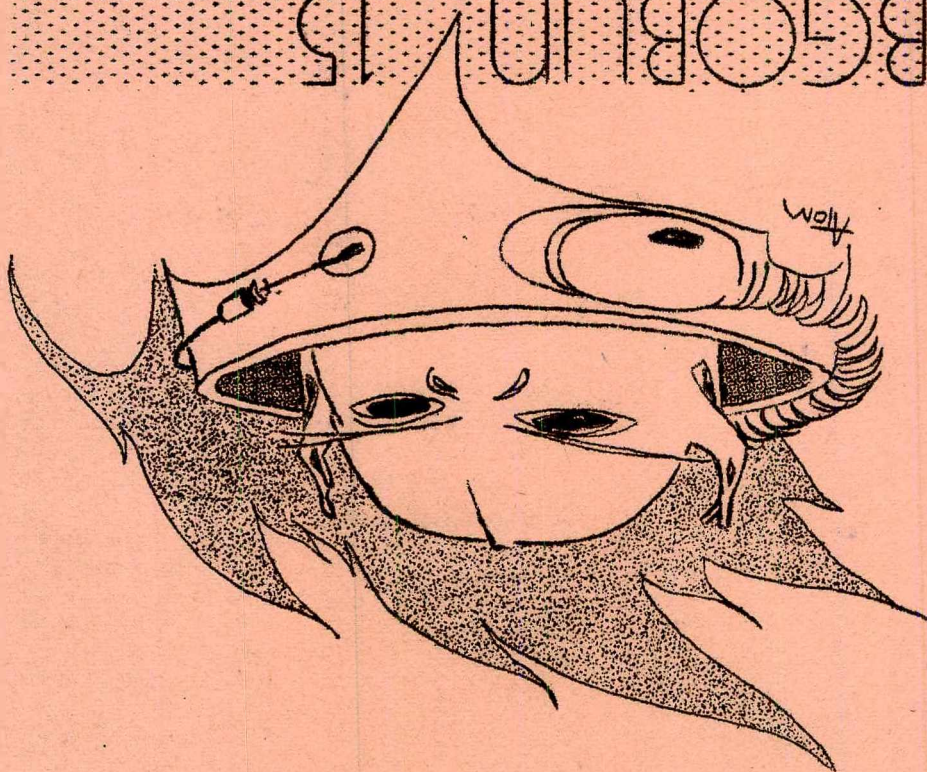


HOBGORN 15



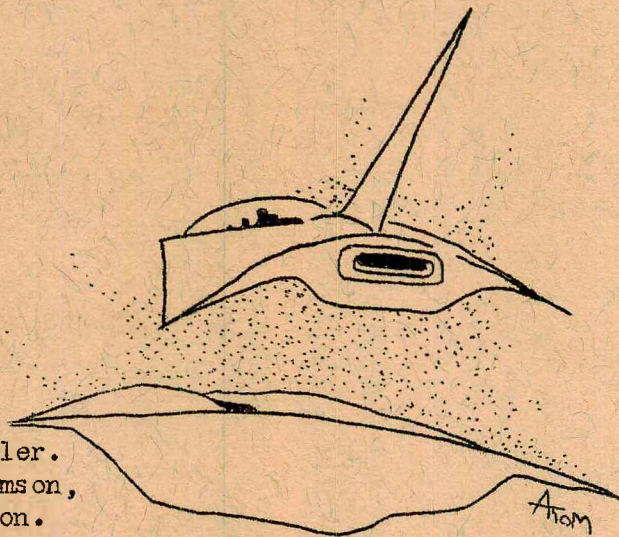


HOBGOBLIN JR

This is HOBGOBLIN 15, July 1965, published for the Spectator Amateur Press Society and several others by Terry Carr, 35 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn, New York, 11201. Mimeography this issue by Bruce Pelz, though thanks are as usual due to Ted White for the use of his stencilling equipment. This is TCarr Pub 261.

HOBGOBLIN 15

Cover by Arthur Thomson. Backcover by Bill Rotsler. The drawing on this page is also by Arthur Thomson, and the cartoons by Ray Nelson are by Ray Nelson.



fansprach

I think I may be losing my grip.

I've gone around for years displaying a haughty nose for the benefit of all J. R. R. Tolkien fans who would try to press upon me copies of the Lord of the Rings trilogy. "I don't really want to read them," I'd say. "In fact, I hate this kind of fantasy so much that you'd have to pay me to read them."

Then Ace Books took me up on it, and I read the trilogy. I find that I still hate that kind of fantasy, but I'm forced to admit that Tolkien does it well; and on days when the humidity is just right I sometimes grow expansive and grudgingly admit that Treebeard is one of my favorite characters in all fantasy.

I've also gone around for years sniffing deprecatingly at Gilbert & Sullivan fans. Reports of masses of G&S devotees from both Los Angeles and the Bay Area swarming to performances have brought pitying chuckles from me. G&S are all right in their place, I would tell you if you asked, but this rabidity of the Savoyards is unseemly.

Then Ron Ellick gave Carol and me an LP of Martyn Green singing G&S patter-songs. We listened to it and were amused. We played it one day when Pete Graham was visiting, and a speculative gleam came into his eyes. "I haven't seen any G&S since I was a kid," he said. "The American Savoyards are doing H.M.S. Pinafore Friday night; why don't we go?" So we went, and we had an absolute ball. The following Friday we went and saw Iolanthe, and the Saturday after that, two days ago, it was The Mikado. I have meantime bought LP's of D'Oyly Carte's Pinafore and The Sorcerer.

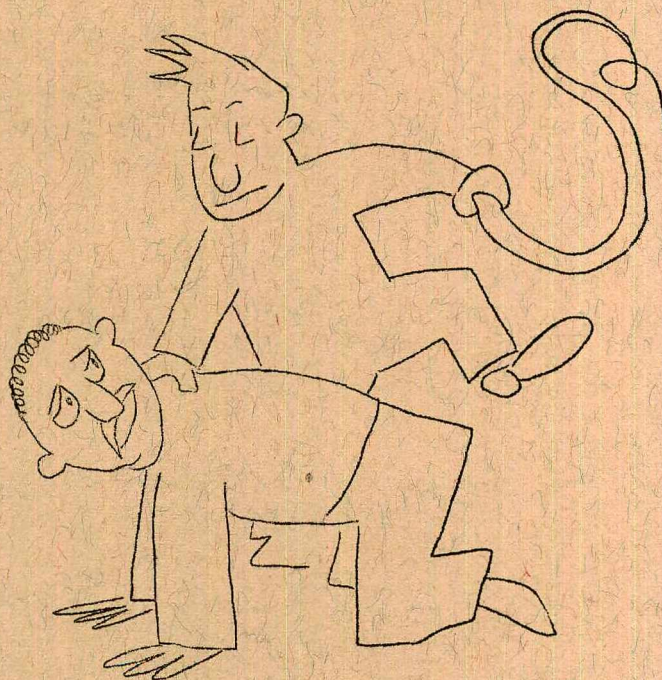
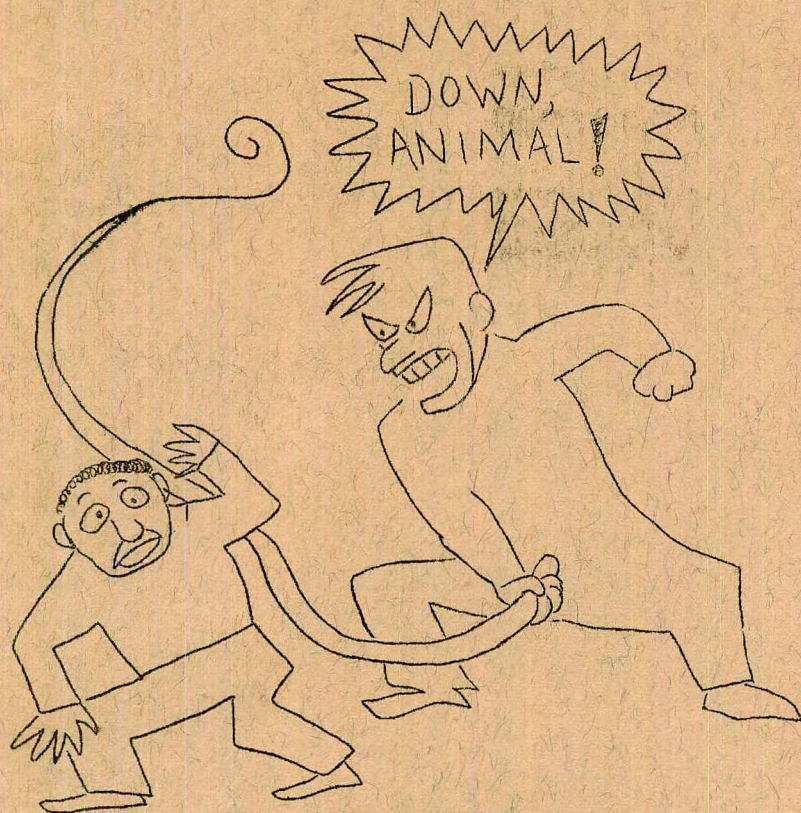
Am I lost? Am I doomed to sink into Los-Angeles-like depravity, fated to end my days reclining in a gutter with rum-cake crumbs on my face, alternately singing off-key versions of G&S songs and Tom Bombadil's chansons? Is there no hope?

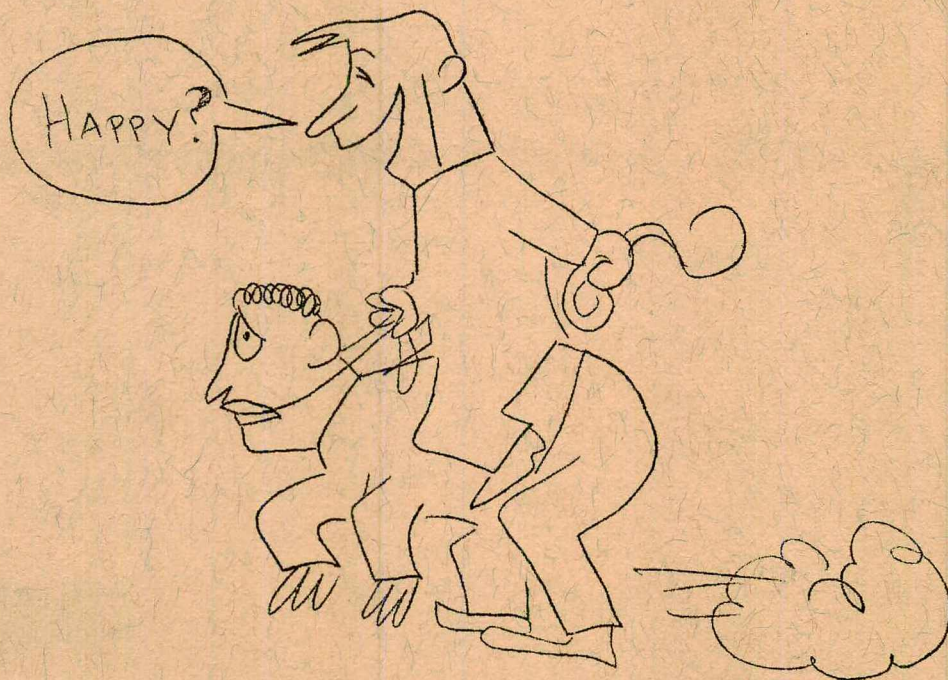
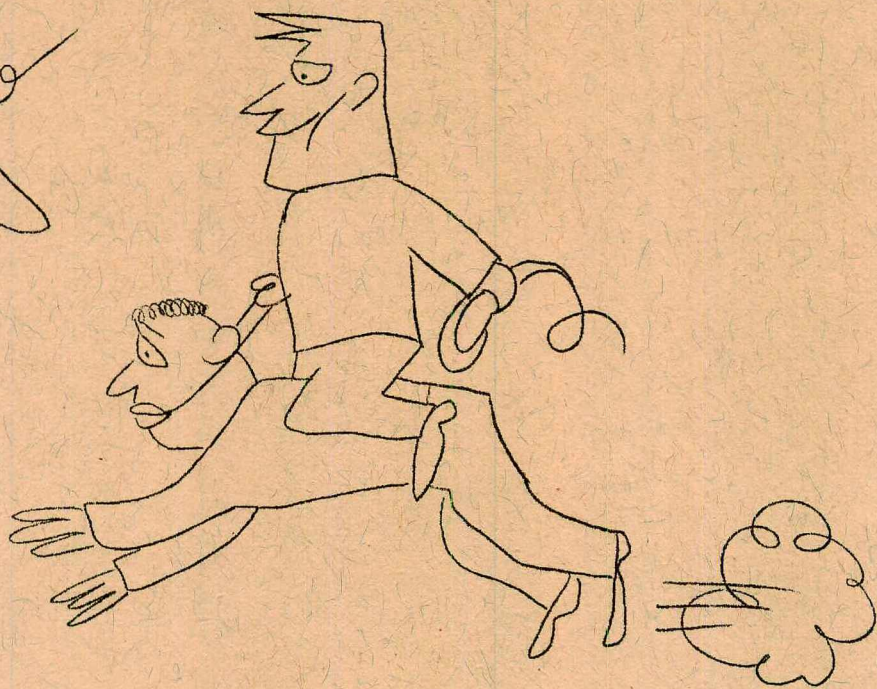
Sometimes I look to the future, trying to read what is there before me. But each time I shrink back, like Dorian Grey confronted with his own portrait. Nothing in the future is fixed and immutable, of course, but the alternatives seem equally hideous. Which shall it be? -- Ayn Rand or Coventry?

Or, perhaps, suicide?

WHITE-MAN'S-BURDEN

BY RAY NELSON





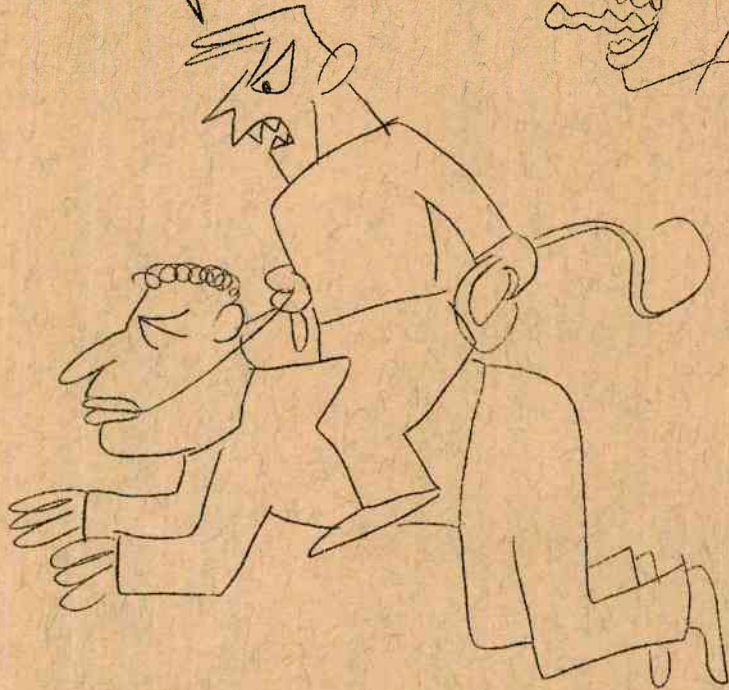
HELL,
NO!

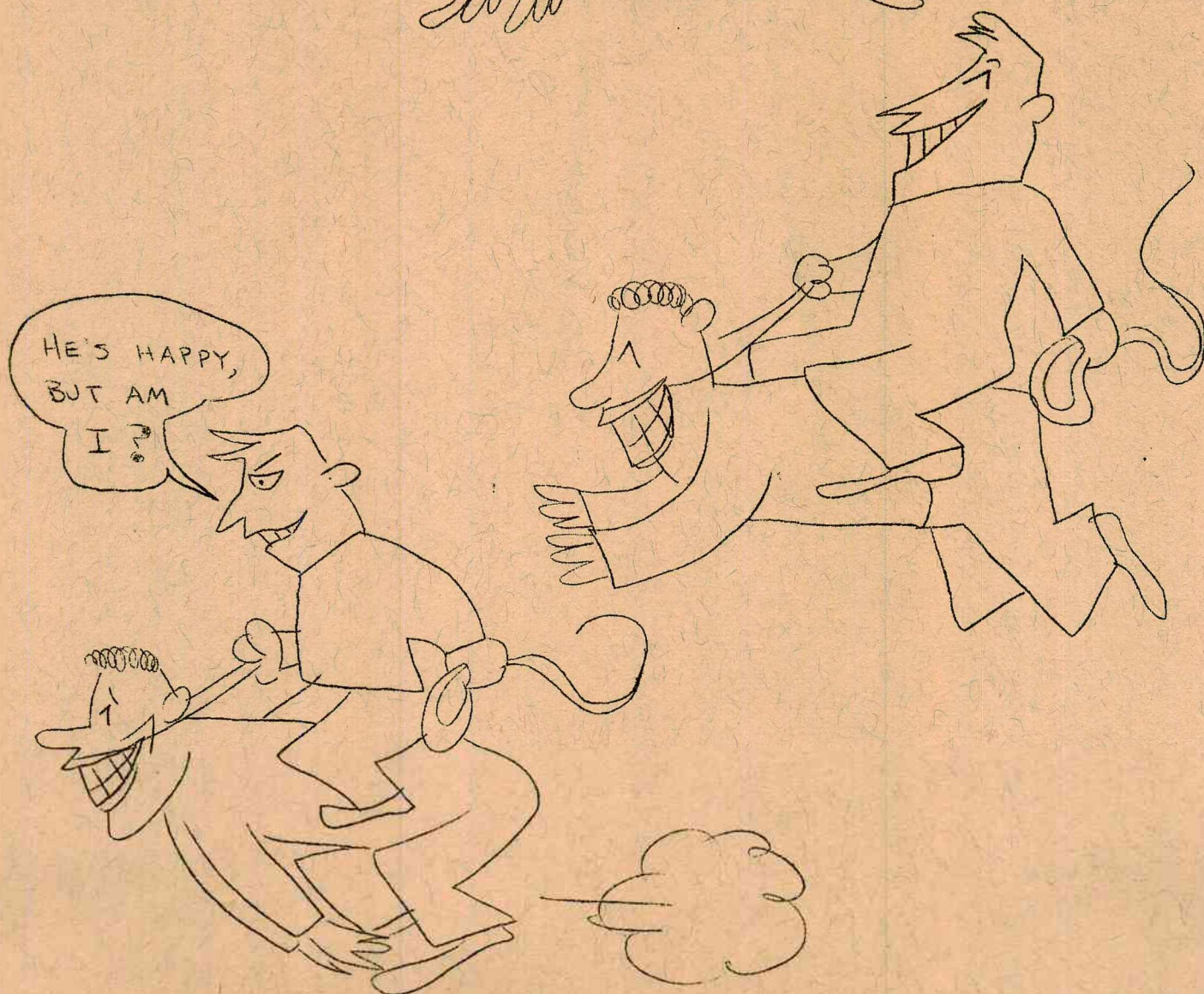
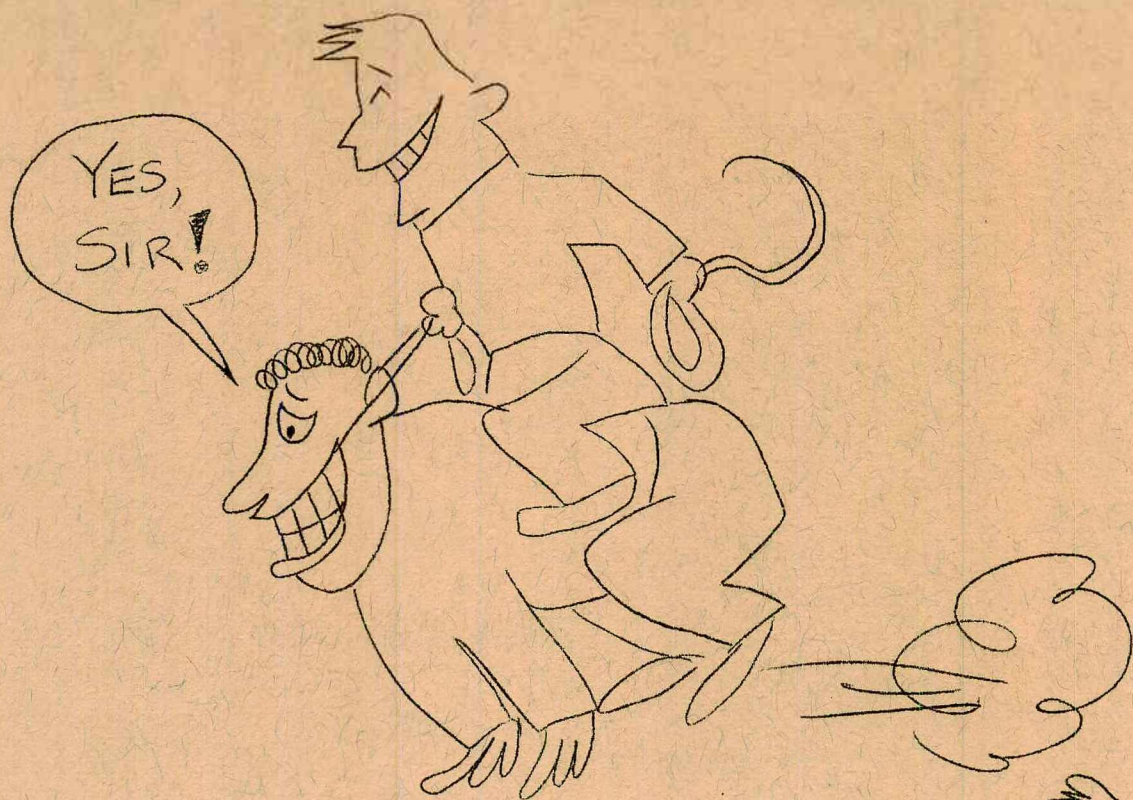


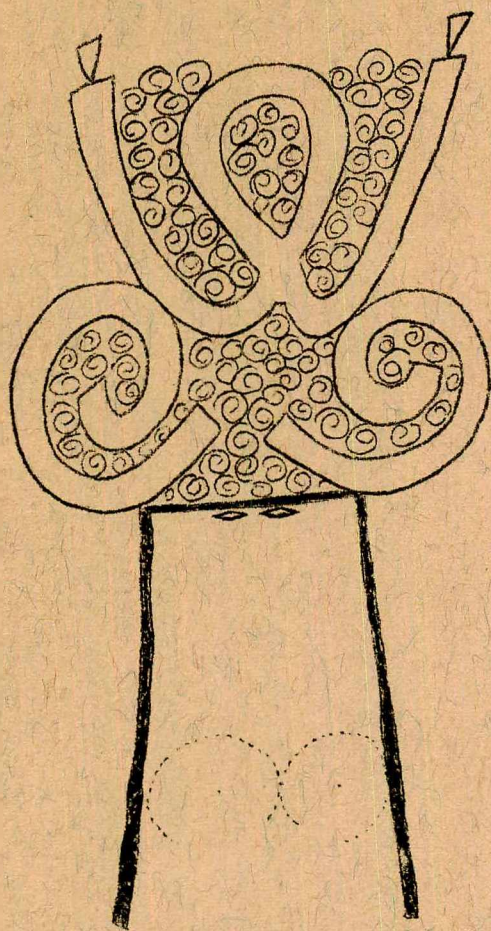
CRACK



HAPPY?







QUEEN OF MAIRS

ROTSLER 62

The Last One

I woke up feeling like an orc had slept in my mouth.

That's the sort of feeling I usually have on mornings-after at conventions -- a sour, Lovecraftian taste under the tongue, a cosmic fuzziness on the palate, and a thickness of breath and spit like something out of Hodgson. It's horrible...namelessly horrible.

But this morning I wasn't at a convention. No white sheets, impersonal lamps on endtables, flowery prints on the wall -- this room was dingy and dull, the light of morning striking through the single window like a ham-handed fist. There was no subtlety about either the room or the morning; they were both dismal. I groaned, and sat up on the edge of the bed.

Slowly, painfully, I began to remember.

No, this was certainly no convention. This was serious business -- grim, earnest. Like a SAPS deadline, I thought, smiling bleakly. The smile broke the plaster immobility of my face, moving muscles long unused. It almost hurt.

I shook my head, rose and went into the bathroom. It was dingy, like the room outside. The faucet leaked; the hot water faucet gave only tepid water. I cursed under my breath, sending the owner of this cheap flophouse to a death right out of Sex Torture Tales or one of its contemporaries. Then, shrugging, I lathered up and began to scrape the days-old beard from my face. And I thought about today.

He was here somewhere, here in this city. I'd trailed him for three months, all the way from a small hideout shack in Arizona, to a cheap bordello in New Orleans, to a characterless rooming house in Baltimore, and finally here to New York. Three months. As I thought about that, I wondered briefly if it had been worth it. But almost immediately I knew it had. He was the last one. The last one.

* * *

The place where he was staying was no less grimy than my own room had been. I stood outside the building, staring up at its dirty brownstone facade, the smoke from my cigarette curling past my eyes and dispersing to join the smog that blanketed this section of the city like the pall that hung over Mordor. The building had two broken marble steps leading into a dark hallway; I mounted them, and looked at the names on the mailboxes.

Blanfield. Morgan. Herbert. Schoenfeld. Trask. Kennard.

Under Kennard's name was a scribbled note to the postman; Postman, please leave all magazines, parcels, etc. with landlady, first floor.

That was him, then. The tip I'd had hadn't included what name he was using now, but that note was a dead giveaway. Even on the run, no fan wants to miss getting fanzines, apa mailings, the prozines he's subscribed to. I thought briefly of the trouble he must have gone to during the past months to see that he kept getting all his regular zines -- DNO letters to apa official editors, endless notes to the

senile little old ladies who run prozine circulation departments. Yes, he'd had his own brand of hell to go through while he'd dodged me.

Well, that was over now. I noted the apartment number, went in and started climbing the stairs.

I moved quickly and quietly, taking no chance that at this last moment he might hear me coming and somehow slip away again. In the hallway and on the stairs there were empty wine and beer bottles, some of them broken, fragments of glass sprayed out on the broken tiles. Garbage bags had tumbled over, dumping soup cans, mildewed lettuce leaves and miscellaneous papers in my path. I stepped over and around them all, moving with as much surcness in the dark as even the Gray Mouser might have had. I went up the steps two at a time, on the balls of my feet, until I reached the third floor.

To my right was a door with the number 3C. This was it.

I stepped quickly to it and lay my ear against the cracked paneling, listening for sounds inside. I couldn't hear anything. Slowly, I turned the doorknob, just in case it might be open.

It was. He had made a bad mistake this time. I smiled faintly as I eased the door open. Maybe he figured he'd given me the slip for good this time. It had been over a month since I'd last managed to get close to him. He was getting smarter, more cautious all the time. The first time he'd moved he'd sent a change of address to both RATATOSK and FOCAL POINT; I'd been after him within days. The next time he'd sent the COA only to FANAC; that could have held me up for years or forever, but I'd had a break and had found him anyway. After that he hadn't issued any public changes of address, and finally he'd changed his name.

But it's no good if you don't lock your door, I thought. I had the door open a crack now, and I scanned the interior of the room, what I could see of it, with a quick glance. I didn't see him. I paused a moment, then drew in a breath and swung the door fully open, stepped in and shut it silently behind me. I leaned against it, not breathing, my eyes darting around the room. He wasn't here, but there was a door leading to another room, and now I heard a sound from there.

I turned and strode to that doorway, looked in. It was a kitchen, small and piled up with dirty dishes. "Kennard" was standing at the drainboard opening a can of beer. There was no door out of the room except the one where I stood.

I stepped into view in the doorway and said, "Kennard."

He whirled, dropping the beer can; beer foamed out around his feet as he stared at me. Even in the dim light of the room I could see his face go white.

"You," he said. Then he let out a long, rasping sigh, and he seemed to slump where he stood. I was watching a man fall apart before me. "I knew you'd catch up to me sooner or later," he said softly.

"Yes," I said. "I couldn't quit on you. You were the last one."

"I know." His dulled eyes met mine, flicked away; he saw that he couldn't get out of the room past me. He shrugged. "All right. Get it over with."

I stepped forward, raising my right hand.

He took it, and we shook. "You can't imagine how glad I am to meet you," I said. "You're the last member of SAPS I hadn't met."

A FEW BOURBAZZLES

THE QUALITY OF MURDER edited by Anthony Boucher. Dutton, 1962. 254 pages, \$3.95.

Subtitled "300 Years of True Crime," this is intended as a sort of sampler of true-crime, covering twenty-four cases, each in three or four thousand words. The list of contributors reads like a Who's-Who of contemporary true-crime writing -- Radin, Offord, deFord, McComas, Samuels, etc. -- and most all of them turn in first-rate essays in miniature. It's an excellent collection overall, and no doubt has been successful in hooking some readers on the true-crime field, as is its intention as given by Boucher in his Introduction. There are several deficiencies, though. For one thing, all but one of the cases are U.S. cases -- and the exception, the Florence Maybrick case, is covered in an essay hung on the fact that the author, Patrick Quentin, met Mrs. Maybrick many years later in Connecticut without knowing at the time who she was. Of the twenty-three U.S. cases, no less than eight are California cases; of those eight, seven took place in the San Francisco Bay Area. These latter statistics are no doubt due to the number of fine true-crime writers in the San Francisco area, of course -- but while the use of their talents has helped the quality of the book, it's thrown off the balance considerably. Another fault, I'd say, lies in James Reach's piece on the Lizzie Borden case, which tells all about how the legend came about that Lizzie had definitely committed the axe-murders and how it had been recently scotched by Edward D. Radin -- and never tells a thing about the case. In a sampler of true-crime this is out of place, it seems to me.

But these are, taken all in all, minor faults which don't alter the fact that the book is interesting throughout, and surprisingly responsible in its reportage, considering the condensation of each case that was necessary to fit the wordage. Highlights, for me, were Clayton Rawson's article on a true-crime with as neat a puzzle as any in fiction, Poul Anderson's coverage of the Mohammed Abdullah case in Berkeley in 1960 (which happened in the University Library while I was working there), and Bob Bloch's expose of the Ed Gein case, which was the inspiration for PSYCHO.

THE BAD MAN OF THE WEST by George D. Hendricks. Ace G-500. 319 pages, 50¢.

Largely through the dire influence of Lee Hoffman and Ted White, I've lately become interested in reading about the Old West as it really was rather than as it's presented in western novels. THE BAD MAN OF THE WEST was the first book I picked up in this field (though I'd earlier read Stuart N. Lake's biography of Wyatt Earp, and several books on San Francisco history); I chose it largely because it's billed as a survey of gunfighters of the Old West as a whole, and so should provide a good introduction to the field, and also largely because I work for Ace, so the book was both handy and free.

It was worth every penny I paid for it.

This is one of the most incompetent books I've ever read. Hendricks was Phi Beta Kappa at The University of Texas, but you'd never know it to read the amateurish prose he writes here. He seems to think that writing quality is in direct proportion to the number of "big words" one can use in place of little ones. Thus he's constantly calling bullets "lead missiles," and we get sentences like, "The habitat of the West presented a powerful incentive to the outlaw to depredate." If he were able to handle this kind of style with any grace and/or smoothness it might be all right, but Hendricks is clumsy with it.

His content is handled as poorly as his style. Breaking his subject down into different aspects like physical appearance of the badman, motivations of the badman, techniques, philosophy, etc., he attempts to end each chapter with a statement of what the "average badman" was like. He quotes a lot of contemporary accounts and later recollections by eye-witnesses -- some of them believable, others obviously stretchers -- and proves mainly that there was no such thing as an "average badman" and that approaching the subject in such terms is useless, though he doesn't seem to

be aware of this.

Some of his speculation is interesting, no matter how dubious it may be or how much he misses the point. Under "motives and influences," for instance, he goes into the fact that most of the badmen had been born in the South and had migrated westward after the Civil War, broken and embittered by its aftermath. This sounds like a good theory for the creation of a type, but he doesn't consider the fact that most of the general population of the west had come from the South in this manner, so any random sampling of people in the west then would probably show a preponderance of ex-Southerners. In a survey of thirty-two badmen, he points out that eighteen were from the South, twelve from the North, and only two from the west itself...but this isn't an overwhelming majority in any case. In addition, the fact that Hendricks deliberately passes over Mexicans and Indians who were badmen further weakens his sectional thesis.

The most idiotic section of the book is the chapter titled Inheritance or Environment?, which seriously raises the question of whether people might be just "born bad," "naturally depraved," etc. -- the old theory of The Bad Seed, which nobody with any sense has paid attention to during this century. Hendricks is apparently impressed with quotes from "old-timers," as in the following section:

Judge Isaac C. Parker, probably the greatest American authority of all time on the frontier criminal, often said that he believed the criminal baby came into the world with the mark of Cain upon his brow. You will remember that he was judge of the first court of justice with jurisdiction over Oklahoma and Indian Territory, a refuge for South-western criminals of all types. The Judge certainly should have known, from experience. Again, during his twenty-one years as judge, he sentenced more murderers to death than any other American judge.

On the other hand, he does include an excellent common-sense quote from Henry Starr, himself one of the most notorious of the badmen:

If the bad criminal mind is hereditary, then the good honest mind is hereditary, too; and all the sons of preachers and doctors and deacons and honest bankers would be good, like their parents, but nearly all the bandits and outlaws and criminals I have ever known were sons of good fathers and mothers. ... One of the worst outlaws I ever knew was the son of a preacher.

If the criminal tendency was hereditary the sons of every criminal would be criminals, too. I never knew the son of an outlaw to be a criminal. Some of the best men I ever knew were the sons of outlaws. The sons of criminals usually turn out well, just as the sons of drunkards are nearly all prohibitionists.

Then, with a marvelous naivete, he concludes:

...There isn't any definite formula that will give the answer as to which made the bad man bad, inheritance or environment.

Each influence, no doubt, played its part...

In most all of the foregoing I've run down this book, but it would be unfair to give the impression that it has no worth. On the contrary: Hendricks, for all his incompetence as a writer or interpreter of facts, has at least done a large amount of research, and the book is loaded with facts about the Old West and quotes from people of that time and place. Read with a jaundiced eye, the book can be quite useful.

PAT GARRETT by Richard O'Connor. Ace G-502. 224 pages, 50¢.

I had previously read O'Connor's biography of the nineteenth century financier and/or "robber baron" Jay Gould, GOULD'S MILLIONS, so I knew O'Connor was excellent both at gathering facts and marshaling them into a coherent and continually interesting whole. How well he could apply his talents to the Old West I didn't know; but I was delighted to find that this book is at least the equal of the one on Gould.

O'Connor has a marvelous eye for interesting detail which can give the feeling of time, place and character, and he brings them all to life here. I loved this note, for instance, on the Lincoln County War:

...Private feuding had a part in the larger picture. Andy Boyle, a hot-tempered British Army veteran and a Murphy adherent, for instance, had taken sides after receiving a letter from C. H. Brady, a McSween man, which began: 'Dear Sir, you redheaded son-of-a-bitch, if you do not bring them horses back you stole you shall hear the gentle report of my needle gun, that is the kind of hairpin I am....'

Pat Garrett, of course, was the sheriff who killed Billy the Kid. The circumstances of the killing were questionable (Garrett shot him in a dark room before Billy even knew he was in danger), and Garrett was alternately praised and damned for the rest of his life for that one act. On the one hand, Billy was a dangerous killer who had a gun in his hand at the time and would definitely have used it on Garrett the moment he'd realized he was there; on the other, it rankled even frontier morality to hear of a deliberate killing like that, especially when the victim was, for all his killings, a popular figure among many of the people in the Territory.

O'Connor is obviously on Garrett's side here, and there's some slanting of facts in evidence. But there are enough facts given to allow any reader to draw his own conclusions.

The story of Garrett and Billy the Kid takes up the first half of the book. The rest traces the remainder of Garrett's life, as he tried constantly to make a success of himself but was frustrated at every turn either by enemies he'd made or by his own impatience and his penchant for gambling and drinking. It's essentially the story of a man who couldn't live up to the legend he'd become, and it ends on a note of pure frustration: Garrett was murdered in cold blood, shot in the back of the head while urinating beside a road (what an end for a legend!), and the man who said he'd done it was acquitted when he pled self-defense.

A fascinating book. I've since picked up O'Connor's WILD BILL HICKOK (Ace) and BAT MASTERSON (Bantam), and am looking forward to reading them.

The road to gafia is paved with margin notes.

A Letter From Brian Aldiss

It was kind of you to send me HOBGOBLIN 14 with your thoughtful review of GREY-BEARD. I appreciated it all the more because American reviewers generally seem to have been down on the novel. Ron Goulart, in a rather sophomoric review in F&SF, called it a turkey, while poor old Miller in Analog found in it some accident that had "melted the icecaps and raised the seas". Obviously there was some senile confusion here with another book, but the general impression was that he didn't much care for whatever it was he read. Yours was the most thorough and intelligent review I have seen from America. I might have been writing it to you.

In consequence, perhaps you will allow me to tell you that Harcourt Brace have left out one whole and vital section of the novel -- one which appears in the English (Faber) hardcover edition. The novel was designed something like a musical suite, and the knocking out of this section destroys the balance of the whole work. It was planned in counterpoint form, with the book's "present" world of Greybeard and Martha in their fifties travelling down the river alternating with three flashbacks that take the reader further and further into the past until he reaches almost into our present -- 1981, when "the accident" happens. So in diagram it should look like this:

The River
Back
The River
Further Back
The River
Furthest Back
The River

Harcourt Brace knocked out the "Furthest Back" section. Fortunately, I managed to persuade my paperback publishers, Signet, to reinstate this section. It depicts Martha and Algy as children and shows how little adults cared for them then -- an irony that the rest of the novel reinforces. Since I spent four years thinking out and writing this book, abandoning it once because at that time I had not the ability to execute my design, the final version represents about the best I can do in the way of a novel, for a few years at any rate; so I was the more sorry that that very elegantly produced hardcover version should not represent my true intent. Perhaps you would be kind enough to look at the paperback when it appears and see what you think of the complete work. I do believe it makes quite a few things in the rest of the book fall into place, as well as representing an aesthetically satisfying pattern.

One thing I was trying incidentally to do in the novel was sum up the attractions of the sub-genre of these "collapse of civilization" novels. It seems to me that they offer us refuge from our increasingly non-human world; from what I have seen of other parts of the world, shall we say Sumatra or India or even Yugoslavia, the loss of most of the things we regard as vital to Western civilization is balanced by a gain in certain fructifying human departments -- to specify an instance, an acceptance of one's life as something given and to be made the best of as it is, as opposed to our Western lives which (and both Christianity and Freud are parts of this tradition) are taken as raw material to be slapped and licked into new shape at the whim of their owners. Hence most of our present discontents. We are terribly discontented people simply because we can see, or think we can, wider horizons; something of all this I was trying to condense into GREYBEARD in not too didactic a form, by showing that a little culture that had had all horizons cut from under it might even in its dying achieve a sort of contentment beyond us now.

You see what your encouraging words have let you in for! Sorry and all that. It's rarely that I summon up enough steam to write to any fanzines, though I'm conscious of a debt to many, so maybe I could steal an extra line to thank and apologise to such worthies as Ed Meskys who, in an ideal world, would certainly have heard from me.

In your correspondence columns, you have my old pal John Baxter; nice to see he's still going strong. And there's Bill Blackbeard...wonder if he'd sue me if I wrote SON OF GREYBEARD....

Anti-Catholicism is the anti-semitism of the intellectual.

A FEW FINAL WORDS: I, Terry Carr, your more or less humble editor, am in need of several old SAPSazines. The zines in question are, I'm aware, classics of their kind, so it will be understandable if most people wouldn't want to part with their copies. However, perhaps these people could be moved to part with them for cash... and the knowledge that, in doing so, they would be restoring these fanzine classics to a person who helped publish them and who needs them for personal files. The fanzines in question are S--- numbers 1 thru 4, and RAGNAROK numbers 5 thru 7. If you have any or all, and will sell, please write.