

HYPHEN

NO. 18,

MAY

1957



"Stf is certainly booming, -- that's the eighth "Vargo" since Michaelmas."

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CARTOONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY ARTHUR THOMSON.

STOP DUPE R

Congratulations James, -- it's a human being!

type human being at that.

And, better still, a genuine girl-

To James and Peggy White, on Friday, 17th May in Belfast Maternity Hospital, a daughter, Patricia. Madeleine phoned me on Saturday morning to tell me all about it. Original E.T.A. was nearly a fortnight ago, and I've been holding this issue up so that I could tell you about it. It is a fine fannish omen for the young lady to start playing hell with the "-" deadline even before she arrives.

Yes, thank you, we have already made the jokes about "the slither of tiny tentacles" and no, Good Old Ted Carnell is not entitled to 10% of the credit this time.

P.S. Now you'll know who the bod carrying the typer is in the front cover cartoon. Arthur, myself, and Mr Statten all think that Vargo is a much more fannish name than Patricia, but we can't get James and Peggy to agree with us.

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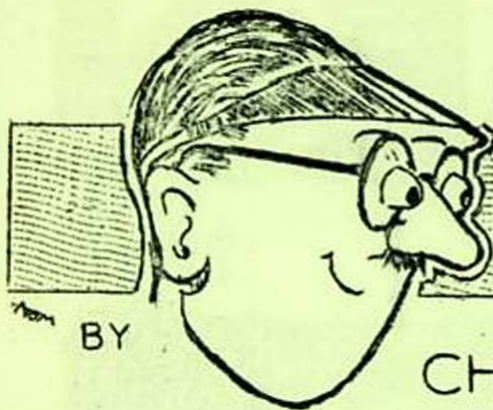
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inside coverage

BY
CHUCK HARRIS

Yes, here it is, the epitome of crifanac, the grossest with the mostest, a miracle in glorious black and white, ~~HYPHEN~~ #18, and kindly renew your sub if it has expired because there is always a chance of there being a #19 before the end of the year. We are late, of course, -- but then, we are always late. I've been busy with other stuff, (she got away, alas, intact and intacta) whilst Walt has been busy founding a dynasty. ~~HYPHEN~~ just didn't stand a chance against such heady brands of mundaneness.

One or two of our most discerning readers (probably those with the cash subs), will notice that there are no sidelines and no TOTO in this issue. The sidelines had to be left out because my typer has been besieged by malevolent demons again, and I couldn't risk forcing a triple-folded stencil and backing-sheet under the platen in case it broke the matchstick that holds the carriage together and constitutes our only defence against Ragnarok. TOTO was left out for two reasons: 1) Vargo Statten wouldn't allow me to reprint from Vol 1 No 3. and 2) I haven't any more paper or duplicating ink available.

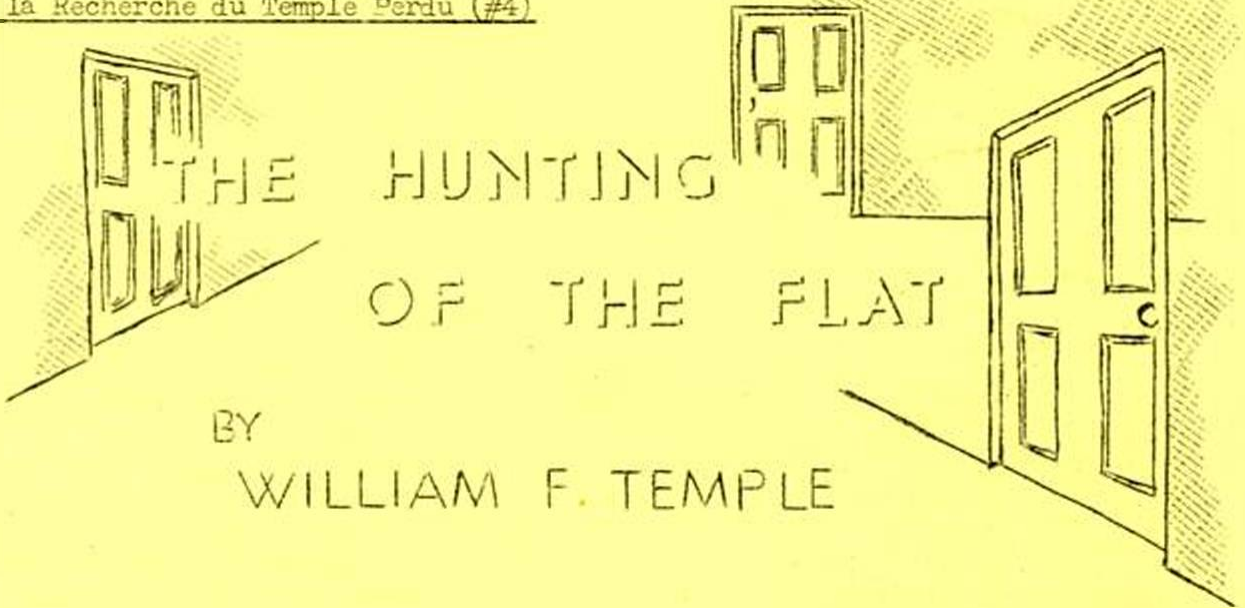
TAFF. You got a voting form for this year's election with your last ~~HYPHEN~~. If you haven't filled it in yet, you should do so immediately or sooner. Anglofen should send 2/6 or more to H Ken Bulmer, 204 Wellmeadow Rd., Catford, London S.E.6 and then send the voting form direct to Don Ford, Box 19 T, ~~RD#2~~, Wards Corner Road, Loveland, Ohio, U.S.A. Voting closes in June, -- you haven't any time to dawdle. If you've lost your form, vote on a blank sheet of paper. You have three votes, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, choice of the candidates. We are voting for Richard Eney and we hope that you will do so too. To give him the maximum votes possible you should write "Eney" in each space as your selection for each place. (Oops! Forgot to say that U.S. fans should send both money, -- minimum 50¢ -- and their voting form direct to Don Ford.)

Anyway, whoever you vote for is relatively unimportant, the act of voting is what really matters. To my mind, TAFF is one of those things that justify the enormous outlay of energy, time, and money that we put into fandom, and it would break my heart to see it all fall through because we were too apathetic to dig out half a dollar and sign our names to a form once every year. We've already voted: we hope you have done so too....but there is still time if you haven't, as long as you get your finger out and do it now. And.....make it Eney if you can, please.

(continued inside bacover.)

~~HYPHEN~~ #18. May 1957. Co-edited by Chuck Harris "Carolyn" Lake Ave Rainham Essex England and Walt Willis 170 Upper Newtownards Road Belfast N. Ireland. Art Editor, Arthur Thomson 17 Brockham House Brockham Drive London S.W.2. Also culpable, Madeleine Willis, John Berry, Bob Shaw, the venerable George Charters and the incredible James White. This issue published by Chuck Harris.

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ABOUT ONE FLAT we inspected off Gower Street, I hesitate to write. I feel as horribly inadequate to cope as I did when I was told at school to explain the Binomial Theorem. I just haven't got the right sort of mind. It isn't big enough and it's quite non-mathematical. The deal with that affair one needs a cosmic, all-embracing mind, one that can step back and see everything as a correlated whole.

To begin with, the flat wasn't a flat. It was upstairs, downstairs, in My Lady's Chamber, take away the room you thought of first, divide the result by thirty-three, knock twice and ask for help. You might describe it as "living quarters," except that it was in far smaller pieces than quarters. It didn't seem humanly possible to chop up an abode into so many parts, and perhaps it wasn't. Ego opined that some vast disrupting force, at present unknown to Science, had been at work in that house.

It was a big house. It held a fair complement of neat, normal, self-contained flats. Scattered haphazard among these were the fragments of the flat we'd come to inspect, as though it had died the Death of a Thousand Cuts and the executioner hadn't been particular about where he'd thrown the pieces.

There was a caretaker who showed us around. He'd had the job for forty years but he wasn't sure of his way about the house.

With some difficulty he found a vacant room on the second floor.

"This is the main living-room," he said.

"It's not bad," said Ego. "Where's the rest of the flat?"

"I'll make no bones about it," said the caretaker, and paused.

"Well?"

"There's no good in dodging the issue," said the caretaker, and hesitated. I said "Well?" this time.

"We might as well face facts," said the caretaker, and was lost for words.

"Well?" said Maurice.

"Let's get down to brass tacks -- "

"Where's the rest of the flat?" howled Ego.

"I don't know," said the caretaker.

"You mean, it got away?" I said.

"Oh, no, sir. It's in the house somewhere. But someone took it to pieces, you see, and -- well, somehow it was never put together again. We'll have to look for it."

So we made the living room the base for our operations, organizing independent sallies from it and making it our rendezvous every twenty minutes.

The first twenty minutes drew a blank, except for a claim by Maurice: which means it drew a blank. He claimed to have found a vacant bedroom on the fourth floor. But when he took us there to see it he couldn't find it again.

We found him a piece of chalk and told him to mark the door with an "X" the next time he ran across it.

I was the first to strike gold. I was prowling along a gallery in an out-building at the back when I came to a doorway laced with cobwebs. I pulled them down and called: "All right, you can come out now, Robert Bruce. They have all gone."

So had he, it seemed. The kitchenette beyond was empty, save for a rusty gas-stove, some paper-lined shelves, a multitude more of cobwebs, and a couple of prehistoric wall paintings of angular antelope and mammoths.

I excavated, and found the paper on the shelves was a "TIMES" of 1892. It struck quite a modern note.

I brought the others to my find. The caretaker admitted it was a genuine part of the flat, and congratulated me.

He observed that the floor could do with a sweeping.

Then Ego had a run of sheer luck and found two bedrooms in one go: the one Maurice had previously discovered, and another smaller one. That left another bedroom and the bathroom to find. We set out on safari, and achieved nothing but sore feet. We rested then in the living-room for a while. I thought that up till now the caretaker hadn't shone at all, especially considering that, if his statement was to be believed, he'd seen all the parts of the flat at one time or another, and I said so.

He said, unhappily: "I was never very lucky at gambling."

Ego recovered the chalk from Maurice, and on the floor drew a chart of the house as he saw it, and marked thereon the positions of the rooms we'd run to earth. That showed us the blank spaces on the map which we still had to beat. We started out again, separately, beating.

A quarter of an hour went by without my setting eyes on any of the others, or upon anyone save a man with a suspicious nature who stuck his head round a doorway and watched me very closely as I wandered up the corridor trying likely doors. It became embarrassing. I was glad when I'd finished sounding that corridor.

Then I ran across Ego in a fifth-floor passage, and advanced with extended hand.

"Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" I said, which I thought was very humorous.

But Ego only scowled and said: "This is no time to be funny and I'm glad you realize it. Let's go back to the rendezvous."



Maurice and the caretaker were already there, and as Maurice was asleep I suspected that he'd been there all the time. But the caretaker was almost hopping with excitement. He'd found the remaining bedroom. It was on the top floor.

"It would be," I said, feeling that my toes were worn down to stubs. "Come on, Maurice." I had to prod him with my stubs to get him awake.

We surveyed the missing bedroom and it didn't take us long.

"It seems.....somehow smaller," said the caretaker. "There's something--- where's the fireplace? There used to be a fireplace. And the window ---- there used to be two windows. I can't see why anyone should want to shift a window."

Neither could we. Ego and I took another look at the mutilated room and decided that this could be Maurice's bedroom. As we pointed out, the air was distinctly purer at this altitude, and as Maurice believed in fresh air and old-fashioned things like that.....

Maurice said that was thoughtful of us, but he didn't want to rob Ego of a fine potential astronomical observatory, for there was a fine view of the sky here or would be when the window was cleaned.

Ego said he'd stand down in favour of me, for it was really a garret, where I'd feel quite at home writing, for all struggling authors lived in garrets.

At a loss, I looked at the caretaker, who said hastily that the stairs were too much for him at his age and, anyway, it was part of the flat and must go with the flat.

"So's the bathroom part of the flat," I said, "and where is it? It's all or nothing, so far as I'm concerned."

So the great hunt for the bathroom began. We never did find it. I don't believe it ever existed, and said as much to the caretaker. He maintained that he'd seen it with his own eyes, and what was more, his father before him had seen it, also with his own eyes. He distinctly remembered the day he himself had seen it, for he'd just returned from the funeral of King Edward VII.

We searched the basement and even the roof. The nearest we came to it was a wash-basin, with no apparent owner, no plug, and only one tap, falsely labelled "Hot".

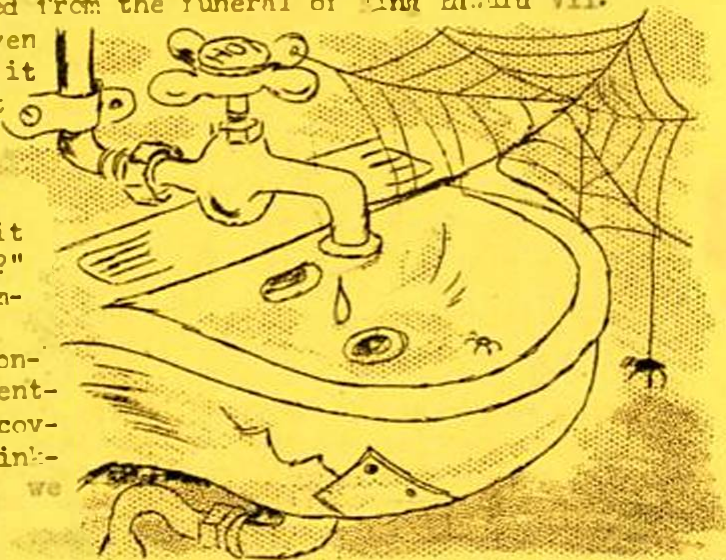
I suggested: "Maybe that's the bathroom, and you've been seeing it through the rosy mist of the past?"

The caretaker said that his memory wasn't that bad.

Ego had worked out a very visionary scheme of living in that percentage of the flat which had been uncovered. It meant the rooms being linked by private telephone, by which we could arrange to meet in various rooms by appointment. It was too complex for Maurice and me, and we rejected it. Besides, I insisted on having a bathroom, if only for the sake of appearances.

So we all took our leave, thanking the caretaker for his trouble.

He said, "Not at all," ----adding that it had been very interesting: he hadn't realized before what a lot he had to take care of.



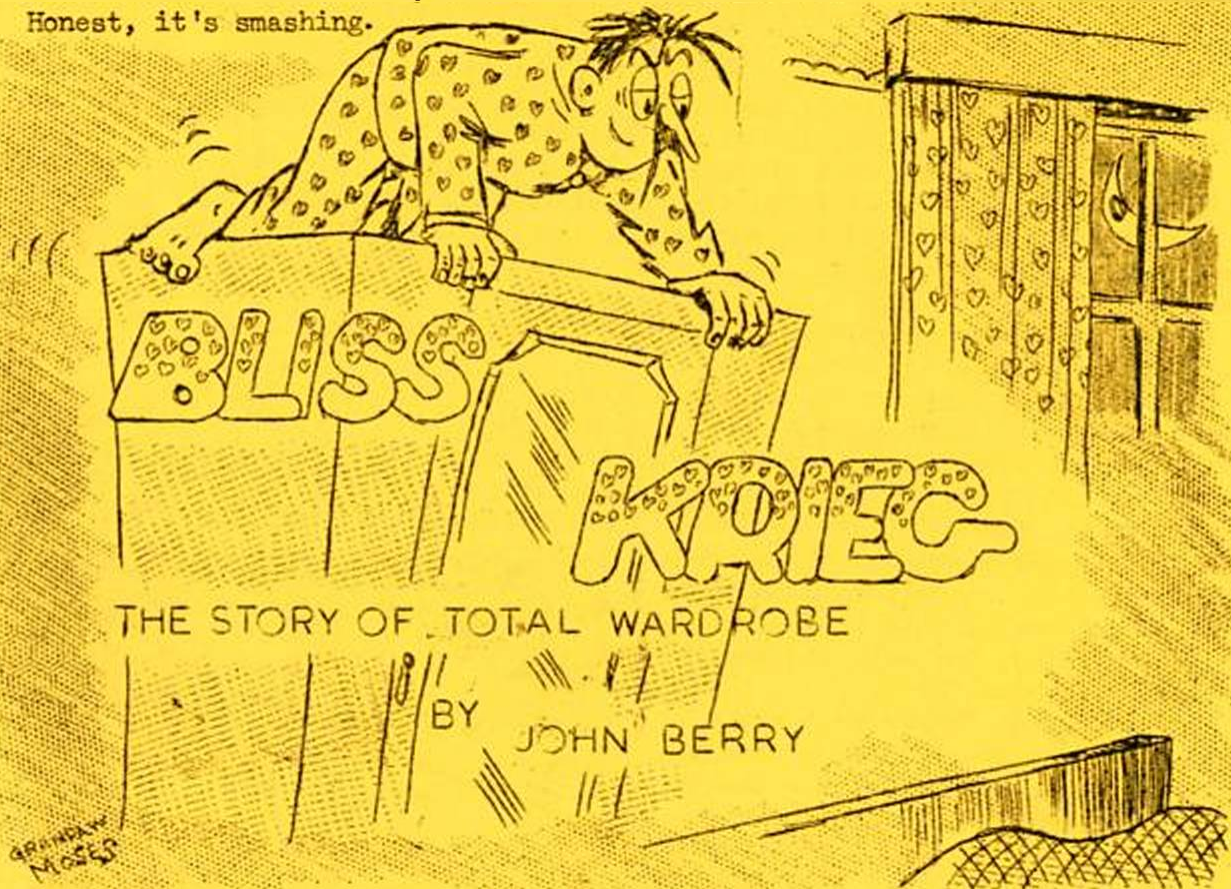
LIVE TROUBLES 5

AUTHOR'S NOTE. I don't want any readers to think I am resorting to pornography. Purposely, to avoid any suggestion of this, I am asking Chuck to refrain from submitting this Mss. to Arthur Thomson. The boy packs atmosphere and meaning into his illustrations as it is, and I don't want to be the first to entice Atom into illoing pornographic works. For one thing, he'd be in even greater demand than he is now.

No.

I just want to place on record a rather novel fannish idea. I need hardly add that this article caters solely for the married fan, and others contemplating marriage in the immediate future. To fen such as Bentcliffe and Harris, single though they are, this will probably be most elementary.....rejected by them years ago. But, as I say, to the normal married fan who regards S*x openly and without lincentiousness, this article is dedicated.

Honest, it's smashing.



In this modern age of hydrogen bombs, guided missiles, television, and BIPED, there seems something obsolete in the basic primary ritual carried on in the marital chamber. For generations now, man and woman have tripped hopefully up the stairs, undressed hurriedly and dived into the bed in a flurry of sheets and blankets. This, to my way of thinking, seems so ancient, so uninspired...something is lacking....there is no sense of originality displayed by the average couple.

After giving the problem much thought, and, incidentally, after carrying out numerous experiments of my own, I have evolved a new technique which, besides being truly fannish in spirit, also succeeds in awakening the shy, dormant spirit of the female.

Allow me to create a picture in your mind. Let us take a typical pair of married fen. The young, pretty wife is lying in bed, glancing impatiently at a copy of MASQUE. Her husband, attired in a pair of bilious-coloured pyjamas, cleans his teeth, and opens and closes his toes. He then gets into bed.

This, you will agree, is humdrum, boring, monotonous, -- enough to dampen the ardour of the most delectable young femme.

But I have solved the problem.

Back again, once more, if you please, to the Bed.

The young wife is still reading MASQUE. The husband has just cleaned his teeth, and opened and closed his toes. BUT, following the Berry Doctrine, he now does a seemingly strange thing. His wife looks up, a new sparkle appears in her eyes, she gasps delightedly as she sees her lover's NEW approach.

(Before I detail the exact movements, I would suggest to fannish wives that they stop here and turn immediately to the Letter Column.....this technique is far better if it comes as a complete surprise.)

Now then, Men.

Do not approach the bed. Turn seductively in the opposite direction, and CLIMB ON TOP OF THE WARDROBE.

(Technical Note. If your wardrobe is not equipped with castors, or similiar small wheels, it is essential that these are fitted before following my teaching. Nothing is more frustrating than having to turn around and clamber down the wardrobe again. Besides being sheepishly insipid, one's wife is liable to be a little bewildered. This actually happened to me in a preliminary experiment.)

Right. Now assuming that you are on top of your wardrobe, lie prostrate across it, and place your feet firmly against the wall.

Now we come to the skilful part of the technique. With a well-judged shove from both feet, propel the wardrobe towards the bed. Your wife will drop her hands with pleasure at this novel action, and, if you have made the necessary calculations, your vehicle will reach maximum momentum AS IT SMACKS AGAINST THE BOTTOM OF THE BED.

With a superb feeling of elation, you will fly through the air and land beside your spouse with a suggestive thump.

This approach is NEW, entirely FANNISH, and absolutely BREATH-TAKING.

I find it unnecessary to make any remark upon landing. "Here I am," or "I'd better oil those springs tomorrow," seems somewhat superflous. The woman will be breathless but FASCINATED. (Unless she studies psychiatry.)

.

Before starting active wardrobe jumping, a few items should be checked and corrections made if necessary. A survey of the floorboards with the possibility of reinforcement, for instance. For the older fen, coming into the Charters category, we would not advise this technique. You are probably past it anyway. However, should the urge strike you, it may be helpful to consider a pair of steps or a ladder to assist in reaching the top of the wardrobe.

Remember, a seven foot high wardrobe with freely oiled castors can provide months of novel marital bliss.

Walter Willis was one of my earliest converts. His bedroom is much larger than mine, and I was able to suggest a refinement that I have not been able to try myself. I advised Walt to measure the overall distance from the farthest wall to the bed. This was 28 feet... I instructed him to purchase 18ft of strong wire and fix one end to the wall, and the other to the back of the wardrobe. With a controlled shove-off, Willis informs me that the abrupt halt when the wardrobe

reaches the end of the wire, is sufficient for him to glide the remaining distance to the bed. On numerous occasions when he has felt frivolous, Talt has even turned a double somersault en route. At first he experienced a little difficulty in finding a wardrobe strong enough to withstand the sudden strain, but after his seventh wardrobe, he settled on a mahogany Victorian type of adequate, rigid construction. Anyone who wishes to emulate Willis, and who suffers from the same trouble, should not hesitate to contact him. He gets his wardrobes wholesale.

The only really dangerous hazard in wardrobe jumping, (presuming one has a fairly nimble wife), is the highly sprung bed. It is somewhat ostentatious to sport a crash helmet, and yet a full-blooded leap onto the bed from a well-oiled wardrobe can result in severe bruising to the back of the head. Landing on one's wife sometimes acts as a cushion, but she may feel somewhat put upon.

Additionally, make sure that the bed is placed against a wall. I still shudder when I think of the Arthur Thomson Episode....

I was staying with Arthur and his wife, Olive, and, for a small fee, initiated them into this new Way of Life.

Unfortunately, the weather was rather warm and Arthur had opened all the windows, and, presumably to get what little fresh air there was about, he had moved the bed under the window. This, in itself, wasn't so bad, but it should be borne in mind that BROCKHAM HOUSE is a large block of flats, and, although the Thomsons are only on the second floor, that's plenty high enough when you're flying through the air in pyjamas after having been catapulted forward from a self-propelled wardrobe.

Fortunately, it was quite dark and Arthur, with superb timing, grabbed a curtain as he soared over a disappointed Olive, and landed safely on the main road below. After being asked the way to the nearest mosque by a coloured gentleman he re-entered the flat eager and willing to try again.

In conclusion, I suggest sand-papering the top of the wardrobe. This will not only assist take-off. Practically speaking, the top of a wardrobe is not so well polished as the front and sides, and a splinter may be easily contracted, --giving rise to the dreaded venereal disease (Medical terms courtesy of WAW).

James White, a veteran of many jumps, predicts that in years to come, it will be a common sight to witness courting couples wending parkwards, the male towing along a sturdy wardrobe.

Finally, I would like to suggest an as yet untried development for the fan who wishes to keep his wife in an agony of suspense for those few vital extra seconds. This entails fitting guide rails so that the husband can triumphantly shunt round the bed a few times, rampant on top of the wardrobe, gazing adoringly at his wife, before suddenly taking off with nerve-chilling exuberance.

The strange, almost hypnotic effect of continual wardrobe jumping is sometimes found to have a strange effect on the female, and in time she may wish to take the place of the dominant male on top of the wardrobe.

Don't forget that Freud had something to say about that.

HAPPY LANDINGS

THE CLASS BUSHEL

BOB SHAW

I AM ONE of those people who feel that they have had a happy childhood and boyhood. Sometimes, when I recall parts of it in detail, I wonder why I have this feeling. I think that some boys just don't have sense enough to be unhappy. I'm behind deadline on this column but I'll try to recall enough events of one period of my life to explain what I mean.

RUSH REPORT RE PORTRUSH

JOHN BERRY'S PORTRUSH adventure in the last *WYTHE* set me thinking of the first time I saw that little resort. It was during that period of my life when I was an unwanted member of the Boy's Brigade, and the Company went there for summer camp one year.

A series of minor disasters with tents and equipment had inspired in the Company Officers a deeply rooted distaste for the great outdoors, and, by the time I joined, the word "camping" had come to denote taking over a cheap boarding-house for a week. The adventurous souls who had decided to make the trip in this particular year mustered in the railway station one grey, drizzly, Saturday morning. The rain was coming down in leisurely, vertical lines and looked as though it could stay that way indefinitely.

Things began to go wrong for me almost immediately.

One of the lieutenants hated me. His name was Johnny and he was a large, beefy young man with a round red face and humourless little eyes. He hated me because at that particular time I had a peculiar gasping sort of laugh which I was totally unable to control, and which sometimes reduced me to the point where I had to lie down to recover my power of breathing. I think he felt that this was bad for discipline.

I saw Johnny working his way down the line (we were queued at the barrier) collecting our money so that we wouldn't lose it. My parents had warned me that I was getting only a certain amount of holiday money and that I had better conserve it if I wanted to have enough for the camp. I had ignored the warning and they had remained firm, -- with the result that I had slightly less than a pound with me. Some of the others had ten times that.

When Johnny asked me for my cash I said, no. I didn't want to let him know my weak financial position. The part of his neck that bulged over his collar turned a deeper red. He lifted his gaze upwards to the sooty trusses and rain-washed

skylights of the station and stood like that for a moment. After a time he said, "Why?"

I didn't know what to say. I glanced wildly around me for succour and saw only my friend McCreedy moving away from us towards the barrier. McCreedy was a thin pale youth who had only been drawn to me by the fact that I was more persecuted in the Company than he. By a strange coincidence he too was having a difficult period as far as laughing was concerned. He was in a sort of "silent heave" stage and his efforts to control this made his face twitch in a ghastly manner.

I could see from the convulsions of McCreedy's body and the spasmodic movement of his ears that he had seen me on the spot and the sight had brought on one of his attacks. To my horror, I felt my own lungs give a sympathetic squeeze and a preliminary sob escaped my lips.

Johnny recognised the danger signs. "Shaw," he gritted murderously, "I hope you're not going to start."

"Hawwwngghh! Hhawwwngghh!" I said weakly, trying to ignore McCreedy who was now an alarming purple colour and twitching from head to foot like a veteran of chorea. The situation was saved by Johnny noticing that the Company had moved through the barrier and was boarding the train. He gave me a threatening-pleading-reproachful look, grabbed his bags and ran away. I could see that he was worried about how his holiday was going to turn out.

At Portrush we emerged from the body-warmed, clammy interior of the carriage (all the Privates had managed to squeeze into one section thus making it impossible for an N.C.O. to travel with us) into the same kind of light, persistent rain. We made a rough formation and marched off to the digs lugging our cases. I still remember that cheerful march vividly -- jogging along through the grey, spotless rain-scoured streets; smelling linseed oil from cricket bats, seeing muddy football boots dangling from rucksacks, being slapped with wet inner-tubes which some of us has brought to use as water-wings.

We reached the boarding house, settled in, made gleeful discoveries about who was in the same room with whom, and had our first meal. When the meal was over we went out and found that the rain had stopped.

I was lounging around the entrance when a fellow called Wishart approached me. "Let's go down to the fun fair," he said. I was quite flattered, because Wishart was one of the leading members of the Company, but I was chary about starting to squander my little stock of cash so soon.

"I don't know if I can," I hedged.

"My money....."

"Never worry about money. I've got plenty here," he said. "Let's go."

This was great! I went with him to Barry's where we rode on dodgems, shot rifles, raced in little racing cars, ate ice cream, fed the slot machines, and, in general, had a good time. When we got back to the digs at about eleven I went to my room where I played "Monopoly" with McCreedy and another unfortunate called Knox. I even did well at "Monopoly" which was unusual for me as I had a fatal weakness for buying cheap property with low returns.



The game had been in progress for about half an hour when there was a knock at the door and Wishart came in.

"Welcome, kind and noble Wishart," I blabbered loudly. "Wilt thou sit with us and share our humble repast?" McCreedy and Knox looked at me admiringly -- I was Wishart's friend. I was a success.

Wishart produced a piece of paper, handed it to me and said: "There's a list of all the things we did down at Barry's. You owe me eight bob."

This was about half my stock. I mustered a trembling smile and gave him his money then went back to Monopoly. I got put out of the game and went to bed. I felt sick.

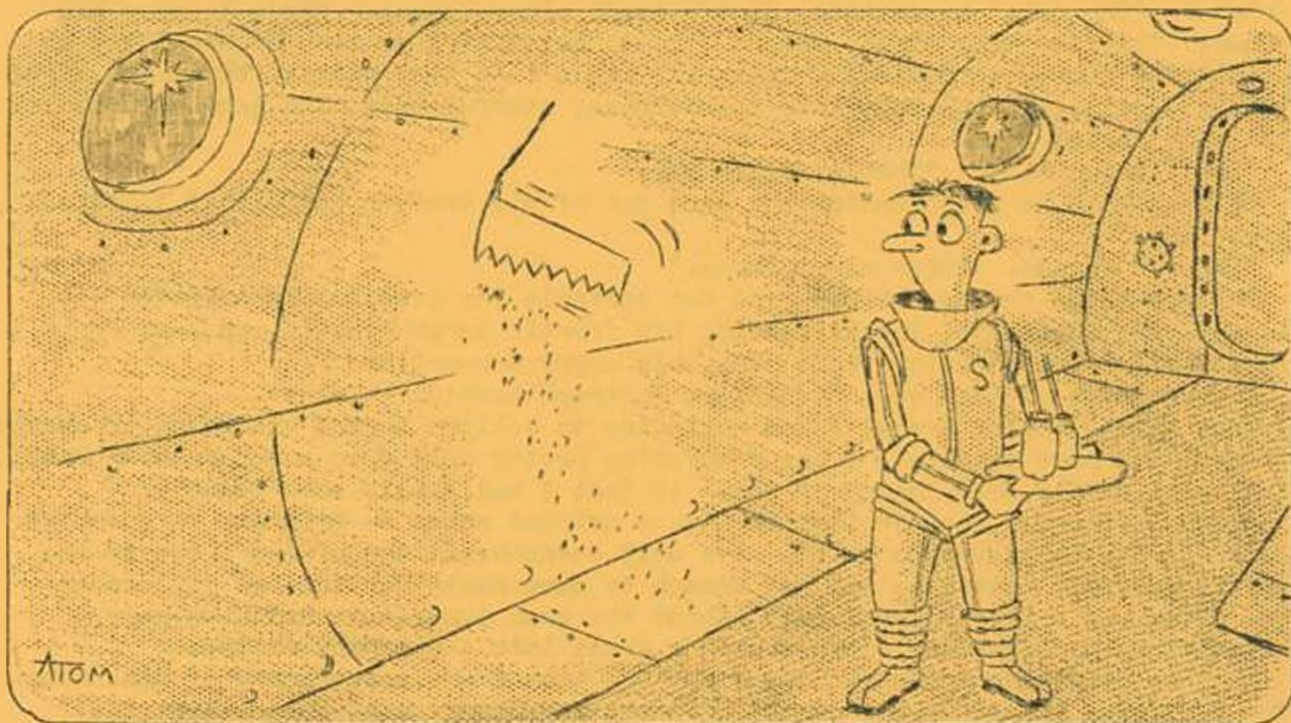
Next day things were fairly quiet. I kept out of Johnny's way and managed to reach bedtime without losing any more cash. On Monday morning the stamp-collecting fiend descended on me. "I've discovered a great shop," he told me. "Come on down and see the stamps." I went and looked them over, said they were very nice and that I was sorry I couldn't buy any as it would leave me broke.

The friend told me reproachfully that he was going to spend all his money on them, and that a real collector was prepared to give his all to the cause. I felt ashamed. Here was I trying to conserve a few miserable shillings when the fiend and I could be sharing our hobby, talking, going for long walks during which we could monkey about with our stamps and in general act like a couple of Gibbons.

I spent all my remaining cash with the exception of two shillings which I felt might see me through any emergency which should crop up. It cropped up about ten minutes later. When we left the shop the fiend said, "I think I'll go and buy some presents and stuff to take home, then I'll have a feed."

"But you spent all your money on stamps," I reminded him.

"That was all my stamp money. I still have my holiday money." He set off briskly in the direction of Woolworths.



I tottered after him, tugging his sleeve. "Wait a minute," I pleaded. "Are we not going to go long walks talking about stamps an' albums an' postmarks an' triang...."

"Are you mad?" he said, shaking my grip off. "I can talk stamps any time. Right now I'm on holiday." He quickened his pace and left me standing in the street wondering who it was up there didn't like me. I went back to the digs and sat on the front step trying to budget for the next six days with 24 pennies. Finally I got an idea.

I went and found Knox. "Knoxy," I said, "How about going up the town and buying a fishing line and hooks? Then we can have fun all week and it won't cost anything."

Knoxy's long gloomy face reflected the mental turmoil my proposal had engendered inside his untidy head. He didn't like fishing, but he liked it better than spending money, -- and, after all, fishing would not be too bad with company.

We bought the lines, took them back to the boarding house and met the bunch on their way to the beach for a pre-lunch swim. This was another good way to enjoy one's self... and free too. Knoxy and I grabbed our swim trunks and went along. We stayed in the water longer than anybody else -- it didn't cost anything.

When it came near lunch-time, Knoxy and I staggered out of the breakers onto the bright sand and went for our clothes. All the stuff had been piled in a promiscuous heap and it seemed reasonable to assume that when all the others removed their stuff ours would be left.

That was not exactly the way things worked out. Knoxy got dressed all right but when I looked for my nice new shoes there was only a pair of cracked gaping things which looked as though they had kicked stones all the way round Ireland ten or twenty years before.

"Knoxy," I said, "somebody has stolen my good shoes."

Knoxy was enraged at the treatment which some unknown had meted out to his new friend. "The rat," he gritted. "Let's teach him a lesson. Let's destroy his shoes. That'll teach him." Before I could begin a refutation of his logic he seized the shoes, methodically broke the laces into tiny pieces, threw the shoes into a puddle, tramped them into the wetness, stuffed them with sand and pebbles and then buried them.

"Yow!" Knoxy said. "That'll teach him!"

It was while he was brushing the sand out of his trouser cuffs that I noticed something.

"Knoxy," I said. "Give me my shoes."

The events of the next minute are not suitable for detailed description --- Knoxy's realization of the situation, his frantic scrabbling in the sand for his shoes, his reluctance to return mine, his angry accusations....

I spent most of that week fishing in Portrush harbour -- alone.

When Friday rolled around I was beginning to believe that I was going to escape without any more trouble. I was recovering pretty well from a sun-roasted back and I had hardly seen Johnny at all. In fact I had hardly seen anybody.

Friday afternoon they decided to have a cricket match -- Officers versus boys. I was forced to play because the boys only outnumbered the officers two to one and it was felt that this was not enough to compensate for the age difference. The pitch was a fairly level spot behind the sand dunes. It had been made treacherous by trampling down the long grass into a slippery flatness.

On this pitch the Officers bowled out the boys for a total score of nine runs. The boys then dismissed six of the officers for seven runs, which meant that

Johnny was left to save the day for them. All through the game Johnny had been

prowling about disgustedly, sometimes lying on his back pretending to sleep, sometimes whistling at passing girls to show us that he was a worldly man encumbered by his duties to us children, sometimes taking the ball and bowling an over at blinding speed by which means he so much terrified four of the more timid boys that they fell backwards into their wickets.

When the Captain, whose name was Sammy, informed him that he was "in" and that three runs were needed, he surveyed the field reluctantly then saw that I was holding the ball. He seized his bat and shouted: "Okay, Shaw, --Bowl!"

The other members of my team gave an immediate cheer, sensing something good was coming up. "Go ahead, Bob," they shouted. "Bowl him out." From the tone of their voices they obviously considered this an impossibility.

So did I.

Johnny made a great show of obtaining centre, marking his crease, examining the fielding layout, squaring his bat. At every exaggerated movement the boys laughed uproariously -- it would be worth losing the match to see me getting pasted.

I ran down to bowl amid a sudden, pregnant silence. The ball, going at a good speed, landed three-quarter way down the pitch, sped up from the slippery grass and hit Johnny, who had been attempting a cut to leg, squarely on the chest. It made a peculiar booming sound and dropped at his feet.

Johnny clutched his chest and glared up the pitch at me with naked hatred in his eyes. "Shaw," he snarled, "Get a grip on yourself."

I retrieved the ball, ran down to deliver it and was just about to let go when I saw McCreedy. The sight of Johnny being thumped on the chest had brought on another of his attacks. He was staggering about at mid-on, limbs twitching grotesquely, eyes rolling, mouth working, face contused. The breath whooshed out of me in one gasp and I shambled to a halt, absolutely incapable of delivering the ball.

Johnny pointed one meaty finger at me and shouted, "Shaw! Stop laughing."

This reduced me to the point where I began seriously to feel that I might die of strangulation. I tried to stop. McCreedy was doing the same. I could see



the panic-stricken look in his eyes as he felt himself go more and more out of control.

Johnny ran down the pitch and seized my shoulder. "This is your last chance, Shaw," he gritted. "Stop it." I dangled on him, sobbing from deep down in my chest. McCreedy was down on his hands and knees, dribbling.

"All right, Shaw," Johnny said, "you've had your chance." He strode away from me and the game broke up in utter confusion.

I saw Johnny once more that day. I was walking through the dunes alone after supper when I heard a sound on the other side of one of the hillocks of sand. Hoping that it might be somebody I knew, I went up the hill and peered down the other side. I found myself looking straight into Johnny's face!

He was lying in the grass with a dark-haired girl of about nineteen. Johnny and I gazed at each other in petrified silence, both of us unable to take in what we were seeing. After a few seconds my legs regained strength and I sprinted away through the gathering twilight, bleating with panic.

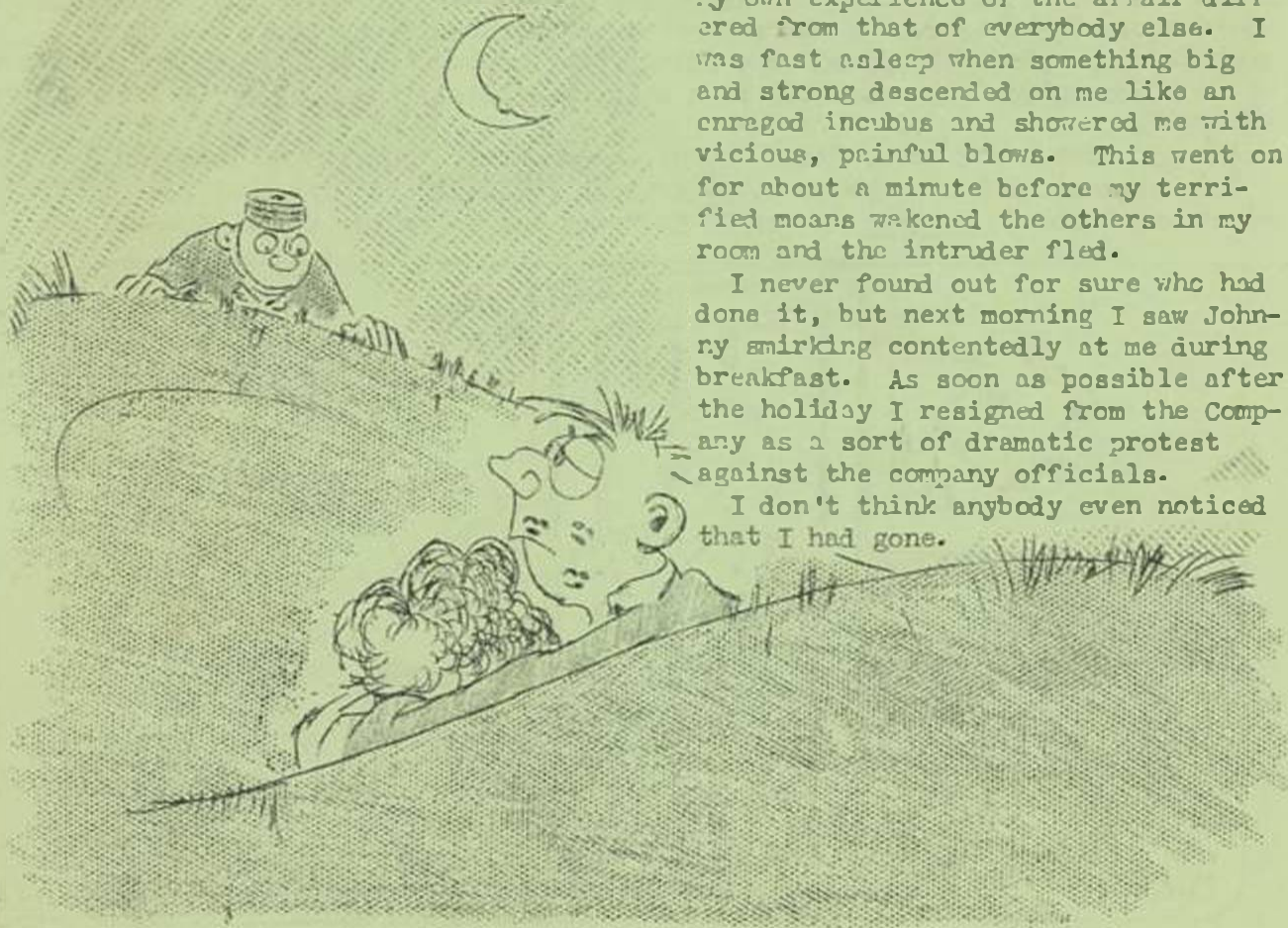
The look of incredulous rage on Johnny's face haunted me until I want to sleep. That night some of the lighter sleepers in the Company were aware of a mild disturbance in the small hours of the morning.

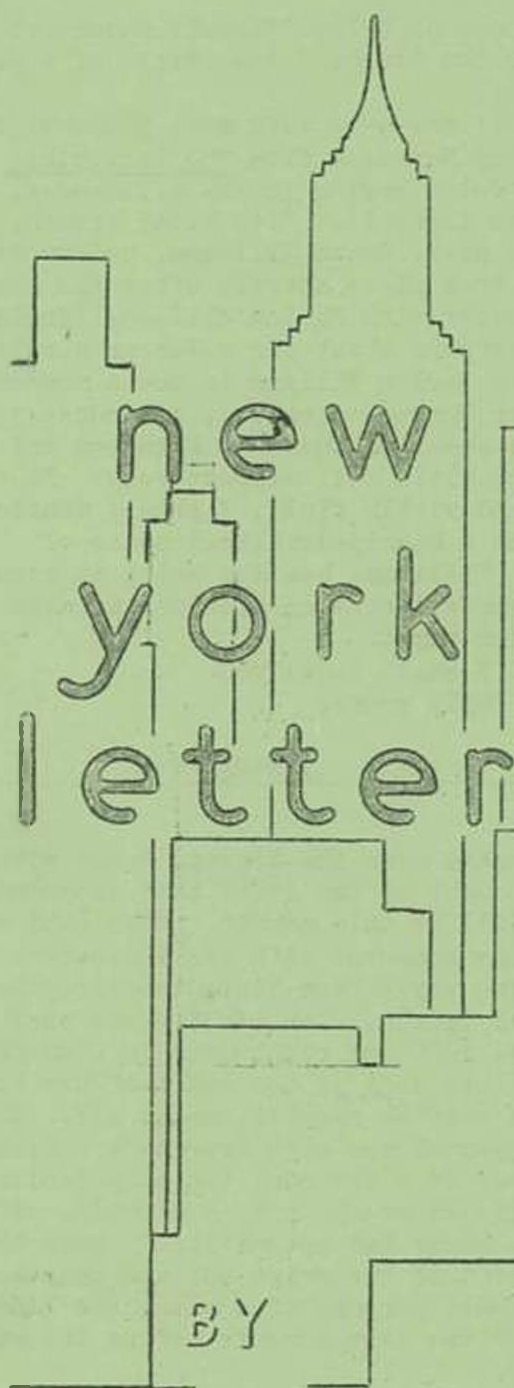
When morning came most of the boys found themselves liberally daubed with shoe polish. Enquiries revealed that the Captain and a couple of senior officers had got up during the night to play a prank on the juniors by decorating them with "Cherry Blossom" boot polish.

My own experience of the affair differed from that of everybody else. I was fast asleep when something big and strong descended on me like an enraged incubus and showered me with vicious, painful blows. This went on for about a minute before my terrified moans wakened the others in my room and the intruder fled.

I never found out for sure who had done it, but next morning I saw Johnny smirking contentedly at me during breakfast. As soon as possible after the holiday I resigned from the Company as a sort of dramatic protest against the company officials.

I don't think anybody even noticed that I had gone.





ERMENGARDE
FISKE

I FIND IT rather difficult to write about science-fiction matters, since I do not as a rule associate with the world of science-fiction. The reason for this exclusiveness on my part is not that I am finer than the other science fictioneers; at least, I don't consider myself so, despite the fact that so many intelligent and perceptive and altogether wonderful people feel that way. It is just that I never seem to be quite comfortable at science-fiction gatherings, largely, I suppose, because it is somewhat unnerving to find myself one of the few humans among a preponderance of aliens. As a result, I seldom attend their little convocations, which is why I am not au courant with science-fiction affairs ----- at least, not with the printable ones; somehow, despite being out of touch, I always get to hear about the others.

I did attend my first -- and last -- science-fiction convention here in New York last fall, and I had such a thoroughly awful time that I won't even be polite about it. In the first place, it seems to me that the convention committee, who knew full well that the convention was going to take place during one of our jungle summers, showed excessive sadism in going to such pains to rent the only un-air-conditioned floor of a large hotel (which, by the bye, I happen to have hated from time immemorial). A little sadism is a healthy and expected thing in science-fiction; however, when it is carried to such an extent as to endanger the well-being and temper of female writers, it is overstepping the boundaries of tasteful psychosis.

As for the rest of the convention, I found it so discouraging that I finally wandered off to a record shop, bought a large quantity of Oriental disks, at a fantastic (ally low) price (it is not true that I was paid to remove them from the store), and went home and sulkily played them until I was lynched

* Present company included. I may be tactless, but not to a fault.

(not everyone can appreciate the delicate nuances of Belog "Kinanti madumurti"). So much for the convention, which, to tell you the truth, I saw little of - just enough to make me shun conventions in the future.

I had one other recent science-fiction experience -- a much more pleasant one, I must add. I attended a preview of the Richard Matheson film The Incredible Shrinking Man, and, though I know I am a lone voice crying in the wilderness, I enjoyed it -- all except for the end, which was terrible. With bated breath, I followed each hair-raising adventure which the star, Grant Williams, underwent, culminating in the most awesome of all, which took place shortly after the conclusion of the film -- his death-defying encounter with Harlan Ellison. (Incidentally, those European readers who have been worrying about our value as a military ally will be vastly gratified to learn that Harlan Ellison is now a member of the United States Armed Forces. I mean Western European readers, of course.) Anyhow, I thought The Shrinking Man was a good show and that Mr. Matheson and Mr. Williams did a fine job with the script and the title roll respectively. To introduce a feminine note into this stalwart and virile field, I should mention to lady readers, as well as to those males with a highly-developed sense of aesthetic appreciation, that the aforesaid Mr. Williams, besides being an excellent actor and a holder of his own against organised science-fiction, is also a real knock-out, and well worth seeing in his own right.

And, on this beautifully inspirational note, I shall leave you.

Soulfully yours,

Ermenegarde.

THE APPRENTICE

By
Ron Buckmaster

He hunched over the levers, tense with the thought of the lives that depended on his skill at this moment. Now! said the clicking computer with its indicators blinking coyly from the automatic pilot.

No! another five seconds. At last his trained instinct let his fingers curl around the jet levers, cutting port, starboard, left and right jets in a smooth sweep. He caught sight of a saucer landing on his left at the limit of his field of vision; these Warts, no respect for Earth traffic regulations at all. Why! if the liner captains like himself were not seasoned men with iron-hard nerves a trick like that could spoil the delicate balance of a thousand ton ship landing in an instant, and change its coughing flame-tipped grandeur to a shambles of tortured men and metal. With that thought his hands had automatically gone to the steam landing jet controls, a practised twirl of the wrist and the ship was enveloped in superheated steam, serving the double purpose of cooling the liners of the jets and providing a gentle upthrust for the last moments before the ship surrendered again to Earth's pervasive gravity.

His body and mind let go in a moment of liquid relaxation, tensing again at the self-aggrandisement of a vagrant thought, he beat it down hastily; he must not get into the odious habit. Lately he had been far too fond of pursuing his mental lips and giving the verdict: "Yes captain, a magnificent landing. Not many of our men would have been so cool in the face of that exhibition by the Martian."

"Look, laddy, I asked for expresso coffee five minutes ago. If you don't give it to me right away I shall call the manager."

The fools, he thought. Little do they know who it is who serves them so meekly. One day I shall show them.

THE HISTORY

OF

IRISH FANDOM

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 3

BY JAMES WHITE

Walter 'Himself' has expressed a wish that the ensuing chapters of "The History" be given a different treatment to that of Chapters 1 and 2. Himself states that in the sections contributed by Madeleine and George the frame of reference of the work has been exceeded in that the few events mentioned have been completely

swamped in a mass of extraneous autobiographical detail (I'll tell you what it means later, John). In the Charter's contribution, for instance, we learn in the space of three thousand words or so the fact that GATC did not as a youth suffer from any fatal diseases and lived to a ripe old age without suffering even from Old Age, a malady from which he still does not suffer. After this long and -- clinically -- interesting introduction comes the meat of the article, the statement that he met the members of Irish Fandom and that the next chapter would be written by Madeleine. Madeleine also spent some time swinging from her family tree before coming suddenly down to earth. After a five-year whirlwind romance she was married to Walter Alexander Himself, otherwise known as Willis, and this ends her introduction to Chapter 2. The chapter itself is such a model of brief succinct reporting that I will repeat it here in toto:-

"Chapter 2. IT WAS ON THE 25th AUGUST 1947, that the first meeting took place between the Willis's and another science fiction fan. The stranger's name was James White."

This is where I came in.....

Chapter III

When I first met, and almost immediately began regularly visiting, the Willis's in late 1947 I felt sure that they must have thought about me with somewhat mixed emotions. On the credit side was my extreme height and interest in s-f, the fact that our political views were more or less in accord, and that religion-wise we couldn't be farther apart. However, there was a peculiar twist in my personality which tended to outweigh all these good points. At a time when it was not yet fashionable to be a little crazy mixed-up, I was just a wee bit queer.

Consider, please, the sort of person I was at that time.

At the age of nineteen, and having contracted an incurable but quite harmless disease some months previously, I was inclined to view the world with a somewhat jaundiced eye. (The disease was diabetes, not jaundice.) I was inclined to scream shrilly and froth at the mouth if anyone came within a yard of my teacup with a sugar-bowl. With easy tolerance the Willis's smiled at this little idiosyncrasy of mine, but they could not, however hard they tried, conceal their shock and horror at my continued and slighting reference to food as being merely fuel --- being on a strict sugar-free diet had soured me, you understand. As a result of this they tended to regard me as something of a pervert. There would be awkward silences when the tea-tray arrived, and frantic talking about Courtney and his boat or rain on Venus, or some such. Finally, Madeleine could stand it no longer; she initiated curative therapy.

You will know of Madeleine's cooking even if you haven't experienced it firsthand. It is pernicious, indescribable and intensely habit-forming. People who have been exposed to it for any length of time, such as Harris and the Bulmer's, are forced to return for more again and again. There's a ginger-bread monkey riding their backs, with Coffee Kisses for eyes and a brain made of steaming colcannon. They're addicts, all of them, you can tell by the way they slurp and dribble at the chin, and the way they make it so difficult to tell the clean from the dirty dishes after they finish eating. But I'm digressing.

Understated simply, Madeleine began experimenting with sugarless pastry. Shortly afterwards I found that I was smiling when I referred to food being just fuel --- both with my mouth and my purty brown eyes. A little later I was calling food food outright and the cure was complete. My wife Peggy, who is famed throughout Irish Fandom for her way with sausage rolls among other things, is in daily attendance nowadays to see that the patient does not suffer a relapse.

But it was not only as a psychologist-cook that Madeleine proved invaluable in the early days. Many a time and oft, as Walter and I set type for SLANT --- a job which required deep concentration and no chit-chat between us for hours at a time --- Madeleine would be downstairs nursing the then baby Carol with one hand and acting as an unpaid but proficient disc-jockey with the other. The music was relayed to us in the fan room, and no matter what records she chose to play, they were always frequently interspersed with Doris Day numbers. I was very fond of Doris Day at the time ---- extremely fond, even to the extent of buying seven of her records without having a gramophone to play them on ---- despite having discovered that her real name was Kappelhoff. I'm pretty cosmopolitan, I guess.

- Later, when she married her agent without telling me, I was terribly, terribly hurt and my composing speed suffered for several weeks.

It's hard to remember for certain just when George Charters arrived among us: he was the original Quiet Man. He would come up from Bangor on Sunday afternoons and say "Hello" and "Goodbye." In between he would spend three or four hours browsing among Walter's magazines or silently watching us set type. He never helped us nor did he speak much in those early days, but later, when he came up three times instead of once a week, he began doing odd stencilling jobs and became more loquacious. We were exposed to the first Charter's-type pun. We wished for the silent, unhelpful days again.

Ten years is a long time, and it is hard to recall incidents in their chronological order. Walter hopes to do a definitive history which will treat the trends and influences over the years as well as our own peculiar reactions to them --- if enough people twist his arm, that is. But the things that come to my mind seem relatively unimportant: like the Willis's Bem, for instance.

Bem was a big, lazy and very friendly cat which haunted the Oblique House fan-

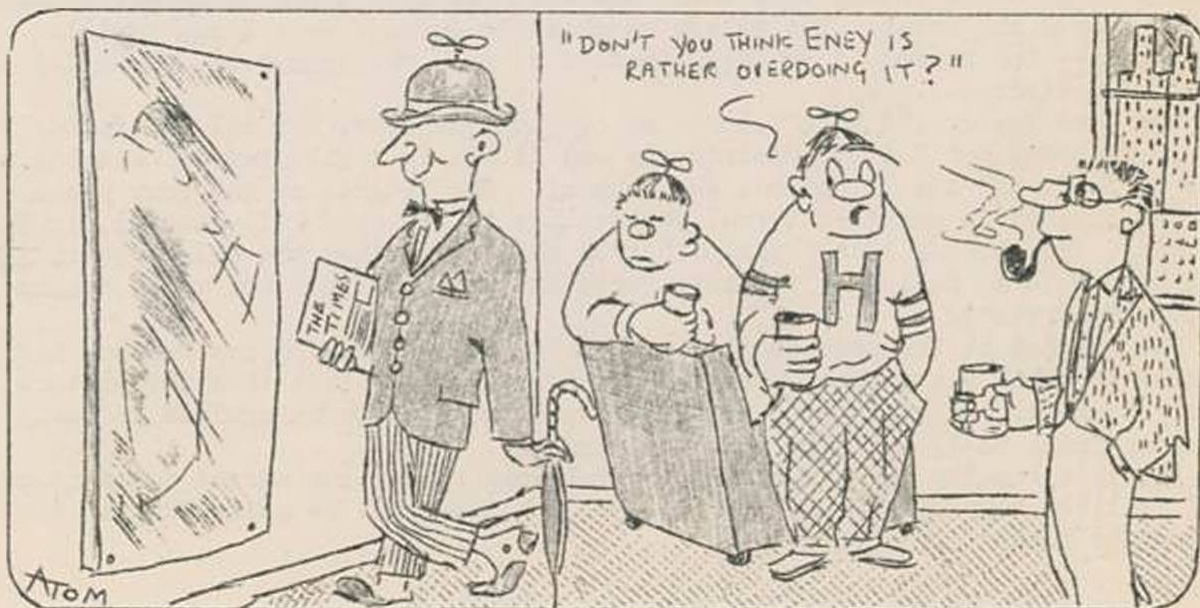
room, and we were childishly pleased at being able to tell visitors that we had a copy-cat instead of a copy-boy. Then he was run over we all felt very bad about it, and it wasn't until some years later that Walter took to himself another. This one was, and is, called Lucifer. He is a mean, black, quarrelsome creature with permanently shredded ears who treats us all like dirt. Lucifer won't even slip-sheet.

Then there was the time Lyell Crane visited us and found Walter and I designing a bridge with Carol's plastic building blocks. Lyell Crane was a real, honest-to-goodness engineer but, we suspected, not a true fan. Instead of joining in and contributing a little valuable know-how, he insisted on talking about politics, dianetics and Lyell Crane.

And then there was the incident of the Douglas Woman, a nice but rather gushing widow who wrote "whimsical tales about leprechauns and the Wee Folk, most of them too good to be published." One night, in a twitting mood, Mrs Douglas mentioned matrimony to George. George's face still shows blench marks around the edges. Nobody mentions matrimony to George any more.

There were not many visitors to Oblique House in the early days. Forry Ackerman was perhaps the most important, but there was Evelyn Smith -- a contributor to SLANT and later an editor of GALAXY -- remembered chiefly for being accused of being a Russian Spy in the London Underground, and Clive Jackson, our first columnist, who should have been a really good professional writer, but isn't. Later, of course, there was Ben Mahaffey, whose visit has been treated at length in "..." No 4, and Chuch Harris, and the Bulmer's. Then there was Chuch Harris and the Bulmer's. And the Bulmer's and Harris.....well, as I said earlier, they're addicts.

The arrival of Bob Shaw marked the beginning of the True-fannish period that has stayed until the present day. A relatively small man --- 5' 11½" --- Bob possessed a dehydrated but very pure and exacting sense of humour and an intense appreciation of food in all its forms. Bob's mind fitted the fan-room like his stomach fitted Madeleine's cooking, and all of a sudden we found that we were not doing so much work on SLANT but were enjoying ourselves just talking. The talking moved out onto the lawn in the summer and was interspersed with pitched water pistol battles or sharp-shooting against butterflies and bees.



Gradually SLANT went from irregular to sporadic and HYPHEN replaced it in order that we could spend more time on these fannish pursuits. We were so busy enjoying ourselves that HYHEN began to go sporadic too.

Events culminated in Walter being big-pounded. On his return, after having written and travelled himself to a frazzle, Walter took a ten week rest using pneumonia as his excuse. George, Bob and myself continued to talk, throw paper aeroplanes and enjoy ourselves around Walter's Sick Bed -- it had caught pneumonia too -- while Himself lay propped up on pillows grinning feebly and groaning. The groans were for George's puns, not Bob's. Eventually he was driven from his sick bed and a few months later introduced Ghoodminton to get his own back. HYPHEN went from sporadic to infrequent.

Ghoodminton, like the art of the duello, is a game which demands cool, scientific appraisal of chances -- the back of your opponent's neck not quite within reach without climbing the table and the referee temporarily unsighted -- and complete co-ordination between eye, muscle, head, shoulder and boots. But with the arrival of the Berry Phenomenon on the scene, the game lost its delicacy. Berry, with his "Everybody on my side is expendable, even me" school of playing, dragged the noble art down to the level of simple, bloody massacre -- a level from which it has not risen to the present day.

I need not mention Berry's effect on Fandom, Irish or otherwise. I can't, on account of I don't use that sort of language.

At a time when the unspeakable harris was loudly reviling me as a filthy pro and sex-fiend, and Bob was cartooning me with a halo because I wouldn't, as Art Editor, allow nudes to supplant spaceships in our zine, I met a girl called Peggy Martin. Tired of hearing me talk about her and not believing that she could be that good, Walter ordered me to bring her along to the Oblique House Christmas party. She was nervous, shy and reluctant to come, because, like a fool, I'd told her something about the people she was going to meet before bringing her. Everybody was there, Madeleine, Walter, George, Bob and Sadie.... the lot. But things were working out fine, a great time was being had by all, until Walter announced that he had a present for me.

From Chuck Harris.

Immediately I screamed "NO!" I knew Harris, I knew that beastly little mind that sloshes about inside that large pointed head like a gob of primeval ooze, and I feared the worst. But Walter reached the present -- a large manilla envelope -- and passed it to Peggy instead of me. She opened it, she cried out, she had hysterics.....

For some reason she didn't throw me over on the spot, nor did her father horse-whip me, nor did I ignominiously end it all in a Milk Bar by ordering a cup of sweetened tea. Instead, she laughed. She laughed at the four pages of typing couched in pseudo-paternal phraseology to her by a well-meaning, double-meaning, treacherous lecher called harris which described the things which did not happen to me during my visit to Paris the previous year and which accompanied the present.

She laughed at the present too, -- a large, technicolored pose of one Marilyn Monroe to which was clipped a note apologising for the fact that the picture was retouched, but explaining that they were inclined to be prudish in the Charing Cross Road, not like in Montmartre.....

All that remains to be said is that for some reason she agreed to marry me and we lived happily ever after, and that Bob Shaw will be doing Chapter 4, though he doesn't know it yet.



BY

ROBERT BLOCH

THE EALING ART

I SUPPOSE THAT every one us, like the famous Irishman Aesop, has his little foibles.

Chuck Harris, for example is a sex-fiend; Walt Willis is a fiend; I am interested in old movies.

There was a time when I could take a snobbish sort of pride in the fact that I seemed to know considerably more about English cinema, for example, than many of my friends. I admit there were occasions when I delighted in pulling my J. Arthur Rank on them with references to Ernest Thesiger, Tom Walls, Jack Buchanan and others who cavorted across strips of British celluloid back in The Thirties.

Those were the poverty-stricken days of the Depression; for some time it was possible to give credence to the claim that the greasy, half-naked gentleman who struck a gong at the beginning of a J Arthur Rank Production was J. Arthur Rank himself. Over here in the States, we used to get English movies as the second feature in double-bills, but surprisingly few people seemed to stick around and see them.

As one of the few, it was my privilege to make the simultaneous acquaintance of Alfred Hitchcock and Peter Lorre way back in 1934 in THE GHOUL and THE MAN WHO COULD WORK MIRACLES: to see American actors such as Edward Everett Horton in such odd but enthralling efforts as THE MAN IN THE MIRROR: to admire Roland Young and Lillian Gish in BURIED ALIVE, and to familiarize myself with the work of such teams as Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne.

As late as 1951 I could enjoy an occasional evening with an expatriate like the Milwaukee television director Ivor McLaren, -- who had worked in films and musical comedy for years in England, -- cutting up old bits about Cicely Courtneige, Wilfred Hyde-White, Olive Sloane and a host of others; much to his amazement and to the bafflement of the Yankees.

But these days, alas, are gone forever. Television has reared its ugly tube. Today the American TV viewer is inundated with imports. In our particular area I venture to say we receive as many British films as local products, and Naunton Wayne has become almost as familiar as John.

Google Withers, Dennis Price, John Mills, Aubrey Mather, Sonia Dresdel, Derek Farr -- we get them all. And of course Guinness and Hitchcock and Sir Cedric Hardnose are household names in America today.

So my day of glory as an expert in obscurantism is long-since past. I shall be forced to study up on Kabuchi dancers or Grand Guignol performers of the Twenties if I want to maintain my status as a wisenheimer or wide boy of the Beaux Arts.



But it is interesting to see this cavalcade of British cinema rushing past on millions of television screens over here -- particularly if one holds to the belief (as I do) that the movies of a nation unconsciously reflect a good deal of its mores and attitudes.

The subtle differences in characterization, for example, afford clues which emphasize the difference in British and American temperament.

English heroes, for instance, are usually much less self-consciously attitudinizing than American ones. Outside of farce comedies such as the Bob Hope films, American movies seldom permit the presence of a hero who

declares himself to be afraid of anything. Once in a great while we get a cautious hero (such as Gary Cooper in *HIGH NOON*) and this switch seems to greatly impress and almost shock our audiences. Whereas English films are full of unwilling heroes. The British scientists of *SCHOOL FOR SECRETS*, for example, would never be permitted on our screens unless shown in terms of broad comedy. Come to think of it, Ralph Richardson would never be cast in anything vaguely resembling the semi-heroic role he played here, to say nothing of being handed outright leads such as his *MURDER ON MONDAY* or *THE FALLEN IDOL*. He's much too old.

Yes, we have plenty of ageing heroes ourselves (Cooper, Gable, Grant, Cotten, Stewart) but they make every attempt to appear youthful and athletic and sexy as all get-out. Once in a while some of them, notably Stewart and Cooper, are even allowed to get just a wee bit tired -- but show them a villain with a gun or a knife or a girl with an oversized bust, and at once they rise to the challenge.

The sex-situation, by the way, offers striking contrasts. British films, generally speaking, are both more forthright and more matter-of-fact about sex-relationships. Dinah Sheridan, in *GENEVIEVE*, sprawls on the bed and tells her husband, "Make love to me." In an American film she would leer, wriggle, cling, partially disrobe -- but keep her mouth shut. We are often visually explicit, but seldom verbally direct.

As to the matter-of-fact part: in British films a happy marital or pre-marital or extra-marital relationship is subtly implied by a mere showing of a harmonious relationship between the couples in question. There is seldom any overt display of affection. In American films the formula is different; there must be constant nuzzlings and clinches to "get across" the idea that Daddy and Mama are still That Way About Each Other even if they have kiddies, or that young Miss Masochist still gets a wallop out of young Mr. Sadist.

The first time I heard the word "hell" used in its common profane connotation on the screen was in *TWENTY THOUSAND HORSEMEN*: since that time I've noted that "hell" and "damn" are common expressions in English offerings -- but it has only

been in the past two years that one finds such language in American movies. Even so recent a picture as THE BLACKBOARD JUNGLE evoked a gasp from a typical audience when a knife-wielding juvenile delinquent told his teacher to "go to hell." Get that, *not*: nobody was shocked because the kid pulled a knife on his teacher. What shocked them was the fact that he came right out and said a nasty word on the screen. Bloody strange, what?

In terms of plot and treatment, differences are so great that they have been... generally noted by critics. Few American producing units would essay a BLACK LACE or a ROCKING-HORSE WINNER: few would tackle a film like THE THIRD MAN and risk an ending where Joseph Cotten and Valli forego a clinch. The impudent and inspired conclusion of THE CAPTAIN'S PARADISE might or might not get by -- certainly we'd never permit the implication that the Captain was not legally (although bigamously) united with Yvonne de Carlo unless he Paid The Penalty.

It has often been said that British films are more "talky" than American; that they are more "episodic"; that they have a slower pace.

If so, I regard these circumstances as blessings in that the very plethora of dialogue and wealth of casual asides and incidents affords we viewers over here with a partial insight into seemingly realistic evidence of the national characteristics.

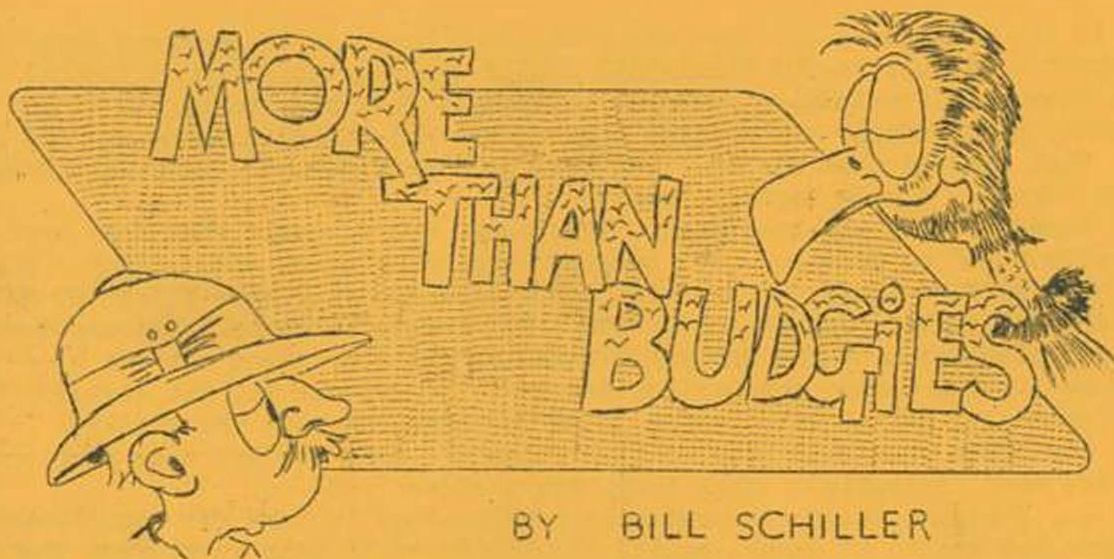
American minor and bit roles are usually assigned to "stock types": over and over again one sees the same clerks, flunkies, second-assistant hoodlums, yokels, western bar-room habitués, policemen, etc. Often the same people play the same roles in endless repetition. And almost always, they repeat the same dialogue. Lord pity the English if they attempt to learn anything about American attitudes and ways from the few pitiful stereotypes generally handed out in our films! I have the feeling there's far more naturalism, far more realism, afforded in the average British cinema effort.

Of course I have yet to run into a counterpart of a John Berry or a George Charters in an English movie -- but I suppose you have your censorship to consider over there, too.

Meanwhile, rest assured that motion pictures, in their own way, serve to cement the bonds of American and British fandom. Any day now I look forward to seeing Robert Morley and Cecil Parker indulging in a rousing session of Ghoddminton while, in the background, Dame Blith Evans whips up a spot of tea.

THE
END





ONCE UPON A TIME it seems this hunter was on safari in Africa and the natives warn him, whatever you do, don't ever shoot one of those birds over there (points) because that's a foo-bird and don't never shoot one of them, nossir. "Why?" Because the foo-bird uses its last dying breath to give a distinctive scream and this summons every foo-bird in fifteen miles and they all come and circle around over you and besmirch you with their droppings and this wouldn't be so bad, altho the smell is abominable, but if you try to wash it off the chemicals in it combine with the water and form an extremely corrosive acid and your skin sloughs off just like the skinny stuff on top of scalded milk, yessir."

So the hunter hunted and he hunted but no luck at all and everywhere he goes these infernal little foo-birds follow, hissing and screaming and making a noise like great derisive laughter and finally he can stand it no longer and in a red red rage he whirls and blasts one to bits with one charge from his elephant-gun but the bird manages to give one little but unforgettable cry as it falls and sure enough, in no time at all the air is BLACK with foo-birds all whirling and dipping and dive-bombing the daylights out of the poor fool with this incredibly gooey, sticky horrible excreta of theirs and he wishes he hadn'ta' done it. Ghod, how he wishes.

And he figures maybe if the native legend was right about what happens when you shoot a foo-bird, they're most likely right about what happens when you go to wash it off too so he's very careful to avoid water as the plague but it's no good trying to rub the stuff off with bunches of dried grass and it sticks and spreads and surmounts and smells and smells and smells, worse each day by far than the day before.

So, after maybe about a week or so he says Hell, he says, I can't stand this a second longer. I'll take just the quickest sort of a dip to see what happens and maybe get just a little relief but I'll be out before anything can start happening. So he wades into the river and makes a couple of hasty splashes at his arms and shoulders where it's worst and starts for the bank but it's too late. There, before the horrified eyes of his porters and gun-bearers and everybody the water reacted with the foo-bird droppings with a hiss and curls of whitish smoke and his skin blistered, went soft and ran off him like paint under a blowtorch only worse and as he staggered for the bank he gave a cry of unbearable pain and died, ---- proving the moral of the story, which is, If the Foo shits, wear it.

GOOD BIT!

RANDOM

BY

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S A

ANTHONY BOUCHER IS A VERY BRILLIANT MAN, and one who perceives that there are finer things in life even than science fiction. In the latest RSF he draws our attention to a phenomenon which nobody seems to have remarked on before—the high standard of looks of the girls in sf. It is true, of course—and thank you for pointing it out—that I did myself once make casual mention of the number of pretty girls at Conventions, but then, as Madeline would tell you, my observations in those matters are not always reliable. I just do not notice plain girls: they fail to impinge on my retina. For all I know I run them down in dozens every time I drive a car. I may have been right about the high standard of female beauty at Conventions, but it has taken the keen analytical mind of Tony Boucher to elevate such casual observations to the status of a General Law, the implications of which are pretty staggering. Science Fiction Girls are Beautiful!

If you haven't seen as many of them as I have, you may be inclined to shrug off the phenomenon as mere coincidence, a slight statistical anomaly. But if you've studied the figures (not to mention the faces) as I have, you'd know it was more than that. I have been a keen girl-watcher, dirty old man and boy, for something like 20 years, and my researches show that the incidence of pretty girls in any random sampling, such as a bus queue, is seldom more than 15%. It rises higher in some places, like Leicester with its preponderance of light industries and like Wallace, and Belfast where most of the plain girls have probably been run over by now, but the overall world score is about 15%. (Among the under-forties that is, I'm overlooking the near-misses.) Now, rest your eyes on the women in science fiction. ~~Amazing~~ Offhand, can you see even one plain girl in either British or American fandom? Most of them are at least pretty and many of them are absolutely beautiful. An incidence of virtually 100% is unheard of outside Hollywood. Without in any way looking this gift horse in the mouth, it behoves us enquiring scientific minds to seek an explanation for this extraordinary state of affairs.

Can it be that there is something about science fiction that attracts all that is beautiful in humanity, in the same way it has attracted all that is fine and noble and intelligent, namely us male fans? Alas, a brief mental review of the faces of the male fans sends this theory screaming into oblivion.

Can it be that us male fans exercise some strange telekinetic or hypnotic faculty which draws into our orbit beautiful things and repels all that is ugly and sordid? Alas no, because if this were so, how to explain the continued presence among us of the three Blots on British

Random, known to all conventioners; they should by now be catching up the outer nebulae.

"Eccles, do you know this uniform attracts women like flies?"

Can it be, then, that these high class females are attracted to us male fans because we represent the hope of the race, homo superior, adapted to survive in the super-scientific world of tomorrow? Alas, it must be admitted that male fans, fine and noble and intelligent though they are, do not make altogether satisfactory husbands. They are unworldly, and have a habit of spilling duplicating ink on the carpet.



No, we are momentarily baffled. We must look for more data. We might ask ourselves, for instance, what other properties do these mysteriously beautiful female fans have in common? Ah! Eureka! (For the benefit of you uncultured fans, that is a Greek word meaning "I have just got out of the bath and am running about with no clothes on".) They have two outstanding properties which leap to the eye. (No, not those, you utter Potaler.) First, they are intelligent. It is just as hard to think of a stupid girl fan as an ugly one. There are no feminine fugg-heads. The second is a little more difficult to express with proper delicacy, but to be frank, the dear creatures are egocentric. With a few shining exceptions like Ethel Lindsay (who is a nurse and therefore a superior kind of girl to start with) and two others (I'm no fool) the sweet things are complete intellectual egotists. Their charm and beauty tend

to make us male fans, who are not only fine and noble etc but gallant and chivalrous and susceptible, blind to this facet of their beautiful natures, but just cast your mind back over all the letter sections you've ever read. How many detailed constructive Boggs-type letters of comment have you seen from female fans? You can count them on your thumbs. It's not that they haven't the energy or ability, because female fans have contributed far more than their proportionate share of good editing and writing to fandom: it's just that they haven't got the inclination to make the necessary effort. And since everyone likes pretty girls (with the possible exception of other girls) nobody ever gets annoyed with them as they would with male fans who behaved the same way.

So now we have it that science fiction girls are beautiful, intelligent and egocentric. I can hear you muttering to yourselves that I've made a right dedupe of this investigation—now we've just got three mysteries instead of one. Ah, but you've forgotten Anthony Boucher. Good Old Tony not only poses the problem in his little magazine, but supplies a clue for its solution by printing a significant article by Isaac Asimov. Isaac (or, as I understand he likes to be called, Izac) points out that sf is the only field of popular culture in which intellect is respected, and instances the convention popularised by Hollywood that men don't like intelligent girls. I think we can take it from there. It is not true that men like stupid girls (the mere fact that a girl loves a particular man is in most cases taken by him as indisputable proof of her intelligence and discernment) but girls have been led to think they do, so they either hide their brains or try and find a place where they'll be appreciated. So, praise be, some have found their way into fandom. As for their being egocentric, that's partly just them working off their

frustration at not having had their intelligence appreciated by the male clods outside fandom, and partly their carrying over into fandom their own attitude to them. Pretty girls are, naturally, a bit vain and feel subconsciously that the world owes them a loving. They're so used to being flattered and not having to reciprocate that it seldom occurs to them to do it in fandom any more than to send their boy friend flowers and tell him his eyes are like limpid pools.



I can still hear some muttering from you slow readers back there on the last page that we're no nearer to finding why ~~of~~ girls are pretty. But we are, if one of my favourite theories is true. For thousands of years women have been jeering at us because we pick our women for their looks, whereas they look for strength and similar survival qualities. To hear them talk, you would wonder that the race hasn't died out centuries ago in ineptitude. Men are fools for a pretty face, they jibe. Our habit of falling for pretty girls and ignoring plain ones is gross injustice, they say. Plain girls, they claim, are just cozing with virtues like kindness and nobility and intelligence and everything, whereas all pretty girls (except of course the one telling you all this) are vain and stupid and cruel. Men, it's nonsense. They have been deceiving us, to sabotage the competition. The truth is that our masculine intuition has been right all along. **PRETTY GIRLS ARE BETTER THAN PLAIN GIRLS!**

The most striking piece of evidence on this I've come across recently was a photograph of the Countess of Rothes, heroine of the Titanic disaster. (See Lord's "A Night To Remember".) She must have been one of the most beautiful women who ever lived. But look at the girls at the top of the intellectual professions, like Jennifer Noyesmith, Rose Hailbron, Barbara Woolton, Francoise Sagen, etc. Smashers, every one. Or take the phenomenon of the Glamour Girl. The movie producers pick some pin-up for her looks alone, like Diana Dors or Marilyn Monroe, and she turns round and acts the professionals off the screen and marries Arthur Miller. Pretty girls tend to be intelligent and intelligent girls tend to be pretty. Of course, when you think about it, it's obvious why this should be so. It's partly because the light of intelligence is part of good looks and partly because smart girls know how to make the best of themselves. But mainly, I think, because pretty girls are better adjusted psychologically: they're happier and more agreeable because people are nice to them, and so they're nice to people. Whereas plain girls are unhappy and frustrated and have got disfiguring lines of bitterness on their faces...not to mention tyre marks.

So there you are, that's why ~~of~~ girls are so bright and pretty. If you don't believe it I can only suggest you press the Union of Fully Certified Sex Fiends (President Emeritus Chuck Harris), to collaborate with Anthony Boucher on a detailed field survey. Maybe Boucher could start a new review department for it in F&SF, reviewing women. It would be a sort of companion to his "Recommended Reading", but I leave it to his own good taste what he should actually call it.

CONVENTION VIGNETTE

"I wondered why all your women look like flies."

I'd like to thank very sincerely the several people who wrote and said they liked THE HARP STATESIDE and whom I haven't had time to answer yet. Bless you one and all. That includes Andy & Jean Young and Larry Stark, who had the bright idea of sending me a tape about it. Incidentally their impromptu conversation had a couple of remarks which I hate to consign to oblivion after I play the tape to Arthur Thomson when he comes over in June. (Chuck will be here too then, all of which reconciles me to missing the Eastercon at Kettering. And, by the way, thanks to the fans who sent me from there an envelope-full of bus tickets, cafe bills, menus, pieces of cork, and other autographed souvenirs. I now have as many tangible effects from the Con as anyone.) But back to the Young/Stark tape. Andy was explaining about an astronomical character called Henry Sawyer, who apparently lives in a house constructed entirely of doors. (Wonderfully enough, as Andy explained later, the only way to the top storey is by an outside ladder, through a window.)

Andy: He built his house out of doors.

Larry: Where the hell else would you build a house?

.....

Andy: I wish you wouldn't keep interrupting.

Larry: How was I to know you hadn't stopped talking?

Andy: I was still breathing, wasn't I?

About 100 copies of THS were bought before publication and another couple of dozen have been sold since. That leaves over a hundred still cluttering up the place here. ((Slipsheets, anybody?)) 2/- or 35¢ to me at 170 Upper N'ards Rd Belfast if anyone wants to help tidy up Oblique House. I've been doing a little of that myself, incidentally, and find that there seem to be spare copies of HYPHENS #6, #7, #10, #11#12. Also of WILLIS DISCOVERS AMERICA, the fanfiction serial of 1952. All 1/- or 15¢ each. Pardon this high pressure merchandising.

By the way, since there seems to be occasional confusion about this, I might say that as far as I know there's no bar on anyone sending American cash money into this country: all the Law says is that we must change it into sterling right-away so that the Government can spend it and we can't send any money out. So please don't send cheques (checks). ((As in Cheque Harris Esq?)) You have no idea of the consternation into which the Provincial Bank of Ireland is thrown by a cheque for 35¢ on the First Federal Bank of Oshkosh, Wis. ((And there is too a place called Oshkosh, Wis. DAG sent us a photo of a sign at the City Limits. So there.))

Franklin Dietz has sent out 2000 circulars about a proposed round trip New York --London for the Worldcon by chartered aircraft, leaving New York 30th August. Cost \$285. Americans known definitely to be coming include RORY FAULKNER and JUDY MERRILL. Advice to visiting Americans: bring warm clothes, a waterproof (for rain, not zapguns), cigarettes and a large purse/wallet. (British money takes up a lot of room for all it buys.) ((And, seriously, unless you are, er, fundamentally thick-skinned you might bring a toilet paper that you are accustomed to use. Visitors usually find our brands rather coarse)). Rory Faulkner will be seconding the bid for South Gate in '58 which Forry Ackerman hopes to be there to propose. The Little Men of San Francisco have unanimously decided to support the South Gate bid. Other West Coast activity includes a forthcoming anthology of the Rick Sneyry Letters. This fannish treasurehouse will be opened by Len Moffatt 5969 Lonto St., Bell Gardens, California.

Brian Varley is still not married.

POSTSCRIPTS



ROBERT BLOCH Of all the time to (Wisconsin) write, New Year's Day is the worst -- I do so only because I have strong doubts of lasting the day out and if I must go, it is fitting that I die as a true fan should; in the midst of a letter to Willis, pun in hand.

Even if I survive, I don't think I can face 195-whatever-it-is with any great expectations -- and that's the dickens of it.

Seems pretty much as if everything has already happened in '56. You know, of course, that Rog Phillips is married, but did you also know that Bea Mahaffey has taken the veil (bridal, that is)? A Christmas card inadvertently informed me of the fact, and when I heard the news I died a little. I can hold up under the realization that she is now a Mrs. Baird, but I doubt if I can endure the inevitable fannish comments about a Baird in the hand, etc., which I am sure will be forthcoming from some of the more insurgent elements. And just wait until Tucker actually becomes a grandfather in a few months! I am sure that people like Grennell and Harris are already sitting back and scheming up comments on that, too. Maybe Berry will investigate it: he investigates everything, it seems, like the cop he is at heart. Always charging about like a bull in a knocking-shop. ((Berry is no common 'bull' -- he is actually a defective constable...a sort of inconspicuous G-string man.))

Indeed, Walter, so much seems to have happened in the 4 short years since '52. And all of it a repudiation of your theory about fanzines being a substitute for sexual activity, or what we refer to as "sexac". Consider the record: in 4 years, Tucker has married, Hoffman has married, Rog Phillips and Mari Wolf both remarried, Mahaffey and her sister married, Mari-Louise Share likewise, Calkins ditto, Ellison Gestetner, also Gibson, Silverberg, Rotsler, Elsberry, and ever so many other people you met over here. And the spawnings: Yours, the Shaws, Dikty Ford, Skirvan, Matheson, Gunn, Marty Greenberg, Isaac Asimov, Ted Sturgeon, and a dozen more including the Youngs and the Grennells. I'd be inclined to take a different tack and say that fanning is an aphrodisiac. Now even Randy Garrett is engaged, and to John Campbell's step-daughter. Apparently everyone is tainted with lust due to the influence of fandom -- Rory Faulkner has just admitted to me that she is a sexegenarian.

No, the coming year can't possibly hold much new, and there are few surprises left in store for us veterans: I should not bat an eyelash if I learned that

Doc Smith had suddenly run off with G.M. Carr. ((Must have taken you years to train those eyelashes.....but supposing if, instead of Doc Smith, it was Bill Danner or Towner Himself, hrm?))

I wish I could say that I expected to make the London Convention (or at least a sizeable female portion thereof) this year, but it doesn't seem likely at this writing. Of course, there's always the offchance. Maybe I'll find uranium in the back yard. If there's none out there now, it's possible that the Russians may drop some for me. But barring such optimistic developments, I doubt if I'll be able to get over.

Needn't tell you how much I continue to enjoy HYPHE: I read it on two levelsfor pleasure, and also inferentially, to discover how life goes for you and the gang over there. I've been delighted to see Madeleine writing and to see evidences of social solidarity in the doings of the Belfasters. In this bloody age of political and racial strife, of pressure-groups and artificial alignments, it's comforting to know that a fortunate few of us have found a pattern of friendship based on more innocuous interests.

Such as the sexac I referred to above.

Of course that damned cover of Atom's on the current HYPHE has caused a lot of trouble: I spent three hours this morning trying to re-enact the scene with Marion's aid, and I found that you just can't possibly type in that position! Unless, of course, you're double-jointed.

....Here is an interesting quote from Sidney Coleman, Pres. of University of Chicago Science Fiction Society, which he gleaned from SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN: "An experimental nuclear reactor that combines the advantages of two radically different designs has been developed at Argonne National Laboratory. Its designers call it the slow-fast or half-fast reactor."

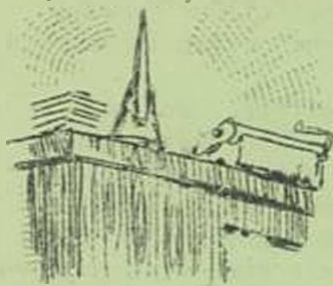
To which Sidney adds, "Well, I've known some 'half-fast' physicists in my time, but all the same..."

RICHARD FNEY Ghod, I'm dull this decade. This was the first time I'd noticed that HYPER'S logo featured letters made up entirely of hyphens. ((Don't worry, we've been doing it since the first issue and you are the first person to notice it, Hawkeye.))...Almost got thrown on that third page when Bob Shaw started telling how he broke his fast on tea, chocolate biscuits, ice cream, and a bag of potato chips....Larry Stark's return of Degler was rather better, I thought, than Eric Frank Russell's reception of the commemorative phallic symbol, and not because of stuff that I didn't understand either...Tickedness and folly is blasted! After cutting a page

from the Birch Bark Bible for TOTO, you get TWO Gestetners for a total of six pounds? (hm, times 2.8 = \$20.80...that IS good) What ghuguiled or foofooled (or Blochclutched) heretic can fail to perceive the truth once it is pointed out to them that the number of Gestetners involved was EXACTLY THE SAME AS THAT OF ROSCOE'S MIGHTY AND TERRIBLE FRONT TEETH?...

((No, all you religious crackpots are the same, -- you seize on any coincidence and present it as infallible proof of the Divine Touch. If you aren't careful you may finish up in alliance with the Rev Sorehead, trying to convert us all to Roscoe-Christianity. It was good about the 2 dupers though, -- and even better about the old ELIAMS machine that he had. He flogged that to a Methodist clergyman from the country for £7.... more than twice what he paid for it 4 years ago... and is now considering retiring from the Civil Service and going into the duper-dealing business.))

ERIC FRANK RUSSELL
(Cheshire)



E. Bentcliffe (a fan) has already written to inform me with indecent glee that HYPHEN'S tale of The Award has created a very large stink. I expected as much. I realised that the yarn tends to belittle the gift and that may annoy some fans -- though I could see no way of overcoming this difficulty except by holding tight and saying nothing at all, thus depriving a few of one or two laughs. Maybe you'll allow me to mention one or two things, thusly: The Award is treasured by me as much as if Eisenhower gave it to me at a meeting of Congress. The ludicrous circumstances of the presentation were nobody's fault except possibly my own. I couldn't very well invite the Bulmers to come here and hand it over ceremoniously when Ken had just made it plain that he and Pamela were feeling far from good and had only object in life, namely, to get home on the next train. Before writing the sorry tale I asked Ken's permission to call him a bastard and he sportingly gave it. Finally, the whole yarn is at my own expense. If anyone's made to look small, it's me. Eh? And I'm not complaining about it. ((You? Look small? Ghod, --and I'd always imagined you to be more trifflid than human being. Seriously, very few of Eric the Bent's informants have written to us with their stink. From the correspondence I have at hand, we had one outraged letter, two mild complaints, and a plea from a neobod who wants to know what the first word on page 28 was. With most of the readers it tied for first place in the last issue with Walt's piece about fandom being a substitute for S*x. Our spy Birchby mentions the trophy too.....))

SID BIRCHBY E.F. Russell's piece was amusing in a tonic sort of way. As a matter of fact, I can claim to have seen the trophy in question. It is, or was then, ensconced in a place of honour on the desk, so I guess that in spite of his disclaimers, he is pretty proud of it.



And with good reason. ((Yes. Only one thing remains to bother me.....we never did find out which was the story, beginning with "A" - but not "Allamagoosa" - for which the award was made. Does anybody know?))

PAUL ENEVER
(Middlesex)



Got HYPHEN. It's slipping terribly, you know; no book-reviews no amateur s-f, no fanzine comments or articles on astronomy; in fact nothing but a lot of words and pictures. And by the time I'd crossed out all the rude words in case my teenage cheeld saw them, it was mostly pictures.

Please do something about this. We want HYPHEN to be a Family Magazine, with something in it for everyone. You could start by using foolscap paper, which is just about big enough to wrap our chips in. ((personally, I always keep mine on my shoulder)) Octavo would do for the fish, of course; present day cod must be a mutated species judging by the microscopic cutlet a

shilling buys. Where was I?

Ah, yes: let's have something controversial, like Is Science Fiction Fandom What She Used To Be? I've tried this, and believe me, it never fails.

And for goodness sake cut out this reprint business. You know the trouble Tubb and Hamilton have been getting into over the very same thing, and even they would never have used a Blish short like that. It's too short.

(still more Enever.) Use the space you save to publish something by a neofan. There are thousands of them up and down the country, all chockfull of fannish genuis and denied any outlet for it. I dare say there are one or two in America too, although fandom over there is practically moribund.

That "To be continued next issue" isn't such a hot idea, either. For one thing we're never certain there's going to be a next issue. When even regular fanzines falter and fall backwards it ill behoves HYPHEN to start getting all anticipatorily cocky. For another, even if the next instalment is written in time for this hypothetical issue and the two happily coincide, the reader can't possibly pick up the threads without either a synopsis or reference to the previous issue.

And who the hell wants to wade through a hundred yards of mud to the potting shed just to get the last HYPHEN?

BOB TUCKER
(Illinois.)



Two or three glacial ages ago I corresponded with you --- wrote to you fairly frequently, as a matter of fact. But then I sort of slumped. Call it a slight touch of gafia, a recurring ailment that visits me every ten or twenty years. (I remember the awful attack in 1936 -- now that was a siege) But I am trying to make amends. I am sorry, do you hear? I am abasing myself all over the floor and down the stairs. My wife and the cat are disgusted with me.

A few days ago I had a nice arousing letter from Roberta Wild. She wanted to know if I expected to come over there this year. That's a mighty pregnant question, and I wish I knew the answer. Ghod knows (salaam!) I've touted London long enough, and voted for it half a dozen times on every balloting; I owe it to myself to drift over and find out what I was shouting about. To be blunt, I am faunching to go. But. Ah, there's that pregnant but. Currently, I am subject to a kind of disease called lack of money (and guess where I stole that?) It may be that the next few months will correct the matter; I have a number of ships drifting about in the horse latitudes, and anyone of them just might come in for me.

There is another small hitch: in the next two or three months I'm due to become a grandfather....but that ain't the hitch. During the summer, at about convention time, I'm supposed to become a father again. That is the hitch. ((Another one. Everyone wants to get in on the act, and we'll be knee-deep in neo-babies by the end of the year. Willis started the trend. Ghod, what hast thou wrought, Walt?))

I don't quite know how to explain to neofans that one can be a father after one is a grandfather. I neglected to include instructions or explanations in The Neofan's Guide, and this news is apt to plunge all fandom into war.

I am also serding away for a bock about birds and bees, to find out what happened. Lucky for Harris that he isn't in the States. I'm suspicious. ((No, definitely haven't had the pleasure, old boy.....but if the off-spring does arrive with a silver mimeo crank in its mouth, you might send it back to me sometime.)) ((No, dammit, the crank, NOT the small Tucker.))

Tell, anyway, this is apt to put a damper on my London plans. I realise my possible absence will cause consternation, even perhaps the total failure of the project, but the Committee must realize that Claude planted his propaganda well and I consider it my first duty to procreate Starbabics to take over the Cosmos. I am finding it so healthy and invigorating that it may go on for years.

And on this cheerful note I leave you.

BOB COULSON
(Indiana)



I liked the artwork much better in "-17. Effect of the Gestetner maybe. Actually I'm not much of a Thomson fan. I like some of his work, -- mostly the larger, more detailed drawings such as the "- covers. His filler illos are sort of cute, but I'm not in favour of using him exclusively. I like variety. The comment in Mal Ashworth's letter reading "Ken is awaiting posting...." gave me a momentary but fascinating picture of of someone slapping a few stamps on the gentleman and pushing him headfirst through a mail-slot. ((Walter says that only generals are dealt with in this way. I think he's hinting at a bloody awful pun about the General Post Office, alas. About Our Arfer, -- it's not his fault that the smaller illos lack some detail: I am continually screaming at him to keep the interior stuff light enough to allow me to duplicate it without slip-sheeting (heavy lines off-set badly), and we have a Thing about economy of line being something to aim for in cartooning. Gawd! even if we had Thurber somebody would moan.))

ARCHIE MERCER
(Lincs)



Well, I DO like your editorial effort. Not at all off the beam. Pushing the converted pram back from Rykeham Moor sub-P.O. yesterday, I did feel a sort of satisfied - sated - feeling. ((Archie uses the pram to get the OPA mailings down to the Post Office. I usually take "- down to the P.O. in a couple of large suitcases - I just don't have the nerve needed for pram-pushing.)) EFR as usual overdoes it. Surely he can't really be like that? ((I've wondered about that myself, but I think he must be a sort of anachronism left over from the days of Good Queen Bess, -- sort of bawdy, raucous and about three times larger than life. He seems one of the few English pro-authors who are free from an inflated idea of their own importance and he never hesitates to laugh at himself whenever the occasion arises. This is a Good Thing.)) There's as usual a pad of other contents, more of which are worth reading than not. I still like this "new readers" column - and still wish it'd been in when I WAS a new reader. (One thing I can say -- HYPHE! and me were neos together.)

Russell the
DEL REY of EFR and O



REV C.M. MOORHEAD
(Ohio)



What happened to "-" 16? I never got it. (Neither did 150 million other non-fans, -- why should you bitch? Your sub began with #17...you'll get your buck's worth if only you live long enough.) What happened to my reply to the fanged remarks that appeared in "-" 15 as a result to my review of HELL'S PAVEMENT? I sent it to Chuck Harris and apparently he lacked the nerve to run it, or perhaps it was too inflammatory even for HYTHEN. ((Cherish the thought!)) Seems to me if you run a thing in the first place, you ought to have the common courtesy to give a man a chance to defend himself. ((Please, there

is nothing common about Our Farmag. We print anything that we believe will interest, amuse, or instruct our Vast Circulation. Your letter did none of these things, and I scrapped it. Remember, this is my hobby. At 8/10th a ream for the paper I just can't afford to be polite or even courteous to any long-winded cleric who may get the urge to do a little advertising for the Lord.))

I would like to have the personal address of Julian Parr. I'll take that punk to the mat thru personal correspondence. ((The hell you will, buster. I see no reason why we should permit our friends to be pestered by religious crackpots .. or, for that matter, by irreligious crackpots or Joan the Mad salesmen.)) The back of me hard to the rest of the rif-raff. ((Tsk, tsK -- it's supposed to be the other cheek if I remember rightly. Blessed are the meek, old boy.))

Who is this James White? I never heard of him before. He has a rather snide way of taking a man's "name in vain." ((Huhhh? I looked up the reference in the last issue, -- there was just one little joke about the Rev Darrell C Richar son phoning you "a parson to parson call." Whatever do you find snide or wrong about that? Are you a Sacred Object....or just bloody touchy? Incidentally, don't worry about never having heard of James White. He'd never heard of you either. That little snippet was added by Walter Himself whilst he was cutting the stencil.))One thing sure, you and the rest of fandom know there is a fellow around by the name of Rev Moorhead. You can poke fun at me all you want, ((Ta)) but I'll still be around for a while and you'll hear from me every now and then. You may all disagree with me and even hate me, but nonetheless...((No, that's your lot. If you have a big enough persecution complex to believe that any of our readers hate you, there's no point in letting you maunder on, or people will start calling you the Rave Moorhead again. I may disagree with you, but I disagree with a lot of people....Campbell on dianetics, Palmer on derocs, Grannell on machino-gunning horses, for instance.... but that doesn't mean I hate them. Off-hand, I can't think of anybody that I hate at the moment. It's a pretty powerful emotion and I can't seen any of our group wasting it on some cantankerous cleric's credulous viewpoint. Thank you for your letter.))

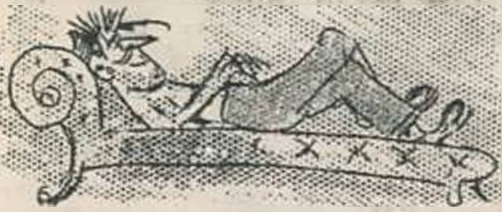
BOB SPAY.
(Alberta)



"Way of Life." This was good, especially the ending which was so snappy and unexpected that I read it about four times. The only thing you didn't cover in the exposition is the case of people like me who never produce fanzines but merely make it possible for others to do so. Would the Psychiatrist say that I'm queer? And that in fandom I gain satisfaction by adopting a female role? And what of women who edit fanzines? I think you could do another article or story for the next ish.

.....this is my twenty-fifth birthday so I'm anxious to try out my more mature mind. A quarter of a century! Twenty five runs in the great Test that is life. I can see now that people have parties on their birthdays to cheer them up and not to celebrate.

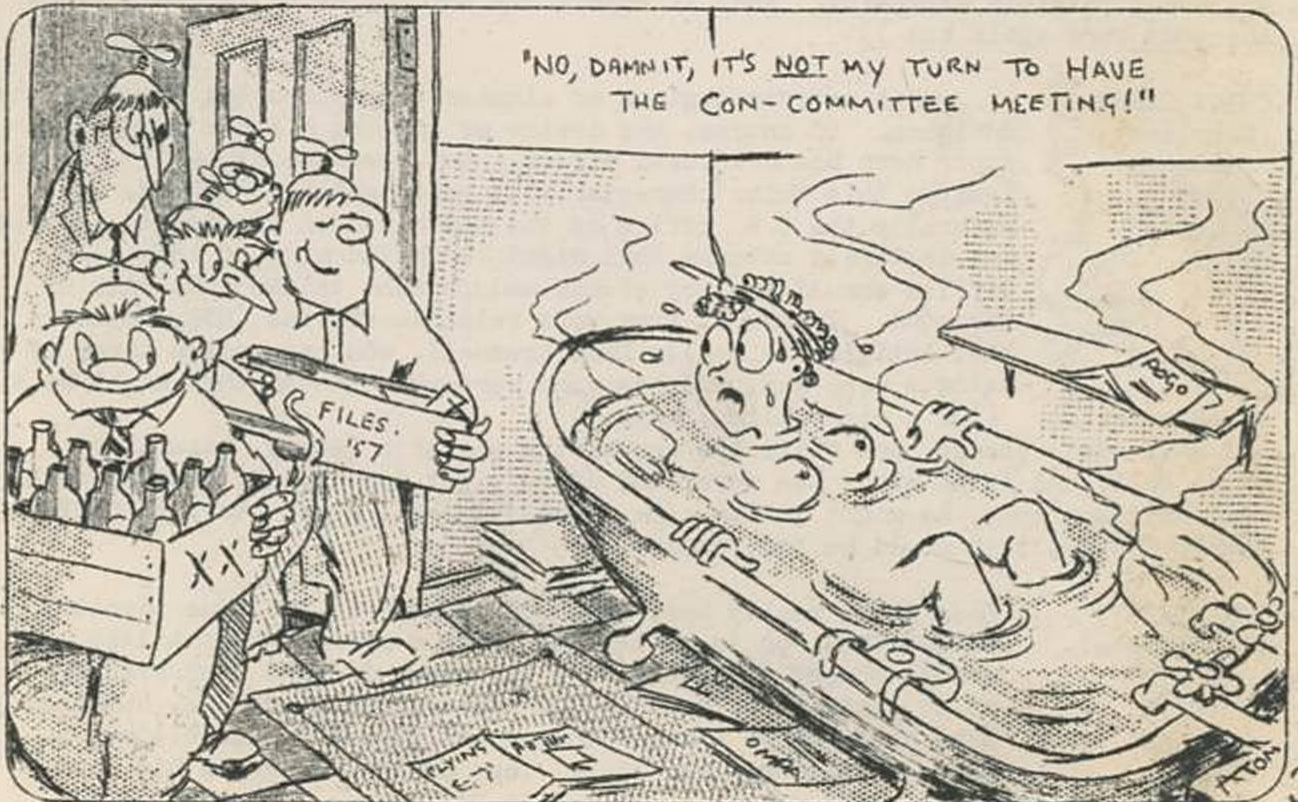
ERIC FRANK RUSSELL ((Again!))
(Cheshire)



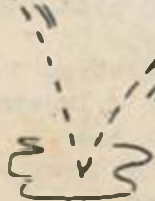
This issue seems to me to register a decided rise toward the dizzy heights of Hyphen normality. I deduce that the bryan-thing has started sleeping more and piddling less, thus enabling you to recover from the animal effort of procreating yourself. Maybe the experience will be a lesson to you. There are or should be cheaper and easier ways of making up for the loss of Shaw.

I'm delighted with the analysis of fandom by Prof. Havelock Tillis. The humour is vastly enhanced by its plausibility. There's just enough foundation of truth to make the reader think that there really may be something in one hypothesis or the other. Probably the root-cause of fanning lies somewhere between the two extremes, i.e., a means of asserting oneself on reaching adulthood, a method of satisfying natural desire for companionship of one's own generation, a release of creative energies which, sexually, are held in check by what some call - with a light laugh - "civilisation." Huh? Huhn-n-n? ((Yes, you don't know how right you are, bwah, --- but that second reason strikes me as the most important....companionship and the urge to become part of the gestalt are the underlying reasons for a very large part of all fanac. And especially so in my own case.))

Russell's piece was interesting. I've often wondered what these authors are like behind the scenes. But I don't approve of the vulgarity of his language. It's not necessary and it isn't funny. However, I think he shows promise and should get somewhere providing he learns to write with more restraint. The winning of a trophy doesn't make a writer fireproof or infallible and you can tell him that from me.



MIKE WALLACE
(Leicester)

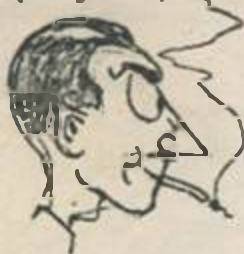


I rate WAY OF LIFE second only to E.F.R.'s piece so give over being so bloody modest! But as to its subject matter..... There seems to be almost a competition running at the moment to think up reasons for being fan; to justify fanac. Why? I'm not at all certain about fandom acting as a therapy for mild maladjustment. It may very probably act as a sort of buffer against the outside world, but when that world finally forces itself upon the person concerned I doubt that his experiences of fandom help to lessen the shock any. ((It can do so though,

and, like religion, it's always there. There is always something going on in which you can share, something creative in which you can join. It's a sort of correspondence course in Getting On with people, and, in my opinion, of far more real value in life than a whole anthology of Dale Carnegie. And, for shy people who don't make friends easily, it can be the finest therapy in the world. Have you got more friends in the macrocosm than you have in fandom, hmm?))

But in any event why bother? I like jazz and I could probably justify that liking if I was called upon to do so. What's it to me that Oswald Plin next door thinks it's a godawful row? If he doesn't like it that's his loss, not mine. I don't need him or his approval. Same goes for fanac. If I want to fan, I'll fan, but I'll not do it for any other reason but that I want to. I don't believe in justifying anything. ((I feel exactly the same way about margins.)) Understanding between people is a very rare thing indeed, and unless you have something in common with the other person then you are beating your head against a brick wall trying to get your meaning across. Nope, it's much less trouble to do what you like without bothering to think up reasons for doing it. ((I have an idea one or two people will be having a word to say to you about this odd viewpoint. And, if it's Harry Turner, -- it'll probably be the same word again too.))

CHICK DERRY
(Maryland)



.....that notorious piece of slander, the purported facts of the Antigoon. Of course, the device of calling a super criminal a super hero has been used before. But never so blatantly. What lengths this White character will go to get into HYPHEN, ugh! Naturally the U.S. office of the GDA has been alerted to counter any dastardly attacks that might be forthcoming if this seedy Raffles should try any of his underhanded tricks this side of the pond. I have it from very reliable sources (NSF, no less) that Antigoon is really Dean Grennell, who has gotten tired of being a Good Man, and has gone berserk. Though this might be a miscalculation. ((Or a misspelling, maybe?))

I must admit though that White has copied the master's (Berry, naturally) style well, and if he minds his ways, and doesn't get too closely tied up with this Antigoon type, he might go far. He might even sell a pro story to OTHER WORLDS. ((No, that would be too far.))

LEN MOFFATT
(California)

SOUTH

GATE

IN

'58

Does James really have some fan in mind as the true identity of ANTIGOOON, or is he leading Berry a merry but fruitless mental chase? If there were any clues in "The Goon Fighter" as to Antigoon's identity I'm afraid they eluded me, but then I have been out of touch with current fandom for some time....

((Yes, Antigoon does exist....but only James knows his true identity at the moment. I don't think that it's DAG though -- I have an idea that it's probably Good Ol' Ted Carnell fighting off the forces of evil with his rolled umbrella.))

JEAN YOUNG
(Cambridge Mass.)



There are, I suppose, people who don't like HYPHEN. I even know one of them, come to think of it. It's their tough luck. I like HYPHEN. ((Me too!)) I suppose I am conforming to the mass in this, but so what? I like HYPHEN. (This is getting monotonous.) ((Not to this glutton for egobco, ma'am.))

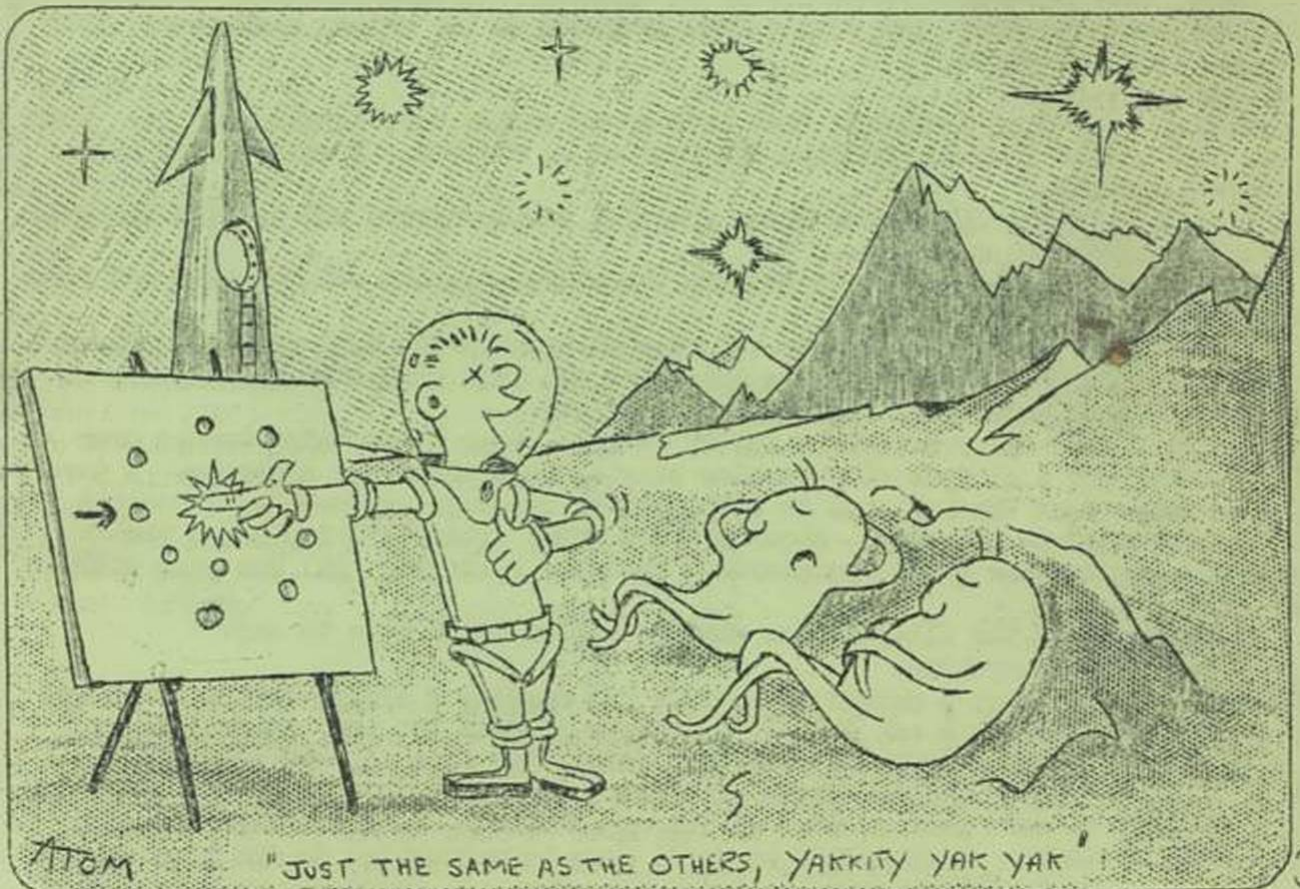
I thought "Way of Life" wonderfully funny, very complete, and gads, but there are parallels and germs of truth in it I'd never thought of. Fandom usually seems so Innocent to me ...ai-ai.

I liked Bob Shaw's column just as much from Canada as I did from Darkest Ireland, and I wish I could meet his friend David. Their adventures sound remarkably like some Field Trips I Have Known... out of my wild and woolly past.

And I liked Larry's FAPAZINE too -- he can write gently funny stuff when he wants to. I AM SOMETHING -- oog and mighod. I was utterly and absolutely croggled by this; in fact, in most places, it was so funny I couldn't laugh, but merely sat, stunned. Ghod, and ATOM'S drawings for it....

I loved that line "She has a ring with five diamonds in it, three of them visible to the naked eye." Who said that? ((A very modest genius.))

ICE CREAM SUNDAY -- one always wonders, of course, just how much of the chronicled doings of the various wheels and spokes of IF are for real.... ((for a Berry article that was damn near gospel. They really did go by train in a reserved carriage labelled "The Willis Party" to Portrush. James did sail his toy boat, and George was a bit tired which probably makes that the most factual article Berry has yet written.))



Joe Sanders
(Indiana)



I'm not much on athletic-type sports. Intellectual sports like Scrabble, Poker, or Spin-the-bottle occupy my time. However, I'd always wanted to try bowling. Just for kicks, you know. I had the chance during my Christmas vacation (though "vacation" used in this sense is a misnomer). I was out of school, visiting an aunt who lives near a bowling alley, and talking to two of my uncles who are rabid bowling fans. Then they heard that their favourite nephew had never bowled in his life ("That, never bowled in your life!") nothing would stop them from taking me to the bowling alley. That was okay by me.

We entered the bowling alley and I took off my coat. One uncle cringed. The other just put his hands over his eyes. Darned if I know why. There is absolutely nothing wrong with a crimson, black, white, grey, and canary yellow shirt. Although it may be rather disconcerting to look from one eight-inch-on-a-side square to another.

We got bowling shoes and found an empty alley. One of my uncles went to get a score sheet while the other advised me to select a ball. I did so. Thud! "Heavy, isn't it?" said my uncle.

I watched my uncles. They would stand back of the line and then take three graceful steps forward, at the same time swinging the ball back and then forward, bending limberly and releasing the ball straight down the alley toward the pins.

I hefted the ball, then took three steps forward, at the same time bringing my arm back, then forward. Then I stared at my hand. "A nice hand," I thought, "long delicate fingers; yet with plenty of power in it. Shows character. Only one thing wrong with it."

No bowling ball.

I turned. At first I thought that both of my uncles were laughing at me. Then I saw that one of them was holding his foot as he writhed. I walked back and retrieved my ball.

I went back to the line, took three graceful steps forward and brought the ball forward. Right into my leg....

The next attempt, the first to go down the alley, bounced off the pins and into the gutter.

That was when I made the mistake. I stepped towards the ball rack and selected a ball at random. I noticed at the time that the ball fitted rather tightly on my hand. I took three graceful steps forward and....

Suddenly I felt an irresistible tug on my arm. Then I was being turned over and over. I got a glimpse of my uncles staring down the alley after me. I tore my hand loose from the ball and it continued on its way; meanwhile, I stopped and lay sprawled in the alley, about halfway down. Dazedly I looked at the automatic pin machine which registered a strike. A strike! All ten pins with one ball.

I walked back up the alley to see what my uncles would have to say.

They didn't say anything.

JOY CLARKE
(London)



It doesn't matter which zine I'm reading I always turned to an EFR yarn first and this ((the trophy saga in the last issue)) outdoes all his other stuff....I chortled with glee all the way through. This chap shows signs of being a good humorist. Why doesn't he try to sell some stuff. Joking aside though, he outdid Walt on this issue. Without EFR he would have been the best in the book...but, as Sanderson said, -- let's hope the P.O. don't get hold of a copy and start perusing.

BOARD MEETING. I shall be in Belfast from the 7th to 21st of June. Arthur the Art Department will be there from the 14th to 28th June. Ghodminton will be waged, of course, but apart from that we are all looking forward to a peaceful holiday as we read through the 248 letters of comment that we will undoubtedly get on this issue. Incidentally, we have just about cleared our backlog of material now, and we would welcome any contributions for future issues, ---fiction, articles, cartoon ideas, or even a quote for the bacover.

The letters that we get about "-" are the most important thing of all. Your money is put in the till and soon forgotten, but your letters are pored over, read time and time again until the type is barely distinguishable from the eye-tracks. Our thanks go to all these people who wrote in last time as well as to those we managed to squeeze into the letter column: Ken Potter, Greg Benford, Ken Bulmer, Bobbie Wild, Alan Date, Don Ford, Dean Grennell, Gregg Calkins, Joe Sanders, Buz & Elinor Busby, Dick Ryan, Pam Bulmer, Blith Carr, Ving & Joy Clarke, Terry Jeeves, D.R. Smith, Len Moffatt, Bob Coulson, Harry Turner, Jan Jansen, Bill Morse, (who has just gotten married), George Richards, Dick Ellington, (and he's just gotten married too), John Brunner, Ron Bennett, Steve Schultheis, Rick Sneary, George Metzger, Claude Hall, Rory Faulkner, Terry Carr, Jean Linard, Lars Bourne, Richard Eney, Boyd Raeburn and Nicodemus Puddlefoot.

WORLDCON. For the umpteenth time.....from 8th to 9th September at the Kings Court Hotel, London. All bookings must be made through the Secretary, Miss Roberta Wild, 204 Wallmeadow Road, Catford, London, S.E.6. Accomodation is limited and if you haven't done so already you should write to Bobbie and let her know that you are coming, or even that you hope to come. This applies especially to U.S. and Continental fans --you'll get priority for rooms as long as you notify us quickly. As far as I know, Stateside visitors will include: Rory Faulkner, Bl Hamilton & Leigh Brackett, Bob & Barbara Silverberg, Mr & Mrs John Peterson, 4e Ackerman, Edward E Bielfeldt, George Nims Raybin, Frank & Belle Dietz, Dave Kyle, Ruth Landis, Audrey Lovatt, Mack Reynolds (maybe), Joan & Harry Harrison, Judy Merrill, and (we hope) Lee & Larry Shaw again. We shall all be there, of course, --- and we'll be most happy to spit on you if you don't join our happy throng who'll be voting for SOUTHGATE IN '58.

Walter's column has just arrived, and I know one co-editor who doesn't believe a word about all these beautiful women running loose in fandom. I haven't read such taradiddle since Normal George sent me his last post-mailing. I have spent many hours deeply absorbed in a study of female fandom, and I can say quite honestly that during my investigations I have noticed two beautiful women and three very pretty ones. The rest are mostly a homely selection who'd look a lot better with the light off, and it will take more than Walt's Lays of the Lost Minstrel to make me think otherwise. Mind you, I'm not bitching about it, -- there's a lot of other things besides physical attractiveness, and I like female fandom. I love every single one of them both individually and collectively, (aaturday twice nightly, matinees on Sunday), but I'll be damned if they are beautiful. Enchanting, yes. Provocative, stimulating, intelligent, and equipped with the most fascinatingly forked tongues that you'd find outside a viperium, but they ain't beautiful and most of 'em ain't pretty either and it will take more than Willis and Boucher to change my mind. So there.

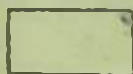
Boucher, of course, is a Dirty Old Pro and needs no excuse, but what is happening to Walter Himself? Is Tio Bhoy's eyesight dimming at last? Has he joined the ranks of the Elderly Ghods, hmm?

Pardon me whilst I duck.

And I have an idea that my complimentary subscription to FEMIZINE has just expired.....



NO, THEY'RE
GOING TO THE
LONDON,
SEE YOU THERE?



An X here means your
sub has expired.

HE IS AN ENGAGING CHILD BUT APPEARS TO REGARD
BEING PUT TO BED AS AN UNWARRANTABLE INTER-
FERENCE WITH THE LIBERTY OF THE INDIVIDUAL...
EVEN HER HONEYMOON WAS JUST A BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY
....THEY CAN'T VERY WELL EX-COMMUNICATE YOU
SINCE YOU'VE NEVER BEEN COMMUNICATED.....I
HATE KICKING MEN WHEN THEY'RE DOWN --IT MAKES
THEM SO BLOODY USELESS AFTERWARDS....HOW DOES
IT FEEL TO BE INFAMOUS?....STF IS A GREAT
COMFORT TO SOME, LIKE JESUS, JUNIPER PILLS OR
JOHNNY WALKER....IT HAS A SORT OF ADULATORY
TONE ALL THE WAY THROUGH WHICH LED ME TO THINK
IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN DONE ON A ROSE-TINTED TYPE
WRITER RIBBON...I'M PROBABLY THE WORLD'S ONLY
FAN WHO STILL HAS HIS GAS-MASK...I NEVER KNEW
MY HUSBAND WAS A DRUNKARD UNTIL ONE NIGHT HE
CAME HOME SOBER....I'M CERTAINLY ALL THERE,
EVEN THE RABBI NEVER GOT WITHIN SWINGING DIS-
TANCE OF ME.....WHAT'S THE FRENCH FOR "POT-
POURRI?"....HE ALWAYS SNEAKS IN WITH HIS DIRTY
LITTLE WHISKERS TWITCHING....WELL, IF YOU
REALLY WANT A FATTED CALF, WHO AM I TO QUIBBLE
...HE SAYS IT'S HIS AMBITION TO SEDUCE EVERY
FEMALE IN SCIENCE-FICTION AND HE'S BEGINNING
WITH ME BECAUSE I'M THE HARDEST.....HE HAS A
PRE-COPERNICAN EGO - THE WORLD REVOLVES AROUND
HIM....THINK -- or thwim..... HE EVEN SLEEPS
ON A MATTRESS STUFFED WITH OLD AMAZINGS.....
YOU CAN JUDGE HOW BAD I WAS FROM THE FACT THAT
ALL THE LEAVES FELL OFF THE LILAC TREE IN MY
GARDEN....SHE SEEMS TO BE THE MOST INTELLIGENT
OF ALL THE ANGLO-FEMS, ESPECIALLY NOW THAT
JOAN CARR HAS SPROUTED TESTES ETC.....BELIEVE
IT OR NOT, ONLY LAST FEBRUARY HE WAS A SECOND
IN THE KANGAROO PATROL...THE PROGENY OF
MERSEY IS NOT TRAINED....THANK GOD THEY'VE
WORN OUT THE GILLINGS VERSION OF "MY STRUGGLE"
.....THE MOST UNIQUE ONE-MAN SHOW SINCE
CHRISTINE JORGENSEN....EVEN A PRO-EDITOR ISN'T
ENTITLED TO POINT AND SAY, "GET!"....YOU REA-
LLY GOT FLUSH TOILETS OVER THERE TOO?...SHE
HAD THREE DOUBLE PORTS AND SAID I MIGHT AS
WELL KNOW SHE'S PREGNANT....WE COULD DO WITH
A FAN ARCHAEOLOGIST JUST TO TALK UNDERSTAND-
INGLY TO THE OLD GUARD....I HAVE A VERY GOOD
REASON FOR GIVING UP TANAC: I HAVE DISCOVERED
SOMETHING BETTER....A PUKKA TRUFAN, MELLOWED
WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF ALL HIS TWELVE YEARS...
TWO HEDONISTS ARE BETTER THAN ONE, DARLING...

EAVESDROPPINGS FROM: Correspondents of Eric
Frank Russell 13: Walt 2: Jean Grennell 1:
DAG 2: Bob Shaw 1: Daphne Buckmaster 1:
Bobbie Wild 1: Chuck 4: Atom 1: George
Charters 2: Ermengarde Fiske 1: and others.