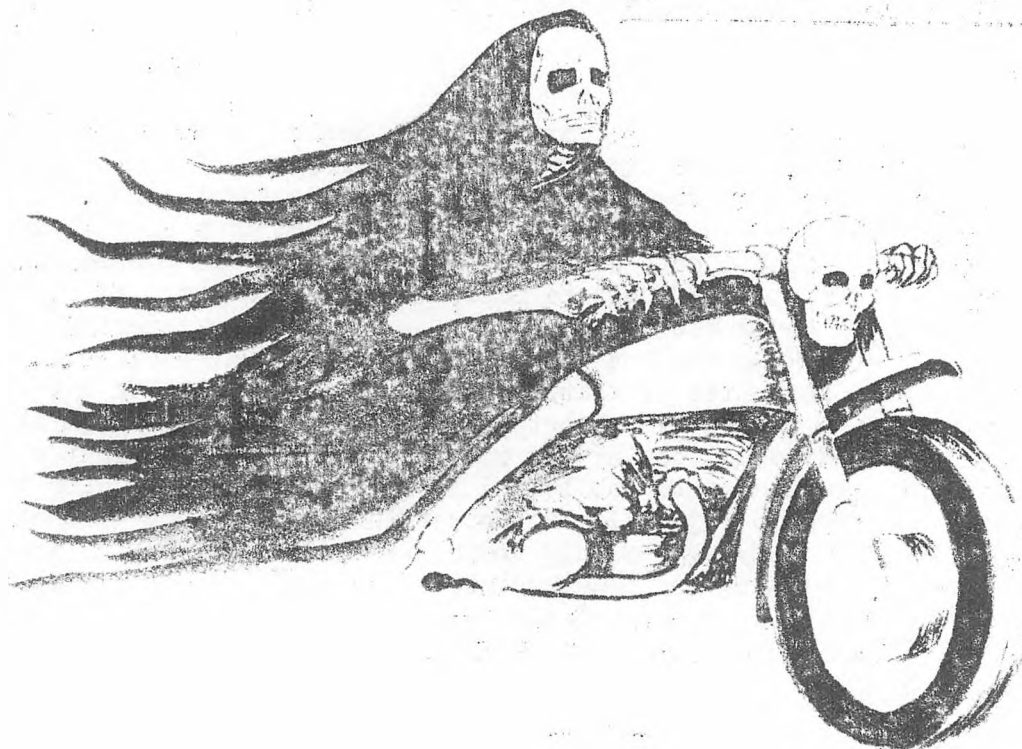
@@@Skel@@@

What on earth have you done to offend kench? I make this 10 pages of A4, which

kench makes equivalent to 6 quarto pages ?? No doubt our overworked AE has dropped one this time. About time too, I was beginning to think he wasn't human. Freudian snails ? Jeezuzkryst no ! That's going too far. As a special favour I shalln't write to you. This will cut down on your unwanted mail, despite being such a huge sacrifice on my behalf. In passing..... I seem to find Gerbefforts difficult to read, whilst at the same time, liking them considerably. Badly set out, perhaps.... A pale grey asterisk isn't really enough to break up the long A4 page into individual reviews...and you an information scientist at that. Black polluted canal? On a recent trip to Londinium we passed over a bright orange river...and I thought the Goyt was filthy... Remember seeing the canal in Manchester a bright pea-green? I almost expected it to bubble and slobber when I looked over the edge at it. You seem to enjoy all the travelling you do...not me though. Said trip to the big city was my only train trip in a year, but I finished up with a gromphy migraine and a determination to avoid such trips in the future. Personally I'll be well pleased when someone invents the matter transmitter. Nice to see a zine-sized zine.

F.H.T.V. 5 (John 'n' Jane) I really enjoyed this, you two, but it might just be 'cos I was in a receptive (i.e. similar) state of mind.....ain't luv wunnerful!?!? Fortunately I don't have to trek 400 miles. Distance does have one advantage though.....you get to read far more SF. Mmmm, maybe that isn't quite the advantage I used to imagine it would be. I like the sound of the ~~pijs~~ / ~~yps~~ parties. Reminds me of the odd drunkfest chez Skel, although I preferred fewer guests, being accountable to my parents over the condition of such piddling inconsequentials as furniture etc. Also, I'm dead nosy and like to eavesdrop on everybody, which tends to get confusing with more than half - a - dozen guests. (This is all really an excuse 'coz I only know about six people who would be prepared to lower themselves enough to come to one of my 'parties'.) Yes, a nice cozy zine....BUT NO MAILING COMMENTS!!! Why bother to be in OMPA if you don't read the other zines....Oh, you do read them? Then for Skel's sake please comment!!! Gas is reading FHTV now, laughing at all the dirty bits. They must be dirty bits or else Gas wouldn't be laughing. I'm glad you pinched a leaf from Kench's book and coloured the cover. Turned out rather pretty. Did you squirm over the word 'pretty'? Lots of people do nowadays. I suppose that in this age of superlatives it falls into the category of 'damning with faint praise'. Pity, because it's too useful a word to be left to fall into disuse.

WHATSIT 22 (Kench) Loved the colour cover. I would have thought that anyone who could colour that well would have been able to draw better though. Some of the interior artwork was bloody awful. I'm still not sure about that one on page five, unless it was some alien 'early Jurastic swamp' (was it swampy in the



early Jurassic? I can't be bothered looking it up). Bad as they were, they were better than no illo's at all. The fact that religion is the only mandatory subject in English schools has nothing to do with superstition. It merely shows up the power of the Church in even these so called unreligious times. The mere fact that a school didn't provide adequate religious instruction would count against it in these times when more schools want their share of the cake, hence nobody kicks against the traces. I am intrigued by your scale of punishments... "...from death for murder.....to severer punishments for assault..." What the hell are you advocating? The death of a thousand cuts? Boiling in oil? Re: Northern Ireland....Notice who always seems to be throwing the stones etc. in the news films? Youths. Youths who have presumably left school and are unable to get jobs (well they aren't working and they aren't at school, are they). This is just the section of the community with a grievance, an adventurous spirit and at the same time lacking the sense of social responsibility that would prevent them starting trouble...(hmm, fire everyone over sixty and give their jobs to unemployed people under, say, 20? Might help at that, 65 year olds can't throw petrol bombs as far as 18 year olds can.) With regard to the IRA the Eire government finds itself in the position of he who rides the tiger.... Improving OMPA? Maybe it's too easygoing. Let's face it, if UL 26 gets by then absolutely anything goes. Something like this is positively DIS-couraging, even though it didn't get any activity count. How about a compulsory mailing? Minimum activity requirement 20pp per annum, of which at least 10 must be in, say, the January mailing.?? Seems like I've said this before somewhere, but I'm bugged if I can remember where. Democratic thing to abolish art? Not at all, but the tiny minority who appreciate it should be made to pay for it. I'll admit that this would boil down to the same thing as very few would appreciate a classical concert enough to pay, say, £20.00 per ticket.

.....and now for something completely different.....er, well almost. A guest review, so to speak. Whilst your two dashing and intrepid editors were allocating the mailing, each unto the other, in strolled Roy Sharpe bent on convincing said editors into supporting his favourite charity. Having swelled the coffers of Manchester City F.C. to the tune of a staggering 10p we proceeded to get our own back by inveigling him into reviewing one of the zines. As luck would have it, this was.....

IS 2 (Tom) Shades of SFR (R.I.P.)!!! Similar size, similar layout, similar style, similar format, even the redoubtable Tim Kirk seems to have crept into the IS camp. All this I noticed within seconds of being handed the zine and so it was with bated breath that I crept to my bed relishing the thought of not only being able to read this beloved tome but also silently blessing Paul and Brian for giving me the opportunity to pen my praises. God what a sap I was. Lord knows I've read some poor literature in my time (I even managed three issues of HELL) but IS really takes the biscuit, and by that I mean it's crummy.

But hold! Before I start pulling it to pieces let's have a look at the good articles in this zine.....Right. That's that done. Now for the rest of it. Most of the contributors seem to be preoccupied with either astrology or death or both. I don't mind either subject in moderation but enough is enough. And why is it that many of the articles seem totally incomprehensible? I know I'm not a genius but I think I have a fair level of intelligence and yet there

are sections of the zine where I don't understand a single word for a whole page or even more. Consequently it cannot hold the reader's interest and I fail to see the point of putting such stuff into a fanzine.

In an attempt to be as fair as I can I must admit that the artwork was of a high quality and the repro in general was fair. There are also two articles worth a mention. The letter to a draftee was a real eye-opener and well worth including. The only other thing that earned its place, in my opinion, was "Who'll Die for Glue?" which was amusing while not humorous and which bore a moral while not being philosophical. What is more the poem "I Love My Flag" which follows it was even better and must come high on the list of contenders for best article in the zine. Not bad considering it doesn't even rate a mention in the list of contents.

If in the future I ever produce a zine of my own, I hope Tom Collins never reviews it. Presumably he likes the stuff he's published, and so I hope he won't like anything I ever produce.

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AND  
 NOW  
 FOR  
 SUMMER '77

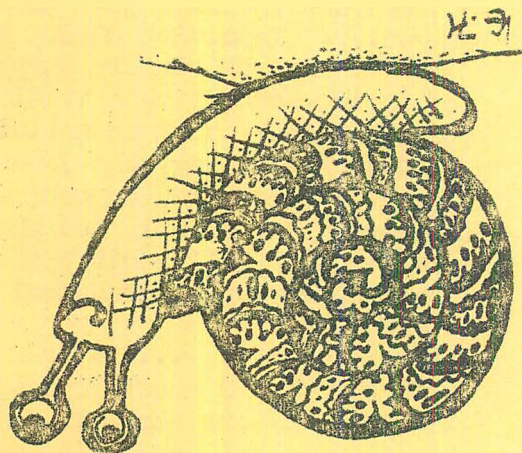
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

We promised you a masterpiece by the beautiful Eustace Eugene McGee for this issue, so, to maintain consistency, it happens next!!! Or so we're saying at the moment. If we can deliver Mike Meera to pull his dirt out in time (sorry, Mike), the second part of his wondrous jazz guitar bit will be featured. And (hold on to whatever you hold on to when you're told to!!) we will be running a piece of fiction, no less. No details here revealed, but I will say that it's quite serious fiction, as opposed to the sludge we've so far slung at you. Mind you, we do have some sludge on hand, dredged directly from the depths of Dave Seale's somewhat grubby little mind. This however, may be held over to no. 6. Then again you might run out of luck and find it in no. 5.

Mike Meera, Vincent van Skol, Brian, Cy Chauvin.  
 Mike's next issue will be by such favourites as :- Terry Jeeves,

Also, maybe, a couple of poems by Cy

EOHHH!!! What a mixture!!!!



# THE



"O.K.  
Ingvii!  
Here's  
where  
you  
get  
yours!"



# CONFRONTATION



## THE STORY OF THE JAZZ GUITAR

by Mike Mearns

### Part One: In The Beginning..

In the beginning there was the banjo. And the banjo begat the guitar as a rhythm instrument. And the guitar as a rhythm instrument begat the guitar as a solo instrument.

This is the way the story of the jazz guitar begins, although strangely enough a pre-1895 photograph of the very first jazz band, under the leadership of the legendary Buddy Bolden, shows a guitarist among the group. This is an exception however - the great majority of "strummers" for the next thirty years or more used the banjo.

The jazz bands of New Orleans, generally recognised as the birthplace of Jazz, made little use of the piano, since such an unwieldy instrument obviously had no place in the marching bands and brass bands which were such an important ingredient in the melting-pot of jazz. In addition, the pianos of that time had larger "harps" or string-frames than modern pianos, and could not be tuned up to the pitch of the brass instruments. Hence the responsibility for providing the harmonic bass of the music fell to the banjoist, and probably the greatest of the early banjoists was John St. Cyr. Although he started out as a guitarist, by the time of the first jazz records he was playing mostly banjo. He had that indefinable thing that all jazz fans recognise - swing. To expect anyone to swing on a stodgy instrument like the banjo is asking rather a lot, but by subtly accenting the steady four beats to the bar he was able to do this, in addition providing a full and sure harmonic bass.

Very occasionally St. Cyr would play a solo, and his solo work, although competent, lacks the inspiration of his rhythm playing. It is common among jazz guitarists that a remarkable soloist may be merely competent as an accompanist, and vice versa. Possibly this is not really surprising, since the guitar is the only jazz instrument called upon to play this dual role to such an extent. Around 1905, St. Cyr would go along to watch other guitarists at work, to see if he could pick up any tips. In his own words "I didn't get too much from most of these guitar players though". At this early stage he was way out in front.

The person who really emancipated the jazz guitar was Eddie Lang. Born Salvatore Massaro in Philadelphia, he was the youngest of ten children. His father Dominic was a guitarist and instrument-maker, and made the young Eddie a special guitar suitable for his small hands. Apart from his father's basic instruction, Lang was entirely self-taught on guitar. He had an amazingly good "ear", and didn't need to read music for either guitar or banjo. He became an admirer of the classical guitarist Andres Segovia, whose influence was to be seen later in Lang's unique solo style.

Lang began playing professionally at the age of fifteen, in a small group with violinist Joe Venuti, later to become his close friend and musical associate. At this time he was playing mainly banjo, although also an expert on the

guitar, mandolin and ukelele. By 1920 his unique single-string banjo style was attracting wide attention, but because of his mother's objections it was not until 1923 that he was able to leave Philadelphia for New York. His first recordings were made in 1924 as a member of a novelty group, The Mound City Blue Blowers, in which he played guitar exclusively. From then on his services as an accompanist were in demand, and during the next few years he appeared with a large number of different groups of many different types.

*Eddie Lang*  
1902-1933



In 1927 the Venuti-Lang partnership was put on a permanent basis with the appearance of the first of a long series of recordings, first as a duo and later with larger groups. These are probably the recordings for which Lang is most famous; the combination of Venuti's fantastically swinging violin and Lang's dynamic and inventive rhythm playing has never been equalled to this day, though the other famous violin-guitar duo of Stephane Grappelly and Django Reinhardt came very close to it.

Venuti's personality was as fiery as his playing, and was the cause of endless trouble with almost everyone who came into contact with him, be they club-owners, paying customers or even, on occasion, gangsters. He was also a great practical joker, and the amazing situations he got himself (and his colleagues) into are too numerous to mention. Eddie was the only one who could deal with Joe, and could usually be relied on to sort things out somehow. Grappelly and Reinhardt had a similar sort of relationship, in this case the gypsy-born Reinhardt being the excitable one and Grappelly the peacemaker.

In 1928 Lang began a series of guitar duet recordings with Lonnie Johnson, a popular negro guitarist and vocalist. Lang used the name "Blind Willie Dunn" for these recordings, as it was considered a more attractive name for the Negro market at which the records were aimed. As on many of the small-group recordings with Joe Venuti, Lang stays mainly in the background, providing marvellous counterpoint for Johnson's fluid, ringing blues improvisation. The contrast between the two guitarists on these recordings is fascinating, for although Johnson's solos are far more swinging than Lang's, his ideas are somewhat limited and he tends to repeat himself. Nevertheless, these records are classics of their kind. Johnson himself thought a great deal of them, and of Lang. "He was a fine man. The sides I made with him were my greatest experience", he said. Lang was one of the first

white jazz musicians to integrate with negro musicians, often going to Harlem to "sit in" with their bands.

In contrast to his rhythm playing, recorded examples of Lang's solowork are mainly disappointing. Swing and dexterity are strangely lacking; indeed, many of his solos sound to me as if they were not improvised at all, but composed by Lang beforehand! However, the musical ideas contained therein are very interesting and advanced for the guitar at the time, and Lang must be considered as the first important jazz guitar soloist.

The stock-market crash of 1929 and the depression which followed had a disastrous effect on the jazz scene. Large bands were forced to cut their overheads and Joe and Eddie, then members of the Paul Whiteman orchestra, had to leave along with many others. This marked the end of their permanent band association, although they made many more record dates together. Lang joined Bing Crosby as accompanist, and on Bing's insistence a clause had to be written into the latter's contract, stipulating that Lang was to be the accompanist on all of Bing's records and that Lang should also appear on stage with him. They appeared together in a film in 1932 and at this time Lang was one of the highest paid accompanists and sidemen in musical history. But it was not to last: on 26th March 1933 he died as a result of complications developing after a tonsillectomy. He was the first of several great jazz guitarists to die at a tragically early age. The sudden death of Eddie Lang left a void. Who would be great enough to fill it?

----- to be continued -----

#### Bibliography

- Keepnews & Grauer Jr. - A Pictorial History of Jazz
- St. Cyr - Jazz as I Remember It (Jazz Journal 1966/67)
- Panassie - The Real Jazz (chap. 11)
- DuPage - Stringing The Blues (LP sleeve notes)

#### Recommended Records

1. STRINGING THE BLUES Vol.1 (C.B.S. BPG 62143) (Deleted). Contains 4 Venuti/Lang duets, 1 Lang solo, 3 Lang/Johnson duets + 8 others.
2. STRINGING THE BLUES Vol.2 (C.B.S. BPG 62144) (Deleted). Contains 1 Lang/Johnson duet, 1 Lang solo + many Lang/Venuti larger groups.
3. BLUE GUITARS Vol.1 (Parlophone PMC 7019). Contains 6 Lang/Johnson duets, 4 Lang solos + 6 others.
4. BLUE GUITARS Vol.2 (Parlophone PMC 7106). Contains 4 Lang/Johnson duets, 3 Lang solos + 4 others.
5. BIX & TRAM 1928 (Parlophone PMC 7100). Bix Beiderbecke (cornet) & Frank Trumbauer (saxophone) with Lang on 10 tracks.
6. ANNETTE HANSHAW (Halcyon HAL 5). Twenties vocalist with Lang on 7 tracks.

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~~~~~ - FIRE - ~~~~~  
~~~~~ - BUST - ~~~~~

@@@Skel@@@

((((Brian)))

GRAY BOAK 6 Hawks Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, 1KT 3EG.

Regarding HELL 3: I await HELL 4. I much prefer your even - numbered issues. Technically HELL 3 is a good improvement, though there is still some difficulty in reading some pages. More ink, perhaps? Layout is pleasant if uninspired. As for the subject matter - I liked your letter column (though my previous comment still applies) and mailing comments.

@@@Excerpt from Gray's LOC in HELL 3, just in case anybody (tut, tut!) didn't read same... "Incidentally you shouldn't interrupt letters....."@@@

To the T4 saga: Why should I have included T4's writings in T5? Everyone in OMPA had received T4 anyway - copies without the mailing comments. T5 included the part of T4 that OMPA members hadn't already received. Elsewhere, you are moaning about the absence of mailing comments - here you criticise me for including them! Make up your mind. It's not as if I do mailing comments very often -

@@@It's not as if you do ZINES very often.....@@@

it seems unfair to deprive the membership of their ogoboo one of the few times that I did. Er..... this is really talking to Skel, isn't it? Never mind. I have no doubt that he'll read it. I suppose that I should send the guy a letter, but I find it difficult enough to write letters to people I find pleasant and interesting, let alone him and Pete Colley. The reason I got steamed up about HELL 1 was that it was a bad fanzine, and there are far too many of them in British fandom. The particular reason that allowed me to let rip at HELL 1 in particular is probably summed up in the last sentence in section two: I must admit that my conscience is rather sensitive about the fanzines I receive and don't LOC. And it seems unfair to lace into a fanzine - no matter how bad - that doesn't attack me personally.

The attack on Joe is unfair - I could just as easily attack you for providing a zine to put Skel's mailing comments in. So far there have been three issues of BINARY (second time around) - I had mailing comments in one of them. At the same time I've put out a TRANSPLANT and two CYNIC's. (There is another CYNIC on stencil, and it would have been out long ago but my duper bust.) I don't bother putting out a zine very often? What's the number of this HELL? 24? I don't think that I'm a nasty 'orrible person either -

@@@There you go Gray, wrong again.....@@@

though I admit to a mean streak if I'm riled. The running feud in HELL 3's Pages was fun - but that crack about Joe was just plain nasty. I don't think Skel's a half-wit - I did, but my opinion has dropped by 0.5.

To answer Peter Linnett (who appears to have read eighteen thousand SF stories at least) I haven't yet read my first story about translating machines, let alone my thousandth. I may have read my thousandth story including translating machines - quite likely, though I'd hate to prove it by counting them. That, however, is quite a different matter. (18,000 stories at half an hour each, half the day for reading, is over two years solid reading of nothing but SF - not counting novels, because that would take much longer. No wonder he's fed up with SF - he must have been doing nothing else with his spare time since he learned to read.) But, seriously, if my thousandth story about (say) telepathy turned out to be as original and outstanding as 'AND CHAOS DIED', or about (say) Bug-Eyed Monsters as was 'THE DANCE OF THE CHANGER AND THREE', or (say) spacowarp/mutations as was 'THE STARPIT' - then I'd think it worthwhile.

You can't improve SF by removing all that makes it SF.

Is Peter Linnett a pseudonym for Skel? Or Pete Colley? (No, I apologise for that. I've no reason to assume Pete Colley is always pea-brained just because he's a fugg-head). Apart from saying that, in my universe, Centauri and worry don't rhyme, that is all. I think that you could produce a better fanzine by yourself, though.

@@@O.K. I goofed. I neglected to go back to the source and check on why you only included T4's mailing comments. This in no way alters my contention that the 'balance' of the zine was all wrong. I did not say that there was too much mailing comment, but too high a percentage of mailing comment, a totally different matter. That should have been obvious from my remark about including other material. I'm rather confused as to why you should be attacking Pete Colley in a loc on HELL 3. Could it be that you really are the creep I take you for? Your arrogance doesn't tend to make you more likeable either. You take for granted the fact that your opinion is a judgement of absolute value instead of conceding the possibility of the existence of other, equally valid, opinions which may be diametrically opposed to your own. In other words, some people, without having their arms twisted, admitted to liking HELL 1. You called Pete Colley a fugg-head, and then exhibit all the symptoms of fugg-headedness yourself in explaining why you felt free to lace into HELL 1. The fact that a zine doesn't attack you in no way increases its intrinsic merit. If it is a crudzine then you should not slack off just because it says nice things about Gray Boak.

Please pass on to Joe my apologies for my 'attack' on him. It was meant to be an attack on you, but I now see how it could have been misconstrued. My remark about you not bothering to put a zine together very often was not aimed at the total number of your zines, but about the frequency of them. What really got up my nose was being raked over (beautifully, though, beautifully) by a bloke who didn't even have a zine in the mailing. Oh, I know the credits said 'Joe & Gray', but BINARY 'is' Joe's. I'm not running a feud with you, either, it's just that I plain don't like you, or rather, I dislike those aspects of you which are most manifest in your dealings with me. Perhaps I just bring out the worst in people. Christ though, I wish CYNIC wasn't such a good zine, then I could really go to town on you. Small minded? Certainly, but then I also get steamed up on occasion.@@@

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JOHN PIGGOTT Jesus College, Cambridge, CB5 8BL.

It's funny, isn't it? You two actually seem to like the crap letters I write. And it isn't only you, either. Though I say it myself and shouldn't, when I was at the Globe last month, no less a person than Gregory Fred Pickersgill himself told me that he liked the letters I've written to him in the past. Well, there's no accounting for taste, I suppose. So here I am, continuing my valiant efforts to become 1995's answer to Harry Warner and the first person to win HELL's Running-Off-At-The-Mouth Award twice running.

Skel, I don't know whether you're a fool, or merely a poor sod who doesn't keep back copies of his own zine. Allow me to quote from page 35 of HELL 2: "...and a couple of 'we also heard from' snippets...JOHN PIGGOTT thought that GRIPE WATER was too long...the only part he seemed to like was the review section..." Now maybe that isn't exactly the WAHF column, but it is certainly part of a WAHF col. Yet what do I find? In your madness you have denied that I was ever in the WAHF column, while the mimeographed evidence is staring me full in the face in black-hearted letters this high!

(( ( I'm sure that Skel regrets causing you all this trouble, John. But I have to admit that it's all my fault. Y'see, the secondary WAHF bit was just about the last thing run off in H-2, and in the rush to get collated etc I neglected to tell him of it, and he obviously didn't see it when looking through the final product. Er..you know that drink I'm buying you in Chester? Make it two! )))

So to CROSS-FIRE. Your lettercolumn is still terribly laid out. Apart from pages 28 & 29 which don't look too bad, for reasons that will become apparent. For God's sake, it's too damn cramped by a mile! Haven't you heard of leaving lines between paragraphs? You aren't that hard up for room, surely? Leave  $\frac{1}{2}$  a line between each paragraph in the letter; leave a whole line between the letter and your comments; leave a line blank between the writer's name and his first paragraph; indent the paragraphs of the letter as it is written. You may use up an extra sheet of paper, but in terms of better layout and a more professional look, it'll be worth it.

(( ( I think you'll find this more to your liking, John. But please do go on..)))

Now don't just sit back on your arses and snigger at this. For God's sake DO THIS. Make it look decent. Get Skel to do some small illos to illustrate the various points raised by your correspondents. Aton did something along these lines for a recent SCOTTISHE. And find a firm that will electrostencil them for you in time to put them in the lettercol in the next issue.

Pages 28 & 29 are better than the others because you've left decent sized spaces between the letters - it breaks up the page; makes it less formidable to read. Your spacing of comments within each letter has given the appearance of breaking each letter into bits...i.e. paragraphs.

(( ( It's all true. And I especially like the idea of the little illos for each letter. You may recall that we did something rather similar, though on a small scale, for the zine reviews in No.2. Of course, what will happen is that the letter that most deserves an illo will arrive too late to do anything about. Re electro's, we've found a new firm to do them - only time will tell if they're better than the last lot. )))

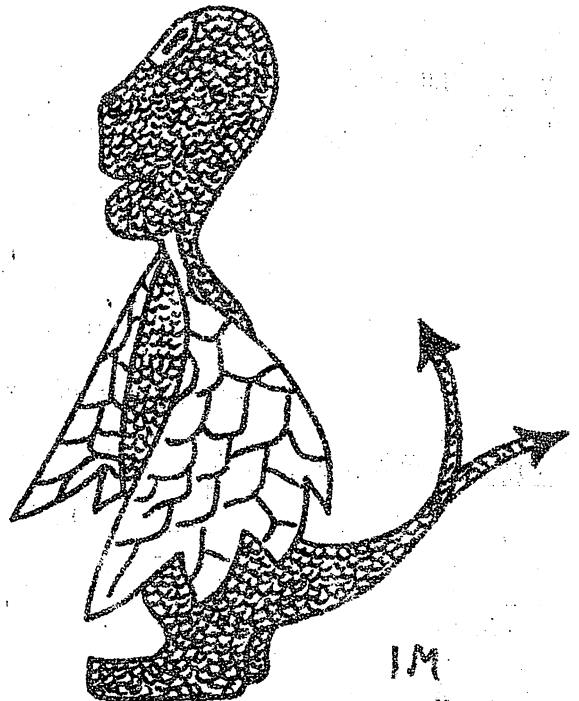
As to the actual content of the letters, I find I have little to say about them, since it seems I wrote half the column anyway. Left is the Mearas' article which I thoroughly liked, and Bo-ak's letter. Take comfort, Brian and Paul! Boak liked LIMBO in your second issue, which means that he doesn't have any critical ability whatsoever, and therefore any comments, adverse or otherwise, which he chooses to make about HELL may be discarded...treated with the contempt they deserve. Inanities, indeed! And in the vulnerable Boak's letter I see you have taken some of my layout spiel to heart without being told. Robinson, Skelton, there is hope for you yet. And as we welcome the end, let us meditate briefly on the wondrous use of teletype paper...

(( ( If you're puzzled by that last bit, folks, let me explain that John's letter was the first I ever received that had to be measured in inches rather than pages. All 36 inches in fact. Re Gray's letter, he did say that we were improving, so perhaps there's more than mere hope for us. )))

(( ( Then eight days later came another letter from John..... )))

What little praise I've heard for HELL from other people (and very little it is, too) appears in the main to be pro-Brian and anti-Skel. I was down at the Globe a couple of days ago, and a most entertaining HELL destruction was had by me, Gray and Greg Pickersgill. Greg in particular seems really pissed off with you. Says that HELL 2 was a blatant pinch from FOULER. Ho ho ho. Meanwhile Boak had some acid things to say about people who drop into fandom and produce a zine after six weeks, and think they know it bloody all.

(( ( Now this is really interesting. If Greg thinks that HELL 2 was a pinch from ye FOULER, then I would have preferred that he told us so himself. No use in saying that he'll review HELL in FOULER....from what I hear the next issue may appear in time for my hair to turn grey. As for being a pinch, he's talking out of the bottom of his beer mug. Gray, too, never said a thing to us on what you here report. And he's up the pole as well. Let him show me where we said anything about doing a zine after being in fandom only 6 weeks. Yet again, Gray seems to be committing the common sin of not properly reading what is set before him. )))



IM

ARCHIE MERCER 21 Trenethick Parc, Helston, Cornwall.

It seems to me that HELL 3 represents something of a retreat from the strong position taken up by HELL 2. In other words, I was a wee bit disappointed at the contents this time. "Isn't it a horrible cover", said Beryl. "Yes", I agreed. Clever but horrible. In itself the cover is doubtless good art - however, it puts one (this one, anyway) in no mood to enjoy what follows. More to the point perhaps, nor does what follows on the whole! The two front-editorials are all right - they say things. "Dear Mr. Pellington" is doubly unexpected - the general frame itself in a fanzine, and the punchline within the frame - which is two counts in it's favour. I'm not quite sure whether or not I like it, though, which probably means I couldn't care less and is therefore a count against it. Roy Sharpe continues to make space flight sound unattractive. I don't dig his table either - it appears, on the face of it, that "fecal output" occurs twice on the right hand side of the equation. Either that, or there isn't enough explanatory matter attached to the table in question.

@@@Nope, one definitely says "fecal water" and is just the water content of said "fecal output"@@@

Mailing reviews, not in this case being brilliant in themselves (not unbrilliant either perhaps, but simply straightforward) are more or less irrelevant to a long-time-non-member of that (doubtless still) excellent fraternity. "Gripe Water" about Northern Ireland is the best thing in the issue - it's not only honest, but good. Peter Linnett sounds like a poor man's Moorecock of maybe five years ago and the limericks are like limpericks. Letters and Malcolm Sharpe - printing every letter in full is a hell (!) of a waste of time and paper. The ideal is to be selective enough that when you quote a correspondent on a given topic, you quote at sufficient length not to misrepresent what he's said. There'll always be the odd instance when someone expresses dissatisfaction nevertheless - but that can be sorted out in the following issue with luck and good management. "SFIAWOL" could have been better titled, I think: "Meara, my love, to thee". So I must agree with Gray Boak - you don't make HELL 3 sound at all inviting. Better luck with HELL 4, the return of the massed invertebrates, and so on.

@@@Personally I reckon Mike will be seething at not thinking of that title himself. I reckon any zine gets more 'fannish' if plenty of illo's are available. No matter how humorous, pages of nothing but print always seem more serious...@@@

ROGER WADDINGTON 4 Commercial Street, Norton, Malton, YORKSHIRE.(HURRAH)  
Is that melange on the cover supposed to represent the turmoil going on inside a Hell-reader's head? Those eyes, especially, much like the way the signs go up in a one-armed bandit...any connection? Admit it now, that letter from the sweet little old lady (as an Analog serial of yonks ago has it) was a rip-off from IT or Friendz, wasn't it? I seem to remember something of the sort from one of their past issues; or are there any similar old ladies out Manchester way? And they say the rainy climate leads to a lot of profanity.....

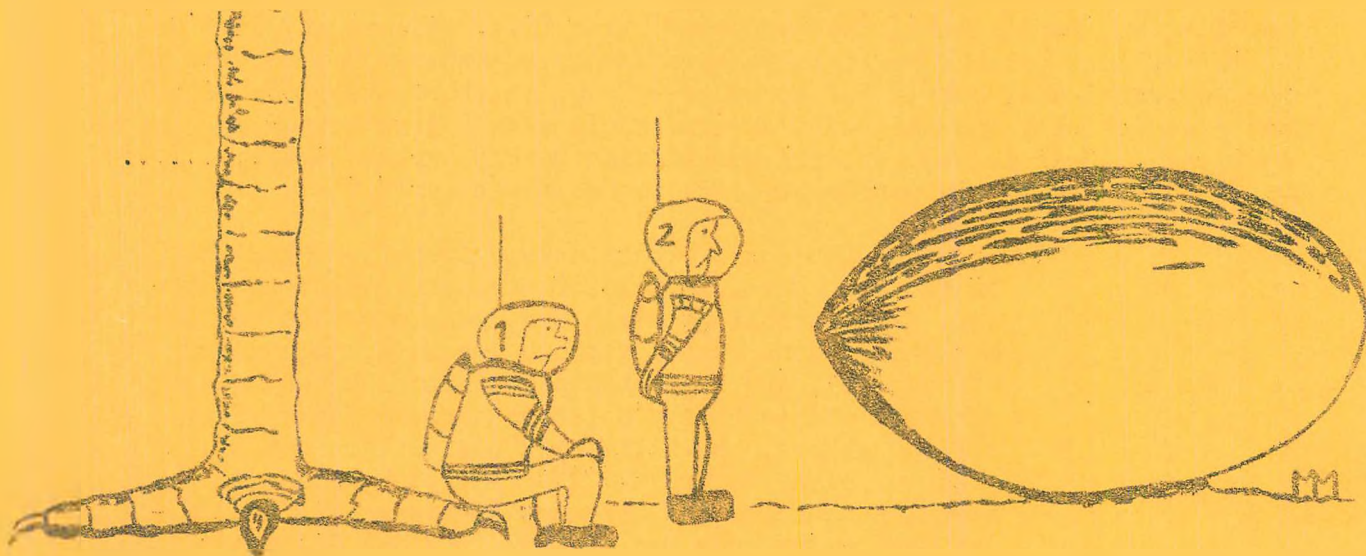
@@@ Ghu knows where "The Letter" originated. A photocopy of it appeared on my desk one day, out of a clear blue sky, some eighteen months ago@@@

The Revolution? What Peter's looking for seems to be speculative fiction rather than SF; which, taking as its Bible the latest incarnation of New Worlds, seems to be rapidly vanishing up a cul-de-sac... The news is that there is a revolution going on in SF; sure, most readers still want space-men, alien planets and the rest, and publishers and authors have to conform to this image as best they can, because otherwise the bottom will drop out of the market and their jobs with it. But we're gradually being educayed into a new vision of SF by such authors and editors as Robert Silverberg, Damon Knight, and Ejler Jakobsson, to name a few; but I have a feeling that this revolution might be a little too slow for Peter - that he'd like to see John Jakes, Poul Anderson, Mack Reynolds (name your own!) vanish utterly under a hail of machine-gun fire from Jerry Cornelius. SF is evolving; it has been since those (not so far-off) Gernsbackian days: but if he goes away and comes back in two or three years, he might be pleasantly surprised. Or does he want to go on wearing that hair shirt?

I'll be interested to see what you make of those two Silverberg anthologies (for reasons of my own!).

@@@Not this issue you won't. No space!@@@

are these the only two titles being passed around Manchester fandom? I hope Heinlein's last novel won't be WTFNE; I'd like to see him go on writing better and better novels (well, he can't write much worse!) or at least going out with a bang rather than with a whimper.....I feel sure he's got at least one blockbuster of a book left inside him, that future fen



will read and then sit back with sighs of satisfaction, saying "ah, that was proper Heinlein, that was!" (obscure LotR reference.....)

@@@ Obscure indeed! Wassitmean? @@@

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DAVE SEALE 13 Rylands Street, Abbey Hey, Manchester.

I had never noticed that I worked in a vacuum until you sent to me your "Look, No Hands" copy of HELL 3 wafting its way gently down onto my desk the other day. In fact, I had to bury it under a Hoyle novel to keep it from floating away. Gone are the witticisms of Skel vs. Brian. Cartoons Nil.... humour Nil....and why was this issue filled with four-letter words like %f@\* and '&(!/ ? Jeese! Surely HELL isn't coming to its post-nova stage already? From what I've read in the CROSS-FIRE pages HELL is built on its lighthearted humour which gives it class.....without which HELL should just pack up, LoC Stock and Barrel.

(( ( How do you get your own back on someone who  
can easily refuse to pour out the tea at break?  
But thanks at least for the kind word 'class' )))

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DAVE ROWE 8 Park Drive, Wickford, Essex.

You two must be a couple of bigger knuckle-heads than even I took you for. Brian starts off with an editorial crying the impossibility of producing a zine without "cont'd on page whereveritis", and goes merrily along and does an 'impossible', 'non-composed' zine (i.e. without any Cont'ds) until the last but one page, where he suddenly remembers what he said in the editorial and, surely for no other reason, interrupts the LoCs with a one page article, and then cont'ds (and how!) with a last letter on the last page. Hell indeed, or will we get some feeble excuse like.....  
....." we wanted to giv paride ov place to Gray's letter!" ?

(( ( I hope you don't expect anyone to believe that bit of fiction, Dave. Instead of trying to think up possible excuses that we might use, consider that (a) we had indeed done a zine without a cont'd, and had run off page 31, (b) projected pages after 32 had been scrapped and (c) Gray's letter arrived yonks after all the others, and filled p32 perfectly. But giving pride of place to Gray??????? Really! We reserve that signal honour for the infamous personages in fandom - not that we've ever had a letter from Roj Gilbert)))

JOE PATRIZIO

7 Oakwood Road, Bricket Wood, St Albans, Herts.

This is not so much a LoC as a retort to certain comments made by you in HELL 3 (although I expect that some comments of a general nature will find their way in, despite my efforts to control them).

First, Skel's comments on BINARY 1011. The cover was hand-cut -- all the illos in B are, have been (except for a Hannes Bok cover that appeared some years ago) and always will be, probably, hand-cut. How this made a difference to what you saw on the paper, Skel, I don't presume to understand. What was there, was there, and whether it was done by hand or by electro seems to me to make no difference, yet you imply that it does -- explain please. And electro stencils are not, as you put it, infinitely superior; they are second best to the artists putting his work straight onto stencil himself. Of course, I'm talking about artists who really can cut a stencil; e.g. Arthur Thomson or Jim Cawthorne. Good as they are (and some of them are very good indeed) none of the young artists now working in fnz can cut a decent stencil.

@@@ Well... I look at the hand cut covers for, say, SCOTTISHE (Aton) and BASTION (Eddie Jones) and, good as they are, they are nowhere near as good as the electro'd covers for SFR...therefore I expect better quality reproduction from an electro  
..... I make allowances for material forced to be hand cut. Maybe the young artists of today are poorer 'craftsmen', but they are better artists, if the end results are anything to go by..@@@

I do not understand the reference to me and SMUGS; presumably it was meant to be unpleasant, but it's too subtle for me, I'm afraid. Skel is grossly unfair to Gray in his snide comment stuck on the end of the unpleasantry referred to above. Gray not only produces CYNIC and wrote a number of columns for other zines, he puts a lot of work in on BINARY. I edit it and cut the stencils, but Gray duplicates it, collates and anything else that has to be done -- usually at short notice because I can't get myself moving early enough. He does all this on his own, and still finds time to write to HELL.

@@@ According to you, Gray has a good chance of Saint-hood. So why must he be a right to inoffensive little me? Cos I'm a louse? A piffling excuse, that one. "I am a Child of the Universe: I have a Right to be Here..." which doesn't really apply, but which, in conclusion, has a nice ring to it.@@@

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PETER PRESFORD

10 Dalkeith Road, South Reddish, Stockport.

Paul's little thing was a load of crap when I first read it, but I thought it was so bad I'd better read it again. Result? That boy's got guts (not the beer type, like Brian's). Yep, it was okay - made me think

of those days when I was in love....er....don't tell the wife! Every time I read through INFERNO I wonder if Pete Colley and I should bung MALFUNCTION into OIPA, so that I'll know what the hell you're talking about.

(( ( I daren't answer that one, Pete ol' fruit. I mean, I have seen MALFUNCTION and...I reserve judgement for the moment.)))

Large footsteps in GRIPE WATER, lad. You're putting your size 13s on dangerous ground. Calling the Irish a sub-species is bad on your part, and shows a lack of understanding. This is the hardest thing I can dig you with. The Irish can, and do, live in peace; only fractions like the I.R.A. won't allow it. One great dollop of blame must sit firmly in the laps of the Eire government for allowing the I.R.A. to operate unhindered. Or perhaps they know what will happen to them if they don't.

(( ( For an illegal organisation, the I.R.A. enjoy the most ridiculous freedom in Eire. For a government who are interested in the ultimate unity of Ireland their apparent indifference to the I.R.A. is impossible to understand. The terrorist campaign in the North is dividing the sections of the community so far apart that unity will never become a reality. The much-discussed Protestant backlash is almost a certainty.)))

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ROB HOLDSTOCK      15 Highbury Grange, London N.5.

I suppose you'd like some comment, then...hmmmm, well, I'm sure Imogene Useless Nogg will turn out to be L.C. And the article sounds crap, so I hope she knows what she's at. Articles are very difficult things to (a) write if you're a writer, and (b) order up if you're an editor. Roy Sharpe's article is utter tedium, and I don't think it has a place in HELL. Didn't (doesn't fit. As the actress.....

(( ( Shows how wrong you can be, eh? What L.C. will think of your equating her with the article I don't know. The writer prefers to remain anonymous for very good reasons. You're so right about articles in general. We've been lucky, or otherwise, depending on how you look at things, in that we've yet to actually order an article. Those we've received have been generously donated without pleas from our side.)))

And GRIPE WATER said badly what a lot of people think, though I must confess that you did it very Campbellesquely; and I'm afraid that, although you make a good case for understanding Irish twots, I still hate them with all my heart. So who said this was going to be an intellectual, or even a

reasonable letter? It's late and I hate the sound of Ian Paisley and the Irish people turn me off.

(( ( I can't say that I was ever turned on by them,  
so you're in good company. )))

HELL seems to suffer from a lack of identity. It's half SF fanzine, half political dishwater, half a struggling social rag. That makes an interesting total. I dislike zines like this immensely. I'm afraid it has no character, nothing that distinguishes it from many other fanzines on my shelf. I will admit that it is ambitious, but that was a mistake in itself because it's half the trouble behind the facelessness of the publication. Don't stop doing HELL (not that you would) but why not try and make it a bit more original? How did you print the cover of HELL 3, by the way???? Electro-stencil? How'd you get no wrinkles in it?

(( ( The lack of identity etc etc is something that we are both aware of, and steps will hopefully be taken to correct this situation. I'm not at all sure of the end result, but as time goes on I think we'll become more like the sort of thing that we originally envisaged. The cover? Yes, indeed, an electro!! Harping back a little to Joe's letter, I would have to be convinced that such a cover could have been hand cut at all, let alone hand cut well. As for the lack of wrinkles; installing it on the duper with more care than a midwife gives a newly arriving nipper!!! )))

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IAN MAULE 59 Windsor Terrace, South Shields, Co. Durham.

Hell! There I was, all ready to comment on HELL 2, when HELL 3 slides through the letter-box. But oh, what a come-down. Are you trying to give fandom a bad name or summat, by only publishing a 32 page zine?

(( ( I'm a poor little innocent. Tell me, someone,  
is that a touch of sarcasm? Huh? )))

Peter Linnett talks a load of shit. It's the readers, not the authors who are in a rut. As long as the general reader accepts the same old themes over and over and over again, then of course the authors will continue to write such stories. If readers were more selective in their buying, publishers would see which type of SF books were selling, and so print more of the same. But we mustn't forget that a large proportion of readers only buy SF occasionally, and therefore only have vague ideas of how SF has developed over the years: would they know the difference between 'Old Style' ideas and 'New Style' ideas? I think not. If 'lesser' authors such as Zelazny, Disch, etc were given the same publicity as Asimov and Clarke are in this

country, then perhaps we would begin to see changes occurring in the reading habits of the general SF public. But until that day I'm afraid we'll have to put up with books like "Runts of 61 Cygni C" for a little longer.

(( ( I agree that publishers and authors will produce the sort of stuff that sells best, but I'm not sure that your proposed solution would work. Staunch Asimov and Clarke fans who've tried Disch and Lazny and decided that they prefer the former are hardly likely to be swayed by any amount of publicity in favour of the latter, while lovers of the 'newer' authors probably wouldn't be seen dead with, say, Russell's WASP within miles. I wish you'd defined 'occasionally'. I only buy SF occasionally these days, but I'm well aware of what's been changing in the last few years. You give me the impression that buying SF occasionally means one book every ten months or so. )))

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OTHERS, TOO, TOOK THE TROUBLE TO WRITE.....

Mike Meara, whose letter Paul seems to have completely forgotten, said a good many things, some complimentary and some highly obscene (could this be why Paul forgot the letter?).

Peter Linnett, asking plainly for a copy of No. 4, which is nice of him.

Mike Sandow, whose letter was interesting, but difficult to quote from.

Keith Freeman, a letter that I completely forgot, for which many apologies.

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APOLOGIES also to all those nice bods who wrote to us last time, and whose names we forgot to mention in the W.A.H.F. section (or non-section).

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"I wish it to be universally known that, despite the sterling efforts of the editors of this publication, the population of the world will double by the year 2000 A.D. Don't you think that this is a little queer?"

Robin Christopher Gillon,

15/3/72.

Poetry occasionally touches me sufficiently for me to enjoy it. Yeats, Poe, Pope, more recently Sydney Carter and a single poem by Houseman - all have left their mark. I do like poetry, despite being accused by some people of having a block of ice where a heart should be. Perhaps these accusations stem from the fact that the people making them prefer heavily symbolic verse, whilst I gravitate towards the matter-of-fact.

Photography snared me last year, though I confess that I am a rank amateur. Some of the pictures I've (excuse me for saying it) "created" are best described as above - rank! But weilding a camera is great fun, and sometimes leads to the most ridiculous things. My visit to the Woodford Air Show last June was ostensibly to write an illustrated report on the show for MELL, and we finished up making the day a Minicon, describing the events at great length. Too damn long for some people. I'll be at Woodford again this year, but relax - no report this time. Other things that turn me on - I can skip over these lightly I think. Bacardi intoxicates me, while scotch imparts a warm glow. I play the guitar, oh so badly, for amusement, and often think it'd be rather nice to write a song.....but I keep arguing with my source of inspiration. Oh we.....

Enough of this - I have other things to relate. The first Friday in March was memorable, it's evening boredom being relieved by a visit from Mike and Pat Meara. Done out of a weekend with Pat's parents, they decided to settle for Manchester instead of Burnley. And very glad I was, too. An extremely pleasant evening it turned out to be. I can't for the life of me remember what we talked about for seven continuous hours, but they were here until 1-30 Saturday morning, at which time they left, taking a damn great pile of books and mags that Mike had purchased from me. For those of you who read Mike's motoring saga in No. 2 I can report that the car is still getting them about. Wonder of wonders!

Thursday March 9th I trolled along to the Free Trade Hall for my first Halle concert since 1968, knowing only that there was some Stravinsky on the programme. It turned out to be the FIREBIRD, which I thought was something like 15 minutes long. Oh no, a mere 4 minutes. But what an explosive 4 minutes! Sheer joy. The audience gave a great reception to the Israeli soloist in Brahms's Violin Concerto. Don't ask me his name - I couldn't spell it even if I could remember it. He was crippled by polio as a child, and plays sitting down. His interpretation of the concerto was absolutely fantastic. But the high point of the evening was Strauss' ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA - the whole work, not merely the bit that most people know. In parts this is one of the most disturbing pieces of music I've heard for a long time. Bitonal scoring has produced some haunting passages. I sincerely recommend this piece to anyone who hasn't heard the entire work. And at the risk of sounding flippant, I ought to say that the programme notes made not a single mention of "2001". Shucks.

@@@ Let's fact it, folks, where else would I be skulking if not in Brian's editorial? I'm hiding away from Arthur Boak's vengeance. Here-with a page of inconsequentials from both or either editors.....or maybe even Cas, who's comment so far is that Arthur Boak is a right obscenity, although she was somewhat led by Brian. Cas deserves to receive some mention here for all the stencil typing she has done for me, including the foulup at the end of the review of OFF TRAILS. She deserves some other mention forthat, but I'm too nice..... @@@

(( ( I'm not sure how this happened - I didn't see him hiding over there. I deny that I ever led Cas anywhere - I merely mentioned that Paul had used an obscenity in his para up there....."Arthur" in fact. I'm assured by a fan of great repute that dear Gray hates the name. Will this get me into the Skel-Boak war? Hope not - it's nice here on the sidelines. But I digress - we're supposed to be saying nothing special here, like Mike Meara's comment on the cover of TELL 3, quote "....looked as though it had been shat on from a great height!" )))

@@@ Mike didn't have a single power cut during the recent crisis. obviously he has connections....electrical ones at that. Memo to John Piggott :- I haven't failed to answer your letter - it's just that I haven't yet succeeded. Give me a few more months. Gerb, if you knew a Nicky, give her my regards...if not, don't. This may sound vague, but an 'almost' relation of mine was mentioned as being 'shacked up' with a student whose description fits you perfectly. On second thoughts, thoug, you probably wouldn't have the time, with all the rushing about you do...By the way, have you heard Alan Sherman's 'The Laarge Daark Aardvark Song'?.... @@@

(( ( Still on at John Piggott...Mike Sandow wants to know whether or not those suggested fanzine titles were, in fact, what the girls think of you. And also how you 'work' with them???? Peter Linnett - more than two lines because it's Heinlein. 'Twould have only got one line, but it cost a lot. I see that Ian The Maule has at last given birth to MAYA, decently repro'ed, yet. If things are improving so much, when oh when will we see a FOULER? One good duper in the country deserves another, surely. Greg??? I'm told that Greg will pull us to pieces in FOULER. Good. We may still learn how HELL was a pinch from his zine. )))

@@@ Yeah, that has been baffling me too! Saw 'Star Trek' this week...the story was 'Arena' by Fred Brown. It's a repeat, of course, but that is by the by. Afterwards I offered to let Cas read the story so that she could see how much they had fucked it up. I checked my records to see just where I had the story, and then made a beeline for the appropriate bookcase.....it wasn't there (the book, not the bookcase). Damn annoying, I thought I could put my hands on any story from my filing system; at least that was the idea. Anyway, I'll let the lady have the last word. Cas if FAT.@@@

\*\*\*\*\* Cheeky Sod!!!!!! \*\*\*\*\*

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