

HURKLE

"The Happy Beast"

This is the informalized publication of Redd Boggs, 2215 Benjamin St N.E., Minneapolis 18, Minnesota, for the Spectator Amateur Press Society. Hurkle is a trademark registered 1950 (and very inadvertently) at the NFFF copyright bureau. Volume I, Number Two, intended for the July 1950 mailing. A Gafia Press Publication.

FAN MAIL DEPARTMENT

"Boggs:

Well, I just read Hurkle and I'll never be the same. I hope to God you won't be, either.

Burb."

THE ASSAYER'S CORNER

The name of this department is the Assayer's Corner for the very good reason that I have a perfectly usable heading for a department by that name. Drawn by Howard Miller, I believe, it is part of the stuff I inherited from Dream Quest and its allied publications. It was supposed to be used on a FAPA mag, but wasn't. It isn't being used here, either, this time, because I haven't time to stencil it. But it'll be seen in all its supernal glory next issue, maybe. Meantime be content with just the title: The Assayer's Corner.

This issue looks as if it'll be mostly mailing comments. This is for the reason that I don't have anything else prepared for this mailing and what with pressing matters besetting me (to coin an inept expression) I doubt if I'll get anything else on stencil. Let's see what was in the April SAPS mailing, which was number 11.

Spectator #11 is a satisfactory official organ. The "filler" notations on the penultimate page are welcome fluff, while the more official matters were clearly and concisely stated -- except that graph on page 1. Maybe I'm dense, but that graph seems to signify nothing of importance that couldn't be summarized in 10 words. At least it isn't striking enough in presentation to hold my interest. The sprawly appearance of the front page shows just how ghastly nonstopparagraphing is when used for one-sentence paragraphs. # The egoboo hounds want reviews of SAPS in all the prozines. It should be clear now that reviews like Merwin's in the July Startling mean absolutely nothing and certainly don't boost anybody's ego very much. Why bother to mail Merwin a bundle at all? # If you must list contents alphabetically, I wish you'd arrange the mags in the bundle the same way. I always check my mailing against the contents listing to be certain I'm missing nothing, and it's irritating to have to thumb through the whole bundle to find each little single-sheeter.

Some of this stuff must pass as merely noted: Washington Dispatch Case, Glop, Chabotage, Graveyard, and Zap, are magazines that, while scarcely devoid of interest, inspired no comments from this corner.

What's left? Edco's Maine-iac, for one. Ed's the first guy I ever heard of who keeps an uncapped bottle of obliterate by his typer as he stencils. My gawd, the stuff must get thick and gooey in no time, standing open like that. It's the great ghod Aybeedick who spills open obliterate bottles, Ed. # I found your mumblings about daily routine in Lubec very entertaining. Why don't more fans come down from the heights of controversy on what-is-and-what-isn't-stf and give us some biographical material like this? Like Saroyan's "diary" in The Twin Adventures, which was better than the yarn he wrote (also in the book) while keeping the diary, this sort of biographical revelation is always interesting, while tenuous controversies often aren't. Geez, too bad you don't work in a boiler factory, Ed. After listening to Stan Kenton awhile you wouldn't even notice the din.

Blob is about Coswal's nadir -- almost as nether as Hurkle #1, which was my nadir (which I have reached more than once). You can't see me (as aSF editor) canning Cartier? Sure, I'd kick him out of aSF or else save him for the once-in-five-years when a story comes along that demands his talents -- as for example "Ex Machina," where his pic of Grandpa was almost the last fine thing he's done. # I incline to agree with you that "burlesque is crudity itself with all its emphasis on filth," but I think most of the crudity and filth comes from the alleged comedians and their stereotyped skits, and not from the strip-teasers. Once in a while there's a strip-teaser worth looking at.

Fanobrel leaves me with mixed emotions. It is nice and cantankerous, such as I love, and I agree with many of Al's remarks, but I dunno -- I feel it doesn't go over at all. I've a favorable regard for Al's ideas and judgments, but I'm sure he's never yet done right by his talents. Everything he's published in fandom so far has been hurried, crudely-stated, amorphous stuff that could have been improved 100% by the mere expedient of rewriting it once. Composing on the stencil or masterset is not one of Al's abilities. Trying to make sense out of this stick-composed gushing is like trying to drink out of a broken fire-hydrant. I much prefer my water from a water-glass -- and I like my reading similarly offered, logically developed and unified in paragraphs for easy comprehension. It takes a more patient man than I to read stuff that goes like this: "Hecht said that not me." # I liked the piece on radio "happiness" dispensers. My pet peeve is somebody named Henry J. Taylor, an excessively myopic commentator who is sponsored by General Motors because of his myopia, or else is myopic because of his sponsor. # Ah, another Albert and Pogo enthusiast!

The full-pager in Sapian (April 1950) of a spaceship is effective. The figures in the pic are shaded to look almost lithographed. # I see you mention Henry J. Taylor, too. # That cover for Fem-Fan which you reprint is another DQ item which passed through my hands at some time or other. In fact, the signature "Martha Miller" is in my handwriting. I didn't mean it as a signature at all, but merely as an identification of the artist who'd done the pic. # Freud would be interested in "The Hand."

Skylark. Passing R. R. Phillips' cover with a shudder, wondering why someone doesn't tell Ultra-Weird that a pen is easier to draw with than his index finger, I found Ashfield's ruminations satisfactory. Only other comment I've got is suggested by the marginal note I find

here: "No backing sheet or didn't remove type-ribbon?" -- a reference to the unaccountably dim reproduction on the first mimeod page.

In Stupefying Stories I was stupefied, verily, by Ray Nelson's allegation that the Bible is actually not great literature after all. And for some reason I couldn't picture all those who, through many centuries, have stated otherwise scurrying for their ratholes because of Ray's broadside. Maybe it's because Ray's article wasn't very convincing. Maybe it's because Ray is wrong. I don't admire the Bible in the Christian sense, but I think a lot of it is worth reading, even for an agnostic. My regard for Ray's good sense suffered a shock when I found him stating that the New Testament is less crude than the Old. I can't see that at all. # Imagine a Sexocrat failing to put the Song of Songs on his biblical favorites list! # The 23rd Psalm is fine, but so are others, such as the one beginning, "By the rivers of Babylon." I wouldn't choose the Bible as one of my desert island books, but if forced to choose between it and A Heap o' Livin' or even the Collected Poems of William Wordsworth, I'd take the Bible.

Thrill Book listings are of some bibliographical interest, there is no doubt of that, but I don't think quoting the first sentence manages to give any reliable indication as to what the story is like. Why not quote the blurb, if there be any?

Wrai Ballard harps on an old theme in The Outsiders -- that Paul can't draw humans. It's true that Paul's human figures aren't as good as his machinery, but they're better than those of nearly 90% (a conservative estimate) of stf artists. Paul occasionally drew some satisfactory people. Consider some of his pix for "The Afterglow" and "Falos of the Dog-star Pack" in FFM, circa 1941. # Fred Remus' poem has this stupefying line in it: "with whispered rushings roar"!

I hope to see Project again, but the situation, as explained in "In the Beginning" (a dept. title copyright by Harry Warner), doesn't make the possibility too promising. # Alden H. Norton's personal replies to letters sent Super Science were an excellent idea, though as I recall he never wrote more than a paragraph or two. Wollheim replied at much greater length to one letter I wrote him once in re Avon Fantasy Reader, though probably he's not answering letters to Ootwa at such length -- or at all.

Nelson's spiel, "The Indifferentist," in Mock seems pretty sound; at least, it's a good statement of one side of the question. # The cartoon-joke about Texas was appreciated here. Which reminds me, I'm pulling like all-get-out for Alaska to become a state. When Alaska is star #49 on the flag, Texas will be only second-largest state! Write your congressmen advocating Alaskan statehood!

Etaoin Shrdlu, in its truncated SAPS edition, boasts that it is a mighty good magazine, while most other SAPSazines are mediocre or just plain "lousey." The editors complain they were swindled when they put 33 copies of their sterling mag into SAPS and received 18 "magazines" (quote-marks theirs) in return. Well now. If you think you got gyped, boys, consider the SAPS members who already had a copy of that issue you stuck into SAPS. Weren't they gyped, too? You got page credit for something a lot of the members received earlier via the sub

route. Is that fair? For that matter, is it fair to circulate this pseudo-copy of Etaoin Shrdlu in SAPS, receiving credit for an out-and-out plug for your subzine? I don't think so. SAPS doesn't exist merely to provide an advertising medium for your mag, and it isn't meant to be a dump for old subzine copies you can't get rid of. # When can we expect some legitimate activity from you?

And so to Saginaw. The Outhouse on the Asteroid's insides hardly measured up to the title and the cover pic. # Mahaffey-Con: I wish I could believe Fluette actually draws the femmes that decorate this and other Saginaw publications, but I fear he merely traces them out of art magazines. # Michigan Fantasite #1 and #2: After reading these and most of the other "Wolverine Insurgent" magazines, I'll admit I'm still utterly bewildered. Who is fighting who -- and why? Actually, the feud has a synthetic, insincere air about it. My considered opinion is this: Too heavy a schedule of fanning has caused Art to react against actifandom. The Los Angeles "Insurgents'" example has influenced him in such a way as to demand a scapegoat/sparring partner like the LASFS for his reactive activities. Therefore, though grievances against the DSFL were quite minor, the Saginawites (?) rationalized them in such a manner as to provide a foe on which to vent their pent-up disgust with fandom. Thus, the feud, and thus the mystifying air surrounding it. Right? # Timewarp continues the antique argument as to the distinction between stf and fantasy. I'd say fantasy is the stuff August Derleth publishes in his stf anthologies. # Dishes given away at the movies? I haven't been to a movie in 10 years where they've done that. Ditto bank night. Wonder if they've got 'em around here or whether I'm just lucky? # Bar-rag's best part is "The Morning After," with its sober reflections on the "fannish evening." # I wonder if Ray would feel the same way if he was Ingrid's old hubby, Dr. Lindstrom or whatever his name is? While I don't feel at all prejudiced against Bergman and will continue to see all her pictures -- considering her, till someone better comes along, the finest actress on the screen, I see no grounds for calling Ingrid a "real life heroine." # Who is this Ben Singer you mention?

WHO'S YOUR CANDIDATE?

If you had a time machine that could make just one trip into the past, and possessed the necessary intestinal fortitude to do violence for the good of humanity -- if you had these two things, what historical figure would you travel into the past to choke in his cradle, before he brought his own particular brand of misery upon mankind? Hitler? Stalin? Lenin? Marx? Napoleon? Philip II? Catherine de' Medici? Genghis Khan? Caesar? Machiavelli? St. Thomas Aquinas? Henry VIII? Alexander the Great? Who's your candidate? My own would be John Calvin.

THE UGLY ISSUE

As everyone knows, the prettiest of Hurkle are blue. So the great historian Theodorus Sturgeonus has chronicled. The first Hurkle in SAPS (mailing #10) was blue. Arthur H. Rapp ran off that issue and he put it on blue paper as I asked him to. But this issue is on white paper, alas, for I forgot to buy some blue paper! Fardle, funt & fup!

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defy the deroes with dianetics
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