

HYPHEN

NO.12



CHRISTMAS



1954



"I told you to ask for a Gestetner 260!!"

In This Issue

Editorial, 2
Damon Knight's Column, 3
BoSH by Berry, 8
Pyrotechnics by Shaw, 9
Bloch on Joyce, 13
Charters on Horses, 17
Varley on Soames, 19

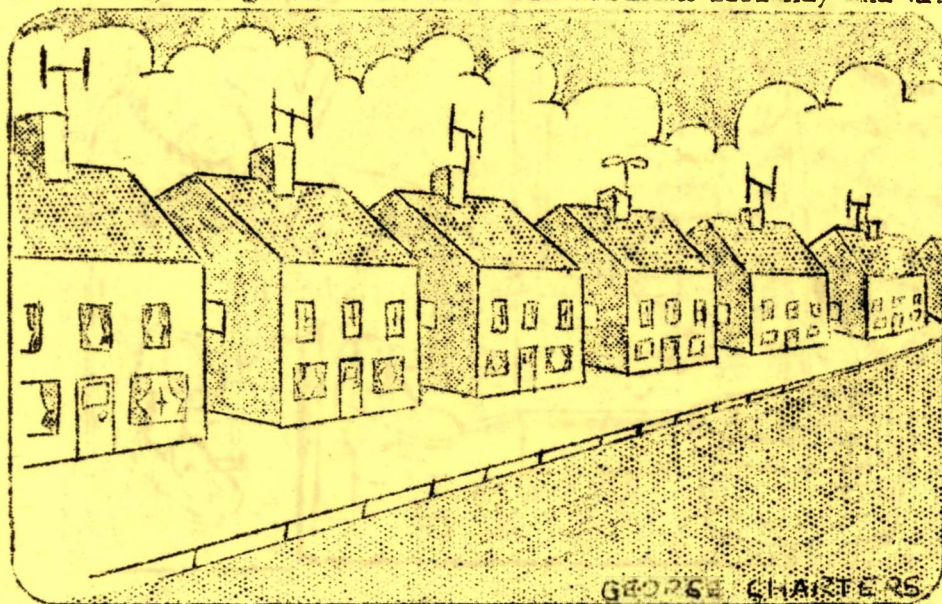
Harris & Vargo Statten (Round 2), 21
Bulmer and the Past, 23
Ashworth & the Inner Circles, 26
Life with Lancaster Fandom, 29
TOTO 40: by Harry Turner, 35
Readers' Letters, 41
Eavesdroppings, 52

CARTOONS BY ARTHUR THOMSON, NIGEL LINDSAY, D.R. SMITH
& GEORGE CHARTERS

There should be a nicely lettered heading here, but my young daughter Carol broke the stylus a few minutes ago. Shortly afterwards I beat her to a pulp. (She was about to scribble in my almost complete collection of OUT OF THIS WORLD ADVENTURES but I got to it first.)

This seems to be the biggest Hyphen ever. It's not that we resolved to produce the second best fanmag ever published in this country, it's just that Chuck has got a new duper and is drunk with power (pages 13 to 34, the nice-looking ones, were done on his Gestetner) and we decided to burn the backlog for a cheerful Christmas blaze. We also did a linocut for the title logo so as to have a bit of colour and we'll probably use this on all future issues too. I hope you appreciate all we do to brighten your drab existences. As a matter of fact this linocut represents six hours of Bob's valuable time because he had to do two, the first one being rejected on account of a minor flaw. It was beautifully cut and represented three hours of meticulous craftsmanship, but unfortunately we had forgotten a lot of what we used to know about linocuts and we made a slight error. I won't go into the details of just what the error was, but any foned who is thinking of producing a fanzine called ~~WYTH~~ is advised to communicate with Oblique House, where he will learn something to his advantage.

With this issue we introduce you properly to the two new members of the Hyphen staff, Arthur Thomson and John Berry. Besides doing most of the cartoons and headings in this issue, Arthur is also responsible for all the little filler illos scattered all over the place. (I suggest 'fillos' as a name for these things.) "Atom" lives in London (though, to be fair, his grandfather came from Northern Ireland) and will be working hand over



fist with Chuck. John Berry is the latest recruit to Irish fandom and has converted the Belfast Triangle into a sort of polygoon. Altho he's quite young (27) he has a wife, two children and a moustache. He is a policeman by trade, but you wouldn't think it by the way he behaves. Tho his sergeant did make him take the helicopter of his helmet..refused to believe he was practising for the Flying Squad.

The TOTO stencils were of course cut by Harry

Turner. He is responsible for the illos and I hope he'll say as much in the witness box.

There seems to be unfortunately some colour prejudice among our readers, two of them having been heard to mutter something about can we not get white paper. Yes we can, and it would be cheaper too, but I've always liked coloured paper. It's so much more..well, colourful. Anything but the best reproduction looks kind of sordid on white paper, whereas my duplicating on coloured paper looks at least a cheerful sort of mess. Or so I like to hope.

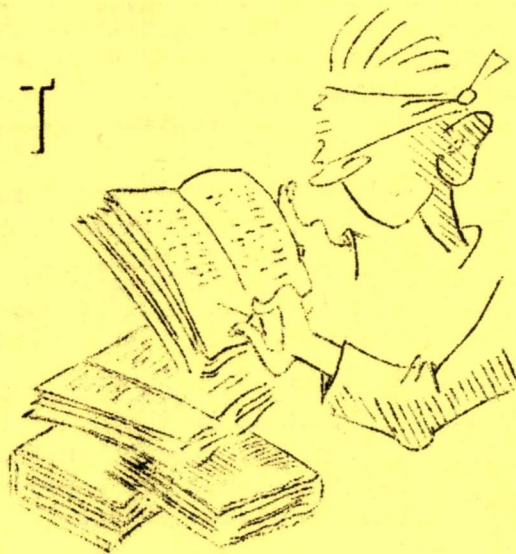
Sincere thanks to the people who sent in cartoon ideas, and I'm sorry if I haven't acknowledged yours. I hope to be able to start writing letters again soon. Incidentally I've lost touch with so many people lately that I've fallen behind in my promags. Expiring subscribers might like to know that almost any current promag or pb would be new to me and very welcome, as would be the last two Pogo books and the MAD Reader.

HYPHEN #12, Christmas 1954. Walt Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, N.Ireland & Chuck Harris, 'Carolyn', Lake Avenue, Rainham, Essex, England. Art Editor Rob Shaw. Associate Arthur Thomson. Assistant John Berry. Help & encouragement from Madeleine Willis, James White, George Charters & Carol Willis. Subscription 2 issues for 1/6 or 2s6 in coin of your realm. If your subscription has expired intimation of this grave news will be found on the back of the wrapper.

MICROTOME

DAMON KNIGHT

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO LOGOGENETICS



Books mate. This is the simple but world-shaking principle behind logogenetics, the new science of producing literature without actually writing. A milestone for fan comparable to the invention of the zap gun and the helicopter beanie, logogenetics will enable every fugghead to be his own Milton.*

Logogenetics derives, of course, from the pioneer work of Dr. Claude Shannon in communications theory. In an effort to duplicate the operation of a hypothetical robot author, Shannon formed sentences by taking a word at random from a given text, then following the text until the word was repeated and writing down the next word, and following the text until that word was repeated, and writing down the next, and so on.

This took too long.

Logogenetic axiom #1:

All logogenetic processes take too long.

The work was carried forward by J. J. Coupling, who tried writing three words on a strip of paper, folding one out of sight and passing the strip to the next fellow, who added a word and folded one over and passed it to the next fellow, and so on. This was better, but still took too long, and got some pretty peculiar looks from people who were asked to try it.

Now we come to the real stuff, the final flower of this breathtaking research, developed in sunny California by the writer and his wife, who were bored silly at the time. Take two books. Any two books. I have here, for example, "Man's Mortality" by Michael Arlen, which is a daisy of a book, and "The Blind Spot" by Hall and Flint, which is a three-star stinker. They happened to be standing on my desk side by side, with nothing but an old copy of Science-Fiction Advertiser

*I did not say Milton who.

between them. We remove this sop to decency. We open two books at random. (Ideally, when we say "we," we mean you and another fellow. The author is doing this example by himself, because his wife is sick and tired of logogenetics.) In the first book, the first word our eye lights upon is "English." ("Man's Mortality," Doubleday 1933, p. 59, line 1.) In the second book, the first word our eye encounters is "Except." ("The Blind Spot," Prime Press 1951, p. 119, line 1) We now ask ourselves, could "except" follow "English" in a sentence? It could, so we write them down:

English, except

Now we return to book #1 and read the first word after "English," which turns out to be "French." We are unable to imagine a sentence in which this follows the two words we already have, so we pass on, rejecting about two full lines for the same reason, until we hit the word "for." Turning again to book #2, we get "the." Back to book #1: "Police." Book #2: "of."

And so we continue, each time resuming where we left off in each book,* until we achieve a complete sentence:

English, except for the Police of denationalized
San Francisco, was a carefully and definitely increased
inhuman disappearance.

This does not make much sense.

Logogenetic axiom #2:

Logogenetic writing seldom makes much sense.

However, upon reading this sentence again -- any number of times is permissible, unless the head begins to swim -- you will note that it seems as if it ought to mean something. The sentence is, of course, out of context, and there we are going to leave it; anybody who wants to know about those Police is welcome to carry on for him, her or itself.

Logogenetics has many, many uses. It is good for writing little booklets to go with exhibitions of ultramodern art, and as a matter of fact this method can't be as original as I thought it was, because it's pretty plain that that's how those booklets are written. It is good for writing science fiction, but you want to pick your reservoir (the books used in logogenetics are called the reservoir) carefully; for instance, the fuggfan who wishes to write like a combination A. E. van Vogt and Ray Bradbury will choose, say, "The World of A" and "The Golden Apples of the Sun," because that's all he happens to have on hand. The result may be something like the following:

Gosseyn moved, but around the door.

"Swallow the pills." In the sky with great desperate coming-in, danger flowering unreal whistlings, Prescott quietly said, "From the women that saw it, helicopters will blizzard." The hotels, the private people, cities that rose to strange power. Farm, strangely, with easy pink picture faces, because the

* But after completing a sentence, we pass to the first word of the following sentence in the reservoir. This will never be any clearer.

race of bound men would sound mysterious. "You opposed the assault, man!"

Murder. Two supposed chocolate Gosseyn malteds. He smiled curtly, for the mute problem would slowly, reluctantly untangling, tell him the partial color acceptance. It again was a picture of a mind, dark, closer to sanity, one uneasy white reverie shining down....

There you are: "The World of Apples," by A. Ray van Vogtbury. It would take the two genuine authors years to turn out a passage like that, and you and your drunken friend from Flushing did it in ten minutes. Plot? Well, how can you tell till you try?

Take another example. How-to articles are a million laughs, and there's always room for one more somewhere. Select appropriate pages from any issue of Woman's Day, mix thoroughly --

With a whisk knife, sweep $\frac{3}{4}$ inch under crust.
Vacuum 1 cup of grated pedals or rugs. Spread
seats in trunk; put dirt on floor. Bake 1 tablespoon
moderate detergent, 325° F., in hot bucket. Break
upholstery apart, and serve.

This is only the beginning. Poetry? Certainly. You want to select your reservoir with care, but this simply means avoiding things that rhyme or scan. Open almost any fanzine --

*

phantasy for which we strive
Goddess of the sifted night, freed from Neptune's orb...
I see agonies infinitely held from Hell, and glories
yet known of ages.
I have thee in my palm, and the distant insolvable
grasp of stars and night.
I bow with darkness and enchanting freedom; but all
the infinite groping of dawn cities is cold.

No fuss! No muss! Simply scrape up all unused words and pour them back into the reservoir. With this treatment, the average pair of "poems" will never wear out.

Short stories? Letters to the Editor? Anarchist leaflets? Sermons? Labels? Time tables? The Great American Novel itself? Absolutely --

REVIEWS

Last month we were speaking about shoddy writing and butter-brained editing in high places. This is a continued story.

STAR SHORT NOVELS, edited by Frederik Pohl (Ballantine, \$2 and 35¢) offers us a sobering spectacle: here are three novellas, by three distinguished writers--Jessamyn West, Lester del Rey, Theodore Sturgeon--only one of which turns out to be a finished piece of work.

*The first reader who correctly identifies the author of the lines used above may not get any prize at all.

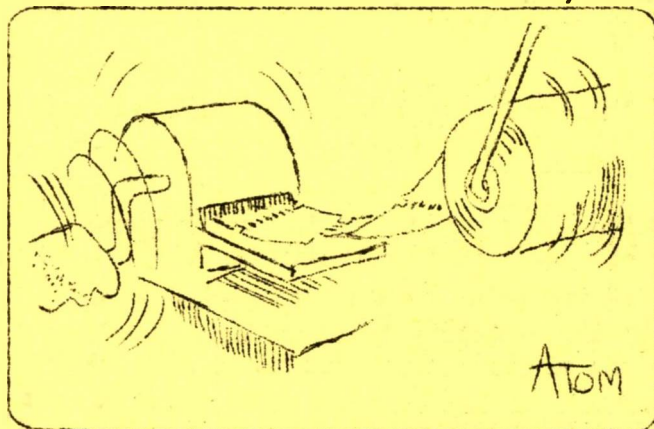
That one, not surprisingly, is the third. "To Here And The Easel" was written at the very top of Sturgeon's range, on the same level as "More Than Human" and "Saucer of Loneliness" and a few others---a breathtaking display of sustained brilliance, all glitter and pop, never holding still an instant, with the velvet-covered fist hanging, hanging...here a pun with a bawdier one on top of it, here a sudden unexpected gallop of blank verse...until that damned fist comes down and squeezes the whole thing so tight that there's nothing more to say about it. I'm damned if I'll dissect it: read it.

Jessamyn West's "Little Men", which opens the book, is an exasperating fraud---no novella, but a rough sketch for a novel. The story begins when the adults of the world wake up to find themselves dwarfed, while their children have grown to man-size---and all but ends there, owing to the slowest narrative technique on record. Every now and then we get a tantalising glimpse of the reversal-of-roles satire we had expected; but it's all two mirrors away, flickerings in the wrong end of a telescope. Miss West, for reasons best known to herself, has chosen to tell her story as the retrospective narrative, written 60 years after the event, of an intolerably windy old man. This hoary method has the sole advantage of making it unnecessary for the author to think up any explanations. In every other way it makes the worst of both worlds---we have neither the sense that the story is unfolding unpredictably as we read, nor the comfort of having been told all that we need to know.

West in the persona of the editor keeps complaining about the windiness of West in the persona of narrator. This seems a futile business; obviously she is not listening to herself, or else is determined to make a lively story into a 10-volume bore if she can. Early in the goings-on, for example, there is a big hassle when the gigantified children fire off a 16-inch gun and sink a ship. You would really think it impossible to make this event sound dull, but West manages---with just two sentences of action, and two almighty pages of remastication.

Lester del Rey's "For I Am A Jealous People" is even more disappointing. Miss West's story, if it is badly and incompetently developed, at least makes a snail's inch of progress before the author poops out. Del Rey's is not developed at all.

The story begins with the assumption that Yahweh---the original one-goat god of the Hebrews, spiteful, petulant and arbitrary---really exists, and that He has found Himself a new chosen people and turned against us. This is novel enough, and del Rey's solution is neat, shocking and sensible. The two together occupy, legitimately, about 15 pages. The rest is vehicle, almost 30 dismal pages of it, including a pointless escape-and-capture sequence that might have been lifted bodily from any two-bit action novel. Del Rey, a high-production writer, can turn out this kind of thing in any desired quantity. He can also write top-grade science fiction, but he discovered a long time ago that few editors know the difference, or care.



William Sloane's anthology, STORIES FOR TOMORROW (Funk & Wagnalls, 626pp., \$3.95) is expressly designed for people who wonder what in the world other people see in science fiction. I think it is probably a well-made book for the purpose, and I can hardly complain if the introduction and the page-long blurbs are addressed to beginners. It's probably no fault of Sloane's, either, that he seems to me to write the way Senator Everett Dirksen talks. Ten of the book's 29 stories are A's on my scale, and 13 B's, leaving only 6 C's. My only legitimate ob-

jection to the book, then, is a small but rancorous one---that it contains four phony-woman's-viewpoint stories. This can hardly be coincidence---the four are bunched together

at the front of the book: Bradbury's "The Wildermess"(1), Boucher's "Starbride"(2), Sloane's own "Let Nothing You Dismay"(5), and Jones' "The Farthest Horizon"(3). (For make-weight, No.4, Mari Wolf's "Homeland" is a phony-male-viewpoint story.)

These things strike me as one of the outstanding blights of the present decade. They come in two principal forms; one, like "The Wildermess"---which contains some of Bradbury's most effective writing, and mushiest thinking---seems to be designed to remind us that some things do not change: eg that wives plunked down on a foreign planet will feel as forlorn as their ancestresses, newly transplanted to America. Well, this is probable enough; but how often do we really need to be reminded of it? A writer who cared to go into this seriously could probably turn up several thousand things we can expect to remain the same for centuries, thus providing himself with material---one can hardly say 'plots'---for several thousand science fiction stories, all equally foolish.

The other form, like "Let Nothing You Dismay" and "The Furthest Horizon", is a little more repulsive. In these we get the familiar theme of the timorous biddnwife, being dragged protestingly into the future until some magnificent coincidence, devious scheme or act of God shows her the error of her ways. Many American housewives like to read genteely masochistic stories like this about themselves in the confession magazines, and watch them on TV soperas; and of course sooner or later somebody had to try putting a space-helmet on them and calling them science fiction. Jones' effort is the pure article, supremely negligible; Sloane's is all the sadder for a careful background and capable, polished writing.



It may be so, as these self-appointed spokesmen for half the race keep on telling us, that the typical pioneer's wife at any period spends all her time weeping, wailing, dragging her feet and in general making an intolerable nuisance of herself, while her ham-shouldered, glitter-eyed husband carries the white man's burden and the white woman's too. I say, it may be so, but I am happy to doubt it.

People who think they might like something like Al Capp's "Li'l Abner", only several times more so, are urged to buy THE MAD READER (Ballantine, 35¢). These strips collected from the comic book "Mad" are unreservedly recommended, particularly the one in which the editors virtuously expose the evils of adults' horror newspapers.

The best new science-fantasy novel to come out of Ballantine Books, or anywhere, in a long time is Chad Oliver's SHADOWS IN THE SUN (\$2 & 35¢). Here's a sleeper. Oliver has finally used his anthropological background to some purpose:

"The fact is, like it or not, that we know more about the Crow Indians than we do about the average citizen of the United States. We know more about Samoan villages than we do about American cities. We know a thousand times as much about the Eskimos as we do about the people who live in the small towns of the so-called civilised world..."

--like for instance, Jefferson Springs, Texas, pop. 6000. Pop. 6000 what? It's quite true that we don't know, and Oliver will use your ignorance with quiet expertness to make your hair stand on end. This is the best kind of science-fictional shoe-ker: like Leiber's "Conjure Wife" (Lion, 25¢), it intermingles the mundane and grotesque so expertly that the reader slides help-

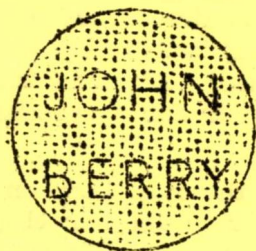


lessly from one to the other. Oliver's portraits of Texans and their towns are from the

(Ctd. on p.12)

"A fanzine should be thought of as a delicately adjusted machine." -Poes

THE SHAVIAN MYSTERIES



I MADE A MISTAKE TODAY. To think that I, having been carefully forewarned, should make such an elementary error, is sickening. It's fate, you say. Could be. Could be. Anyway, even as the words left my lips, I realised the Thing I had done.

"Bob," I said, "lend me your cycle pump."

I looked at his face. It brightened up like a ray of sunshine breaking through a cloudy sky. I could see what he was thinking....."wonder of wonders, someone asking me for the loan of my pump."

"Sure," he breathed, "sure." Moving quickly, so that I couldn't change my mind, he untied the string, and handed the instrument over to me.

What could I do? I mean, I had a long way to walk home. (I should mention in passing that my rear wheel wasn't really flat. There was some air in it, but not sufficient to carry me and all the fanzines I had borrowed from Walter.)

I held the pump tenderly in my hands. It seemed to expect it. The original colour, I suppose, had been white, and I could just decipher the words "Property of the LO" on the handle. With a sigh, I looked for the connection (of the pump) but couldn't find it.

"Ah," said Bob proudly, "I forgot." So saying, he whipped the pump out of my hand, and hit it violently against the wall of the Willis threshold. Then he turned the pump outside down. Honestly, it was uncanny. I watched, mesmerised. Have you ever seen a butterfly emerge from its chrysalis? This was a similar operation. A little metal thing slowly emerged from the pump handle, looked around, wiggled to and fro slightly (like Marilyn Monroe getting warmed up) then dropped at my feet.

"There," said Bob triumphantly, handing me the pump with a flourish.

I picked up the connection and bent it, testing its flexibility. I was temporarily blinded by a fine spray of rust that arose from it.

Bob grinned sheepishly. "Hasn't been used for a while," he explained, edging forward slightly.

When my eyesight was restored, I attempted to screw the connection to the pump.

"No, no," he interrupted impatiently, "this is an anti-free fall gadget of my own invention. It makes screwing obsolete. Just push the connection into place, that's all."

I complied. There was a faint click. Right enough, I couldn't move the connection.

"How do you get it out?" I asked.

There was a pause.

"Oh fruit," he grunted. "That's a point."

His eyes started to oscillate wildly, so I returned to my unenviable task. I was pleasantly surprised to find that the connection fitted onto my tyre quite effectively. I hoped my troubles were over. But then, I always was an optimist.

I pumped vigorously for two and a half minutes, then felt the tyre. There was air in it originally, as I mentioned, but there didn't seem to be much more. I pumped vigorously for some five minutes, then felt the tyre again. Not much change, if any. I pumped

THE GLASS BUSMEL



ON SATURDAY, October 30, the city of Belfast held its Halloween celebrations. (Note: this is the Irish equivalent of Guy Fawkes day.) There was the usual number of explosive sounds and bright flashes of light extending into the small hours of Sunday morning. By Sunday night the last newly neurotic cat had descended from the trees and all but the most cautious of old ladies had removed the plugs from the ears of their pet canaries. By Monday the city had relapsed into its normal, quietly humdrum existence....

Heh! Heh! Heh!

We held our display on Tuesday night.

At a quarter to eight George Charters arrived and I let him in. He was wearing a bulky tweed coat and a bulky tweed cap, an outfit which makes him look rather like a

hairy mammoth with herring-bone skin. "Ah, there you are," he shouted. "I'm going to let you and the rest have it. I'm in form for bloodshed. Just let me get at yiz---I'm dangerous tonight."

"Wait a minute, George," I said, "we won't be playing ghoddinton for a while yet---we're having a fireworks display first."

"That's a pity," he replied, "I was looking forward to a friendly game," We went out to the back where the others were gathered watching Walter let off a few Fairy Sparklers for the benefit of his small daughter and two of her playmates. We arrived just in time to hear the last of an argument between him and James. James had tied two threepenny rockets together and fixed a sparkler onto the bottom of the sticks. Walt had said that this contraption would rise no higher than a single rocket, which remark had caused James to fall back on his BIS jargon in indignant denial. He spouted a lot of highly technical data and knelt to ignite his masterpiece. He lit the sparkler and the two fuses and leapt back, glancing resentfully at the layer of slightly leaky cloud a mere two thousand feet up. He resigned himself to losing sight of the rocket before it really got going.

We all stood there in the damp darkness--waiting. The sparkler burned merrily inside the milk bottle for about three minutes and then went out. "Stand back," warned James as we closed in a bit. "It will go thundering skywards any second now." About a minute later the slightly touched paper was all consumed and the rockets began to blast. They thundered skywards for about ten feet, faltered, keeled over and wobbled drunkenly along the ground for a short distance. They barely cleared a fence and expired fitfully in somebody's back garden.

We could see that James was shaken, that his faith in rocketry was shattered, so nobody spoke. We just laughed.

"Let's get on with the other stuff," said Walter. "What else have we?"

As I told him about my deadly arsenal of Atomic Crashers and Little Demons, and John Berry babbled enthusiastically about the blast areas and flame throwing abilities of his

"You remember the time Peewee Martin started the rumour that I was a dwarf?"

-BBS-

stuff, it seemed to me that Walter's face paled slightly. "I've been thinking," he announced after a few moments. "There isn't much space here---let's all go round to my father's house." This seemed a good idea so we set off. As I passed James he was staring at the point where his rocket had disappeared and muttering, "The fools! The poor fools! They'll never reach the Moon."

With rustling raincoats and squelching shoes we trooped along through the fine drizzle to a house several quiet streets away. Walter opened the front gate and ushered us all in; for some reason he seemed happier now, and placed us at the side of the house with a severe injunction to keep quiet. We huddled against the gable while Walter brought Carol and the other two little girls to the front door and rang the bell. We listened with bated breath as he explained how, out of the goodness of his kindly heart, he wanted to treat the children to a few fireworks. He reappeared and we trudged round to the back.

I saw the rain blurred faces of Walter's father and mother peering out of a side window as Walter went by with his silent retinue of small children. The faces began to withdraw, then re-appeared hurriedly as Madeleine Willis and my wife Sadie passed into their ken. They remained there in silent bewilderment as James and his fiancée Peggy went by, closely followed by John, then me. They drew back instinctively as George lumbered past in the rear in his bulky tweed overcoat and bulky tweed cap. I felt sorry for those faces.

To begin the display we shot off a few rockets in their natural state. These flew quite well but they all seemed to fly in the one direction---towards a dimly seen house in the row whose back gardens abutted on the one we were in, separated from us by a tennis court. After we had tired of this we began the second part of the show---the aerodynamic section. I had bought some of the flying squibs known as 'Flying Imps' and glued wings onto them making them look like tiny V2s. I felt proud of these little spaceships for they flew perfectly although the weight of the wings always brought them down again. Funnily enough, these too all landed on or around the same house. I became distantly aware of slight stirrings of life from the direction of this ill fated building, but it didn't seem worth mentioning.

The next item was the ascent of John's Viking. He had sawn the stick off a shilling rocket and glued on balsa wood wings and painted it in big black and white checks. It was lovely looking. We lit it and stood back. At that moment we heard an aeroplane passing over very high and somebody suggested trying to bring it down, somebody else began to hum 'Dragnet' and I heard Walter muttering something about lighting the blue paper and retiring from fandom. At that moment the Viking took off. It was magnificent the way it climbed on a pillar of blinding incandescence just the way they do in the books. Everybody agreed afterwards that it was the best thing in the show. There was only one thing wrong. John must have made one of the wings heavier than the others because pretty high up the rocket leaned to one side and turned over, still blasting away. I looked round for a shovel with the vague idea of digging a slit trench, but I need not have worried---it nosedived the same house as before.

Next I let off some of my high explosive ones but only a couple of them banged and Walter's father came out to see what was happening. He looked at his garden which we had reduced to a pretty fair imitation of Flanders. I heard him say, "This is a good place to let them off", and he wasn't even slightly sarcastic. Honest.

Sadie and Madeleine were beginning to get bored with the poor performance of the bangers so they called for something new. James must have been still carrying the mental scars of his earlier brush with the force of gravity, for he suggested tying two rockets together so that they faced in opposite directions... "Let them just lie there and strain." This sadistic idea was quashed by John who suggested tying four rockets together and holding them with pliers until they were all firing. James countered this by pointing out that we had no parachute to wear "just in case".

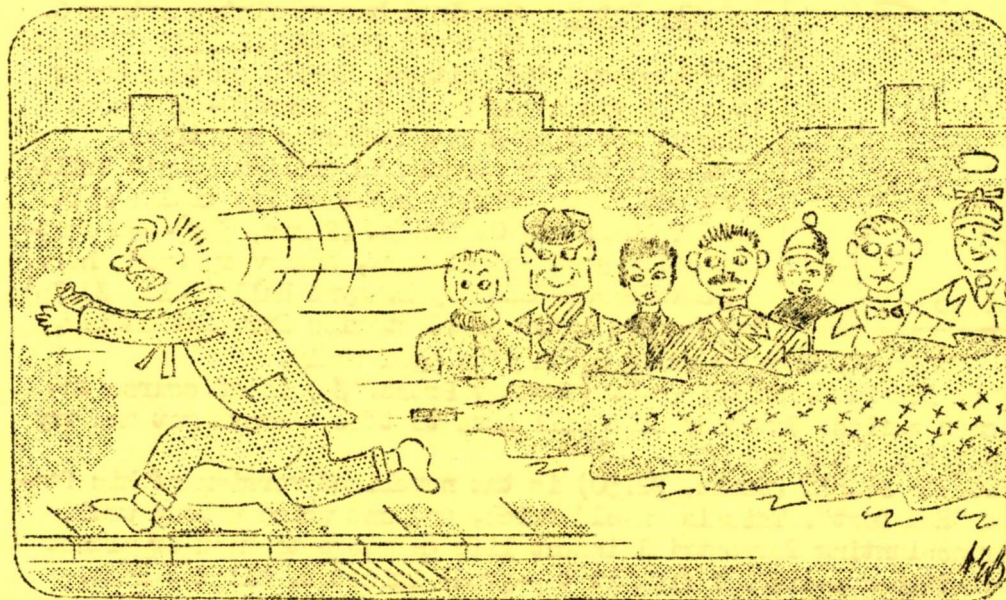
We finally decided to tie an Atomic Crasher onto a rocket. Now, I have a theory about these particular squibs. I bought them in one bundle and I think that, by some mistake in the factory, the first six I lit had had no explosive in them. Also I think that all the powder that should have gone into them went into number seven. As luck would have it that was the one we put on the rocket. While we were cellotaping it on James, who was beginning to recover his faith, worked out the chances of a good flight. "A 3d rocket & a 1d banger....hmm! That's pretty good lift---a three to one ratio." Getting even more hopeful, he said we might break the sound barrier. I never heard of anything sillier---for supersonic flight you need a sixpenny rocket at least.

Anyway I lit the Atomic Crasher, waited a few seconds, and then lit the rocket. It went up at a terrific velocity. It had achieved quite a fair height when the weight of the banger pulled it over to one side. It turned and zoomed downwards, its trail of sparks now reinforced by those from the squib. It disappeared from view behind a hedge but we could see that it had landed....yes, that's right...fair and square in the back-yard of the same house. Exactly at the moment of impact the Atomic Crasher exploded. I saw the intervening hedge lined with crimson flame and the ground shook below our feet. Everybody burst out laughing except me---I had belatedly remembered that there had been somebody moving out there. Somebody in our group said in a stricken voice, "My Ghod! The Russkis have got in first." James said, "The lights are going out all over town." When our ears stopped ringing we realised that every dog for miles around was appealing in a loud voice to its canine Ghu to come and save it. Suddenly through the sounds in my head and the, I suspect, slightly hysterical laughter and the yammering of the dogs I heard what I had been dreading to hear....

From the direction of that last appalling detonation, borne on the rain-laden night air, there came faint piteous cries.

I don't know what the poor devil was trying to say but he certainly sounded as if he was in a bad way. My sleep is still haunted by his faint bleats of bewilderment mingled with pure fear and helpless, impotent anger. James, who was by this time once more his old devil-may-care self, gleefully whispered, "That gap in that row of houses wasn't there before."

The more prudent of us decided that we had better move on before the police cars arrived, so we gathered our gear and set off back to Walter's. As we were walking back I found a Flying Imp in my pocket so I let it off in the street. I can't remember much about the ensuing few seconds but John has covered it for me....



I noticed that Bob was absent. I looked round, and saw him bending down by a front gate. I hurried on, presuming he was trying to complete the night's destruction by blowing up the gate with his last Atomic Crasher. Seconds later I heard a hissing noise, followed by a cry of frustration. I looked round, startled. There was Bob, eyes protruding, cheeks puffed out, his feet

"He who frights and runs away lives to run away another day."

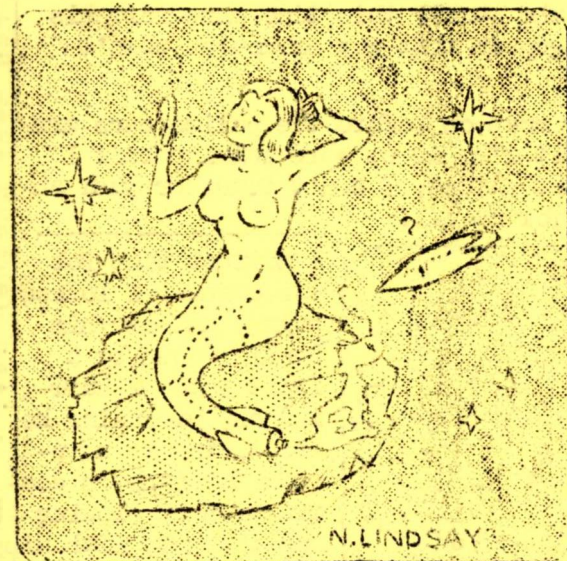
BOB SHAW (Ctd.) Thank you, John. Personally I refuse to believe that I could ever behave in such an undignified manner, but let the readers judge for themselves. See the way when anybody makes a crack at me I just laugh?

Back at Walter's I planted my remaining banger in the damp earth and lit it. To tell the truth I was still thinking about that unknown soul whose evening reverie had been so rudely shattered...that's how I failed to notice that the blue paper had broken off this one. I absent-mindedly touched the match to it and found to my horror that I was squatting (off balance too) in a shower of sparks from a prematurely exploding Atomic Crasher. Gibbering horribly with undiluted fear I took off down the path, travelling about six inches above the ground. I crashed through the world record for the twenty yards, the sound barrier and several ranks of grinning fans and femmes. I was proud of that dash--it made me feel like one of the Unkillables in 'Final Blackout'. Gritting my teeth to keep my heart from bouncing out onto the ground I turned to witness the explosion of the Hell-Bomb.

It went.....'phht.'

A dimly seen object that I had taken to be a huge pile of dustbins painted in zigzag camouflage turned out to be George Charters in his bulky tweed coat and cap. It said, in a patient voice, "Now will you go up and play Ghoomintin?"

So we all went in for friendly, safe, predictable Ghoomintin and tea and cake.



DAMON KNIGHT' COLUMN, ctd. from p.7

life; his aliens are almost--not quite, but nearly enough--as believable. There are absurdities in the story as it develops, but I think you may find as I did that they don't matter. The novel is one piece, all the way down to an unusually satisfactory ending. This man can write.

Briefly Noted Cardinal has reprinted Arthur C. Clarke's THE EXPLORATION OF SPACE in a handsome 35¢ edition. Here's another basic item, if you haven't got it already--or a good present for your doubting-Thomas relatives.

An even bigger bargain is William Fam's brilliant anthology, with a rider on its title: OUTSIDERS: CHILDREN OF WONDER (Parna, 35¢)---a fantastically good job of work, and every word here.

PLANETS FOR SALE, by E. Mayne Hull (Fell, \$2.75) is the old Artur Blord stories from Astounding,

strung together to make a "novel". Even as stories, they've aged badly.

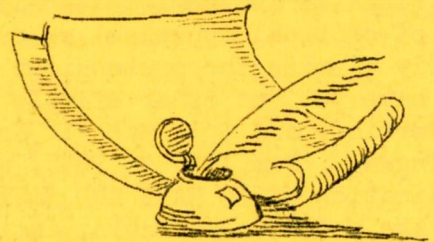
CHILDREN OF THE LENS, by Edward E. Smith, Ph.D. (Fantasy Press, \$3) is of course the final volume of the Lensman series. Somebody else will have to take a month out and try to evaluate this massive work; I can't.

Murray Leinster's FORGOTTEN PLANET (Gnome, \$2.50) is the novelized version of his famous old "Mad Planet" and "Red Dust". This is an old trick, and one which nobody would dare to try any more--transplanting Terrestrial insect life en masse to another planet and blowing it up to more-than-man-size. I find it top-grade Leinster, all the same. Gnome's binding is unusually good.

JOHN BERRY (Ctd.) a sheer blur of slashing movement. He flashed past, coat tails akimbo, hotly pursued by a Flying Imp with a long comet like trail. The nose of the Imp was about 2½" from Bob's nether regions. I yelled to the crowd, and they parted respectfully to make way for the strange procession. There was a final devastating explosion, then silence and utter darkness. We pulled Bob from the hedge, carefully removing the Imp. Radio retrieved his collar and tie from a nearby lamp-post. We eventually managed to calm him down, none the worse for his impulsive flight.

CAUSE TO READ JOYCE

ROBERT
BLOCH



To be a professional critic is to be professionally fickle. As old First Fandom member Robert Browning once remarked, "A man in armour is his armour's slave", and anyone arrayed in the breastplate and cuirass of criticism must willy-nilly follow the critical Code of Unchivalry.

It is one of the tenets of that Code, apparently, never to praise today what you praised ten years ago -- and always to openly disparage what you exalted in the still more remote past. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule; these exceptions are known as "revivals" and consist of six-month periods following the reissuing of books by authors safely dead and done for.

On this side of the Pond we have had several such "revivals" in recent years. One centred about F. Scott Fitzgerald, and his case is so typical I might as well cite it to cover the entire phenomenon. Fitzgerald was a Boy Wonder in the early '20s, who wrote about the wealthy youth of the Jazz Age. For a decade he was in vogue, then with the coming of the depression the critics turned on him and, true to their Code, demolished him utterly. All his previously-proclaimed virtues were found to be vices. Fitzgerald found a job in Hollywood, produced his best book (*TENDER IS THE NIGHT*) and began an even better one (*THE LAST TYCOON*) and died a dozen or so years later. He was a bitter, disappointed man; but not defeated, although critical barbs wounded him deeply. A memorial collection, containing the unfinished portions of his last book and some short stories, attracted little attention.

But after he was safely interred for a number of years, another writer did a thinly-disguised biographical novel, *THE DISENCHANTED*. Budd Schulberg, the author, had worked with Fitzgerald in Hollywood and used his experiences in the story. He produced a moving and powerful book. At the same time, a collection of Fitzgerald's stuff was published, and the movies saw fit to make a singularly inept version of his old novel, *THE GREAT GATSBY*, starring Alan Ladd -- an actor who wears the habitual expression of a man at a diplomatic reception who thinks he may have sat down in something wet but is afraid to look... and even more afraid to imagine what it might have been that he sat in.

Schulberg's novel, the republished collection, and the Ladd movie started one of those brief "revivals" I spoke about. Suddenly the critics "rediscovered" Fitzgerald. Articles and essays were written in praise of his work. There was much damning of the "fools" who had ignored his genius during the period of his final obscurity -- and since some of the writers were these selfsame "fools" they also carefully ignored the fact that they had ignored him. For about six months Fitzgerald was elevated to the Great Hierarchy of American Letters, to reign along with Ernest Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe, Mickey Spillane, and Richard S. Shaver.

But true to tradition, the critics forsook Fitzgerald again about six months later and he is now one with the forgotten hordes. Currently awaiting revival, I predict, are such presently-obscured luminaries as James Branch Cabell, John Don Passos, Ben Hecht, and Sinclair Lewis -- all of whom are either ignored or disparaged by present day American critics, and all of whom (in my opinion) deserve far more kudos than are presently being lavished on the neo-obscurantist-homosexual school of belles-lettres.

James Joyce has ruined my appetite for fried kidneys"

The reason for citing the above example is obvious. First of all, I wanted to scare off all Serious Constructive Fans, to whom a discussion of anything outside the field is anathema. Secondly, I wanted to attempt to establish the singular nature of critical appraisal as currently practised -- in order that the reader can safely dismiss the pretensions of omniscience common to critical pronunciamento.

I have yet one other example to furnish before plunging into the theme of this dissertation, and I'll make it brief. I refer to the case of Ernest Hemingway. Hemingway, from 1925 to 1945, was almost above criticism. In 1937, following the publication of TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT, a few of the more opportunistic critics began to take potshots at Ernie, intimating that he'd lost the old black magic. But Hemingway's FOR WHOM THE BELLS TOLL followed quickly enough, and it made so much money as a movie, and Cooper and Bergman did so much to promote the sale of sleeping bags that the critics retired and bided their time. TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT became a movie in the mid-40's (at least the title was used) and Lauren Bacall again saved Hemingway's critical reputation for a time. But several more years passed and Hemingway produced nothing. The critics stuck their heads out of their holes (you are at liberty to interpret this figure of speech in any way that you wish, but please remember that the onus is on you, and I use the term advisedly) and began to nibble away at the Hemingway mantle. They discovered (as discerning readers discovered years ago, at the height of the Hemingway Craze) that DEATH IN THE AFTERNOON is an amazing mish-mosh of high-level writing and sheer hokum; that THE GREEN HILLS OF AFRICA is a journey-man job of travel trivia; that Mr. Hemingway wrote a singularly pedestrian series of fishing articles for ESQUIRE; that his concept of Viscerotonic Man is not necessarily the Whole Truth Made Manifest.

And then Mr. Hemingway wrote ACROSS THE RIVER AND INTO THE TREES and they had their chance to pounce. For this was a bad book. It was a very bad book, and one of Mr. Hemingway's disciples, John O'Hara, made the mistake of praising it to the skies and comparing Hemingway favorably to the late Wm. Shakespeare, Esq. That did it. During the following year, Hemingway was the Number One Quintain for every Knight of the Pen.

(All right, schmoe, you can read about quintains in THE SWORD IN THE STONE, and it'll do you a damned sight more good than wasting your time over these ramblings, too).

Hemingway, the critics wisely perceived, was a decadent, fascist-minded, sex-obsessed, egotistical, liquor-soaked has-been.

Then Mr. Hemingway sold several short stories to the movies. The resultant films (although hardly faithful representations) were highly successful at the box-office. Mr. Hemingway followed this up by selling THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA to LIFE magazine for an unprecedented price, and an unprecedented printing in this picture-periodical. THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA was a fine novella, and the aura of successful merchandising surrounding it did the trick.

The critics began to reverse themselves. Hemingway was the apostle of the positive - a yea-sayer with faith in the future, a true democratic spirit; mature, disciplined, humble, dedicated to his work.

When Mr. Hemingway followed up his book's appearance by a highly spectacular African plane-crash, he became canonized and is now on the extreme edge of deification. The plane went down and Hemingway came up with an odor of sanctity.

The phenomenon I stress here, obviously, is that disparagement is not the only extreme which mars general critical judgement. Hysterical exaltation is also possible. The only thing that critics seem to suffer from as an occupational lack is objectivity.

Perhaps it is unfair for me to refer only to American writers in this respect: British examples abound. Witness the rise (and decline) of Mr Rudyard Kipling; the rise (and decline -- and gradual rise again) of Mr. W. Somerset Maugham; the rise

So never sent to know for "not the Nobel tolls -- it tolls for thee."

(and decline, and slow evidence of incipient revival) of D.H. Lawrence, and the rise and decline of Aldous Huxley. All these names have been showered with the most ecstatic, almost mystical praise -- and damned to perdition by the same voices in subsequent years.

Now, at long last, against this background of critical vacillation, we come to the case of Mr. James Joyce and ULYSSES.

There has always been a Joyce cult: even in the early days of THE DUBLINERS (if Willis will pardon the expression). THE PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN still has its vociferous admirers, and there are those who prefer the early-draft ULYSSES published as STEPHEN HERO, and those who dote upon FINNEGAN'S WAKE.

But ULYSSES is probably the book most closely identified with Joyce, and rightly so, for in it he posited and popularized (although he by no means invented) the form we all refer to as "stream of consciousness" writing.

Publication of ULYSSES, as you probably know, was preceded and attended by stormy dissent. Smuggled portions of privately-printed text emerged from Paris. A court decision made the book available in the United States. All this made for publicity, and the big boom was on. Reading ULYSSES was -- for a time -- as mandatory an obligation amongst self-styled intelligentsia as was an understanding of the Einstein Theory. That is to say, people said they had read ULYSSES, just as they said they understood Einstein, and the critics plumped for it in the early '30s just as they plumped for the Higher Art of Walt Disney, the Symbolic Value of Chaplin's little tramp, and the exaltation of the Poo over the Yobber.

The critics went to Night Town with Poldy and slid under the covers with Molly Bloom and a lovely time was had by all. Joyce, as might be expected by those who understand the critical temperament, was eulogized as the creator of a New Literature. Since ULYSSES is not exactly easy reading -- in spots it's a good deal more incoherent than a letter from Chuck Harris -- there sprung up a variety of self-appointed "interpreters". These savants published articles and books to serve as "guides" or "keys" to the text, and some of these efforts make for amusement. I have seen it solemnly stated (and published) that Joyce wrote certain portions of the book in key with particular colors, in accord with certain astrological signs to govern his mood, etc. There was a definite effort to "annotate" Joyce as thoroughly as Shakespeare -- with a paragraph of explanatory footnote for every word he wrote.

The inevitable result was that many potential readers, already dismayed by the apparent prolixity of Joyce's prose, were further discouraged by perusing one of these so-called "guides". And the critical huzzas, blithely hailing Joyce as a Kindred Spirit to Miss Gertrude Stein, Mr. Ezra Pound, Mr. E. E. Cummings, did nothing to reassure anyone.

I'd venture to say that Joyce lost a third of his audience because of his critical popularity; would-be ULYSSES readers were frightened off by the sheer incoherency of the praise.

Then came the usual critical reaction. Joyce was "old hat", he hadn't really discovered "stream of consciousness" writing, he was actually just a "stream of self-consciousness" writer and the latter FINNEGAN'S WAKE was a "stream of sub-conscious" effort. Also Joyce was one of those smart-aleck Irishmen and (later) he didn't even live in Ireland, which proves that he was damned if he did and damned if he didn't, and besides it was possible to parody Joyce's style which proves something else again - viz, that he couldn't possibly be so much if he can be easily imitated by others.

So Joyce gradually lost favour with the critics, and thereby lost another third of his possible audience for ULYSSES.

"If it's so good, why don't they confesse it for 'Reader's Digest'?"

All of this has a special application in this particular instance, because ULYSSES is a difficult book to read and to interpret; its sheer essence presents sufficient challenge to the average reader without the added heckling, pro and con, of critical reaction.

And yet, ULYSSES is an important book in that it has served, and served steadfastly over a score of years, as an inspirational springboard for many contemporary writers. Even Mr. Hemingway found it of use to him in portions of TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT, as the discerning will discover, and many authors have not been ashamed to confess their indebtedness to Joyce in print.

Because of this phenomenon, some of Joyce's influence has come to be felt by indirection -- I hazard that there are writers who have not read ULYSSES, but have borrowed stylistic trappings discovered in the work of other writers who were copying Joyce.

To relate the matter to science-fiction, almost every ULYSSES reader will recognise the primal source of some of the Esper thought-and-conversation patterns in Bester's THE DEMOLISHED MAN, and in the frank stream-of-consciousness elements in Sturgeon's work (in which is also frequently adumbrated the relationship between Bloom and Stephen Dedalus). Novels such as Wolfe's LIMBO owe much to Joyce's technique, and some of the devices which seem to startle the readers of GALAXY and ASTOUNDING can be easily traced to the world of Blazes Boylan and dear little Zoe.

There is no doubt but that Joyce's tortured humor caused him to embellish his account with the most elaborate puns and topical references to events and personages which we non-Dubliners, after a lapse of almost fifty years, find unintelligible. There is no doubt but that his wilfully involved style makes for hard going. There is no doubt but that his unannounced change of viewpoint, his trick of slipping from the conscious to the subconscious level in narration, offers a challenge to the reader.

But there is also, in my mind, no doubt but that the effort involved in a conscientious perusal of ULYSSES is a rewarding one; no doubt but that the reader who addresses himself to the book will come away with full recognition of three memorable characters -- Stephen Dedalus, Leopold Bloom and Molly Bloom.

And, more appositely, he will have, in the process, acquainted himself with the source of most of the so-called "modern" writing techniques which dazzle the naive in general literature today as well as in science-fiction.

Critical furore and fulmination aside, ULYSSES towers head and shoulders above most twentieth-century writing as a great source-book. Joyce well deserves a place beside Marcel Proust, Thomas Mann, and that other eminent Irishman, Walter Kelly, for his contribution to lasting literature. If for no other reason than that he managed to drag so long and comparatively serious an essay out of me, Joyce will never be forgotten.

(Editor's Note: 'Ulysses' is a detailed account of everything that the principal characters thought and did on one typical Dublin day--the 16th June, 1904, to be exact. Each episode corresponds with those of Homer's Odyssey and "is furthermore related to an organ of the body, an art or science, a colour and a symbol; and each is written in a different and appropriate technique." (Charles Luff). ~~As~~ Bob implies, this is only important to the lover of esotericism...but there may be some of those among Hyphen readers.

"Bloom is the emanation of a racial unconsciousness, a symbol of all that repressed world in man which Freud calls the Id. In this sense, Ulysses is the most wholesome purgative that has been offered to mankind for more than a century. That it should be banned and burnt by the public hangman is a mad example of the way mankind refuses salvation." (Herbert ^{read.})

Salvation is however now available at most British bookshops at 25/- a copy. --WAW

"It would make a fine ice-show if they could get Billy Graham to play Poldy."

MY

SECOND

COLUMN

BY

George,

Real George,

GEORGE ALL THE WAY,

Charters



I have been wondering how people with relatives ever manage to do any fanac. I would like to show you how I am beset, bothered and bewildered, by telling you of one short day recently. At the time I had visiting me (1) my brother Bob, (2) his wife Eileen, (3) and (4) their two young daughters. When I arose on that fateful Saturday morning little could I foresee how the day would close. Perhaps it is just as well that such things are hidden from us.....

To put the events in their proper chronological order: I arose at eight o'clock, had my breakfast, saw the milkman, saw the baker, fed the poor unfortunate Boxer pup, and went down the street for the morning paper so that my visitors could read it at breakfast. Then, when I had their breakfasts prepared, I took paper and breakfasts upstairs and fed the brutes. This finished, I took the pup for a walk, and on my return washed up the dishes, tidied the rooms, made the beds, and set out for Belfast. Had fun going round the shops (book-shops, you clot), and got home at 12.15 in time to get the lunch ready for one o'clock. Then my sister-in-law Eileen, whom I had always regarded as my friend, with her stomach bulging with my food, suggested that we go to a Gymkhana. Horrorstruck, I turned from the sink and stared at her. So this was the viper I had nursed in my bosom. But what could I do? After all, she was a jest in my house. So, with a smile, I gracefully gave in. (To be exact, I said "All right, I'll go to the bloody thing.") My sister also decided to come and, just as we were setting out, another sister and two more neices arrived. They said they would come too, so we all piled into the two cars and the procession set off.

Ah, if only I had stayed home instead....

What kind of snake would you find on a car? A windscreen-viper?

We arrived at Clondeboye, scene of the exhilarating events that were to take place, and it was as we drove into the entrance to the estate that the only satisfactory incident of the day took place. When one of the guardians poked his head into the car and demanded payment, I completely outfumbled my brother and he paid!

The first thing to catch the eye of the six female fiends with us was a Hoopla stall, and the excitement generated by the attempts to win Valuable Prizes was so intense --and expensive -- that I wandered off in search of something a little quieter. Hardly had I started, however, than I was dragged back to join the other members of the clan in a visit to Clondeboye House, the country seat of the Marquis of Dufferin. Fortunately, two good men and true halted us before we were halfway there so we straggled back again to the enclosure where the racing was about to begin.

"Relax, it's house-broken."

The first race was a cart-horse Derby and the sight of these mighty steeds as they thundered by was enough to strike terror into the strongest heart. The Boxer pup was fascinated, his eyes out like organ-stops, following the beasts as they trundled by and the earth itself trembled (free advt. for J. P. Coats & Sons' Breweries). Bringing up the rear was the largest and most massive horse of all with a tiny rider perched on its back like a mouse sitting on the deck of an aircraft carrier.

The next events (if such breath-taking items could logically be called events) were pony races over the hurdles. Some of the ponies cleared the hurdles with ease, others by knocking them down first. Some just refused to jump-- obviously the brainy ones. During this race my sister-in-law thought she was not getting enough attention or publicity, so she pushed the pup on to the course, then screamed and ran after it. Perhaps she had in mind the suffragette who ran onto the Epsom Derby course some 30 years ago. I am glad to report that any publicity she got was unfavourable. Bob called our attention to the Gymkhana: A lot of horses showing their asses to a lot of asses showing their horses fact that the pup seemed enthralled by the horses galloping round the enclosure. Only when I saw the shivering HORROR with which he gazed, did I realise what the poor thing was thinking - that when he grew up he'd have to carry Eileen or Bob on his back.

The announcer was good. He was always careful to give the results whilst the people were still applauding he guessed they did not want to be bothered by trivialities.

One little girl whose mount refused a small jump three times was so vexed that she looked as though she could have eaten her pony.

When another event began -- a relay race, I think -- we were compelled to move to a drier spot beneath some trees. But, before we moved, Eileen, unsuccessful in her publicity-seeking pup-on-course act, tried to push her poor down trodden husband onto the track to be trampled to death by the hurtling behemoths. Fortunately, this attempt was also doomed to failure. If it had been successful it would have spoilt the day for the rest of us, -- he was the only one who had cigarettes.

Over and over again, it seemed now, that the riders had to jump one particular hurdle: if it could have spoken that hurdle would have said plenty. We watched it out to the miserable end, and then watched apathetically as yet another "small hurdle race" was run. Not knowing the results, and not caring much anyhow, and with the rain gradually increasing, we began to lose our enthusiasm. Lesley and Christine sheltered under my coat, making me feel like a bedraggled mother hen. Eileen gave me the pup to nurse, making me feel like a mother dog. The rain began to make me feel like a drowned rat. My troubles multiplied like rabbits.

At length, everybody decided they had had all they could stand, and we made our way back to the cars to return to civilisation.

So we came back to Bangor and had tea, and somebody suggested "Let's go to the pictures!" So we went to the pictures, and by some underhanded skullduggery I found myself at the head of the clan when said clan arrived at the paybox. And if anyone asks if I enjoyed the picture he will be reported to the N.S.P.C.C ---the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Charters.

So we are back to where we started. Let me repeat, for the benefit of those who came in half-way through the programme: How do people with relatives ever manage to do any fanac? Sadly I confess that I don't know. It's a sixty-four dolour question.

SOAMES

by

BRIAN VARLEY.



Soames was tough. Six foot four of hot-blooded, iron-muscled All-American male. Soames was forgetful. He walked into a bar one night forgetting to open the door. "Jeeper," said Soames, "the air's thick in here tonight." Soames was forgetful, but he was tough.

Soames was handsome. Tall, deep-chested, a face like Apollo and a mass of dark crinkly hair. When Soames hove into sight, Errol Flynn hid his women.

Soames was a genius. He designed the first moon-rocket and created its powerful atomic drive. Einstein wrote him fan-letters.

Soames was in charge of the Moon-rocket Project at Blue Fields, and it was a stroke of Soames genius which devised the code-name for the Project, -"Operation Green-cheese." Soames was a tireless worker. Not content to sit in his office and direct proceedings, he was always out on the field with his technicians and workmen. He was always amending plans and inventing new gimmicks; indeed, hardly was a part constructed but he thought up a better device and it had to be unassembled once more.

Everyone listened to Soames, for wasn't Soames the man who had built a pipe line out to the Outer Void? (This was originally known as PLOTTOV until the Russians claimed that Josef Plottov, a Russian scientist, had invented it.) Because of this pipeline every laboratory in the land could now get a beaker filled with absolute vacuum at the turn of a tap.

Soames was not always concerned with serious projects however; he was, after all, a normal man who liked children. Because of this liking for children Soames had combined the doll which would drink and then wet nappies with the U-bend from a kitchen sink, so that now the doll didn't wet nappies until put to bed. Yes, Soames was brilliant.

The rocketship was nearing completion. Soames and his ADC's were touring the interior when Soames stepped out of an air-lock some sixty feet above the ground. He descended with dignity, if alacrity, to the concrete surround with an acceleration of 32ft. per second squared. The workmen rushed over but Soames had picked himself up and was patting his crinkly black hair into place. "Sue the firm who made this concrete," said Soames looking at the deep depression he had just climbed out of. Was it not Soames who had written into the contract that the concrete must be able to stand the weight of a man falling from a height of sixty feet? Leaving his assistants to deal with the situation Soames hurried off to calculate his speed per microsecond when he hit the concrete. He had an idea that this might be a record.

Whilst Soames was working out this calculation and writing to all the scientific journals and the Sunday newspapers, his assistants were busily completing the rocketship. Could they finish it before Soames returned and amended some more plans? They did, ---just.

"I'm donating these virgins to the Kettering auction."

Naturally, Soames was to pilot the rocketship. The President and the whole of Congress, the massed bands of the United States Marines and the Brooklyn Dodgers, together with a crowd of two hundred thousand, had assembled to wish him bon voyage. He shook hands with J. Fred Muggs and the President and then took the microphone to say au revoir. As his deep bass rang through the colossal, specially-erected stadium, a thousand women swooned; then as Marilyn Monroe mounted the platform to kiss him goodbye, a thousand men swooned.

Eventually Soames took off, -- a perfect take-off of course. His ship rose vertically, balancing on a column of pure fire (with acknowledgements to the SF Writers' Cliché Club) and 200,000 handkerchiefs waved in farewell.

Time passed. Hours grew into days, the Earth receded and the Moon grew larger. Soames wrote a thesis on this phenomenon. Soames cried the Moon and discovered that the other side was.....just the same as the front.

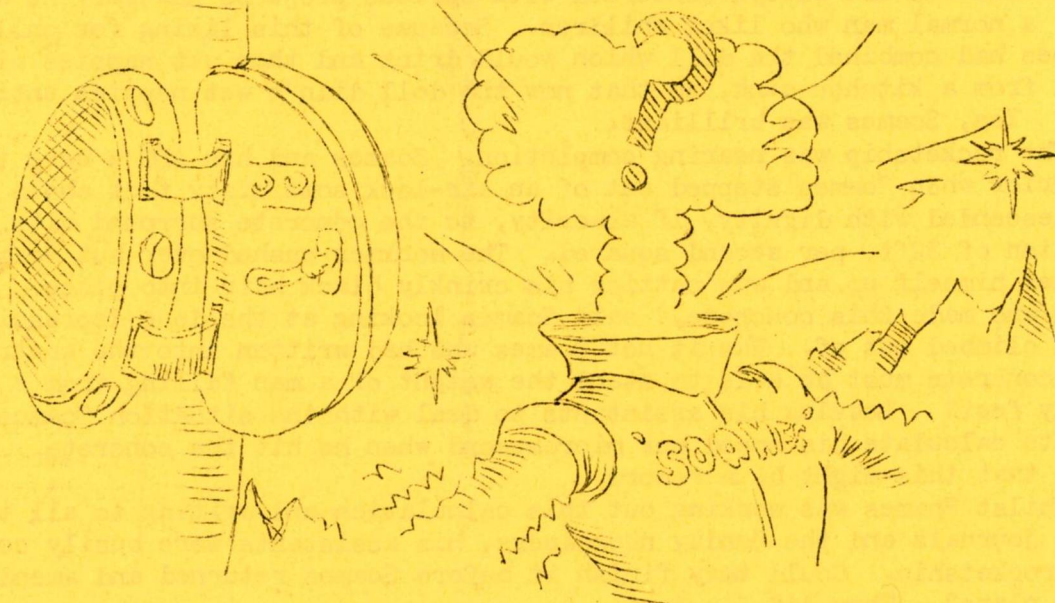
He selected his landing place and circled the crater in the manner approved by Flash Gordon. There was no sign of Ming, nor of his allies the Clay Men. He circled lower, hoping to scare some ignorant Selenite from its hiding-place. There were no Selenites, although he could see dozens of Stalagmites*.

Soames brought his ship in for a precision three-point landing. Quickly swallowing a laxative, he eased from the controls and peered through the port. Two maggots peered warily back out of a piece of Stilton. He started back in amazement, then he remembered his mother's warning: "Never leave yesterday's lunch on the window ledge."

Undaunted by this slip of memory Soames prepared to take a look outside. He climbed carefully into his spacesuit and fastened the necessary straps. He collected all the necessary impedimenta....binoculars, specimen-bag, hammer, pick, shovel and star spangled banner. He set the automatic film-recording device and crossed majestically to the airlock. He turned, smiled into the camera lens, opened the lock and stepped out.

Soames was dead. Soames had forgotten his helmet. Soames was forgetful, but Soames wasn't that tough.

((* Children born in German P.O.W. camps?))





I had a letter from Dave Cohen yesterday. I think that he must approve of me because he reckons I am a deserving case for some prozine egoboo. Listen.....

"..You may or may not know that I am running a regular column in the British S.F. Magazine on Personalities in Fandom. As I do give you some notoriety in that underworld

called Fandom, I wonder if you would care to send me some details about yourself --How you first came to read S.F.: your first activities in the field, your activities in present day fandom etc. Your present job, your favourite hobby and whathave you. In fact anything that you consider suitable for publication about yourself. With the info --if you are interested -- I would be most obliged if you could send a photo of yourself. It would help if you could send a non gloss photo for reproduction. Thank you."

This made a pretty big impression in Rainham. This was no crummy fanzine biography, this was the Big Time and my family began to treat me with new respect. Nothing like this had happened in the Harris clan since Uncle Fred made page 2 of "The News of the World" in his scoutmaster's uniform. They were very impressed. My mother went out to tell the neighbours about it, and I sat right down and wrote eight thousand words on my favourite subject. Me.

This I decided would be no ordinary fannish personality piece. I thought of how sickened I was when I read in "New Worlds" that James White, that horrible little reach-me-downs peddler was passing himself off as a "sartorial consultant" and I was determined to speak the truth. If the circulation of the British S.F. Magazine wanted to hear about me, then I would Give Them My All....

"How did I come to read S.F.?" -- other people might have avoided this question, but not me. I told them straight out that I bought a BRE "Fantastic Adventures" because I was attracted by the cover, and because the lead novel had "silken thighs" and "heaving breasts" all in the first paragraph. I'd imagined it to be pornography plus and I've never quite gotten over the disappointment.

"Your first activities in the field?" -- never had any, old man. I'm just a home-loving boy, not one of those rustic Lotharios from Trowbridge fandom.

"Activities in present day fandom?" A very good question.

"Your present job?" That was easy. I told them about me and Henry Ford, and how we'd tripled our production during the ten years that we've been together. He looks after the production side, and I deal in human relationships and serve refreshments to my fellow workers twice daily. And, of course, it isn't just anybody who can be trusted with 2lbs of cube sugar in his desk drawer.

"Your favourite hobby?" -- Brother! I thought that everybody, but everybody, knew the answer to that. I'm young and healthy, unmarried and uninhibited, and naturally my favourite hobby is the same as any other fan's. I don't go in for any of those dangerous obsessions like stamp-collecting, but once I'm in the mood, nothing, absolutely nothing, gives me more pleasure than to curl up in the old armchair and think of those wonderful letters I'm going to answer just as soon as I get the stamps, the stationery, the opportunity, and the inclination.

"Whathave you?" --Well,but I think we'd better just skip that. I've got to be careful what I say around here, the "Post-Scripts" people are just waiting to give me the treatment too. Poor old Harry Turner gets it in the neck this time for saying "balls" when he meant testicles and I don't want anything like that to happen to me, But if you're really interested, I could write to you privately.

"He's as innocent as a new-born cobra."

"And anything suitable for publication." ---Sometimes I wish that I did do things suitable for publication. But not very often.

Anyway, you can see that it was a pretty choice 8,000 words, the fey sort of stuff that would triple any prozine's circulation and have the readers hollering for a second helping. And there was a photograph too.

Actually, I wasn't too happy about the photo because most of pictures are the glossy type. I found two non-glossy ones, --the first showing me stark naked and in an attitude of wild abandon at the age of six months. I thought this was hardly suitable and decided to send the other one. This showed me fully dressed but still with the old wild abandon at one of the Stupormancon saturnalias. It wasn't very good, but at least I was upright, and with some careful retouching nobody would ever notice that Ken Potter and Harry Hanlon were supporting me from behind.

So I had everything ready to mail to Dave. Then, Arthur Thomson arrived.

Arthur is our latest acquisition, a layout and cartoon genius and the Art in the Art Department. He's a nice guy, --quiet, shy, and diffident, (you'd find it hard to tell us apart), -- and this was our first meeting. He's been reading sf for years, but has only just discovered us people lurking in the background, and is full of enthusiasm to learn about Fandom.

He sat on the sofa and I began the instruction: "Once upon a time in the village of Prosaic in the Country of Mundane there lived....." Three hours later he made his first comment. "Yes," he said, "I understand all that and I recognised this Jophan character as soon as you opened the door," (cynics in our circulation are at liberty to ask for their ninepence back), "but," he went on, "surely I would learn more about fandom by hearing about your real life instead of gleaning through these old fanmags and stuff?" He gestured towards the pile of Quandrys, Hyphens, VSM No 3, and Slants that I had dragged out for him.

I considered this carefully and had to admit that he had a point. I put the mags back in the safe and gave him instead the piece I had written for Dave Cohen. He sat back and read it, laughing in all the right places.

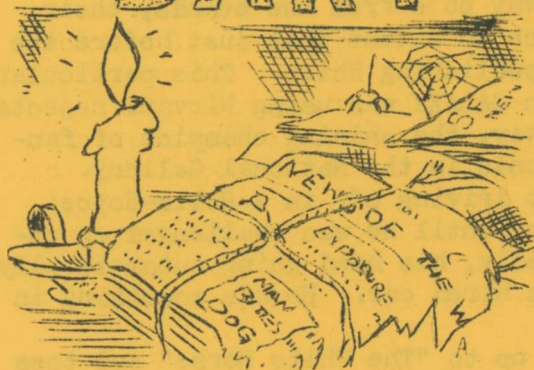
Suddenly, he stopped reading, laid the thing down and stared at me in astonishment. I leaned over, glanced at where he was up to, and then reached for the Mss., ripped it in half and threw the pieces into the fire. There was nothing else I could do. I had spoilt something that was big and fine and grand for Arthur, and my biography was better burnt. I was able to explain and comfort him, but I wouldn't be able to do the same for the readers of the British S.F. Magazine.

You see, Arthur had been searching for fandom for a long time. He hadn't been aware of this search, he was just conscious that something was missing, -- like a femme fan after her first convention. Ever since he'd left kindergarten he'd lived our solemn stefnic life, denying himself everything except the barest necessities so that he could afford to buy and read all the prozines regularly. At Christmas he used to ask Santa for a slip-stick instead of a cricket bat, and he spend his teens writing to JWC Jnr about astrogation errors in asf. Naturally, he found my autobiography a bit of a shock, but he had to find out sooner or later. He'd gotten up to ".... I read Galaxy and M of F & SF regularly and very seldom bother with any of the prozines..." and he just couldn't take it. The poor guy had imagined that science-fiction fans spent a large portion of their time actually reading science-fiction! It took him quite a while to get over it too, but I guess that 27 is pretty old to learn the facts of life.

THE EPICENTRE ARCHIVES

BY
KEN BULMER

BLACK BART



You must all remember him, and many of you must still wonder why he did what he did. His fame resounded from the swamps of Okefenokee to O'Bleak House, by way of Bloomington, L.A., "The White Horse" and Puerto Rico. (That, of course, is yet another story.) Charles Bartholomew Black -- Black Bart as he came to be called, (although I fail to see how a person can come until he has been called) presented a case for study that had to be left unopened until after the key was turned in the lock of death.

The newspapers carried the headlines for only three days, which would have annoyed Black Bart had he lived to read his obituary, as one of his dearest wishes was to be a nine days' wonder. Black Bart was worthy of better things than being a mere thirty three and a third percenter.

But I am running ahead of the story again, so for slow readers I will go back and begin one evening when Vincent and I were happily eating spaghetti from last year's "New Statesman" and gnashing our teeth over a blackish piece of blotting

Moving from the Epicentre to my new address entailed a considerable amount of careful sorting of the uniquely efficient filing system in use at the Epicentre. Whilst meticulously depositing a dusty fanzine file into its cardboard container I broke the rotted string, the "News of the World" wrapper parted company, spraying the fanzines across the floor like a splayed deck of cards ---and the memories came flooding back.

Superzine!

Who can forget that publication? The lithoed covers charmed me still through their dust coating. The brilliancies of wit scintillated from every four-colour mimeod page. Yes, Superzine brought the memories, and the ache and the longing for things that are best dead and forgotten.

But for the new generation of pb nurtured fans it seems fitting that some of the old things, the sacred legends, the doings of a past era of fandom which lie in so rich a profusion in the Epicentre Archives might well be brought back to life for a brief moment. I propose therefore to give the world from time to time some of the little-known stories that might otherwise be handed down to posterity in a garbled and unscientific fashion or even lost completely.

And, with those much read copies of Superzine in their broken wrapper before me - their editor had never thought he could be so rapt in the "News of the World" - it seems only right that we should find what moral there is in the story of Charles Bartholomew Black. The story is highlighted now by the evidence of the last issue, of which this pitifully bedraggled specimen with its yellow stain is the only copy still in existence -- the rest were publicly burnt on a bomb site outside "The White Horse" -- and of these carbon copies of Charles Black manuscripts.

"I'm uncertain whether she's Pollyanna or Polly Adler"

paper sent over from Northern Ireland. Vincent was about to speak when the doorbell was knocked. As our bell did not work it was more or less obligatory to knock if you wanted to come in, and the bell was loose so you used that to knock with. As I say, Vincent was about to speak, -- at that time he was still Vincent: it was before he'd had his stroke -- but he went downstairs instead and answered the bell. What has posterity missed?

Little did we know when the stranger had negotiated the stairs and had been found a seat on the S.F.N. file, that those pale, intense, dedicated features would one day adorn its front pages. Such fame, we could not in reason have expected, would accrue to one so young.

Charles Bartholomew Black, it turned out, was a fan. Not, you'll notice, a faan. The ayes had not yet had it. The story as it unfolds is familiar. He noticed the piece of black blotting paper and, to our surprise, informed us with a deal of fervour that it was a fanzine. "I," he said, pressing one ivory finger against his bosom, "am going to put out a fanzine also." We were duly impressed and in the fullness of time the ivory finger was indeed deeply stained with mimeo ink. The impecuniousness of youth hampered his work at the outset; but he grimly persevered, rising like a salmon at the bar of fandom. Black Bart - he insisted on being called Charles Black but never was - went from strength to strength.

Vincent and I were editing an article by Ego when Black Bart burst in with the great news that he was publishing "Superzine". Money, apparently, was no object. "Superzine became the "Slant" of England and Black Bart was happy. He had a stony heart with regard to Vargo Statten. He fulminated in his many fanzines against the insidious spread of what he termed low class publications. He became the scourge of fandom and stood forth boldly for class in everything. Through it all Black Bart prospered, the only cloud on his horizon being Willis, who prospered even more. Despite Black Bart's vigorous campaign to clear away pb's from the stands, their numbers increased. Later on his mania grew to such an extent that just before the end he even reproached the American Campbell for publishing White. This particular piece of crusading was a trifle offkey - why, even GALAXY was using Nirvana rejects.

However, Black Bart went on his self-righteous way, the shining champion of fandom. One afternoon he was barely civil to Syd Bounds in the National Gallery. Chuck mentioned casually that he'd seen Black Bart driving off in a Rolls-Royce; but so wild an eventuality received little credence until he was challenged on unfannish behaviour, whereupon he admitted shamefacedly, his hand going automatically to his fob pocket, that it was a friend's friend's hired car. He was something in the City by way of bread and butter he said.

Black Bart was the soul of goodness. He'd come up to "The White Horse" and toss a pile of next month's prozines onto the tables with a light laugh. "Take 'em, boys -- their standard is pretty low," he'd say. "I see those turncoats who are writing professionally are well represented. Vile pros are a stench and an abomination in the nostrils of true fans."

Black Bart hated any fanac outside the scope of pure fanning. If he could have his way, said many a fulminating editorial in "Superzine", the pb's would be brushed from the stands and the Trufans fanzines take their places. We had suspected that he was being financed by Augustus Bickerstaff, but Black Bart vehemently declared that he had refused the money, and commiserated with Gus before the latter disappeared beneath printing furniture. He was lavish himself: the party in his room at the Con where he cut a prolific pb author dead, became world renowned. The hosts of neofen he directed regarded him as Ghod. The feet of clay became apparent only after the mists of illusion had lifted.

It was after I had met Pamela that I had the first vague doubts. I tried to

reason the thing out, knowing that I was tearing down a colussus. Pamela had a more direct method. As we left Black Bart one evening, she said thoughtfully: "That fan has a skeleton under his beanie. Intuition is Logic without Tears; and I'm not crying."

I shrugged the whole thing off and then Black Bart came round to the Epicentre one evening when Vincent was out, and said: "Look, Ken, you remember I sent you a pile of my old carbon copies for you to use the backs?"

I was astonished to see him. Ever since a certain pb had hit the market he had consigned the Epicentre to the deepest pits of hell. We were, he had said in a white-hot one-shot that blackened and partially melted its staples, a couple of renegades, festering blotches on the fringes of prodom, not fit to lick the boots of Shaver. And now, here he was, white around the gills - I believe he'd ancestors in Manchester - and trembling like a Vargo Statten fan asking Ted Tubb for his autograph. I invited him in. He began to cast furtive eyes around our filing system, even inspecting the "Urgent Action" file behind the gas-stove. I thanked him for finding it for us.

"I don't quite know what happened to those carbons," I told him. I stared at him, -- a thin line of sweat glistened across his forehead and his eyelids twitched. I knew he wanted to kick me in the guts -- but didn't know how to on account of not having read the right sort of stuff. I said I didn't know what we'd done with them. But I did. I got rid of him at last and took the carbons from under my "Observer" plate, -- the one with the peanut-butter smears in weekly coats.

My suspicions were confirmed. The seeds had been planted in my head by Pamela, and now they grew to full bloom. Vincent came in, I showed him, and the shock almost made him put out a special edition of SFN.

Late that night Black Bart came back. He looked a wreck. Without any preamble he told us what all the world now knows.

I interrupted and Vincent laid down his zap-gun.

"We know, Black Bart." It was an awful moment.

"You know I'm --"

"Do not profane the Epicentric air with the names," Vincent said sorrowfully.

A sly look came over Black Bart's face. The gleam in his eye demanded straw in the hair for full effect. "Did you know I was"

We pointed to the wedge of pocket-books holding up the table's short leg. "Even that too," we nodded solemnly.

Black Bart said nothing further. A copy of "Superzine" fell from his limp hands onto a piece of ceiling forgotten on the window sill. It was damp with his tears. That copy which now lies before me, the only one of its kind left in the world.

If only, then, we had known what was in his true fannish soul! If only we had fully comprehended the utter torture of his desire for paper and ink and stencils and spare colour duplicator rollers, a desire which overrode his trufannish scruples as to the methods by which he acquired those supplies. Poor wretched Charles Bartholomew Black! Torn between two opposing desires, what other course could he have adopted? To the neofans he shed a great light. He should have trusted us old cynifans - he should have known that the ~~Ere~~ would keep his secret.

But his own code was too strict. He left us then, weeping, and already we had exhausted that topic of conversation before the door grated behind him - forever. Poor Black Bart! A Trufan who was forced to the equivalent of selling his soul.

Looking now at the Superzine file and its wrapper, seeing the blurring of colours on that last fatal issue where his tears fell, the past swims again before my eyes and I see once more the last words written about Charles Bartholomew Black - Black Bart, the deceptive fan.

As I said before, he received a full write-up in the "News of the World".

MY

FANDOM FOR A CAUSE

By

MAL ASHWORTH

It's strange what kind of things do happen at a Convention really, isn't it? Oh, not those kind of things - they're natural enough; I mean things like several people thinking of the same thing at round about the same time. In different circumstances I would suggest telepathy, but..... I was sat in the bar when the first incident which brought up the subject occurred. No, I know that's not surprising but

this time I was in the bar alone; I had managed to creep off on my own for one of those rare moments which help you to appreciate company so much more during the rest of the time, and was contemplating my future in the depths of the Glass that Cheers. It looked quite rosy. I hadn't notice Ben Rene (you know Ben Z. Rene who does a column called "Wide Awake" for SCRIMPLES?) come into the bar until he sat down beside me and rested his glass on the table. He didn't waste any time.

"Look," he said, "I wanted to get a few minutes to talk to you while there was nobody else around. The fact of the matter is that after this farce is over and I get back home, I'm going to start an Inner Fandom, and I thought I'd let you in on the set-up before it all happens. You can see the way things are going at present, with that mob out there." He waved his hand in the direction of the Hall -- "calling themselves Mature Fans, trying to run things as though they were Ghod and his henchmen to stop anyone having any fun and make them all sit in straight rows and listen to their damned lectures. Hell!" He shifted in his seat and automatically adjusted his water-pistol. I pulled my jacket back unobtrusively so that he could see that I was carrying one too and was 'with him.' At the same time I tried to slide the copy of FANTASY TIMES around to the side farthest from Ben and to make it look as if it were a copy of HYPHEN anyway.

"Well," he went on, "that's the way things are going and that's the reason we need an Inner Fandom. You'll be with us of course because I know you're just as much against that sort of trash as I am, but I can tell you that I'm being damned careful who I pick. Membership will be by invitation only of course. I'll have to dash off now because there's a couple of other people I want to see about it, but I'll be writing to you to give you the details later on."

I thanked him a lot for his faith in me, finished off my drink as his back disappeared through the bar doorway, and drifted back into the hall again. To tell the truth, besides being 'honoured' at being chosen as a member of Ben's Inner Fandom, I was slightly surprised; it wasn't as though I'd ever corresponded with him, or anything like that.

I'd only just sat down and was doing my best to concentrate on what the chap on the platform was saying about Why Science Fiction Was Not As Good Now As It Used To Be, when old Rable plonked himself down next to me and whispered: "Hello, er, Harrumph." I helloed him back and went on trying to concentrate. H. O. Rable, (who used to publish THE APPRECIATIVE ENTHUSIAST about five years back) was one of the people I didn't know best in Fandom; in fact I didn't know him so well that I didn't even know his christian names.

26 "I say," he whispered loudly, "Harrumph."

"Yes?" I said.

"Er..... let's go get a drink shall we?"

I was going to tell him that I'd only just been doing that but my curiosity got the better of me and I was failing utterly in my attempts to concentrate on the lecture anyway. So we went.

H.O. collected a couple of drinks and we sat around and chatted about things like the last mention of SF in a book published in Hindustani and the Spread of SF In General, and after a while the conversation got around to the Convention, with H.O. -- having by then got thoroughly warmed up -- doing most of the talking. When, with growing vehemence, he started a tirade against 'those silly little imbecile children with water pistols' I formed my first faint suspicion of what was to come, but I sat tight and listened (and made sure to button my jacket and conceal the bulge over my left hip as well as possible).

After about ten minutes of tirade H.O. ("call me Horace" was slipped in during one of the intervals when he stopped for me to interpolate a "Yes I think so too") leaned across and said, very confidentially: "As a matter of fact - and this is why I wanted to talk to you particularly - I'm starting an Inner Fandom just for the really appreciative enthusiasts. There'll be none of this juvenile irresponsibility because, to tell you the truth, I'm being damned careful who I pick for it. One thing I can tell you is that they'll only be the Mature Fans who know what's what in S-F and don't want to make a drunken orgy or a glorified game of "Cowboys and Indians" out of Conventions which should really be Business Meetings. We shall have our own magazine of course, circulating only to our members, all of whom will have joined by invitation only. I wanted you to know how things stand because you will be in with us of course. I know that you know your own mind about these things. Seems to me I once read a very fine article of yours, though I'm blown if I can remember now just what it was all about. Still, you're with us of course."

I thanked him in a rather awestruck manner and just then someone came and dragged him off to a minor Business Meeting somewhere. Before he left, however, he promised to write as soon as he'd got all the lesser details of his scheme worked out. If I had been surprised at being invited into Ben Rene's Inner Fandom, I was thoroughly jolted at being invited into Horatio's.

There was a little respite after this, which was just as well for my 'orientation --and it wasn't until that all-night party in 184 that the next incident in the chain occurred. I was watching fascinated while a couple of pro-eds settled for all time the respective merits of their magazines in an epic zapgun duel, when Louis Seanner came over, forced me into the corner, and pushed a glass of some obscure wine into my left hand, -- my only hand which wasn't already holding a glass.

"I've been looking around for you for quite a bit," he said, "but you know what it's like trying to find anyone in this fog. As a matter of fact, I've got a scheme on hand which I know you're going to be pretty interested in because I know that you're one of the people who are in favour of the idea of Fandom for the fans and let the pros go their own way. I am too, very emphatically, but have you noticed certain trends away from that lately? Especially at this Con - you'd think the blasted thing had just been organised for the pros. Besides that, nearly all the BNFs, both the so-called Trufans and S & C types are columnising in some promag or other, or selling little stories now and then, and, to put it bluntly, I'm dead against all this damn prostitution. Fandom's got to be independent of the pros." A sudden thought struck him. "Yes, I'm dead against all this pro-stitution; what we need is a better con-stitution." He chuckled at that for several minutes and I kept him company in order to find out what was coming next -- though by then I had a pretty good idea! I wondered if he knew about that story I'd had published under a pen-name in "Verified Science Fiction" but decided not to mention it just then.

He went on: "Well anyway, the fact of the matter is that I'm starting a sort of Inner Fandom for the people who think like us about this, and I thought I'd let you know about it early on; you're one of the first to be chosen of course, but you need have no fear of anybody with pro-leanings being picked; I tell you I'm being darned choosy. I'll be writing you all about it once I'm home again, but that's how it stands now."

Well of course I thanked Louis and said it was nice of him to choose me and that I'd look forward to hearing from him. Just then Bill Ian Plotts, the well-known pro and a good friend of mine, came over and dragged me off to be on some group photograph; I did my best to grin casually at Louis.

About the rest of that night I don't know much, and the next day passed in the usual Convention manner too - lots of things all happening at the same time and the clock hands zipping round like they were after some lap record or other, and almost before I'd gotten the mornings ringing sounds out of my head it was nine at night and time for me to leave and catch the train for home. I didn't want to leave but that had damn all to do with it, so I made the best of it, said goodbye to those folks I could find, collected my case and headed out. I was halfway through the revolving door when I heard someone calling after me. I never try to turn round halfway through revolving doors, so I went right the way through and waited at the other side. A second later, a youngster called Pete Boggs, one of the Irish fen, exploded through the doorway and grabbed hold of me. He was slightly breathless.

"Lookit," he gasped, "have you got just half a minute? I've got to talk to you before you leave." I said I had just about that long. "Well," he went on, "the point is I thought you'd rather like to know about an idea of mine because I think you'll want to be in it with me and you're one of the first people I'm asking anyway. The way it looks to me, these old fans have been running things too long, and they think it's going on like that forever, so they're getting damned complicit.... damned self-satisfied, about it all; well, I figure that it's time we younger fans showed them a thing or two about how to run Fandom and publish fanzines and things like that. They've run the show long enough and they're making a hell of a mess of it right now, so I'm starting an Inner Fandom for the younger fans, to run things our way for a change. We'll only accept members by invitation of course, but we'll publish our own zine and whatnot, - maybe several zines - and show these Old Timers who are daydreaming for the Good Old Days, what can really be done when we get down to it. I know you think the same so you're one of the first I've picked but anyway I'll write to you in a week or so about it; I've got to see a few more fans I know about the idea now and I guess you'll want to catch your train. Cheerio."

I called my thanks and all the usual after Pete as he hared back into the hotel, and I pounded down the street towards the station. I was wondering, abstractedly, how Pete had managed to overlook the twenty-three years difference in our ages and class me with the "young fans." I suppose it was a sort of compliment really.

When I got seated in the train and we were chugging placidly through the slums, I started to think about the Convention and the sequence of events. I supposed I'd really collected quite a lot of indirect egoboo - unless of course Pete was inviting Rable into his fandom, and Rable was inviting Ben Rene and so on..... Anyway if you ever want to know anything about what's going on in any Fandom, just drop me a line. My only worry is what's going to happen if/when they all start scrapping with each other -- I know one fan who's going to wind up with a multiple schizophrenia. And I do mean multiple.....

I wish you could have seen that stack of letters waiting for me when I got home-- from organizers who hadn't been able to get to the Con.,

life with

Impressions by Ken Potter.

You call this life?

I am to write, gentle reader, of my normal fanning. This is not easy. For a start, I do not know the precise implications of the phrase "normal fanning." I am not sure even, that such a thing still exists. If I am to take it that "normal fanning" consists of lying down in hotel corridors with the purpose of being trodden on by a maid, -- if I am to take it that

BRENNSCHLUSS

normal fanning includes handing out quote-cards to members of the --ah--Public, then I am not a normal fan.

But BRENNSCHLUSS is something else again, -- it began with the hecto.

The hecto. Long, long ago, Dave and I went 50/50 in a hectograph. It wasn't exactly a machine that we bought, but two tins of goo around which to build one. If I remember correctly, those tins cost us 5/- each and it still gives me a pain to think of all that money. Why, I could have bought a sub to BMW if only I'd waited. A long term sub.

After we'd bought the er, hecto, we took it to Dave's house, tipped the goo into a pan and began to melt it upon the stove, --trying all the time to ignore the stench that arose from it. At last, the stuff having reached the consistency of thick treacle, we poured it into a biscuit tin lid. It oozed from the corners and covered Mrs. Wood's polished table whilst the small amount remaining in the lid thickened and dried. Something was wrong. Since we had been convinced by a serious and instructive article that nothing ever goes wrong with hectos, we were worried. And, besides this, the jelly's surface was pitted with millions of bubble craters, like a lunar landscape.

Sadly, we scraped it up and put it back in the pan. We remelted it and popped each bubble as it appeared. It smelt even worse than before. We were very careful about the bubbles as we poured it back into the lid, but again it oozed from the corners like a live thing.

But the jelly was flat and there were no bubbles. We placed the prepared master-sheet face down on the jelly and rolled it with some gloriously improvised device.

We were ready now. We reached for the first virgin sheet of paper and placed it carefully upon the jelly. We rolled it but once, applying the correct pressure, and peeled it off with considerable difficulty. We had to admit that our ingenious reproducing device had not been an immediate success. The sheet was purple in a few places. But the parts that weren't purple were more or less black.

We seized another white sheet and lay this upon the jelly to repeat the process. We noted with satisfaction that it came up much more

a lancaster fan
corruption

my how we have
LIVED !!

"Don't quote me as saying 'No Comment'"

easily than the last. It was not until we turned it over that we realised it had taken most of the jelly with it....

But I guess that's enough of background though.

The beginnings of BRENNSCHLUSS are inextricably bound up with my other hobby. Sex. Or, to put it another way, you can blame Irene. BRENNSCHLUSS began at the Sunday School Youth Club Dance. Fandom had so sublimated my sex instincts at this time, that Irene had to mention that she read Science Fiction before she could sell me a ticket. With the enthusiasm that is so often misdirected, I lent her some fanzines. This time it wasn't misdirected.

By the time PERI 3 arrived, I began to get ideas. I saw beautiful visions of Irene and myself gazing rapturously together, with eyes full of trust and tenderness, at our first fanzine, which we had cherished and nursed, and over which I had started smoking. And another vision of my hypothetical son diminutively approaching me and saying meekly: "Dad, I want a duplicator for Christmas."

ME: "But son, why don't you use mine?"

H.S: "I...I can't, Dad. Why! I'm still a neofan. I can't use the BRENNSCHLUSS duplicator."

ME: "Why son?"

H.S: "Well, I'm so new. I can't do anything with that duplicator. Every time I look at it I'm overawed. Gee Dad, that must be the Enchanted Duplicator itself!"

ME: (sharply) "Don't be profane! (pause) -- but you're right in a way. It has a History. I'll think it over." (I smile benignly, although I know the little bastard only wants a duper because he's ruined the ink-feed on mine trying to keep up with his OMPA schedule).

S-o-o-o-o I said to Irene, "Shall we publish a fanzine?"

Possibly I didn't say it quite as flatly as that. I must have had the tact to break it gently, but at any-rate, it was Irene who mentioned casually that there was a duplicator lying around their house somewhere.

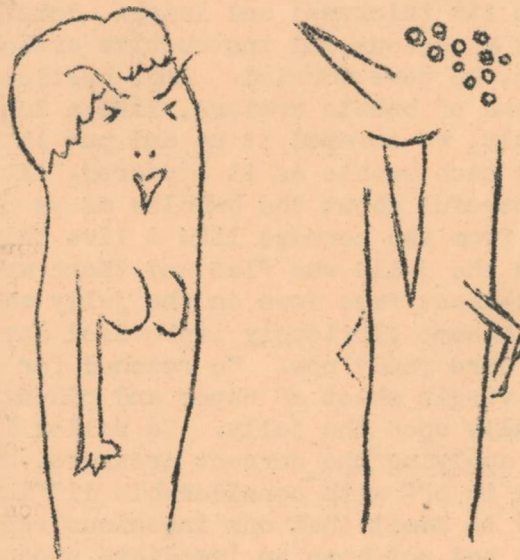
Immediately I imagine a gleaming monster of a rotary with self-feed and fully automatic puns. I went frantic at Irene...

It wasn't hers, it was her father who owned it. It was a flatbed, and it had been given to him by the vicar, because it was no longer any use for printing Sunday School propaganda. It was prewar -- she never said which war -- and had already been spurned by the Chess Club and the Whist Drive Committee. She didn't think it worked.

"We'll make it work," I said. That Canute character can get off here.

That evening Irene and I were alone in her house. Following our primitive instincts we naturally decided to look for the duplicator. We looked rather thoroughly in a couple of arm-chairs and then decided we'd try the hut.

And we found it there. It was an ancient flat-bed in the last stages of



S-o-o-o-o he said to Irene
"Shall we publish a fanzine?"

disintegration. It had no silk screen, but we didn't let a little thing like that stop us. After all, the ink had to get through a stencil, why should we make it harder? But,.....well, it was like re-living the hecto nightmare all over again. Once again Irene's intuition had paid off, -- it didn't work. But if anyone wants to buy a slightly-used flat-bed that once satisfied those who publish Sunday School circulars...

Dave had so far refused to be connected with anything with a title like BRENNSCHLUSS, but Irene and I went to work on him and eventually he came into the combine. With typical livewire enthusiasm he pursued sundry females, and ignored fandom, but at least he was with us.

We decided to have some publicity. We bullied Irene into cutting some stencils, and then bullied her father into bullying his boss to let him run them off. I....er, persuaded Willis to distribute them, and sat back and waited.

And I'm still waiting.

But waiting actively, if you see what I mean. My present activities consist of rushing home, bolting my tea, and scampering upstairs to my bedroom fanshack. We had intended to write BRENNSCHLUSS ourselves, but as the news got around, people began to flood us with articles and columns that we just can't leave out. Life is hard. I keep all of this stuff in my bedroom and gather an armful every Wednesday evening when I go to meet Irene. I give it to her and explain kindly how I would like to have the stencils cut, but give her complete freedom as to the finished product. My suggestions are clear, simple, and free from complication. She smiles sweetly, stuffs them into her handbag, and forgets every word I've said. But let her give her own version.....

Impressions by Irene Gore.

After drooling the matter over for some considerable time, I came to the conclusion that Life With BRENNSCHLUSS is pretty much the same as life without BRENNSCHLUSS. Or is it?

Instead of wending my way slowly homeward after a hard day's work and musing upon the books I must read, the buttons I must sew on, I wend my way slowly homeward musing upon the books I must read, the buttons I must sew on, the articles I must write, the stencils I must cut, the letters I must answer, the ones I don't intend to answer, and the latest copy of Fantasy & Science Fiction which I can't afford to buy. Yes - BRENNSCHLUSS has indeed added a little colour to my musings, and sweat to my brow, and in return has extracted my meagre earnings from my meagre purse. (Excepting, of course, two Irish half-pennies and a German pfennig.) And yet still I cling to its bosom. After all, to whom would Potter turn when writing to Walter Willis? Where else would he find that 2¹/₂d in copper, and who else would lick the stamps?

On Wednesday evenings I receive my orders from Potter. "Type this out in double spacing, with three carbon copies, $\frac{1}{2}$ " margin, top, bottom and right hand side, and the other about, er,...1 inch. No - you'd better make that left hand margin a bit wider, and stick a sort of filler or something down the side. Do it in capital letters, and you might as well even up the edge while you're at it. (Gasp, gasp) Got that?"

"Yes," I say humbly.

"Right! Well, now on the other side stick the paper in the other way up and leave about four inches for Dave's illo, and don't forget the wide margin goes at the right hand side, and if it won't all go on, edit it Woman! If it finishes halfway down a page, don't start anything else on it, just leave it for

"She's the kind of girl who gives prostitution a bad name."

Dave to fill in. Or if there isn't enough room, think of something else to do with it, see! The fold it into three and stick it in that brown envelope I gave you about a fortnight ago, and don't forget to address it. "When you get paid tomorrow or Friday get a 3/- Postal Order, put it in this white envelope" --he gives me a white envelope - "with the address on this bit of blue paper typed on it" - he gives me a bit of blue paper - "enclose a 4d stamp and fold them into the brown envelope, and don't forget to leave it open so I can sign the bottom bit. Get a 2¹/₂d stamp as well. Now I want you to do this one on fools-cap etc. etc....." I smile weakly and he changes the subject...

"Have you done anymore of that article of Dave's," he says. "Yes," I say proudly, "Five whole pages." "Well scrap it," is the retort. "He's going to rewrite it."

On Friday evenings I return the goods. Potter gazes at them for a few seconds, then a dark cloud passes over his face. Suddenly a screech rends the drowsy city air. He utters a terrifying hiss and I shrink backward in horror. "Woman!" he bellows. "oman!" he fumes. "This says 'obscure side street, not 'obscene side street.'" He casts the goods in the gutter and tramples them underfoot. I tremble.

"Sorry," I murmur. He grins in a cheerful way. "S'all right," he says, "how can I expect anyone to read my writing." I breathe a sigh of relief and stoop to pick up my countenance and the trampled goods.

"But of course," he continues, "they're no good now. I could do with another three copies anyway, so you may as well type them again." I seethe inwardly and my lips curl in a snarl.

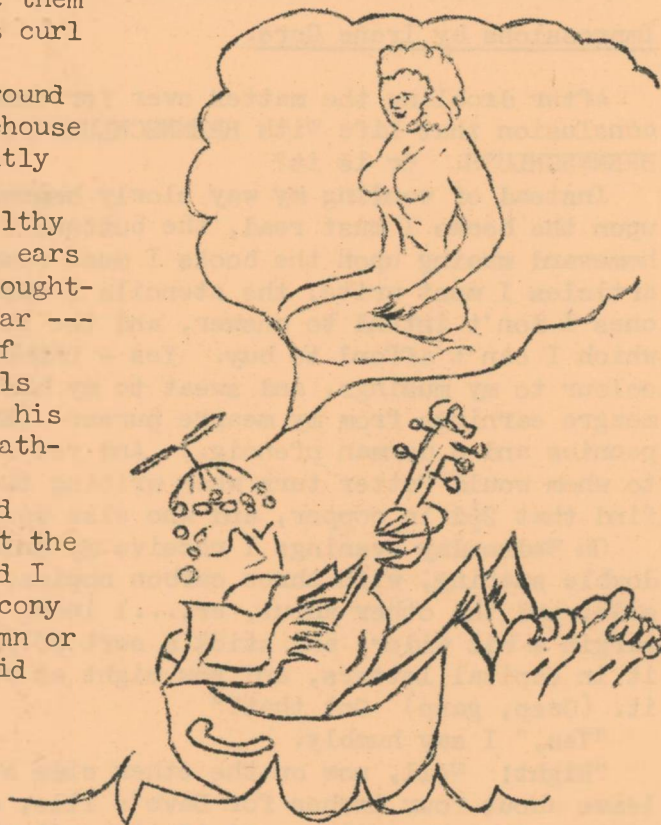
And Oh! -- the agony of mooching around on Morecombe Parade, outside a picturehouse with a misty white fog oozing repellently down your vertebra, a pool of definite dampness at your soggy feet, and a healthy sea-breeze whipping cosily around your ears and rear portion. And Potter, ever-thoughtful Potter, murmuring softly in your ear --- "But we can't go and see 'Scavengers of Mars' --we haven't bought those stencils yet." The offended ear glows dully as his steamy breath is tossed away by the gathering storm.

Of course, BRENNSCHLUSS has its good points, tho' I cannot recollect them at the moment. I remeber once that Potter and I went to a dance, and sat up in the balcony all night writing an article or a column or something for some poor faned. Who said fandom isn't romantic?

A wise old fan sat in a boat,
The more he sang the less he wrote,
The less he wrote the more he sang,
And across the sea the music rang.

Originally the first line of this verse was "A wise old fan sat on a balcony" but I couldn't think of anything to rhyme with "balcony", so I substituted "by a

the wise old fan



moat" for "on a balcony" to make it rhyme with "wrote." Upon further consideration, I decided that fans sat in or by boats more often than in, on, or by moats, so I changed "moat" to "boat," and the last line from "And through the trees the music rang" to "And across the sea the music rang". This last because I didn't see any trees in the Irish Sea when I voyaged to Dublin, and came to the conclusion that this may be because there are no trees in the Irish Sea. Come to think of it tho', I've never seen any trees near a moat either, not wet ones anyway. And so a poet is born, and such is life with BRENNSCHLUSS.

Epilogue by Dave Wood.

Most times being a member of Lancaster Fandom is an easy life. Most times all I do is drift round to Potter's house, drift up the stairs, and drift into his bedroom. "Shut the door, there's a drift," says Ken, but I just settle firmly on the bed, read the mail and the new fanzines, and then drift off afterwards to meet a certain young neofan called Brenda....

This time it was different. He was waiting for me on the doorstep and frothing quietly at the mouth. "Harris," he said, "Harris wants us to write something for HYPHEN." I pushed past him and wandered up to his bedroom. He followed me. "Harris thinks we might write something on Life With BRENNSCHLUSS," he said. I settled back on the bed and picked up ORION. "Harris says you have to write part of it."

I snapped up. "Write what?"
 "Life with Bren."
 "Thy?"

"Because Harris says so."
 "Oh." And I wandered out into the night with my mind full of great things and wonderful writings and fame and happiness.

He was on the step again the next night. "Well?" he said.
 "Well?" Somewhere in the back of my mind there crouched a wonderful retort, -- that two wells make a river and.....but it slipped away into the darkness and all I could do was stand in mute appeal before Potter. He put on his "Bloch writes to me" look and stalked into the house whilst I slid miserably behind him.

"Let me see it," he said.
 "That?"

"Life with Bren."
 "Life with Bren?"
 "Yes."

"Ken,.... I haven't....."

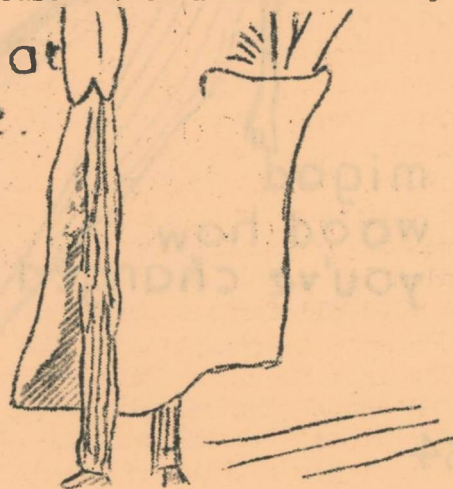
.....
 He was on the step the next night.
 "Well?" he said. This had become his favourite opening gambit.

"Done." Triumphant.
 "Life with Bren!" Amazed.
 "Done." Flatly.
 "Ah!" A long drawn-out sigh of satisfaction.

DEPRESSED?



so what
 ...so are we.



"Do they wear shoes in Kettering?"

m

He leafed eagerly through the pages and settled down to read. The room grew silent and the night plodded on.

He cleared his throat. I stood up and I smiled at him.

"Er...Dave..."

"Yes?" Eagerly.

"I'm sorry Dave..."

"Sorry? But why?"

"It won't do."

"Won't do?" Astounded.

"Look. It's too stodgy, formal, matter of fact. Harris wants Hyphenstuff, not a mixture of text-book English and graphs showing the potential rise of Lancaster Fandom. Dave, I'm sorry but....."

I knew then that I had failed.

There was a pained silence.

"Look," he said, "here's an idea that you might work on....."

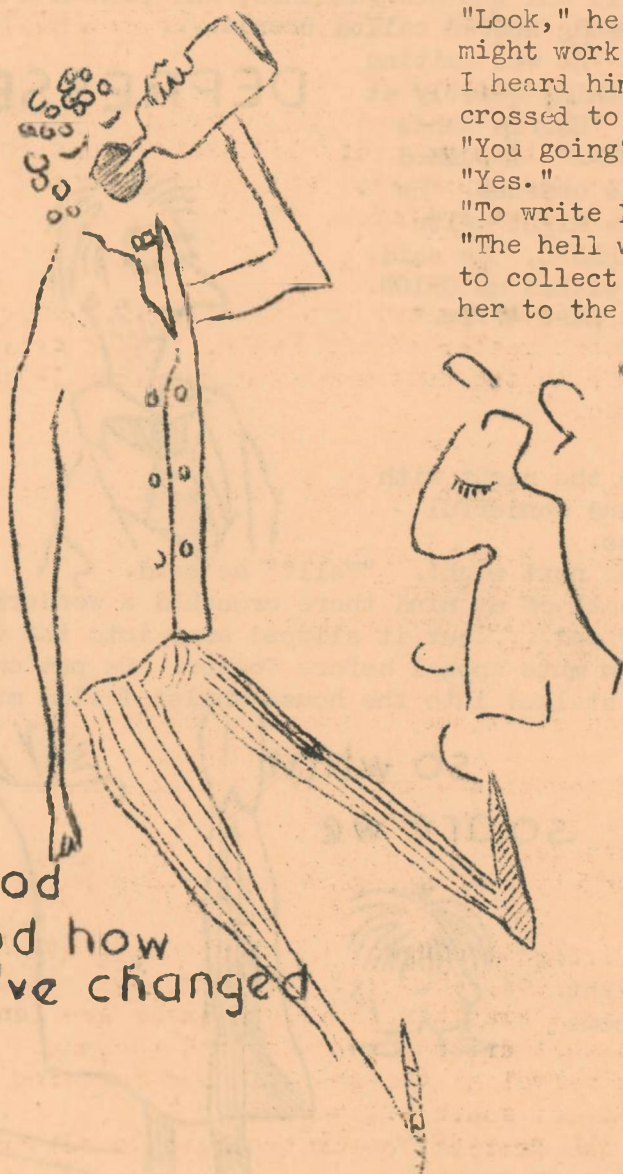
I heard him out and then stood up and crossed to the door.

"You going?" he said.

"Yes."

"To write Life With Bren?"

"The hell with it," I said. "I am going to collect Brenda and I am going to take her to the pictures. You call this life?"



migod
wood how
you've changed

THE
ABSOLUTE
END
of it
ALL !!

IDLE CHATTER in the vaults...

By ERIC C. WILLIAMS

(From Novae Terrae Vol 3, No 4 - December 1938

SCENE: Editors Hanson, Temple, and Clarke examining correspondence over breakfast.

Hanson: (unfolding a gigantic sheet of printed paper) "Look at this - another form from the British Museum."

Clarke: "What do they want this time? The BIS Bulletin?"

Hanson: "No, Novae Terrae. Didn't you send it off with your blinking BIS Journal?"

Temple: "Pass the butter and shut up you squigs."

Clarke: "Of course I did. I just caught the post - you remember. That makes about four of those blithering things they've sent. God knows where they must put all the stuff they collect, and God knows what they want it for!"

Temple: "Are you squigs going to pass that butter...?"

== * * * * *

SCENE: The dim lit vaults of the British Museum. Two young men stand amidst towering stacks of papers and printed matter of all kinds. One is writing in a book, the other kneels on the floor in the dust and examines a small pile of magazines. Now and again he sneezes.

"Artishoooo! Lot 575,216."

"Slowly rotting atoms! This job is enough to send you rockets. Some more of this duplicated stuff."

"Name of production - let me see - N-O-V-A-E 'Terrae.'"

"Novae Terrae. What on earth does that mean?"

"New Earths, from the Latin. Duplicated production."

"Yes, I've got that down. What year?"

"1938, believe it or not."

"1938! Lord! how this duplicated stuff smells when it reaches its hundredth birthday!"

"No need to tell me. Nature of contents - um, this is a bit difficult to place; largely speculative, I should say."

"Well, that makes a bit of a change."

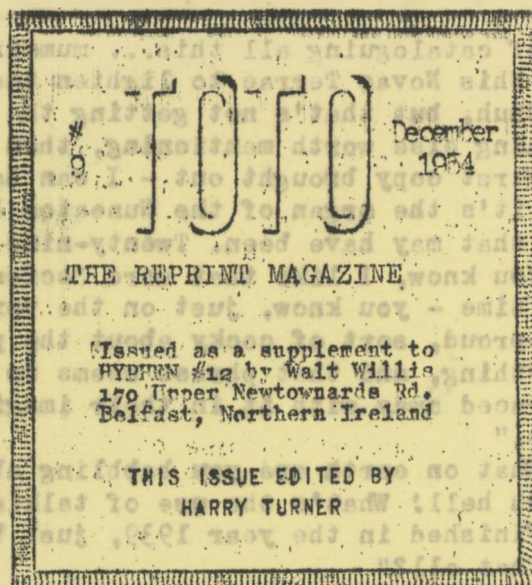
"Yes, seems to be concerned largely with speculative fiction published in other books and magazines."

"I suppose that brings it under the heading of a fan production?"

"Artishooo! I guess so. You know, Jol, when you consider that all these stacks and stacks of duplicated stuff stored away here for lord knows how long were all turned out on cranky old machines that dripped ink and tore the paper to shreds every so many turns, it makes you marvel at the patience and devotion these people must have had to go on churning it out month after month."

"And it makes you marvel that the British Museum troubled to collect it all and store it away in these vaults."

"Yes, that's true. Poor luck for us they did. And just our luck to cop this



job of cataloguing all this... mummified stuff. Thank God there were productions like this Novae Terrae to lighten the task now and again!"

"Uhuh, but that's not getting the job done. Give me the number of copies and anything else worth mentioning, then we'll get on to that stack of Church gossip."

"First copy brought out - I can hardly read it, terrible duplicating... '36. Says it's the organ of the Nuneaton Branch of the Science Fiction League, whatever that may have been. Twenty-nine issues."

"You know, I like that word 'science-fiction', it so describes the minds of that time - you know, just on the verge of scientific discovery, half-thrilled, half-proud, sort of cocky about the possibility of their ultimate conquest over everything, and that phrase seems to illustrate how they grabbed this science and raced away with it in their imaginations as if they had known it all their lives."

"What on earth are you babbling about?"

"Oh hell! What's the use of talking to you? Anything more to add?"

"Finished in the year 1939, just before the war."

"That all?"

"Changed editorship five times - that's significant. Gets rather snooty towards the last about politicians."

"Everything you read about that time does. Things must have been pretty bad in those days. Remember that fellow Wells, either he had indigestion or there was something in what he was saying."

"He was a diabetic living on insulin - might have had something to do with it."

"Most of those birds turn out brighter than the rest in the long run."

"You're a diabetic yourself aren't you?"

"How'd you guess?"

"By the polish on your boots. Now shut up and put this down, Novae Terrae - a privately produced magazine that preceded the era of freed imagination by about two generations - useful to students of the Metamorphosis Period. And now those Church gossips. Artishoooooooooooo! Lot 575,217."

The Prospect Before Us

or Pity The Poor Writer! By MARION F. EADIE

(From Zenith Vol 1 No 3 - December 1941)

"Perhaps you would care to see over one of our factories?" suggested the Man of the Future.

"No" I said. "No, I don't think so. We had a lot of factories in the century I come from. Couldn't I see - say, one of your great libraries?"

He looked puzzled for a moment, and then his face cleared.

"Ah, the Palace of Literature!" he said. "Certainly, by all means. You must see the Palace of Literature."

He led me thru the broad streets of Damopolis to a vast white building of stately design. Noble building, fit Palace of Literature! It seemed unfortunate that the facade bore such a striking resemblance to that of the boot factory across the way.

"We of the 21st century treat our writers much more humanely than you did in the barbarous times, if I may use the word, of a hundred years ago," said the Man of the Future.

I bowed my head and blushed as we entered the lofty building. During my visit

to the 21st century I had so often heard the words 'barbarous', 'dirty', and 'savage' applied to my own times that I could now see scarcely anything of value in the 20th century.

"This is where the writers of the State wander to meditate on the genius of the past," said my guide. We stood in a mighty hall covering several acres of ground, around whose walls were crowded the busts of famous writers of the past. I gazed in awe at the silent assembly.

"No longer must the writer struggle to earn his living by menial labour, or else live a parasite on society," said the Man of the Future. "Our State supports him, assures his future, and grants him a pension when he retires. Writers now have nothing to do but write, and they are counted valuable members of the State. If you follow me you will see some of our great men of letters at work."

We crossed the vast hall and passed thru a doorway into an extraordinary room. Rows and rows of desks filled it, and at each desk sat a man or woman writing busily. At either side of the desks was what looked like a letter-box, while the desks themselves were piled with reams of virgin paper.

"This is the Novel Room," explained the Futurian. "We prefer writers to use pen and ink - inspiration flows more freely. The box at the left is for spoiled sheets; the writers push in the sheets and they are instantly sucked away to be re-pulped. The box at the right communicates by pneumatic tube with the typing room, and writers push their finished chapters into those."



"It all seems very efficient," I ventured.

"We waste nothing," replied the Futurian. "The next rooms are the Short Story rooms. Come this way."

I walked with bated breath thru this room where at least five hundred novels were simultaneously being written, and we entered a smaller room, similarly ranked with desks. The walls here were painted dark red and decorated with crude irritating, jagged white lines. The atmosphere was curiously stuffy and smelled of incense.

"This is the room where weird and horror stories are written," explained the Man of the Future. "We have other rooms for love stories, detective stories, war stories, and so on. The atmosphere and decorations are specially arranged by our psychologists to stimulate the inspiration of the writers."

"And do you find that it helps?" I asked, a trifle breathlessly.

"Undoubtedly," he replied. "The State ensures ideal working conditions for every operator, however humble."

We passed thru the Short Story room and emerged into a corridor.

"None of our writers works more than six hours a day," said the Futurian. "For two hours before and after starting work they enjoy happy, healthy, noisy games, essential for relaxing the mind and ensuring physical fitness. The sports grounds are just outside."

Some draught must have caught me at that moment - yet how was it possible in a perfectly-designed building? - for I felt myself shuddering.

"The essayists and diarists are along the corridor to the left," proceeded the Futurian. "Then, of course, there are the historians, but they are in another wing. I think we should go up to the Poetry rooms - step into the lift, please."

We shot up and arrived in an airy corridor.

"These are the highest rooms," said my guide. "We find that elevation helps the poetic inspiration." As he spoke he opened a door and we passed into a long room littered with sofas and divans, which in their turn were littered with men

and women in various languid attitudes.

"Poets are different from other writers; they must have more stimulus," explained the Futurian. "In the mornings we usually have visual stimulus and in the afternoons aural stimulus, but today, as it happens, we are trying out a combination. Please take a seat."

I sat down uncomfortably on a sofa of the type which engulfs one completely and makes rising a somewhat embarrassing business. Immediately the whole of one wall seemed to fade, and on it appeared a convincing picture of a moonlit glade while somewhere a brass band began to bray out the first movement of the "Moonlight Sonata". Then a violin was wailing a gypsy song, and the scene had changed to a picture of a dancing girl. Five minutes later, to the swing of a rousing march, the wall was brilliant with old-fashioned military uniforms. From time to time a poet would rise and rush into an adjoining room. I felt tempted to follow them.

"Inspiration strikes them all of a sudden," whispered the Futurian. "Then they dash off and write whatever has come to them. The next room is sound-proof and there they can sit peacefully composing."

"Wonderful!" I said feebly.

We left the poets at work and descended to the next floor.

"I hope you are broad-minded?" asked my guide. "Considering the century you are from... But you must understand that the writer needs a fuller life than the ordinary citizen; he must even be allowed to indulge in what would be forbidden to others. It is all part of his trade. History shows us that the great geniuses of the past were all great lovers, and we have provided for that."

We entered another room. It was very hot and scented, and crammed with flowers. In rows of chairs sprawled women of all types, looking excessively bored.

"They also work only six hours a day," said my guide proudly.

We passed on.

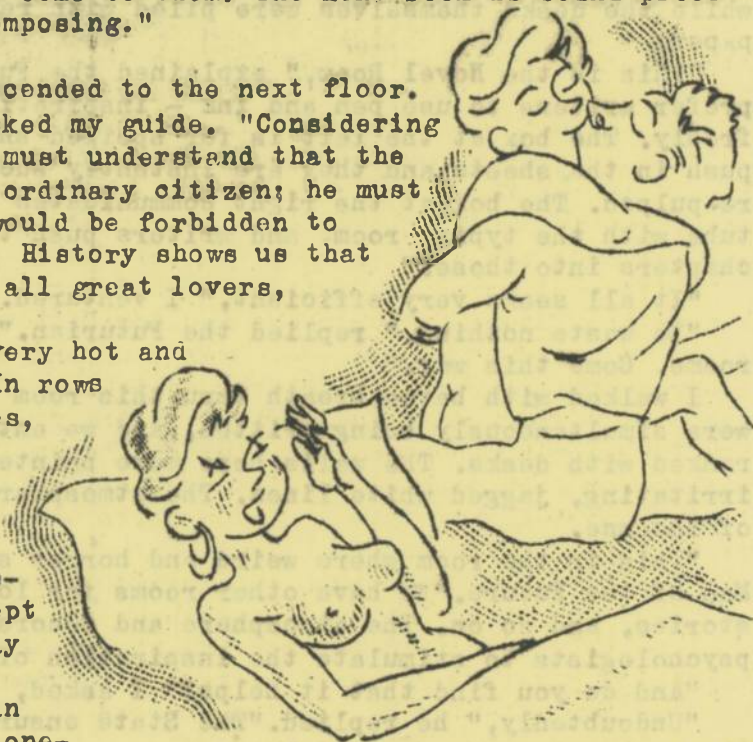
"Most of our writers are on piece-work," continued the Futurian, "except the poets. They have a months holiday per year, but in the case of the novelists, who often take longer than a year to complete a work, we allow one-twelfth of the period taken over the work. Thus a writer who works six years on a novel is allowed six months holiday at the end. But I'm glad to say that since our new competitive system was introduced there are very few of that sort in the Palace."

"He opened another door and an appalling reek gushed out. The place seemed to be a sort of public bar. Writers were drinking, sprawling on the floor, smoking, sitting at tables, and registering every sort of bohemianism.

"All this is necessary for their inspiration," said the Futurian. "When they have finished their work we counteract the effect with happy, healthy, noisy games. We haven't time to look in at the typing room, but I might explain that the mss, straight from the author's desk, are scanned by a photoelectric machine which turns out typed copies at the rate of 5000 words per second. These copies then go to the readers' room, which you are about to see."

"Then you do your own publishing?" I asked.

"The State is the sole publisher," he said. "We have eliminated wasteful



competition. Here we are."

The readers, rows on rows of them, sat at desks exactly as did the authors. Beyond the room we stood in we could see another precisely the same.

"Every ms passes thru the hands of three readers," said the Futurian. "The first corrects for grammar and spelling, the second for accuracy - and some of the poets turn out the most extraordinarily unscientific statements - and the third for morality and ideology. The book is then ready for printing. But first of all the ms as passed by the three readers goes back to the copy room, where six copies are made. I'll take you down to the basement where the printing presses are - just this way."

We left the readers feverishly blue-pencilling mss and went down in the lift.

"Two of the copies come down here," continued my guide. "One goes to the monotype room, where the machine automatically scans it and sets up the type. The other goes to the art room where the book jackets are drawn. A third copy goes across to the illustrators in a separate building, just behind the sports pavilion you may have seen as we came in, where every book is provided with six full-page illustrations in black-and-white and a coloured frontispiece. The other three copies go to the critics, who write their reviews and submit them to the press. There's nothing like having different opinions, is there?"

"No, it's a great thing," I muttered.

"The three reviews are then combined, cut down by sixty per cent, and published in the State newspaper," said the Futurian. "This is the typesetting room, but it won't interest you very much. The book-jackets are done next door."

Next door was another room full of desks, each stacked with coloured paper.

"Different wrappers distinguish different types of books," explained the Man of the Future. "Red covers are for National Books - State Book Club choices. Every worker must read these. Orange covers are recommended and may be read if desired. Our workers have plenty of leisure for reading; none of them works more than six hours a day. These green covers you see are for books on philosophy, and the pale blue ones are children's books. The artists superimpose a suitable design for each book - very interesting work."

We walked slowly down the room while the workers raised their heads to look at us in bored fashion.

"State Book Club choices are issued to every worker as they are published, and periodic exams are held to ensure that the books are read and understood. As soon as they have read their books the workers return them to the library to be repulped, and thus we avoid waste and accumulation of litter." The Futurian held open a door as he spoke, and we emerged into a long narrow lobby lined with time-clocks.

As we passed down it a door at the top opened and a stream of authors emerged. It was exactly eighteen hours, and each punched his time as he passed out. The last of them was disappearing as the first of a new lot appeared to check in for the next shift.

"They work in four six-hour shifts," said the guide. "Some authors prefer to work in the morning; others thru the night, and still others in the evening. We suit all tastes. But none of them has to work more than six hours a day."

The door by which the new shift had entered led us back to the hall of the busts. As I was about to step out I noticed a crowd of workmen suspending an enormous red and white banner across the hall. Curious, I stepped forward, and at the same moment the Futurian plucked me back.

"Perhaps we'd better go out by one of the side doors," he suggested. "It won't be so crowded."

"I'd like to go this way again," I persisted, more because I saw how very much he didn't wish me to, than because of any real desire. We walked down the hall

until I could see what was written on the side of the banner facing the outer door. In large white letters on a red ground appeared the words:

Y A H ! Y O U B I G S T I F F S !

Last week the Palace of Literature at Yopolis turned out

56,780,000,000,001 words.

The Palace of Literature at Damopolis turned out

only 55,345,000,000,000 words !

GET A MOVE ON, COMRADES !

A glance at my Futurian showed that his head was bowed in shame and his cheeks were scarlet even as mine had been on entering this noble building. Full circle! I was content.

Condensed from **Approach to Life** by R O N H O L M E S
(Gemini No. 7 - May 1945)

... in (fandom) we have our chance to express ourselves, to create, write, print, edit, criticise and generally expand our ego. We take this opportunity too, expressing ourselves first in that emotional manner common to young fans - dogmatic, intolerant, but expressive.

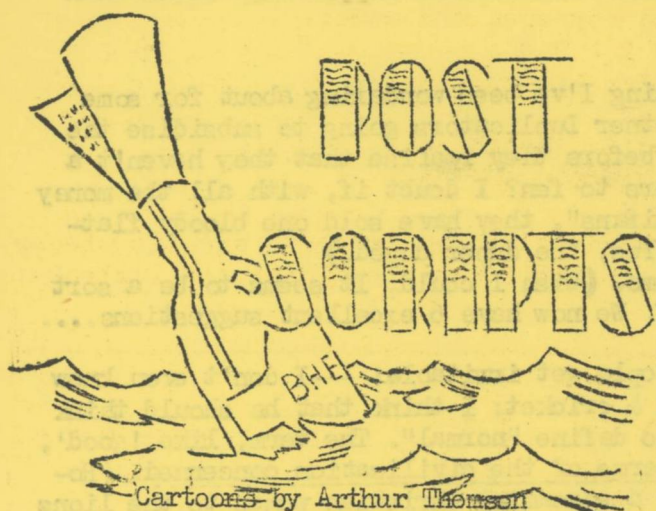
Later this stage is passed, and we settle down, to follow that trend which interests us most. We begin to edit, illustrate, review, and generally be creative. With new-found conceptions and knowledge we turn our energies into constructive channels and, with fewer inhibitions to hold us back, concentrate upon expressing ourselves in a way which produces real happiness.

I well remember my first writings, the result of a desire to show I existed, a desire to be acknowledged. Later I changed: fandom's importance was still social, but instead of the urge for self-display I wanted to swap ideas and meet people... the emotional element had gone. If I wrote something, I did it to benefit myself, not to be printed.

So we can divide our fanning into three periods, the first of adjustment, then the creative period, and finally a stage where science-fiction comes very little into the picture, and one's ties are very largely social. It is at this stage that, phoenix-like, something arises from the ashes of fandom, in the form of a rooted interest in sociology, mythology, art, psychology, book-collecting, etc. In this new stage we really cease to be fans, but still retain our old social contacts - our friends and friendly-enemies. We are a good crowd because we have no emotional connections with each other and can give and accept criticism in a fairly impartial way.

I think, then, that we must accept fanning as a stage in our lives: the release of pent-up energy into channels which make us happy. We are a community of hobbyists; only, unlike most communities of this type, our hobby embraces such a wide field that we are less dependent than most upon the outside world.

... Fanning cannot be advanced or even set upon certain paths - to call on fans to 'pull together' is folly... Fanning is liberty of expression... Our desire to change it is basically a desire to have other people enjoy themselves in the way we do. This desire is either selfishness or an inability to see the true principles behind it all. So let us no longer ask fans to 'organise' - let us get on with expressing ourselves while we can, lest this desire to chain down other people's mode of expression loses us our own.



Cartoons by Arthur Thomson

ERIC FRANK RUSSELL I liked Damon Knight re-
(Cheshire) reviewing in an irascible mood. His technique of sandwiching periods of utter resignation between bellows of fury proved highly amusing. (A sort of brood & batter sandwich?) I liked also Pam's take-off of the true confession style of narrative. Would like to introduce her sometime to a pal of mine, who had one sf yarn published years ago, and who's actually written dozens of 'true confessions' under a femme pen-name, for 30/- a thousand words. His Muse is most active when he types naked, drunk and surrounded by empty bottles. Working-class females break their hearts over his soul-torments. I won't tell you who he is—no names, no packdrill. But he once made Gillings pee on my rug.

JOHN BRUNNER Liked in particular Knight's masterly exposition of the art of being nude
(Bucks.) without being impolite...You always have good letters, and I rather liked Varley's out of this bag; but as ever the Blochhead won the day. Thank Ghu the pros are turning fan.

HARRY TURNER Quite a problem this subtle connection between sf and farming. Jim Harmon
(Manchester) is quite right when he says that fandom's sf evangelism is not needed today. In the days of long ago before the war I suppose the main object of fandom was to gain converts to sf. With the drying up of supplies during the early part of the war some fans found they could get along quite well without sf and spent their time arguing about everything, but everything. But at the same time that this movement for a self-supporting fandom was under way we still had some of the real oldtimers treading the paths of orthodoxy and together with the newer fans they were sadly puzzled by the irrelevant material appearing in Fantast, Zenith and several of the sheets included in Mike Rosenblum's Futurian War Digest. As I recall it, their pathetic plea was "But what's it got to do with science fiction?" By the middle of 1942 when I disappeared into the RAF, fandom was gradually dividing into the fanarchists & ignorers of sf, and the oldtimers & newcomers who just couldn't fathom out how anybody could be interested in any thing but sf. Just where it would have finished up if the war had not damped down most activity I hesitate to say. Since fandom has grown again after the Black Ages of the later war years the same split seems to be appearing. Where do we go from here?

(I don't know...do we have to go anywhere? Today it seems to me that only a few humourless monomaniacs like Graham Stone contend that fandom should spend its time in rapt contemplation of science fiction. With for instance The New Futurian being enlivened with fanish wit and Hyphen publishing its own type of literary criticism we seem to me to have reached a satisfactory modus vivendi. There's room, in fact need for both types of fanmag, and their common subscriber, l'homme moyen fanish, seems to be becoming increasingly common.)

ROBERT BLOCH Well, Hyphen got past the censors again and I've just
(Wisconsin) finished reading Chuck's article on fans. Didn't Sax Rohmer's 'Fu Manchu' have an organisation known as the 'Si Fan'?

As I recall, its avowed purpose was to dominate the world, which of course suggests certain similarities. Similarities often look alike, particularly when they resemble each other, don't you think? I don't; it's habit forming. Habits are worn by monks and nuns



"I don't know that I shall speak to these ordinary fans at the Convention—I may just show myself."

you know. Although not, to my knowledge, simultaneously. Have you ever noticed how frequently simultaneous events seem to occur together? Occurrences happen more often than anything.

MIKE WALLACE
(Hull)

The cover brings to mind something I've been wondering about for some time. How much longer are Gestetner Duplicators going to subsidise the Vargo Statten Mag with adverts before they realise that they haven't a cat in hell's chance of selling fifty-quid dupers to fan? I doubt if, with all the money they've spent on "Gestetner 260 Calling All Actifans", they have sold one bloody flat-bed. I feel rather sorry for the poor folks. (Yes, the duper duper.)

I wish you'd explain that cartoon on p.12 to me. (Wish I could. It seems to be a sort of kit cartoon..you fit the caption on yourself. We now have 6 excellent suggestions.... one of them extremely rude.)

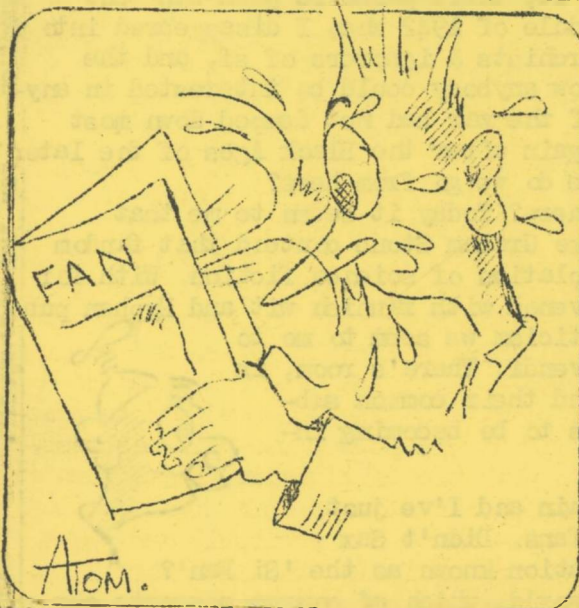
And BALLS to Harry Turner (Coo, don't some people get irritable! ---I don't even know the fugghead). As to his remarks about football & cricket: I think that he should think (always assuming that he can) first about how to define "normal". The term, like 'good', 'evil' etc, admits of no definition except in terms of the civilisation concerned. (Roman civilisation did not regard the throwing of a screaming Christian woman to the lions as wrong) and therefore normality can be defined only as that which the majority of the population consider to be a natural way to act. Farming does not conform to the general population's concept of recreation, whereas football and cricket do, and so farming is 'abnormal' while football and cricket are 'normal.'

Of course, from the point of view of an impartial amoeba circling the Earth in a flying saucer (Turner?) one thing is just as normal as another. Fen are 'maladjusted' in the same sense that they are 'abnormal'. But most fans are maladjusted only in so far that they think in a more open-minded (some normals would say amoral) manner. However, the quarrelsome backbiting fen are, in my opinion, maladjusted by anyone's standard. I think that even my hypothetical amoeba would consider someone who acts without reasonable thought as 'abnormal' or maladjusted.

(Ashworth, what have you been adjusting all these fans for?)

MAL ASHWORTH
(Bradford)

Modelling ourselves on Hyphen is all very well but the upshot of the whole business is that we now both have very green appearances, are all sorts of colours inside and are full of dirty cracks.



SID BIRCHBY
(Manchester) I am staggered by your news that the next Con is to be held at some place called Kettering. I can only hope that it doesn't clash with Market Day.

The latest mutation of the common cold bug hit me yesterday, and the result was that I found myself confined to bed on a wet Monday morning in Manchester. I had sunk into one of those feverish black moods one gets at such times, feeling very upset because the lampshade persisted in ignoring me, when glop on the hallmat: the morning's post arrived:

1. a postcard from Stu Mackenzie
2. Hyphen No.11
3. the quarterly gas bill.

There's some fine stuff this month. The best item for general interest and suspense was the article "Gas Escapes!" The plot was well constructed and the action nicely built up. There's

this consumer with a gas escape. First it's only a suspicion. He goes through the routine, prowling round the house, sniffing at inlets, not burning any unclad lights. He

straightens up. Decision! This is it! He runs downstairs, turns off the main tap at the meter, struggling to get through the 12" high triangular door under the stairs where they put the damn thing. He's gasping for breath--staggers to the window, throws it open, and doubles up across the sill, only one thought in his mind: the Gas Board must be told at once. Then the whole atmosphere is spoilt by a week ending. Blandly the author says, 'Make sure you can always turn off the main tap. If not, inform the Gas Board.' About as much use as the proverbial advice on what to do if the parachute fails to open. (What's that? Drop dead?) Fan fiction will never get anywhere until it learns some discipline

'Tariffs for Supplies'. Personally, I didn't care for this. Some of the material you print is so esoteric as to baffle me. I suppose one would have to grow up with fandom to appreciate this.

Letter Section. Very lively. I notice quite a number of them have a declared calorific value of 450 B.Th.U's per cube foot.

Quotes. The best was the one printed in red. "The use of faulty flexible tubing, or tubing which can be too easily disconnected, is dangerous." True for you, but it took courage to print it.

(Thank you. Stu was pleased, if not surprised, to note that you evidently considered a copy of 'i' to be worth £3:15:11 (less discount). I have not yet received a reply from the Gas Board.)

D.R.SMITH
(Muncaton)

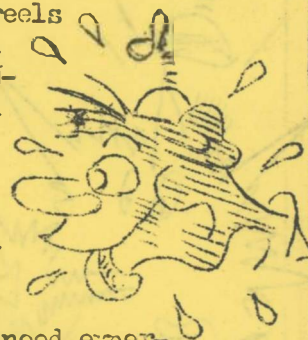
If you & Damon Knight had striven for years with the sole object of pleasing me you could not have done better than for him to write and for you to print his comments on some aspects of present-day sf. This indeed I enjoyed, I delighted in, every well-chosen phrase of it...I would like to know whether it is possible to buy the ViewMaster stereoscope and reels anywhere nearer than Switzerland on this side of the Atlantic?

(The viewers are available here, but not the reels. If any of you State-side readers whose sub expires with this issue would like to renew with a set of ViewMaster TOM CORBETT SPACE CADET reels (set of 3, \$1.00) I'd be very grateful. (And Carol would like ALICE IN WONDERLAND or JACK IN THE BEAN-STALK.) Don't be afraid too many other people will send them. In the first place they won't, and in the second I can easily pass on any surplus to people like D.R.Smith.)

THE TRUE-FAN OF LEEDS

Your chronicle of Miss Gloria Farnhurst's adventures, while fascinating in a revolting, slobber-some kind of way, does at least highlight a chronic need experienced universally and simultaneously by every section of fandom. I refer of course to the need for a signal of some kind; a kind of a symbol whereby fan can distinguish fan from nonfan. Perhaps you will reply that beanies are a sufficient mark for any fan to pinpoint a fellow sufferer in a crowd, but there are several drawbacks to this type

of headwear. The most obvious is the propellor--consider the frightful possibilities inherent in the wearing of a single-bladed prop. while climbing Blackpool Tower. One moment all is mirth & gaiety, then comes a sudden squall of wind---and there is one less to pay subs to Hyphen. No, what is needed is a sign that can be used at all times to denote membership of the esoteric circle. Two fingers raised in the air, perhaps, tho this has possibly been copyrighted by the armed forces. A handclasp with the third index finger bent at right angles to the rest so that it engages in the palm of the other's hand might do, but again there may be objections by wrong-minded critics. But there are obviously many more signs that can be used. All that is required is for someone to follow the lead that I have given and to select a symbol with which everyone will agree. I need not dilate upon the delights in store for us when this has been achieved. Picture the thrill one will feel



"Are you sure you wouldn't rather have a little piece about orbits and astrophysics?"

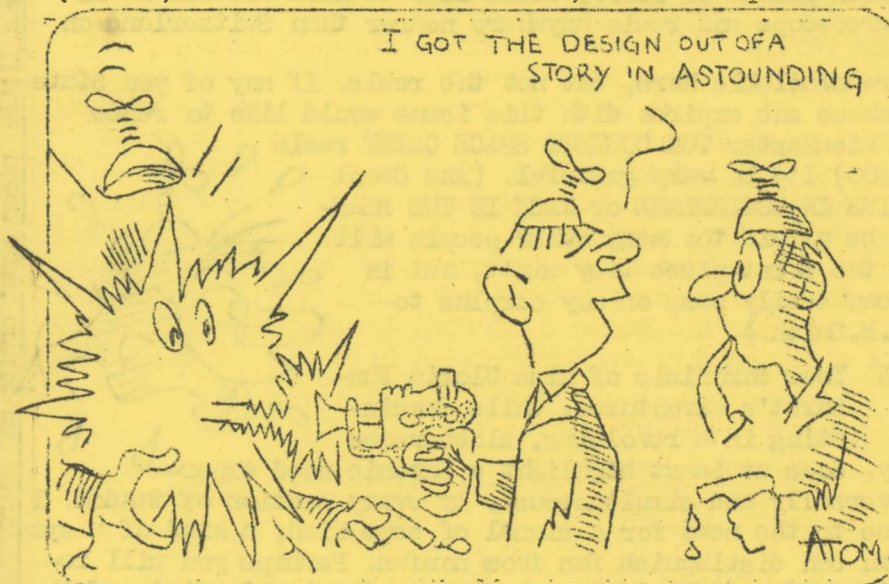
on attending the vicar's teaparty and recognising by some secret token that a fellowfan is near!

(Hmm. I'm not sure who this is--the style is the style of George Gibson but the typer is the typer of Mike Rosenblum--but I'm surprised that either of them should think that a fan needs any other identification than his sensitive fannish face....supplemented if need be by a copy of the last Hyphen cover pinned to his jacket. Copies of Hyphen front covers for this purpose, together with bacovers to be worn behind, can be supplied for a small charge. As for the sensitive fannish face, if your face is not fannish enough our Cosmetics Dept. can supply you with jars of fannishing cream.)



ARTHUR C. CLARKE Haven't time to read fannags these days but have built myself a scanner (London) er that hunts up references to myself or my alter Ego, so it automatically rang a bell and popped Bill's article in front of me. Amusing to read about the old BIS days again--and to realise how we've grown up. (I exclude myself.) It's a staggering fact that the BIS will have its 21st birthday next month. I'll be off to fresh woods and pastures new by the end of the year. Am off to the Great Barrier Reef with 3 aqualungs, 2 underwater cameras, and a very expensive life-insurance policy from Lloyds of London.

BILL TEMPLE Ego's card returned with thanks. From the blurriness it's obvious he (London) wrote it underwater, where he spends most of his time these days. We



keep a glass tank for him at The Globe now, and he was splashing around in there last Thursday trying out a new underwater movie camera he'd just bought.

I don't have to say how much I enjoyed the latest Hyphen, especially the letters full of words like 'marvellous' and 'wonderful'. And for once they weren't from

Ego on the subject of Ego (more instalments of the Temple Memoirs coming in future Hyphens. Does your scanner work under water, Arthur? Incidentally, nice of you to go all the way to Australia

to check on that bathwater.)

DAMON KNIGHT Highly satisfactory issue. Ermengarde was wonderful; she ought not to (Pa.) do this kind of thing for you, though--SEP pays money. Shaw in great form--that bit about the corduroy for instance; you can see the man has been brooding about it.

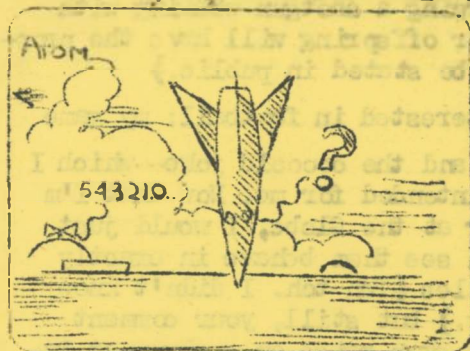
Tell him I promise not to do any covers for Hyphen; that ought to calm him down. There is more Art in this one than in most bmf's whole heads. It is the sort of thing critics go over ecstatically with magnifying glasses, trying to figure out Who Is The Bridegroom, and you see patches reproduced in scholarly books: Hyphen Cover No. 11, by Shaw (detail). Whoo. I never was much of a detail picker before, but this one fascinates me. My favourite bit is the big figure with his back turned. By heaven, I can see the shoulder pads in his jacket and the water pistol in his back pocket. Also he wears his braces too tight; someone should warn him. (US readers: he means suspenders.)

JAN JANSEN (Belgium) I certainly object to the idea of getting some blank space in Hyphen. When that is needed I'll be only too glad to take a sheet from my own stock and staple it in.

Even at the expense of being stuffy, I would like to chip in with Sid Birchby about the Supermancon. I know I would have enjoyed myself now, but what would have been the effect had I turned up last year just after getting acquainted with fandom. I'd have got out, but quick. Let's have all the fun, but let's have it after the actual proceedings, which need not be dull and dry.

ARCHIE MERCER (Lincoln) The page contributed by your postal apostle of exotic eroticism succeeds in being disgustingly amusing. But shouldn't the name have been PISMIRE?

A remark in Nigel Lindsay's letter I don't get, about Lee Hoffman having an account of your American trip in Slant. Which Slant? It so happens that when I first wrote subbing for Slant, you were actually across the Atlantic at the time. Which is the reason I received a signed letter from one (Mrs) Madeline Willis, who I honestly thought at the time was your mother. I subsequently received one Slant, No.7. That one had no Hoffman article. Could she have done an anticipatory skit in a previous issue?



(Yes, in No.6, and written at a time when neither of us thought I'd ever be there. If anyone remembers it, I did actually take a 'well-chewed' copy of Slant with me to hold in my hand when getting off the train in Savannah and we repeated the opening dialogue, but the folding bed did not accordion-pleat me.)

KEN POTTER (Lancaster) I've been wondering for some time why fandom should grow up around and cling to science fiction. Trufandom has exactly nothing to do with sf and it's more logical to think it would spring from Leacock, Thurber and Perelman readers...I was

seriously considering launching a movement, or something, to attempt to separate Trufandom from sf and bring in trufan types who have never heard of it. We could insert farmish ads in widely read periodicals, carefully worded so that only trufan types would answer. The whole thing was very Deglerish in a way, except that I don't think we're superior.

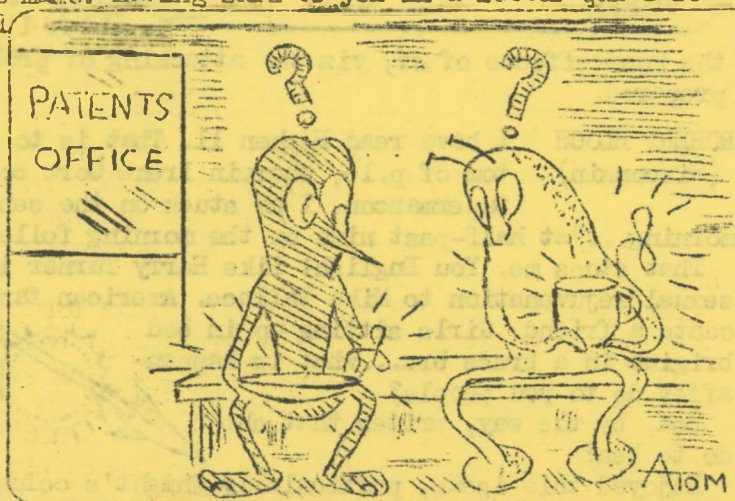
But since so many trufans spring from sf, and Fandom is a nice interesting size, and I like good sf anyway, and the split will probably come unprompted in time, I thought 'what the hell' and forgot it.

(Pity; I'd have liked to see that advertisement.)

DAPHNE BUCKMASTER (Surrey) I have a complaint to make. Having said to you in a letter quite recently that I agreed with your policy of

printing what you like, I suppose I shouldn't now complain without appearing inconsistent. So I'll be inconsistent. Well, not quite perhaps, because I was referring then to humour about which there will always be controversy because no one can define it. But when it comes to one fan seriously swearing at another surely that is a different matter? I am referring to the first word on P.28 (Harry Turner's letter.)

(To save you all the trouble of looking up the last issue The Word is used again in this one in Mike Wallace's reply--in capitals yet Is this what is meant by being "roundly abused"?)



VING CLARKE
(London)

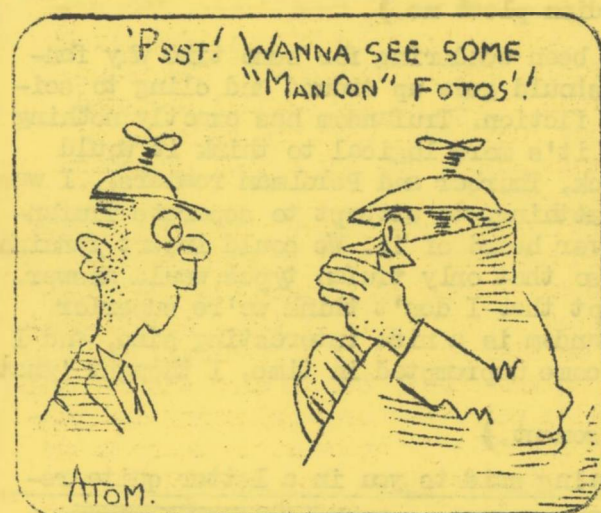
Nice cover, tho wildly fantastic. Where would you get 14 actifans working together? Damon Knight's is the kind of reviewing I like; not only tells you all about the book, but doesn't even lure you to going out and buying it. Always liked Damon's reviews since those beauties in WORLDS BEYOND.

I think Lubin would be the perfect illustrator for Wansborough. I can think of one or two captions: "And this part of the park is what we term 'Lovers' Walk"... "You must come and meet a fellow like yourself who landed here years ago, name of Degler"... "I bet you find things have changed since you went away". Please tell me if I get a prize.

(Not from us—we only work here—but try Lubin. None of your explanations accounts for the fact that the signboard shows a man holding a book or that one of the aliens is meant to be a young female or that she has four legs and the one with the gun only three. Our three explanations are as follows: 1. The human and the 4-legged alien are members of a Galactic Exploration team which consists of both 2-legged and 4-legged life-forms so that no matter what type of alien they encounter they will have something in common with them. It is just their luck to have run across a race of 3-legged creatures to whom both are anathema. 2. The four-legged female is a mutant and her 3-legged normal father is forcing a shotgun wedding with the two-legged alien on the theory that their offspring will have the proper quota of legs. 3. This explanation cannot be stated in public.)

JOY GOODWIN
(London)

Let Harry and Mike fight it out—I'm not interested in football: my game is 'footsie'!



Ah! Damon Knight, and the oooooold joke—which I see is obviously intended for me. Now that I'm a regular attender at the Globe, I would just like to add that I see them behave in exactly the same way to males (Tch tch. I didn't know they were That Way.) but still, your comment was funny; I can't even raise an eyebrow at Damon. Pythias I should like to get into a good fight. (Well, you can't say I don't try to make puns!)

JAMES G. MCCOLL I have read two issues of Hyphen,
(Lenark) loaned to me by Jim McArthur of
Edinburgh, and I think they are
all right. In No. 11 I was particularly impressed
by Damon Knight's expose of the hack writers and
by The Path Of True Love by Pamela Bulmer, from
which I'm taking a few hints... 'Rndom' shows

the good effects of sf, viz the attacking of problems before they arise, in order to be prepared.

ROBERT BLOCH
(Wisconsin)

I have read Hyphen 11. That is to say, I have read almost down to the bottom of p. 16; wherein Irene Gore concludes her account of attendance at the Supermancon. I am stuck on the sentence where Irene wakes up in bed in the morning... "At half-past nine on the morning following I sat up with a jerk"...

That stops me. You English! Like Harry Turner in the letter column, generously offering sexual rejuvenation to Mike Wallace. American fans would scarcely go that far to accommodate a friend. Girls sitting up in bed with jerks at Conventions... Gina Lollobrigida in a brass bra... what is happening to British Fandom? What did Bea Mahaffey do to you people?

Bea, by the way, writes that she
do to Bea?

Enjoyed this issue, particularly Knight's column. I won't say he writes pure vitriol; just about 50% vitriol in a half-acid sort of way.

That's all the readers' letters for this time (incidentally I've come to the conclusion that Ron Bennett is the 'Trufan of Leeds'). There hasn't been enough time for most of the American mail to come in, but we should have a really big letter section next issue.

A friendly elephant tells me that the "roamingest Noble of them all" joke quoted last issue was made by Dean Grennell. I might have known. By the way Chuck Harris is now taking English subs for Dean's superb finz GRUE, at 1/- a copy. Proceeds to the Transfand.

Through the courtesy of the editors I've been fortunate enough to see advance proofs of most of the Christmas 'i', billed in their last issue as "the finest fanmag ever produced in this country". I don't know if it actually is the finest because I haven't seen them all yet, but it's certainly the biggest I've heard of and must have broken a pile of records. It runs to something like 150 pages altogether. I feel it would have been the better for a little less publishing and a little more editing, but it contains at least two pieces that are destined to ring along the corridors of time, even if some of the rest of it...like the Hallow Eem party stuff...finishes up in a little room at our end. One is Vinç Clarke's 14 page fantomime "Fendarella", which may lack the depth and sincerity of last year's immortal "Scrooge On Ice" but which is nevertheless brilliant vintage Clarke, full of tortured puns, verse fit to make Ogden gnash, and subtle fannish allusions. (I was particularly pleased to notice one about Harmon's door demolishing deeds—Vinç has always been so insular in his referents) The other item is Ted Tubb's Trufan Tale "Requiem". Reading this one feels like the old lady who complained that Hamlet was full of quotations--some of this story has been bandied about for months as London Circle catchphrases. The story itself is in a sense the ultimate development of a type of fanfiction which I think started with Bob Shaw's SPAN! in Hyphen 3. That was humorous fannish fiction with serious emotional undertones. The serious note was sounded more fully in The Enchanted Duplicator and later in 'Scrooge On Ice' (written after Vinç had seen The Enchanted Duplicator in typescript) and now we have Ted Tubb writing stories which are not humorous at all in the usually accepted sense but instead are inspirational in tone, almost religious. This one reads as if it were written with real sincerity and I think that anyone who has a real affection for fandom and fannish ways will find it genuinely moving.

At least I did, though I may be just a sentimental slob, and I also feel what a pity it is that the magazine in which it appears should have started off so much on the wrong foot. It looks as if the editors wanted to make their mag provocative and controversial, but the arrogant and pretentious approach is difficult to bring off without the wit of a Burbee and the disarming naivete of an Ellison. As it turned out, 'i's editorial persona did succeed in getting the mag talked about, but it also aroused the hostility of a large section of fandom, an hostility which has been poisoning fan relationships in Britain for months, ever since the original 'i' makeover. It seems to me that all the trouble which has been rife in British fandom since last June, both in front of and behind the scenes, is due to large segments of British fandom having attributed to the London fans the synthetic personality paraded in 'i'.

It would be a real tragedy if this hostility were to result in the return of the London Circle to disenchanted torpor. British fandom can't afford to be without a LC fanzine or to lose geniuses like Tubb. And yet disenchantment is inevitable if these newly enthusiastic actifans continue to produce monumental efforts like the last two 'i's in a conspiracy of public silence and private hostility from large parts of fandom. Their editorial policy may have made the mag sell, but as a stimulus to fanac, hostile interest is no subject for appreciation. Fanning is fun, but the 'i' editors don't seem to be getting much out of theirs. I understand Ted Tubb is writing the editorial for this issue and I hope he and the Christmas spirit between them succeed in convincing provincial fandom that the Londoners are, like most fans, quite nice people.

Other good items in the Christmas 'i' are a deadpanhandling appeal on behalf of depressed pb authors, a little fannish fiction gem by Daphne Buckmaster, a piece of Ghu theology by Canon Carnell, and a scholarly thesis on the law of obscenity and its possible application to sf by Sid Birchby. At least this issue should quieten the critics who complained that 'i' was priced too high. 150 pages for 2/-...why, it's almost as good value as Hyphen! Write for your copy to Stu Mackenzie, 5 Hans Place, London SW1. You don't really have to fill up that Reservation form...

Next issue, TRIODE.

(Please turn to p.51)

vigorously for about ten minutes, and felt the tyre. Egad, there was no air in the tyre at all. THE PUMP HAD BEEN TAKING IT OUT.

I appealed to Bob, and told him of my Amazing discovery. A flush crept over his face, and he stared transfixed. Suddenly he yelled aloud.

"Triumph, oh triumph!"

"What do you mean?" I asked, following his jubilant contortions as he leapt gaily over the Willis lawn.

"The discovery of the age," he yelled.

"You mean---?"

"Yes," he screamed, "the world's first anti-gravity device!"

I walked home.

PS.I have since learned that Bob has solid tyres.*

*Or at least his bicycle has.

I really think an apology is due. Personally, I have a great regard for Bob Shaw, and yet, when I feel the urge to write another article, and think back on the last few meetings of Irish Fandom, I usually discover that the outstanding famish occasions concerned Bob. I have already written about Bob And The Cycle Pump, and Bob And The Teapot*, and it is with certain misgivings that I offer this further Shavian episode, entitled:

BOB AND THE TYPEWRITER

Please do not think I am getting any ideas of grandeur about my literary capabilities, but for some time past I have had the desire to own a typewriter

I broached the question one afternoon at Oblique House, whilst we were all savouring Madeleine's delicious culinary achievements.

"I would like to get a typewriter, folks, any ideas?" I said.

There was a deathly silence, then they all looked guiltily at Bob, who was busily popping Madeleine's masterpieces into his mouth, blissfully ignorant of my question.

Walt moved the tray away.

"Here's a client for your typer, Bob," he explained.

Bob stopped chewing, and looked at each face in turn in utter incredulous bewilderment, until he came to my innocent visage. Then his eyes softened with realisation.

"Oh, yes, yes," he said silkily, "I do have a typewriter for sale. Would you like to see it?"

Presuming my answer would be in the affirmative, he grabbed me by the coat collar and in a thrice I found myself outside the door of his room. He patted me on the shoulder warmly as he opened the door, and ushered me through.

"Of course you need a typewriter, John," he confided, stepping towards a large wardrobe, "and I have the very thing you want. Cheap, too."

You must realise that my heart was thumping with excitement. What a glorious opportunity I thought. Me, getting a pro-author's typewriter. God.

Bob opened the wardrobe door, knelt momentarily as if in prayer, and then reached inside, staggered to his feet and stumbled across to the table, his back to me all the

*Held over for the next issue of Hyphen.

**The Shaws are now living at Oblique House.

time. I saw the table sag in the middle, as Bob deposited his machine on it. He did one or two strange things with his hands; then he turned, eyebrows raised in triumph and waving a hand with professional assurance.

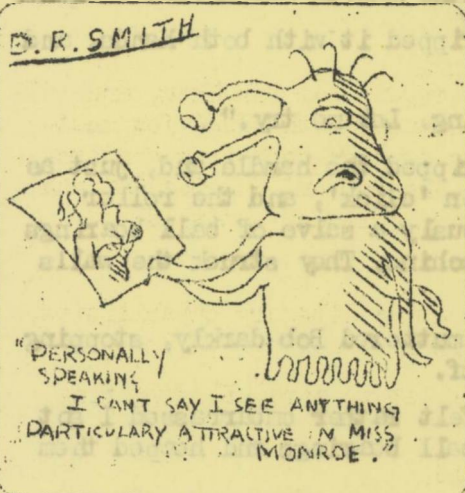
"Here it is. Remarkable condition, if I may say so. And dirt cheap."

I looked at it closely. Now, I want you to understand that I am no novice as far as typewriters are concerned. I have seen, and used, many of the finest models available.

I looked at Bob's machine again, stifling a groan of anguish. My immediate impression was a rusted hulk of machinery suffering in silence. On closer examination, however, it began to look more like a typewriter. It sort of grew on one, if you know what I mean.

Bob put his hand on my shoulder. "You see, John, it isn't the appearance of the machine that matters, it's the way it types. Let me put in a piece of paper, and you can try for yourself."

So saying, Bob produced a clean sheet of paper, and began to insert it. After three or four minutes of futile manipulation, he turned to me.



"Have a look on the wall over there. You'll see a beautiful picture of a lunar landscape," he suggested.

I crossed the room and looked at it. It was an interesting picture, right enough. I examined it in detail for several minutes, being frequently distracted by spasmodic bangs and muttered expletives coming from Bob's direction.

Finally, I heard a long drawn out sigh of satisfaction. Bob guided me back to the table, where I noticed a ragged dirty looking chunk of paper imprisoned by the roller.

"Type something," said Bob, biting his lips slightly.

My pet word for breaking in typewriters is:--

Terminologicalinexactitude.

I've typed it so often I can do it blindfold, so there was no need for me to remove the layer of scum off the keys.

So I typed termino-- etc.

The keys made a series of staccato noises, like someone trying to start a car on a frosty morning.

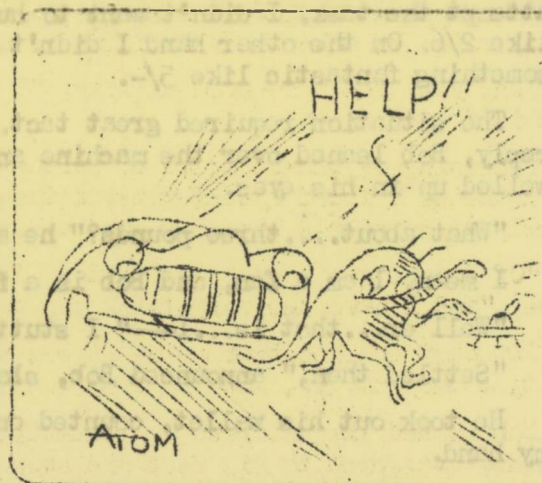
I peered at the paper, and saw something like this:--

the

I must impress on you that I don't type very fast. Compared with Walt, you would think my hands were crippled with arthritis. So Bob's next remark, savouring as they did of flattery, came as rather a pleasant surprise.

"No no John," he explained, "you are typing much too fast. I can see that you are an accomplished typist, and I can assure you that this is the machine for you. But you must get used to it. Try typing 'the' again, but a little slower."

So with a much slower movement, I typed termino-- etc. I looked with apprehension at



"First Fandom is not dead!"

— Bob Tucker

the result, something like this:-

term olog inextatid e.

"Hmm," mused Bob. "There must be something wrong with the gribble draw back lever. It's probably being fouled by the trumbikle snatch wire. I think I can fix it. By the way, let me describe the functions of these controls."

He pointed to the left of the machine. I looked, completely awed. All I could see was a large ball of fluff, with bits of wire, string and metal peering selfconsciously out at me. Bob, with lack of foresight, attempted to blow it away. We both began to have fits of violent coughing, and it was some time before I was able to get my bearings. We both reached the table again.

"You would think," remarked Bob indignantly, "that science could do something to combat these sudden attacks of smog, wouldn't you?"

With a knotted fist staring me in the face, I had to agree.

"Well, back to business," continued Bob. "This lever here controls the roller movement. Turn the roller handle to the right there, and note the smooth mechanical action."

I gripped the handle and turned. Nothing happened. I gripped it with both hands, and wrenched both forearm muscles, but still nothing happened.

"Ah," pondered Bob, "probably the snitch tag needs oiling. Let me try."

Bob is stronger than I, and he knows his machine. He gripped the handle and, just as the sweat began to bead on his forehead, there was a sudden 'click', and the roller spun round and round for several seconds, while simultaneously a salvo of ball bearings was ejected with some force from different parts of the machine. They struck the walls and ceilings, leaving dirty black marks.

"I saw Carol playing with this machine the other day," muttered Bob darkly, stopping the flow of blood from his torn fingers with a handkerchief.

There was a painful silence for some minutes and as I felt rather embarrassed I got on my hands and knees, collected a couple of handfuls of ball bearings and heaped them on the table.

Meanwhile, Bob had collected his scattered wits and with remarkable aplomb said; "As I said, you can have this magnificent machine dirt cheap. What would you suggest?"

"Rather a difficult situation to be in, don't you agree? I haven't much mechanical knowledge myself, but at a rough guess I would say a skilled mechanic would take about three weeks, at 4/6 an hour, to fix the machine--assuming that one could be found to attempt the task. I didn't want to hurt Bob's feelings and say something reasonable, like 2/6. On the other hand I didn't want to throw my money away recklessly and say something fantastic like 5/-.

The situation required great tact. Whilst I was trying to formulate a non-committal reply, Bob leaned over the machine and patted the remains affectionately. I swear tears welled up in his eyes.

"What about....three pounds?" he asked quietly, a distinct sob in his voice.

I mean, I am a fan, and Bob is a fan, and---

"Well er...that is...I---" I stuttered.

"Settled then," announced Bob, shaking my hand firmly, "three pounds it is."

He took out his wallet, counted out three crisp one-pound notes, and thrust them into my hand.

"Now take the bloody thing away," he screamed.

.....As I said, I have a high regard for Bob Shaw.

Ctd. from p.47

Pilot Officer J.K.H. Brunner, Officer's Mess, RAF Bletchley, Bucks., England
 Harry Turner, 10 Carlton Ave., Romiley, Cheshire, England
 Robert Bloch, Box 362, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, USA
 Mike Wallace, c/o Marcus Bishop, 267 Hessle Rd., Hull, Yorks., England
 Mal Ashworth, 40 Makin St., Tong St., Bradford 4, Yorks., England. ('BEM')
 Sid Birchby, 1 Gloucester Ave., Levenshulme, Manchester 9, England.
 D.R. Smith, 13 Church Rd., Hartshill, Nuneaton, Warwks., England
 Ron Bennett ('Ploy'), The Grange, Beckett Park, Leeds 6, England.
 Jan Jansen, 229 Berchemlei, Bergerhout, Belgium.
 Archie Mercer, 434/4 Newark Rd., North Hykeham, Lincoln, England.
 Ken Potter ('Brennschluss'), 5 Furness St., Lancaster, England.
 Daphne Buckmaster, 1 Grove Cottage, London Rd., Camberley, Surrey, England.
 Vin Clarke, 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent, England.
 Joy Goodwin, c/o 204 Wellmeadow Rd., Catford,
 London SE6.
 James G. McColl, 22 Greenlea Rd., Chryston,
 Lmarkshire, Scotland.

I meant from this issue on to give the addresses of everyone who wrote letters of comment whether or not they were quoted, but most of the letters are still with one of the contributors. Next time I'll make a note of them before I send them round. Meantime I'd like to thank everyone who wrote, whether there was room to print their letters or not. I'm sorry I haven't been able to acknowledge them, but I've fallen badly behind with my correspondence lately, on account of Hyphen and the Transfund.

Mike Wallace, Ron Bennett and Ken Potter (addresses above) would like their names added to the list of those willing to write letters of comment on US fanz, and here are the US fanz willing to give a certain number of free subs on those terms. (Incidentally, it would be a nice gesture if the fans who receive these free copies would make an occasional small contribution to the Transfund in the editor's name.)

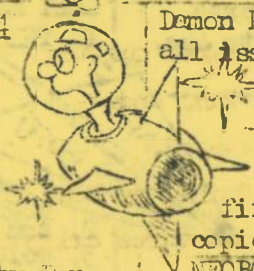
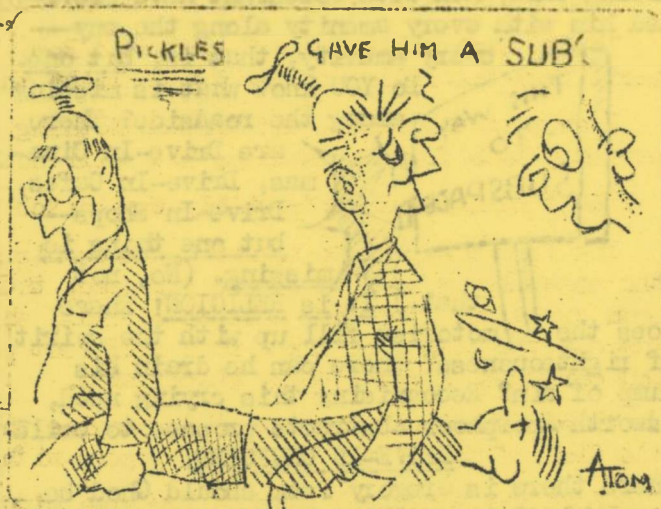
OOPS!!, Gregg Calkins, 2817-11th St., Santa Monica, California, USA. Latest issue of this outstandingly well produced fanz has excellent material by Bob Tucker and others. There's also stuff by me. PSYCHOTIC, Richard Geis, 2631 N. Mississippi, Portland 12, Oregon. Contents always outstanding and now going photo-offset. HODGE PODGE, Marie-Louise & Nancy Share, Box 31, Danville, Pa. Recent issues slightly marred by material reflecting prejudice against oppressed minorities, including the Negro race and Paul Mittelbuscher, but this is no doubt only a passing phase in the development of this very agreeable fanzine. VULCAN, Terry Carr, 134 Cambridge St., San Francisco 12, California. Lively and entertaining, this is the best thing so far to have come from the younger San Francisco fan's.

State of the Transfund at 9/12/54

Carried over.....	268:14: 7
Pete Campbell.....	7: 0
ISFCC (per Terry Jeeves).....	4: 0
Ken Slater.....	1: 0: 0
Total in sterling	270: 5: 7
By Don Ford.....	242: 0: 0
	2112: 5: 7

The figure for the amount collected by Don Ford is not up-to-date, and it may be more.

The complete list of contributors will be published later.



Demon Knight, Canadensis, Pa., USA, wants all issues of Slant and Nos. 1, 2 & 3 of Hyphen. Will trade books or if pressed pay money.

Sgt. Joan W. Carr, c/o RASC Sgts. Mess, Maida Camp, BELF 17, wants first four issues of Hyphen. If good copies money (almost) no object.

NEOBOD. Sauce Tartare Savigny. Soignez les pailons mais, n'oubliez pas les boudins--surtout vin blanc avec saucisson. Cichoraceae cum cynarocephale. Grotted G.

ASHWORTH AMORPHOUS ABSTRACTS (ASSOCIATED)

announce the sale of shares in their
GREAT NEW ENTERPRISE!

Do YOU want to join in a Stupendous Business Undertaking that is not for chicken-hearts but for MEN? Do YOU want to help Save your neighbour's soul and pocket a profit on the deal? Then read on.

Civilisation today is becoming mechanised; Man is out on the roads. Everyman and his wife has a car; he is going places. Recognising this, Men With Foresight have provided him with every amenity along the way—every amenity, that is, but one.



Do YOU know what is missing along the roadside? There are Drive-In Cinemas, Drive-In Cafes, Drive-In Shops—but one thing is missing. (No, not that.) It is RELIGION! Where does the motorist fill up with the spirit of righteousness? Where can he drain his sump of sin? Recognising this crying need, Ashworth Amorphous Abstracts propose to build DRIVE-IN CHURCHES!

Where there is Gregory Peck should Ghod be far behind? Aaaa will take Ghod out on the roadside to Everyman: we will build Drive-In Churches which with tastefully designed neon signs and fluorescent posters will make the little old ordinary churches look like barns. Yes Sir, we'll lay Religion on for the consumer on wheels. GENUINE BISHOPS will dispense the preaching over hi-fi relay systems, choirgirls in ballet-length skirts will sell popcorn, and real frocked, surpliced and dog-collared clergymen will sell strip cartoon versions of the Bible.

This thing is BIG. Will YOU help Ghod, your fellowman and YOURSELF all at one time? Write now for prospectus to Mel Ashworth, Chairman, Ashworth Amorphous Abstracts Lss.

SAVE WHILE YOU SAVE!

STOP DUPER

ESAF D. ROTE ARRESTED!
COURTHAY TESTIFIES

EXCALIBUR? YOU MEAN CALIBUR HAS RETIRED?...ALL I CAN FIGURE OUT IS THAT I MADE SOME DISPARAGING REMARK ABOUT MORONS AND HE MUST HAVE TAKEN IT PERSONALLY...ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TWO WEEKS IN TORQUAY WITH ERIC BENTCLIFFE? 'I'LL STOP BUYING THE MAGAZINE, EXCEPT FOR COMPLIMENTARY COPIES...I DON'T OBJECT TO SLEEPING WITH YOU JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN'T THINK UP CARTOONS...OFFHAND, WOULD YOU SAY I BEAR ANY RESEMBLANCE TO AN OTTER?...HE GOT ME TO TRANSLATE HIS DIET INTO FRENCH AND WANTS TO KNOW HOW TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GENTS AND THE LADIES...YOU HAVE TO INSULT HIM BEFORE HE WRITES YOU TYPED LETTERS...SHE'S WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL A MELTING POT OF THE WORLD...ELLISON RAN INTO ME WITH A CIGARET IN HIS MOUTH AND BURNED A HOLE IN THE KNEE OF MY PANTS...ANYONE FOR ELECTROLYTICALLY REDUCING OSMIUM TETRAXIDE IN HCL?...WELL, RUN THRU A HALLWAY WITH A FIREHOSE FOR ME WILL YOU?...VERY FEW MOTS AND NO WIVES WERE EXCHANGED...I CAN ONLY WRITE THE AWFUL CRUD I DO WHEN I'M IN THE MOOD...SHALL I WEAR SHOES SEEING IT'S UP TOVEY?...DEAN GREENELL THINKS YOU LOOK LIKE ROBERT BENCHLEY: THIS I GRANT HIM, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE LENGTH OF TIME BENCHLEY HAS BEEN DEAD...ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE A NONENTITY OUT OF ME?...IS THERE ANY TRUTH IN THE RUMOUR THAT YOU SOLD YOUR ALABASTER BODY TO MARION Z. BRADLEY?...IS WHITE REALLY A NEGRO?...HE'S ALL RIGHT IN HIS PLACE BUT THEY HAVEN'T DUG IT YET...WITH ALL THAT BOTTOM YOU'D THINK SHE'D BE MORE STABLE...WE ARE NOW LISTENING TO THE PATTER OF LITTLE FEET. MAIL ME A HOUSETRAP...SHE LAID ON THE COUCH AND I LOST INTEREST IN HER ENGRAMS....RALPH, QUIT BLOWING YOUR NOSE; YOU'RE OUT OF ORDER...DO YOU THINK FANDOM ONLY EXISTS IN TUCKER'S IMAGINATION?...TOMMY BLOCH SENT ME HIS PHOTOGRAPH—AND I HAVEN'T SEEN MY FATHER SINCE DINNER TIME...I WILL ALWAYS STICK UP FOR BEA MAHAFFEY...ALL THE TIME HE'S TURNING THE HANDLE HE KEEPS YELLING 'OM MINE PADDIE HUM'...I SUPPOSE A PERSON OF YOUR EXCELLENCE HAS ACTUALLY MET WILLIS?...WHY SHOULDN'T I KEEP INK IN THE BEBOP?...HE TALKS LIKE HECTOGRAPHY...



NO FANNISH MAIL FOR 3 DAYS! CAN THIS MEAN THE END OF CIVILISED MAN ON EARTH?...HYPERSPACE IS OUT!...HOOG.

James white 3, Damon Knight 2, madeleine willis 1, bob shaw 1, chude harris 4, don vogars 1, yaw 2, david rike 3, robert bloch 2, tom white 1, arthur thomson 1, mel ashworth 3, golden gate futurian society 1 and correspondents of eric frank russell 6. Grateful acknowledgements to collectors eric frank russell, Damon knight, david rike, jan jensen, terry carr, joy godwin, dean greenell & glenn conlin

