



THE NEW MILLENNIAL HARBINGER

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THE NEW MILLENNIAL HARBINGER NO. 1

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The New Millennial Harbinger is published by John Bangsund, 1/166 Glen Eira Rd, Elsternwick, Victoria 3185, Australia, primarily for the first mailing of the Amateur Press Association of Australia (latest creation to proceed from the heat-oppressed brain of Leigh Edmonds), secondarily for those many people who have sent me their fanzines and to whom I am unable to afford to send ASFR in exchange. There will be others who will receive it - people I should write to, for example, if I had time to write letters.

Editorial Policy: As far as possible this publication will contain only 100% pure undiluted Bangsund. Letters of comment are not ruled out, but I will tend to quote passages and comment on them rather than publish letters in full.

Fiscal Policy: I will exchange for fanzines, letters, services rendered or any display of interest soever. But not for money. A subscription to ASFR will not guarantee your place on this mailing list.

As a mark of respect to a man whose image and example had a large influence on my adolescent thinking, the man who published the original Millennial Harbinger over a century ago - Alexander Campbell (1788-1866), I would like to launch this publication with a small scholarly dissertation on one aspect of the place of this man and his legacy in the world of ideas. It is only fair to warn you that this is controversial stuff. I can think of no other reason for Dick Bergeron's not publishing it in Warhoon...

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THE PRECURSORS OF THE RELIGIOUS BODY KNOWN SIMPLY AS
DISCIPLES OR CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN ENGLISH FICTION

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The Churches of Christ, or Disciples, as I shall refer to them in this article, are, one might say, without theological or historical hair-splitting, a branch of the Protestant movement in the Christian Church. Originally devoted to restoring the pristine unity of the Church, the Disciples themselves went through various schisms, surprisingly not at the time of the Civil War in the United States, when so many denominations were split asunder, but towards the end of the nineteenth century and during the present century. The two major denominations surviving these schisms are the Churches of Christ (Disciples) and the Churches of Christ. The latter title is sometimes qualified by the terms Unassociated or (less kindly, but no less truly descriptive) Anti-Organ. Both denominations claim about two million adherents in the United States of America.

But I am not concerned with the present-day denominations, nor, indeed, with the movement started by Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander in association with Barton Stone and others during the early years of the nineteenth century. If I were, I might find any number of references to these people in English fiction, though I can't think of any offhand. No, I am concerned with their precursors: those tiny,

independent, Bible-loving Christians who, when the Disciples became organized, decided to merge with them.

I could, were I concerned with the larger view, mention that two Presidents of the United States are said to have belonged to the Churches of Christ (James Garfield and Lyndon Johnson); that the sometime Prime Minister of Rhodesia, Garfield Todd, had gone to that country as a Disciple missionary; that such well-known show business personalities as Pat Boone and Jane Russell are said to be members of these churches; but these undoubtedly interesting facts are strictly irrelevant to my purpose in this article, and I shall not mention them, except in passing.

The Glasites and the Sandemanians: these are the people I am concerned with. Oh yes, there were others. In many countries of the world, in Russia, Norway - even in Australia - there were simple Christians who rejected divisive creeds and clung to the truths of sacred writ; who, when the Campbellite or Restoration Movement spread, recognized in its tenets their own beliefs and happily joined the cause.

But in England, for long the home of English fiction, there were the Glasites and Sandemanians, named after John Glas of Auchtermuchty (1695-1773), author of *The Testimony of the King of Martyrs*, thorn in the flesh of the Scottish Kirk, and Robert Sandeman, his son-in-law (1718-71). To what extent do we find these lovable, primitive (their own term), fiercely independent Christians figuring in English fiction?

To commence, I turn to that unique novelist, Thomas Love Peacock, and in particular I turn to his novel.

(Er, I can't find Peacock's solitary reference to Sandemanians, Dick, because I neglected to note where it occurred, and Tony Thomas has my annotated copy in which I've made a marginal note in red biro where the reference occurs, so it shouldn't be too hard to find if I can get that copy back from Tony, but of course he's in the process of moving right now and it might be packed away somewhere. Anyway I expect to see him next Sunday.

And, er, hmm, that's the only reference to Glasites or Sandemanians I've ever found in English fiction after twenty years or more reading the stuff, but I'm sure there must be others. If I had the time I'm sure I'd find others, eventually.

Do you think you might be interested in the article for Warhoon, when it's finished, Dick? I mean, you know, it's not all that interesting a subject, but it hasn't, to my knowledge, not that that's very extensive, of course, been what you might call done to death in the fanzines. You'll let me know, won't you, Dick?)

(Or was it Glasites that Peacock referred to? No, I'm pretty sure it was Sandemanians.

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FILLER

Someone asked Mr K whether there was a God. Mr K said: I advise you to reflect whether, depending upon the answer to this question, your behaviour would alter. If it would not, we can drop the question. If it would, then at least I can be of some help to you by telling you that your mind is already made up: you need a God.

Brecht: Anecdotes of Mr Keuner

ONE FLASH AND YOU'RE ASH. BUSTER

Paul Stevens tracked down a bloke who owns an almost complete run of the old Universal serial, FLASH GORDON. For various reasons I will not identify him; let's call him (hm, what's something original?) Mr X.

(I pause, lest there be any misapprehension, to point out that Paul is the Film Group Secretary and I his typist, chauffeur and witness, when available.)

At various times on the day of the screening I had the feeling that something would go wrong. We would have an attendance of fourteen and Paul would have to flog his sf collection to pay the bills; or four hundred, mostly local larrikins, and they'd wreck the joint. Or that somewhere in the film there'd be a monster and Wally W would stop the film and order everyone out. You know the sort of bad feeling you get when you've taken a risk on something, and you're terribly confident of it working out, but as the time draws near... like that.

On behalf of the Club, Paul had taken a risk - a big one. Club finances for years have been minimal - at the best of times we've been hard put to it to find even the modest rent for the cobwebbed firetrap we are pleased to call the Clubroom - and part of the problem has been the Film Group. More often than not the Group's 16mm screenings at the Club have lost money - and who can be blamed for staying away from

our primitive shows, with their dusty, draughty, cigarette-smoke-laden auditorium, rickety old seats and fuggy sound system? Deciding whether or not to attend a show at the Club has been almost as difficult as deciding whether to watch a film on commercial television.

So all honour to Paul for taking the risk of arranging a full-scale 35mm show in a proper theatre.

By 7.30, after a last-minute panic when we realized that a programme-cum-propaganda sheet hadn't been prepared and tore about typing stencils, running them off and thanking the fannish ghods that we hadn't hired a theatre on the other side of town, it looked as though Paul's gamble was about to pay off. There were about sixty people in the Astor's foyer within a few minutes of our arrival, and half an hour later more than double that number.

Mervyn Binns was signing people up as Film Group members almost as fast as he could write, and I was folding the propaganda sheets and wondering where the hell all these people were coming from, when there was a bit of a commotion and I observed that Paul had turned a deep shade of blue. Diane came over to me. "Bloody projectionist," she said. "He's locked the film in a box and gone home!"

Well, I'm not too sure whether that bit actually happened or whether Mr Waterford just threatened to go home, but the fact is that for the next half an hour all seemed lost. Mr Waterford had half a dozen stories, and none of them seemed terribly reasonable. He wasn't allowed to have anyone in the box with him - it was against the law - and even if we had arranged for Mr X to be in the box (which he claimed we hadn't) it was still illegal. The film was of the old nitrate type - he couldn't use it unless there was a fireman on duty in the theatre. Mr X wouldn't let him run through the film before showing it, obviously proving (to Mr W's satisfaction anyway) that it must be in a dangerous condition.

The arguments drifted down to us from upstairs. We appealed to Mr Thanatos to honour his (verbal, worse luck) contract with us and proceed with the show. He just shrugged. He had hired the theatre to us for the night; we were in the theatre; he could do nothing more.

Eventually Paul had to tell the audience that the show could not proceed "due to technical difficulties", but that if everyone was willing to go to another theatre, Mr X was willing to show us the film. Everyone was willing. It takes more than a lunatic projectionist to upset a dedicated film fan. So, as Mr X busied himself in a phone booth across the road trying to find us another theatre, the crowd milled around in the foyer. Some discussed incendiary techniques, some pondered methods of killing theatre managers and projectionists which would look like accidents afterwards, others - about thirty of us - debated the logic of the situation with Mr Waterford, who had (with incredible foolhardiness, if he really believed we would destroy the theatre at the first sight of a monster) descended to the foyer. "I've been a paratrooper, luv," said some character we'd never seen before to Diane, "and me mate's a commando. Who do you want us to do in? Just say the word." Diane was tempted, but wisely refrained from saying the word.

Then a delightfully absurd thing happened. Mr X returned and mounted the staircase to address us. Mr Waterford followed him, and they stood, on either side of the banister, like a couple of rival politicians on the hustings, each telling us in the most dignified terms why the other was, if not a dangerous lunatic, at least a nasty spoilsport. We learnt for the first time that in examining a cartoon that was to be

shown before the main feature, Mr Waterford had managed to break the film in four places. Naturally, Mr X would not trust him with his priceless film. "Priceless my foot!" said Mr Waterford, "You can imagine what condition the film is in if he won't even let me look at it!" And so on and so forth, with all of us cheering and booing alternately, just like a matinee crowd.

Finally we all piled into cars and headed off for Toorak, where Mr X had found for us an obliging friend with a private thetrette. Which seated forty-eight people. Somehow we packed in, about a hundred of us. On the way in, so they tell me (Diane and I were among the last to arrive), one chap stopped everyone with a melodramatic gesture and said, "Okay, I'm the projectionist here, and if there's anyone in the theatre I'm not showing the film!"

(We found out later that this man's name is Fred Smoot. He enjoyed himself hugely and swore he would be using the night's incidents for a sketch in his show at the Chevron. We have no way of telling whether he did, nor to what effect. If fans don't patronize night clubs to any large extent. I mean, you're either the kind of person who goes to night clubs or the kind of person who pays 70¢ for Analog. It's hard to be both.)

FLASH GORDON was fun. We knew it would be. The film was in superb condition. But... well, it was all a bit of an anti-climax after the entertainment we'd already had that night.

The most important result of Paul's magnificent gamble is, of course, that the Melbourne Fantasy Film Group now lives. Not only does the Club look like having a financial backer, but the Group itself could become quite a significant thing in its own right. We have booked the Plaza Theatre at Newport for our next show on 17th October, and we hope that in time Newport, Vic. will become as synonymous with fantasy films as Newport, R.I. is with jazz.

Naturally, with our luck, on 17th October we'll probably all turn up at Newport and find that the theatre (which has been converted downstairs into a dance hall) has been hired out for an Italian wedding reception, or a Seventh Day Adventist ball, or...

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WHAT THIS MAZAGINE NEEDS IS A POORF-READER!

Lee Harding knows as well as anyone that while at Wilke's, the printers, I worked on Dr Allan Wynn's biography of his father, Samuel Wynn, the winegrower. Lee also knows that Dr Wynn wrote to me congratulating me on what he was pleased to call the excellent job I had done. He really was pleased. As a token of his thanks he offered me a bottle of Coonawarra Estate Claret, vintage 1954 - a noble gift indeed, which I must get around to collecting. (Besides, I'd like to meet the man.) But - and Lee nearly killed himself laughing when he told me - Oscar Mendelsohn, reviewing the book in Nation, feels differently about it. "Before the reprint that one may anticipate for this book," he writes, "some attention to poor proof-reading is advisable..." Of the five slips he quotes, I take full responsibility for three. "Resistance" and "relevation" are unforgivable; "ambience" I let pass because that's the way I (and all my references) spell it. One day I must Reveal All about the proofreading game. Until then, I think Mark Twain has the last word: "God first made idiots. That was for practice. Then he made proofreaders."

ON CLAIRVOYANTS

Talking of proofreading... The local papers recently carried the story of an American couple who were (successfully) advised by a Dutch clairvoyant to look for their missing son in Australia. This clairvoyant's name was variously reported as Herkes, Horkis, Hurkes and Merkus. It could be that this indefinite item of information was gained from a long-distance telephone call, and that the newspapers' informant, when asked the Dutchman's name, merely cleared his throat. But it is perhaps more likely that the person referred to is Peter Hurkos - about whom I know nothing, except that a gentleman of that name with clairvoyant powers published a book while I was working at Cheshire's, and the name lodged somewhere in my RNA cells or wherever it is that Isaac Asimov thinks odd memories lodge.

About two years ago another Dutch clairvoyant was brought to Australia in a fruitless attempt to find some missing children. His name didn't quite lodge in my mind at all. (Was it... Vanvan Schlouterschlouterhagenhagen?) (No, that's... gibberish!) (A gibberish is a Stone fanzine.) (Lithographed, of course.) (I must stop reading Irish punzines.) I say, his name didn't quite - ah, you remember back that far. Anyway, this fact and other internal evidence help to date the following editorial which I wrote for ASFR and completely forgot about. (Those rascally little bloody RNA cells! Heaven knows the trouble I have writing editorials, and this one I wrote and forgot about! Utterly!) And didn't rediscover until recently when I went searching through my papers for something much more important - but that's another story. Waste not, want not, I always say. (What do you always say?) Here, defying all consequences, is:

THE EDITORIAL BANGSUND'S RNA CELLS DIDN'T DARE TO PRINT!!!

This Could Be The End Of Something Big

Strange and sad things are happening in England. Back in the early fifties, the Nova magazines disappeared for fourteen months; now we learn that something similar may occur again, for New Worlds and Impulse have gone under for an indefinite period. Nothing the publishers can do about it, evidently; some firm owing them a lot of money has collapsed, leaving Roberts & Vinter in a most embarrassing position. One repercussion in Australia: as far as we know, to date John Baxter's only reward from the UK for his novel THE GOD KILLERS has been the thrill of seeing his name in print. (Mind you, things might be different by now: John's a helluva busy bloke, and we don't hear from him as much as we'd like.)

Some will say no great loss if New Worlds and Impulse fail to emerge from this crisis. But, wait a minute - we can't afford to lose them. There aren't that many sf magazines around that we can just do two of them in cold blood. Especially two that traditionally have given space to up-and-coming writers, including Australians. I've lately been reading manuscripts by three aspiring local writers, and two others have asked me for John Carnell's address. These people, the ones I've read, show varying degrees of promise: one writes well, but is a bit short on plot development; one writes abominably, but is a born story-teller; the third could go places with a little deeper understanding of people. Now, any of these authors could come up with something - let's not say earth-shattering, but interesting, worth publishing. What happens to their work if, as is usually the case, the American magazines knock it back?

Mike Moorcock may not be everybody's favourite editor, but (along with a lot of other people) I find New Worlds a pretty readable magazine; a lot of the stories off-beat, but so what? - it's a change; the reviews, on the whole, quite reasonable; the editorials always worth reading. Impulse was rather a frustrating magazine under Kyril Bonfiglioli's charge, but let's not malign him - he published some memorable stuff.

definition, of past events; which events may be remembered, if they did not take place too long ago; or which may be read about, if they have been recorded and published. But they do not come to life - that is, history does not exist - until someone remembers them or reads about them. Westminster Abbey, Hong Kong, ah, Ballarat - these places exist whether we think of them or not..."

("So much for Bishop Berkeley," murmured Mr Crundall.)

"...since they occupy space. But history occupies time, which is a subjective dimension, perceptible only to the mind of man. Therefore, history only exists when a man thinks about it."

"But," cried Tom, who is by no means as thoughtless as he sometimes appears to be, "that would mean time travel is impossible!"

"It certainly would," agreed Nat. "That is, time travel as it is used and abused by science fiction writers. There are only two forms of time travel which I can conceive. One is that one-way journey through time which comprises the lifetime of every animate and inanimate thing; the other is the mental journey undertaken by any human being with imagination when he remembers the past or reads about it."

"Mr Dexter, you are an anarchist," said Mr Crundall. "An impertinent and subversive anarchist. If your views were to spread, half of our science fiction writers would be out of work."

Nat chuckled. "I don't believe in alternate universes, either," he said.

"Sir, you are a heretic," said Mr Crundall. "Fortunately, you are quite sound when it comes to port. Will you have another?"

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THIS IS THE PLACE FOR A SPOT

"Three wise men of Gotham set to sea in a bowl." So runs the nursery rhyme. It is not well known that one of these three men was the great-great-uncle of Gotham's most famous citizen: his name was John Batman. John and his two wise friends did not perish, as the old rhyme would have us believe, but were washed up on the shores of a large island called Fan Demon's Land. Here they exploited the natives for a while, until, tiring of the trick, they set sail for another large island to the north which they named North Tasmania. Landing on a small cove (who said "ouch!"), the three men looked about them and Batman said, "This is the place for a village." "Village it is, then," said one of his companions, the callow Fawcner, "you go off and buy the place while I just build a motor-car showroom here." The caped crusader leapt into his Batbullockdray and roared off. The third wise man, an idle dreamer, sat on the ground drawing plans for underground railways, civic squares and cultural centres in the dust. Meantime Batman had contacted the Jigger Jigger tribe. After some hard talking he finally managed to acquire 600,000 acres and a rude perch or two for a handful of beads and the sailing bowl. "Why do you want that?" asked Batman. "We make it into mia mia," said the native chief, "big mia mia - many people live in - have didgeridoo concerts." How was John Batman to know that one day the people of Melbourne would pay dearly for this transaction? One hundred and twenty years later the Government of Victoria paid out a vast amount of money to buy back what is now known far and wide as the Mia Mia Music Bowl.

000 And that's it for this issue. It was fun. Now, back to ASFR 17! (26.9.68) 000