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KEN FLETCH '70

No 13



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Brag Dept: The January issue of Jewish Frontier (575 Sixth Ave NYNY 10011; 60¢) has a story of mine, "The Blood Thereof" (about a Jewish vampire. A Minnesota Jewish vampire).



HOW I SPENT MY THANKSGIVING VACATION,  
or, well, anyway...  
by Dorothy Jones Heydt

The Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles is one of those institutions which was exceedingly posh forty years ago (it contains the Coconut Grove and is across the street from the Brown Derby, and if you don't recognize those names, ask Daddy), and has been resisting the downhill slide ever since. It's still quite posh in appearance, but it's Thirties posh. Vast amounts of dark wooden paneling where it isn't really appropriate, acanthus leaves all over the rug, phoney marble doorsills in the bathroom. And I dare say that, like most other hotels that have hosted a science fiction con, it'll never be quite the same. All the other denizens of the hotel were either Los Angeles types in too much glitter going to the Coconut Grove, or elderly people who had their peak around the time the hotel had its. Curiously enough, we didn't attract much in the way of curious stares -- not even Hal and me in our heraldic medievalls. I rather think the elderly types had seen everything and were weary of it all, and the glittery Angelenos were going to act as if they'd seen everything if it killed them.

We arrived Thursday evening, which by a strange coincidence was Thanksgiving, and went out to dinner with the Barony of the Angels. This turned out to be a mistake. The Barony of the Angels are lovely people, but they had inadvertently neglected to do a reconnaissance before making reservations at this place called "1520 AD, Los Angeles' only medieval restaurant." Well, Los Angeles' it certainly is, but medieval it ain't. I will not bother you with every last jerk and quiver, but it is staffed by some of the less talented denizens of the Renaissance Pleasure Faire; they wear Renaissance garb and have twentieth-century manners, and the exceedingly inappropriate music (Funiculi, Funicula??) is electronically amplified to a decibel count that well exceeds the pain level. We left early, with Technicolor migraines, and the serving wench was most surprised, remarking that it was an unusually quiet night. This is really hardly surprising, since the staff has obviously cut its teeth on rock concerts and suffered considerable hearing loss. There's one "1520 AD" in central LA and one in Pasadena, at last count. Shun both as you would the plague.

Well, the con. It was well-stocked. Unlike SFCon, which ran each film at least twice so that you could see everything (assuming you had limitless endurance), each film was shown an average of once. (This, of course, had considerable to do with the terms of rental.) Films came in three categories, which I shall define as Hard-Core Science Fiction, Soft and Slitherly Science Fiction, and Vampires, though the Committee had set up definitions slightly more genteel. They did their best to have only one film of a given genre running at a time, but there were

occasional overlaps. (As Eric Hoffman said, "I'm only inhuman, I can't do everything.")

Thus it was that Friday morning began for us with the Price/Lorre/Karloff The Raven overlapping The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T. Hal and I made our own executive decisions; he saw The Raven and the last part of Dr. T.; I saw the first part of The Raven and all of Dr. T. Neither of us went to see "Amok Time," which was also on that morning. After Dr. T. Hal saw The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad; I went and had a small headache and returned in time for the last twenty-three special effects of Sinbad, or in other words the last ten minutes. By this time it was mid-afternoon, and we saw "A Piece of the Action" and Chuck Jones' (more on him later) "Pogo Special Birthday Special," which was a better adaptation from comic strip to film than you usually see. We then took a quick look at Galactica -- actually, the title was Galac-some Hungarian inflectional ending which I don't remember. This was its U.S. premiere and no one, including the Committee, knew anything about it. Well, it was a couple of people doing a modern dance against an astronomical background to the accompaniment of some bongo drums and a narration. In Hungarian. The drumming and dancing were amateurish and the astronomy insufficiently inspiring; the narration may have been great but since we didn't have Sarkanyi Gero along to translate we'll never know. We went and took a nap.

Meanwhile the programming had contained such other things as Psycho, The Revenge of Frankenstein, a Draculan panel, and the Frederick March Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

In the evening the Draculans met and somebody premiered The Thing With Two Heads, whereof the advertising slogan is, "They grafted a white bigot's head onto a soul brother's body -- " yes, quite. Some of the ersatz heads were on exhibit in the exhibit rooms, one with buttons hooked up to make it blink. We saw Mission Stardust, which turned out to be a Spanish adaptation of Perry Rhodan, who turns out to be Europe's answer to Captain Future. The special effects were only fair, the plot and acting almost as bad as the worst of Hollywood, but I will say this for Perry Rhodan, he only looks clean-cut. He is slightly more lecherous than James T. Kirk, though not during business hours.

We then saw "I, Mudd," which it transpired Hal had never seen. His helpless giggles of mirth at the illogic were shushed by few, because practically everyone else had gone to see The Night Stalker. Then there was a small Harlan Ellison festival consisting of "City on the Edge of Forever" and "Demon with a Glass Hand." I had not seen "Demon" previously, and enjoyed it. Harlan can indeed write coherently when he wants to. The action took place in a large slumsome building, possibly because all the



stairs were fun to run up and down, but more likely because they'd used up most of their budget in building the very impressive glass hand.\* It was now 2:30 in the morning, and we could have stayed up till 4 and seen Dracula, complete with armadillos, but somehow we didn't.

The program book, by the way, had the notation, "6 am. We will be cleaning the room. Go have breakfast for an hour." I don't suppose there were many up at that hour to take them seriously, else the waitresses would have been much more harried than they were by lunchtime.

Let me at this point put in a plug for the Ambassador's coffee shop staff. They were exceedingly pleasant and cheerful even by ordinary standards, and compared to, say, the International, they were dei ex machina. You could get fed in the thirty or forty minutes you had between films, and the food was edible and only decently (not indecently) expensive.

Saturday morning had the Chuck Jones film festival. Chuck Jones is this nice man who does cartoons. He was Jack Warner's personal gadfly in charge of cartoons at Warner Brothers until they closed down their cartoon business. "What's Opera, Doc?" was the last cartoon he did for them, and if you haven't seen it you haven't been to a con for several years. They had other items such as "Duck Dodgers, 24-1/2th Century," and a Joe Friday version of the same thing. And one whose title I've forgotten in which Porky and Sylvester are abducted by a passing Jovian; Sylvester freaks flamboyantly and Porky sleeps through the whole thing, even when they get into free fall and the blankets float away. There were also a couple of more free-form items specifically designed by Jones, in the last days at Warner Bros., to get Jack Warner's goat. One was called "Now Hear This," and involved the misfortunes of an elderly Britisher who got hold of an ear trumpet with a mind of its own. The other was called "Duck Amuck," and involved the struggles of Daffy Duck against the cartoonist, who erases his backgrounds, blots out his sound track, clothes him in inappropriate garb, at one stage turns him into a duck-billed-flower-faced-six-legged lavender whatsit and thoughtfully provides him with a mirror to freak at himself in. At the end we get a look at the cartoonist -- Bugs Bunny. Why not. In between the cartoons Mr. Jones talked about the cartooning business and life with Warners' and what not, and was most charming. Oh, yes, he also did an animated version of Norton Juster's The Dot and the Line (not for Warner Bros., obviously) which is the most faithful adaptation of book to film I've ever seen, and if you think that didn't take work! He

\* Someone -- David McDaniel? -- told me that Harlan Ellison wrote the episode with the idea in mind of using that particular building, because of the striking gingerbreadity of the decor.

had also done the Pogo thingie we had seen the day before.

Meanwhile in the main room they were showing Moby Dick, or I believe they were. At any rate they had Ray Bradbury talking afterwards, about the day he looked into his London hotel bedroom mirror and said "I am Herman Melville," and started writing the screenplay. Now he has a play out on the same theme called Leviathan 99 about a Great White Comet, and I want to see it some one of these times.

After that we saw This Island Earth, which had at the last minute replaced something or other that didn't arrive. I always enjoyed that one, though it was a bit weak here and there and Charles Beaumont was perfectly right when he said Jeff Morrow pronounced the word "mutant" in a way that made one think of laryngitic emmets.

What on earth did we do then. Ah yes, there was a six-hour animation festival running and we wandered in long enough to see the old Disneyland program on "The Plausible Impossible." I have just noticed Richard Matheson was supposed to be speaking that afternoon, and if in fact he was there (several people couldn't make it) I wish I'd heard him. I've never even seen him and if he were to create a giant rutabaga that would sit down on me this very day I wouldn't recognize him.

Another short nap, and then we saw the Disney Peter Pan, with Hans Conried as the voices of both Papa and Captain Hook, which was a nice touch.\* And then there came the MASQUERADE.

There were, let's see, about ten costumes/acts/what not, some of them containing two people. With one exception, who wasn't really in costume, everyone got a prize for something. Even Ricky Schwartz as "The Real Seymour." Like I say, there were about ten costumes. Hal and I were wearing our formal medievals and if I could have thought of a title in a hurry we'd have entered and probably walked away with a prize or two. There were a few monsters and a few pretty girl costumes and one rather pitiable aged Andorean lady. Also a gentleman from The Omega Man who turned out surprisingly well because of his white-painted contact lenses, and when I consider what contacts cost he deserved an award just for devotion to the original above and beyond the call of duty. Also a nice girl whose name I can never remember, but she won the Westercon's Most Naked Lady contest as Golden-Haired Sif.\*\* She was again in her skin, plus a label and a few gift wrappings, as "A Hannukah Present for David Gerrold." (David was among the judges, because Bill Theiss couldn't make it.) And that was about it. Everybody got an award of some kind and we were out of it in time to go upstairs and see "Journey to Babel."

\* A tradition from the stage, ever since Gerald Du Maurier (father of the novelist) doubled the roles.

\*\* Lisa Deutsch.



After that, gee whillikers, there were all sorts of neat things on, such as Son of Blob and Rosemary's Baby. Hal made some wistful noises about staying up till 12:30 to see King Kong, followed by Son of Kong at 2, but I hauled him firmly upstairs and he hadn't the strength left to resist. We had been trading a migraine back and forth at two-hour intervals for some time anyway, and our eyes were running at 24 frames a second. We could have gotten up again at 8:30 for Godzilla's Revenge, but somehow we managed to miss that too. Somebody or other was telling me that all the Japanese monsters are really nice people, who just want to get their kids back that these dumb Japanese scientists insist on hauling off to the middle of Tokyo, but give me a Horta any old day.

We did, however, get up in time for the Star Trek festival at 10. All manner of Trekkian personnel were there, some of them vastly changed. DeForest Kelley and James Doohan still look about the same, but the younger members have let their hair grow since they got out of the UFP Star Fleet. Walter Koenig has a moustache and is completely unrecognizable. Gene Roddenberry is still his sweet self, but Majel Barrett (introduced as "my wife, the nurse") has done her hair back to brown and lost ten pounds she didn't need to; she's still pretty but she looks ill. One hopes not. Everybody was there, in fact, but Nimoy and Shatner. I dare say they've gotten a bit shy. They had surrogates, however, of whom more later.

So they explained how, yes, it's conceivable that Star Trek may be revived, and the people to convince at the moment are Paramount. David Gerrold and Dorothy Fontana supplied names and addresses of people to bug, and I've lost them.\* Roddenberry and Fontana are currently working on another projected series (pilot, in the form of a movie-for-TV, is evidently to be shot one of these times real soon now) entitled Genesis II, which takes place 108 years from now and 100 years after the Great Conflict. Civilization is just beginning to struggle back, and of course it takes a different form in every village, which should make life varied.

Then "Where No Man Has Gone Before" was shown, in its form as a pilot, not as an episode. There's an introductory scene which was cut, showing the Galaxy from the outside with a bit of voice over about how they're leaving the Galaxy, et cetera, and leaving their regular law-enforcing job for a bit of exploration, tracking down these strange signals, et cetera. And cut to the chess game.

Then a black-and-white print -- Roddenberry's own -- of The Cage in its original form was shown. If you've seen The Menagerie

\* Emmett Lavery or Frank Yablans, 5451 Marathon St. LA 90038; Herb Schlosser NBC-TV 3000 Alameda Ave Burbank 91505; Mort Werner NBC-TV 30 Rockefeller Plaza NY 10029.



you've seen 97% of The Cage. The scene "outside Pike's home town" was somewhat longer, wherein Vina kept trying to distract Pike's questions with "Please, dear, you know I get -- ah -- headaches when you talk like this," and Pike later told her, "You know, those 'headaches' are hereditary. Do you really want to bring up children here?" et cetera. There were a couple of very brief shots of some of the other zoo specimens -- a large apey one and a fairly large birdy one, both looking bored.

Then all three years' blooper films were shown, after which they began a panel discussion and we left, hoping to see what was left of The Time Machine -- another of those overlaps. But it was in its final scenes, so we said the hell with it and had another nap.

At three there was a, yes, banquet. They introduced a small feature for this one which I hope will be copied: there was no High Table. Each table contained one celebrity and a dozen or so other people, and one could sign up ahead of time for the famous person of one's choice. We sat with Robert Bloch, who as I'd suspected is very pleasant company, and Mrs. Bloch took Hal and me for nineteen and somewhat younger respectively, which was great for my ego at any rate. Hal cannot properly appreciate youth, considering he's still got it.

I had to leave just as the speeches began, alas, because there was another darned overlap and I wanted to see Things to Come. From Hal's fragmentary memories I gather that the Melies Awards were presented, and Harlan got one for "Demon with a Glass Hand." And Mr. Bloch made a speech, saying things like, "If you've ever waited for a hotel elevator, you know why King Kong climbed up the outside of the building," and, "So then they knock him out and decide to put him on a raft and ship him home to his island. Now, in the first place, the ship's too small. In the second place, they can't carry enough food for him. In the third place, I don't want to be on that ship when he wakes up and gets seasick!" and, "After that came Son of Kong -- he wasn't as big as King Kong, but then Fay Wray wasn't very big either."

I was at Things to Come. I am fond of that film. The opening scenes are really awfully accurate (it's a perfectly good World War II film, made in 1935), and the closing scenes are really awfully inaccurate (you shoot a moon rocket out of a series of guns, one inside the other, and the outside gun, get this, has a sight on it. Who's going to sight over it? The Eyeball that Sat Down on Tokyo?), and the middle part is rather good after-the-bomb science fiction before they invented the bomb. Hal arrived for the last bits of it.

By this time, like every con since the hallowed first probably, they were running late. So along came David Gerrold,

saying, "I'm supposed to speak for half an hour, and we're 24 minutes behind schedule. So I'll answer questions for six minutes, and then we'll show 'Tribbles' and be back on schedule. Now, your first question, 'How can you break into television writing?' You can't. Next question?" And he answered a few and then they put on "Tribbles."

By the way, somebody other than David indicated that part of Shatner's Weltschmerz out of that show derived from an allergy to tribble fur. I'd like to hear more about that. Anybody keep track of the Captain's rashes?

After "Tribbles" there was a most agonizing overlap. We had our choice of Metropolis or The Seven Faces of Dr. Lao. We said Woe Alas a lot and saw Metropolis, and it turned out to be the right choice because it seems Dr. Lao is going to be on the telly one of these times. In our area, anyway. So we saw Metropolis and that was the last agonizing conflict of the evening. I mean, we could have seen The Thing instead of Forbidden Planet, but I'd rather read the Campbell version. The print of Forbidden Planet, unfortunately, like most I've seen in recent years, has undergone color changes. The beautiful deep turquoise sky of Altair IV was muddled to a drab olive green. This time, however, I got a slightly better look at the Id Monster and discovered I'd been misinterpreting it all these years. I always thought it was more or less simian, with two arms and two legs and a large massive head set into its large massive shoulders. Uh-uh. It was a large, quasi-round head set on two legs and that was it. Almost like a baby chick, but not the kind you'd want to find in your breakfast egg. It was adept at standing on one leg and doing people or things in with the other, and this explained why it tended to brush people aside rather than grabbing them. It did manage to pick up Lt. Farmer between its pad and its claw, but it didn't have much in the way of manipulation. Perhaps now we know more about what the Krell looked like, because of course this two-legged head was a very good shape for going through a Krell door. But they must have had some tentacles or whatnot somewhere, with all those buttons to push. On the other hand, maybe they hadn't and that's why they were so anxious to develop power without physical instrumentalities.

That was the last film. We oozed into bed and left the next morning.

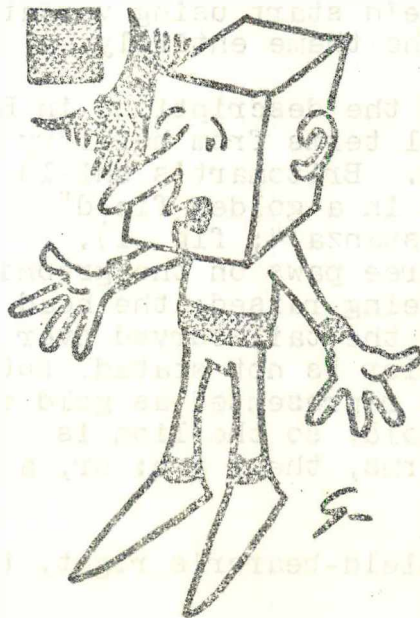
Ah, yes, Seymour. I heard more damned enigmatic references to Seymour all through the convention: "They say Seymour's coming." "I got Seymour's autograph." "Ricky Schwartz as the Real Seymour." "Seymour's supposed to be at Table No. Umpty." He turns out to run the local version of Creature Features, and I still don't know what he looks like but if Ricky Schwartz is to be believed he wears a broad-brimmed black hat like a southern Senator in a cartoon.



Ah, yes, Spock's and Kirk's surrogates. Those who attended LACon will recall a very young man with a lovely blue shirt and shiny black bangs, with Terran ears but all in all looking more like Spock than he has any right to. Well, he's found a buddy who looks more like Kirk than he has any right to, and they go around in their exceedingly well-made uniforms causing whiplash in the suddenly-turned necks of incautious spectators. The trouble is, Spock and Kirk weren't a Commander and a Captain at the age of fifteen or so. They ought to have lovely grey-blue cadets' uniforms with gold sunbursts on them, like Finnegan's. I don't know if you can become a cadet at fifteen or so, but then we all know Spock and Kirk were both demon students. (By which I do not mean to imply they studied demons. I'm sure they left that to the Draculans.)

It was really a very pleasant con, all things considered. I wish there had been less overlapping and more duplications -- maybe not to the extent SFCon took of having everything run at least twice, because nobody is going to want to see every last little frame. At least I hope and trust not. But I wouldn't have missed, say, The Time Machine or The Raven if they hadn't been there at all; and I was exceedingly frustrated that they were there and I couldn't see them. The Committee freely attests that the Filmcon is in an experimental state and will probably change a lot. Maybe they can arrange for some reshewing of some of the older, less expensive films?

Anyhow, it beats turkey at the in-laws'.





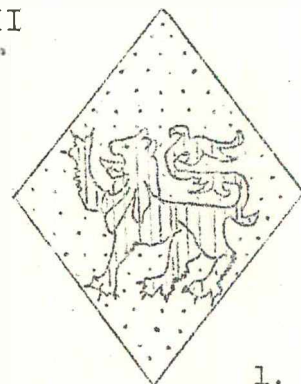
LIKE - SEEMING SHIELDS  
by Ruth Berman

At the 1971 Westcon, Boncueur of the Society for Creative Anachronism happened to remark that it would be a good idea if the SCA went through various works of literature and made a list of fictional shields. The Society forbids the use of names or shields already used by either historical or fictional people -- but it is easier to find out if a design has been used in the historical past than if it has been used in the fictional past. I offered to go through Spenser's "Faerie Queene" (and give myself the pleasure of re-reading it) and make a list of the designs pre-empted by the knights of Gloriana's world. Once I was done, I was surprised to discover that the listings fell into a pattern.

Many Spenserian scholars have suggested that Books III and IV represent the earliest layer of "The Faerie Queene." The types of blazonings of arms used by Spenser fall into groups which tend to support this theory.

The blazonings in Books III and IV are the most detailed in the poem, and they make use of figures which are more often like those in conventional heraldry; the blazonings in Books I and II are less detailed and less conventional; the blazonings in Book V are few and lack detail, and there are no blazonings in Book VI. It seems unlikely that a writer would first make use of unconventional devices, then limit himself to conventional ones, and then stop using either kind. It's more likely that the writer would follow convention at first and then, finding the conventions too limiting, that he'd start using variations on the theme and finally stop using the theme entirely.

The language of the descriptions in Books III and IV uses technical terms from heraldry oftener than the other books. Britomart's shield "bore a Lion passant in a golden field" (Book III, canto i, stanza 4; fig. 1).  
Passant: walking, three paws on the ground, the dexter forepaw being raised; the head looking forward, and the tail curved over the back. The lion's color is not stated, but lions are most often represented as gold or red. The field is gold, so the lion is probably red. Her arms, then, are: or, a lion passant gules.

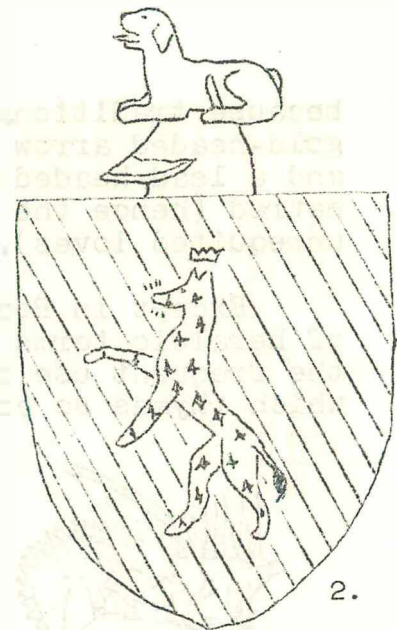


1.


(Dexter: the shield-bearer's right, therefore the viewer's left.)

The field: the entire surface of the shield is called the field.

Artegall's crest "was covered with a couchant Hound" (III.ii.25). Couchant: crouching, with legs and belly on the ground, looking forward, tail passed between the hind legs and its end erect. Artegall's shield had a "crowned little Ermine/ That deckt the green field with his faire pouldred skin." (Fig. 2.) A field is said to be powdered when a charge is many times repeated in it so as to form a pattern. Spenser here seems to have confused the conventional representation of a field covered with ermine furs, in which the field is powdered with spots representing the tails, with the appearance of a single ermine.



However, it's possible that he actually means that the ermine is depicted with an ermine tincture. He doesn't give the position of the ermine, but as the copy of Boutell's Heraldry (revised by J.P. Brooke-Little, London, 1970) I'm using as source for heraldic information happens to have a drawing of an ermine rampant, that's what I've shown. Artegall's arms (leaving out such unknowns as the position of the ermine and the tinctures of the hound and crown) are: vert, an ermine ermine crowned; crest: a hound couchant.

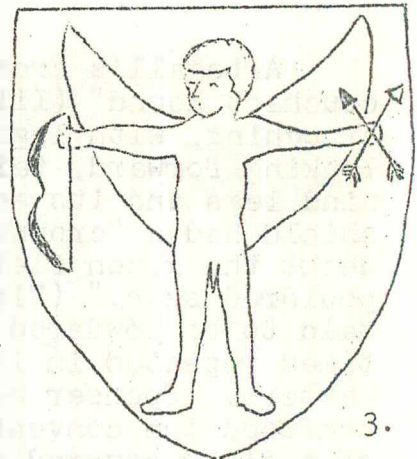
A somewhat confusing detail in the description of Artegall is the mention of his armour as "round about yfretted all with gold,/ In which there written was with cyphers old,/ Achilles armes, which Arthegall did win." It's tempting to suppose that the lines mean that Artegall's shield has a border of gold frets (a fret is an interlacing of two diagonal stripes and a lozenge: ) , with the motto written in some contrasting tincture on the border. But "Achilles armes" in this case means his "armour" (and perhaps his sword), not his shield. So it's the armour itself -- breast-plate, back-plate, etc. -- which is fretted with gold all over, not his coat-of-arms. And I am at a loss to tell where the letters are -- possibly across his chest and back, like the numbers on a football uniform.

Sir Scudamore "bore/ The God [of Love], with wings displayed wide" (IV.i.39; fig. 3). Displayed: wings are displayed when the body is affronté (facing the viewer), usually with the head turned to the dexter, and with wings and legs spread out on each side, the wing-tips upwards. In a later passage, Spenser refers to the figure of Cupid "emblazond" on Scudamore's shield (IV.x.55), and mentions that the design includes "his killing bow/ And cruell shafts." I would guess that the Cupid holds the bow in one hand and the arrows -- something like the United States eagle. In the drawing I've shown two arrows specifically,



because traditionally Cupid uses a gold-headed arrow to inspire love, and a lead-headed one to produce hatred (hence the great numbers of unrequited loves).

Except in Books III and IV, the use of heraldic terms is rare, except for the frequent use of the term "field," which rhymes so conveniently with "shield."



3.

In Book I, the lengthy description of Arthur's armor uses only one technical term. The dragon on his crest (fig. 4), like the hound on Artegall's, is "close couched on the bever" (I.vii.31):



4.

For all the crest a Dragon did enfold  
With greedie pawes, and over all did spred  
His golden wings: his dreadfull hideous hed  
Close couched on the bever, seem'd to throw  
From flaming mouth bright sparkles firie  
red,  
That suddeine horror to faint harts did  
show;  
And scaly taylor was stretcht adowne his backe  
full low.

Considered as an actual crest -- something Arthur supposedly wore on his head -- it seems a little unlikely. A dragon shooting flames is easy enough to draw -- but to sculpt in three dimensions on a helmet? Still, the crafty "seem'd" suggests that the flames are not really there. If they are not, the crest may be described, "a dragon couchant or langued gules," without the addition of "breathing out flames gules." Note also that the position of the tail is not curled up against the body as in the definition of couchant quoted from the Boutell; but I suppose that the positions had probably not become so completely stylized in Spenser's time as they are now. To be precise, of course, Spenser doesn't say that the dragon is "couchant," only its head. But a dragon with its head down would look silly rather than horrifying unless its body was resting as well.

The following stanza (I.vii.32) complicates the crest further:

Upon the top of all his loftie crest,  
A bunch of haire discoloured diversly,  
With sprinkled pearll and gold full richly drest,  
Did shake, and seem'd to daunce for jollity.



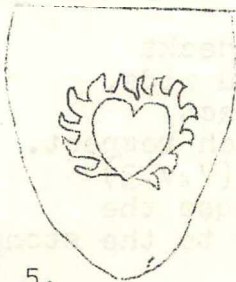
There scarcely seems to be room for that Homeric hank of hair. If the dragon enfolds all the crest, from its head on the beaver to its tail stretching down the back, where does a knot of hairs go? -- especially when the verse goes on to compare that bunch of hairs on the crest to an almond tree "all alone" on the top of a mountain? I suppose the lines could be rationalized by suggesting that the hairs are a kind of mane on the dragon. But Spenser was often careless in such details, and what probably happened was that he wrote two descriptions, one Homeric and one medieval, and decided to use both without noticing the slight discrepancy.

In Book VI, Tristram does not wear armor, but his stylish buskins are "paled part per part" (VI.ii.6). A shield parted per pale would be a shield of two colors divided lengthwise by a line down the middle.

In Books III and IV no character has a motto actually lettered on his shield, except Artegall, who while in disguise wears armor decked with "woody moss" and carries a "ragged shield" with "saluagesse sans finnesse" written on it (IV.iv.39). Also, of course, his normal armor bears an inscription, although not on the shield, and "Achilles armes, which Arthegall did win" is not precisely a motto emblematic of the bearer's character.

In Books I and II there are four characters who bear lettered shields: the three Saracen brothers in Book I, Sans Joy, Sans Loy, and Sans Foy, each of them bearing his name on his shield in red letters, and Atin, in Book II, whose shield is "a flaming fire in midst of bloudy field,/ And round about the wreath this word was writ,/ Burnt I do burne." If his field is red, the fire must be gold, I should think, and probably the wreath and letters of the same. Lettered shields occur in conventional heraldry (the best known is probably Oxford's "dominus illuminatio mea"), but they are rare, and I don't know of any which consist of the bearer's name.

The figures and fields described in Books III and IV are mostly ones found frequently in conventional heraldry: lion, hound, ermine, the burning heart (fig. 5) on Paridell's coat of arms (III.viii.45); golden field and green field. Satyrane's use of a human head (specifically a satyr's head; fig. 6) and Scudamore's use of a god are a little unusual in conventional heraldry, but such figures sometimes occur.



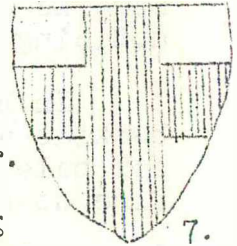
Arthur's shield in Book I is deliberately unconventional in having a diamond field, and it is highly unusual in having no figure on the field, although



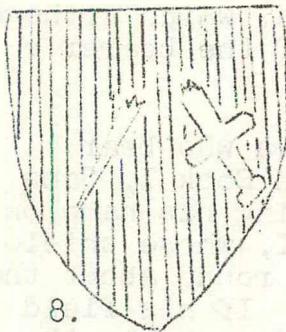
a few such unmarked fields are known. For example, according to tradition, Brutus Greenshield (who is mentioned in "The Faerie Queene, II,x.23-24) bore a plain green field. The unconventional diamond field is not mentioned in the descriptions of Arthur in Books III and IV, as it is in the preceding and following books.

The shields of the three Saracen brothers in Book I are unusual in having no device -- so far as the narrator tells us -- except the letters of their names.

Among the characters in Book I, only the Red Cross Knight has entirely conventional arms (argent, a cross gules; fig. 7), and his are assigned to him by tradition, not created by Spenser.

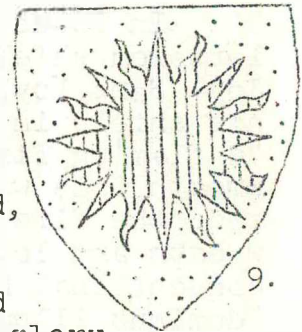


In Book II, Guyon's shield is unusual in having a human head on it, and it is unconventional in having a head which is a recognizable portrait of a single individual, Gloriana, the Fairy Queen. Atin's shield is unconventional in its use of a motto on the shield.



8.

In the later books, Spenser seems to have lost interest in the use of arms as a symbol of the bearer. Sanglier, in Book V, bears a conventional shield, "A broken sword within a bloody field;/ Expressing well his nature" (V.i.19; fig. 8), and Braggadocchio appears with a shield "which bore the Sunne brode blazed in a golden field" (V.iii.14; fig. 9). Given a golden field,



9.

the most likely tincture for the sun is red: or, the sun in its glory gules. (Curiously, this design is very close to a historical shield mentioned in the Boutell's: "Argent, the sun in glory gules -- De la Haye.) But Burbon's shield is described only obliquely; it has "his deare Redeemers badge vpon the bosse" (V.xi.53), and is an imitation of the Redcross Knight's shield, differenced by reducing the size of the cross.

The description of Radigund's shield is similarly vague:

And on her shoulder hung her shield, bedeckt  
Vppon the bosse with stones, that shined wide,  
As the faire Moone in her most full aspect,  
That to the Moone it mote be like in each respect.  
(V.v.3)

The syntax is confusing in this description, because the phrase "that shined wide" seems at first to refer to the stones,



but the use of the singular in "that to the Moone it mote be like" suggests that the phrase "that shined wide" refers back to the shield. Spenser probably means the reader to assume that the shield has a silver field, from the comparison to the moon, but he does not say what figures, if any, are formed by the gems on the boss.

In Book VI, no shields are described at all even where the plot would seem to demand such a description. Turpin gives directions for recognizing Arthur in terms of the savage man accompanying him, with no mention of the distinctive shield. Calidore's shield is never described, and he is almost alone among the major characters in that respect. Of the other title characters, only Campbell and Triamond, who are far less important in their book than Calidore is in his, go unblazoned, and, even so, a brief description is given of the shields of Triamond and his brothers, Priamond and Diamond, as "scutchins gilt" (IV.iii.5). It could be argued that, as the knight most torn by the desire to escape knightly responsibility, it is thematically fitting for Calidore to appear with a shield which is never described, but the Red Cross Knight and Artegall undergo somewhat similar temptations.

Even Book IV, compared to Book III, shows a slight decrease in Spenser's interest in blazoning shields, although he devotes attention to the shields of Scudamore and the disguised Artegall. But where he describes the shields of Satyrane and Britomart, he avoids doing so in terms of the figures emblazoned on their shields. Satyrane's shield, previously described as bearing a "Satyres hed" (III.vii.30), is described in terms of his allegiance, and becomes his "maiden-headed shield" (IV.iv.17) when he leads the party of the Knights of Maidenhead at his tournament. When Ate (who does not know that Britomart is a woman under all that armor) describes Britomart, she says, "in his shield he beares/ (That well I wote) the heads of many broken speares" (IV.i.48). Normally, someone describing distinctive characteristics of an armored knight would give the design on the face of the shield; the main purpose of decorating a shield was to make it possible to tell one knight in armor from another. But Spenser here ignores the use of blazoning in favor of a description which is in accord with the speaker's love of dissension. (Spenser's use of the preposition "in," instead of the more usual "on" or "upon" makes it clear that the spear-heads are literal spear-heads, stuck in the shield from previous battles, not painted spear-heads. In fact, the description managed to trip up L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt in The Incomplete Enchanter -- they described Britomart's shield as "a black field on which broken spear points were picked out with silver.")

However, in Book IV as in Book III, Spenser uses the situation of recognizing a knight by the arms he bears more conven-

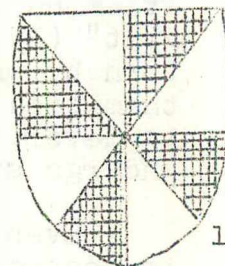


tionally than he does elsewhere. Satyrane recognizes Paridell by his arms (III.viii.45), and Blandamour recognizes Scudamore by his (IV.i.39). But Una is deceived into thinking Archimago is her knight "by his like seeming shield" (I.iii.26), and, as mentioned before, Turpin does not bother to mention Arthur's shield in telling others how to recognize him.

Both the descriptions of shields and the descriptions of characters' reactions to shields are handled more conventionally in Books III and IV than elsewhere. Unless there is a thematic purpose (and I cannot see one) for using much conventional heraldry in Books III and IV, much unconventional heraldry in Books I and II, and almost no heraldry in Books V and VI, the probability that Books III and IV were written first, and that Spenser began to feel heraldry too limiting and then dropped it, seems to me the most likely explanation.

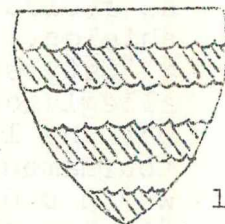
\* \* \* \*

De Camp and Pratt made a number of additions to Spenserian heraldry in The Incomplete Enchanter. The best known, of course, is their donation to Sir Campbell of a shield of "gyronny of black and silver" (fig. 10) -- a complimentary allusion to the real-life arms of John Campbell's family.



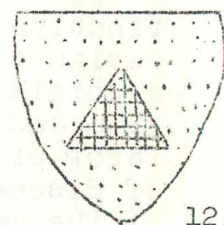
10.

With Paridell they ignored the burning heart mentioned in Book III, and bestowed on him a shield marked with "engrailed green bars" (fig. 11) -- I don't know why.



11.

To Sir Ferramont, a minor villain, they assigned a gold shield with a black triangle, obviously punning on the name (iron mountain), (fig. 12). They added an oak-leaf crest to Artegall's disguise, with brass oak leaves fastened to his armor to give it the "mossy" look described by Spenser. (They didn't explain what Spenser meant by a "ragged shield," and I don't know what it could be, unless it meant the shield was scarred from many blows.) They assigned "three crossed arrows" to Sir Elandamour -- probably to suggest a perversion of the arrows on Scudamour's shield, for Blandamour is an enemy to true love.



12.

In "Ptolemaic Hi-jack," I created title characters for one of the unwritten books of the "Faerie Queene," the one which would have dealt with the virtue of constancy (and I assumed that the two cantos on Mutability Spenser wrote were to have gone in that book). The knight I called Adamantus, and his lady Constance. The lady's name sounds probable, but I'm afraid I

missed a bet in not noticing that at one point (III.viii.28) Spenser lists some of the names of Gloriana's knights, including among them a knight who never appeared in the poem as far as it was written: Sir Peridure. Sir More-than-hard would be a fine name for a constant knight. I like to think, though, that Spenser would have liked the arms I assigned to Adamantus: azure, a circle argent, representing the moon in the sky, because (in the Ptolemaic universe where the "Faerie Queene" takes place) the heavens are unchanging, and it is only beneath the moon's sphere that change occurs.

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## THE SAGA OF OLAF LOUDSNORE: DC(a)

by Ned Brooks

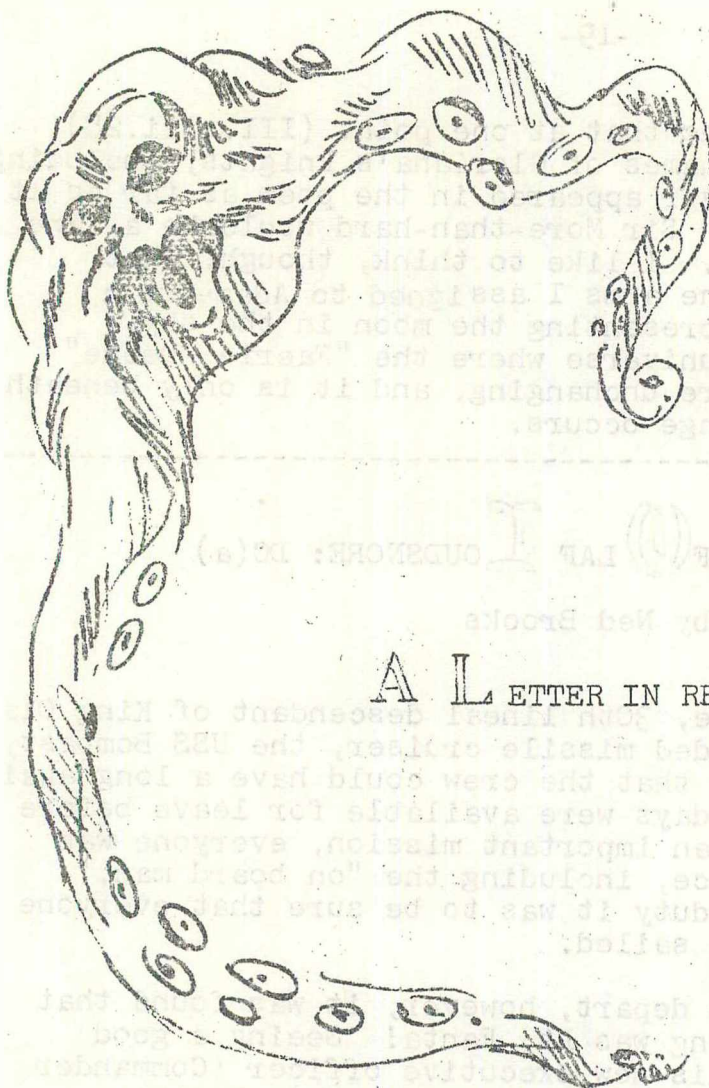
Captain Olaf Loudsnore, 30th lineal descendant of King Olaf Loudsnore, ordered his guided missile cruiser, the USS Bombast, into the port of Manila so that the crew could have a long awaited shore leave. As only two days were available for leave before the ship was to depart on an important mission, everyone was allowed to go ashore at once, including the "on board man," Lt. Fanta, M., whose sole duty it was to be sure that everyone was on board when the ship sailed.

When the time came to depart, however, it was found that the only crew member missing was Lt. Fanta! Seeing a good opportunity to embarrass his new executive officer (Commander Libby, R., one of the Navy's few women officers), Captain Loudsnore ordered her ashore to locate the missing "boardman."

Upon making inquiries in various low dives in Manila -- for she knew well Lt. Fanta's reputation -- Commander Libby learned that he had been seen headed for Tagalog Town, a "native village" maintained for the benefit of the tourist trade. Making her way to the collection of thatched huts in the midst of a rather run-down jungle, she found the chief's nubile daughter Wanna perched somewhat uncomfortably atop an oversize "cannibal" cookpot, which sat on a small but picturesque fire. This seemed odd, so Commander Libby demanded to know what was in the pot. Wanna pretended she did not speak English, but as a yelling and clanging was heard from the pot, she jumped off the lid, and as the overheated "boardman" emerged steaming, she said in her phony pidgin English:

"Just Fanta, Ms., a hot damn gobby...."





Note: if it goes as planned, Harlan Ellison will publish a re-written version of this letter as essay, along with a reprint of "That Only an Amateur," in Clarion 3.

A LETTER IN RE: "That Only an Amateur"  
from Harlan Ellison

Dear Ruth:

Many thanks for the complimentary copy of No 12 and for the comments re my introduction to Greg Benford's A, DV story. What you say about "unknown" vs. "amateur" is to the point and interesting.

I must confess I even agree with quite a lot of what you set down, even though it contravenes my position in the Introduction in A, DV.

The problem -- if there is one, and I suspect we are talking about the same thing in different agreement -- is that the subject is a big one and, confoundingly, one that seems to defy definition without deep and extensive examination of terminology. It's like defining sf -- the best definition of sf is "anything I point to and say that's sf." Likewise, the only satisfactory definition of "amateur" is what we would both point to and say, "that's amateur."

The problem manifests itself in both my Introduction and your essay in the limited space available for examination of the question. Had either of us gone on at greater length, I think we might have found our seemingly contrary views converging.

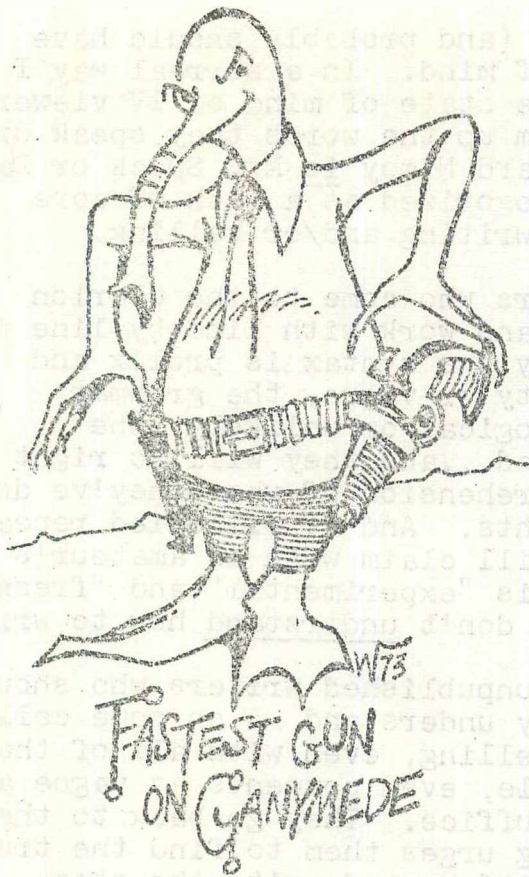


Amateurism, I suppose I meant (and probably should have stated more clearly), is a state of mind. In a surreal way I typify it, and identify it with the state of mind of TV viewers who think the actors actually dream up the words they speak or, even more horribly, who think Leonard Nimoy is Mr. Spock or Dan Blocker was Hoss. It could be categorized as a lack of core understanding of the realities of writing and/or selling.

For instance: there are writers who come to the Clarion Workshops whom you can take aside and work with line-by-line on a defective story, pointing out why the syntax is prolix and broken-backed, the language unpretty or vague, the grammar clearly "schoolgirl," the plot illogical or unlikely, the characterization shallow and cliched...and they will go right back and do it again, with no comprehension of what they've done wrong, or how it can be set to rights. And if pilloried repeatedly for these same crimes, they will claim with an amateur's arrogance that what they're doing is "experimental" and "fresh," when the truth is simply that they don't understand how to write.

On the other hand: there are unpublished writers who show in their work the spark that says they understand -- on some cellular level perhaps -- the art of storytelling, even with all of the flaws noted above. For those people, even comments as vague as "Make your characters more real" suffice. They go back to the work and their native understanding urges them to find the truth in the work, to peel away the falsities, and write the story more muscularly.

Recourse to authority is easily the cheapest way to win an argument and I assure you I won't do it here, but I merely offer as some validity of my position the knowledge I've gained in having read perhaps two thousand manuscripts for the DANGEROUS VISIONS books, hundreds of stories as an instructor in writing-workshops, and a vast number of silly letters from people who want to write and ask me for advice or instruction or agenting services. It is possible (within proscribed limits, for there are always exceptions) to tell an amateur from a potential professional. Every editor can do it. Silverberg and Terry Carr and I have sat and talked about how it's possible to tell if a story in submitted manuscript form is of interest or simply the work of a dub, by reading the first page and the last. It may seem chill -- to the kind of mind that thinks one should love all members of all minorities simply because they are members of a minority rather than judging each individual on his or her own merits and defects -- but that editorial method is used by every editor I've ever talked to about the problem. There are simply people who will never be professional in their writing habits or abilities, and to waste time with them is to steal it from those who have the talent and need the attention.



As for scaring off those with talent...it can't be done, Ruth. Ciardi may have made you quiver, but he made you examine your work and yourself, and he didn't scare you off...you sold to Saturday Review. It didn't scare me off when my college English professor told me I had no talent and should forget writing as a career. It didn't scare off any of the writers who understood that writing is a holy chore and they had been touched with the gift. It only scares off dilettantes and amateurs whose abilities are tiny or non-existent, or whose lack of ego and feelings of self-worth would doom them much more quickly than the harshest words a critic could employ.

Your sentiments do you honor, Ruth, but as a woman who clearly has writing ability and talent, you should toughen up. To be so all-inclusively Florence

Nightingale about the talentless and amateur will serve you ill in years to come. The amateur will descend on you -- as they have on me and Silverberg and all the others who have made some small mark -- and waste your time, drain your resources, nickel-&-dime you to tears with their endless demands, their silly letters, their vague dreams and desires. The ones who are not amateurs will understand that only they, themselves, can bring those dreams and desires to fulfillment, that there are no magic shortcuts or arcane rituals proffered by writers who have made it. They are realists -- even if they are dreamers -- and they are professional -- even if they've never sold -- and they will find their own paths, as each of us has.

Finally, I must thank you for that essay. A great deal of careful work and thought go into the DV introductions, and far more than as merely snippets of comment or gossip they are (hopefully) intended to stir discussion. Nine times out of nine, reviewers and fan writers see the work as frippery and choose to analyze me rather than the philosophies expressed therein. Yours is the first genuine example I've seen of a reader's perception that there is some substance there to be masticated.



((The club apa is relatively new in fandom. Info for those unacquainted with it: the members of a club who care to participate prepare a few pages -- or several pages, sometimes, in Minneapa, which has several Talkative Little Blaggards. At the meeting, the pages are collated and stapled. People from outside the area can participate by getting a local member to put their pages into the distribution and mail them their copies of the distributions. Club apas have a speed-of-communication and an intimacy which are appealing. One drawback is that only a few readers see the material. Tom Digby is an original thinker who writes almost exclusively for his own Probably Something in Apa-E and Minneapa. Here are some selections from his Minneapa contributions.))

P ROBABLY S OMETHING T HINGS  
by Tom Digby

PROBABLY SOMETHING 8/9/72 but not THINKING THERE EXISTS A SET OF "TREE LAWS OF ROBOTICS" FOR ARTIFICIAL PLANTS BECAUSE SOME INDEXER MADE A TYPO

But what would such a set of Laws be like? Would there be things like rules against robot trees putting their roots into sewers or tearing up sidewalks unless ordered to do so by a qualified human? Would such trees have to let children climb them? What about lovers carving hearts and initials? What about the confidentiality of conversations held under them? Would a robot tree be allowed to testify in court, and could it sue a driver who ran into it? And when Robot's Lib arrives, will a robot tree be considered the equal of more humanoid robots or will it be just a tree?

PROBABLY SOMETHING 8/23/72 but not STARTING A SUPERSTITION TO THE EFFECT THAT A CAT IN A SPACESHIP IN FREE FALL WILL ALWAYS KEEP ITS FEET TOWARD THE NEAREST PLANET

As you can see, this is a logical (sort of) derivation from the fact that cats usually land on their feet when jumping or dropping from a height. There may be legends of some ship being lost but finding its way to a planet by watching the antics of the ship's cat, and it won't get checked too often because cats may not (or again they may) take well to free fall (imagine trying to empty the sandbox under such conditions).

PROBABLY SOMETHING 11/4/72 but not DESIGNING ICE SKATES FOR MERMEN LIVING IN MINNESOTA LAKES

Within the last month or two paving crews have done the following to Santa Monica Blvd (which runs about a block from here): Paved over the railroad tracks in the middle of the street; Painted lines, crosswalks, etc.; Paved another layer of paving over that; Painted lines, crosswalks, etc., on the new paving; Come by with a sandblasting truck and erased some of the just-painted lines; Painted new lines a few feet over to make left turn lanes; Put reflecting markers on these (hopefully?) final lines. Maybe next week they'll install new railroad tracks in the street?



PROBABLY SOMETHING 12/2/72  
but not USING A TIME MACHINE  
TO MAKE CORRECTIONS FOR A  
PERFORMER'S POOR SENSE OF  
RHYTHM BY SHUFFLING HIM  
SLIGHTLY BACK OR AHEAD TO  
COMPENSATE

Of course it may  
require computer assistance  
because the required actions  
of sending him 1/10 second  
ahead for the first couple  
of beats of each measure and  
back to the present for the  
rest except in case of cer-  
tain figures where you send  
him back 1/8 second for beat  
2 only or whatever may be  
too much for human reflexes.  
And it'll probably require  
another musician "playing"  
the controls of the computer-  
assisted time machine anyway  
to take care of what the  
others do during various  
songs.

PROBABLY SOMETHING 12/16/72  
but not DECORATING THE CATS  
FOR CHRISTMAS INSTEAD OF  
GETTING A TREE

Of course there might be problems like they keep wiggling  
and scratching and tear off a lot of the tinsel and stuff and  
they tend to run all over the room and pull the plug for the  
lights out of the socket. Maybe that's why you don't hear  
about things being "all lit up like a Christmas cat" very often.

And if you try to put presents under them they tear off the  
wrappings and get into all kinds of other mischief. But there  
are few things that are as attention-getting as a well-decorated  
Christmas cat.

THAT GRAIN ELEVATOR IS FULL OF LEFTOVER COMMENTS.... A while back  
I asked the clerk in a head-shop-type place about the price of  
something and she said "I'm not sure, but I think about a  
dollar." (The place is fairly informally run.) The idea  
occurred of Federal Reserve Notes marked similarly -- that they  
represent an approximate amount which isn't known exactly. How  
you deposit a "not sure but about a dollar" bill in the bank I  
will leave for future discussion.



No and Yes: Letters

from Jackie Franke, Box 51-A RR 2 Beecher IL 60401

Though I enjoyed reading them, I can't really figure out just what "Letters from England" are! Fiction or truth? They have a very Victorian flavor, with all those references to "A," "B" and so forth, which makes me tend to consider them fictional. However, it could be that your sister does write letters to home in this manner and you merely concealed the identity of the persons she referred to. Maybe the two of you read too much Sherlock Holmesian material.

((real correspondance, identites concealed. But I'm afraid it was a mistake to use letters-instead-of-names -- spoiled the flow of the reading. My apologies to the readers and to Jean.))

Liked the Astrology bit. Read it to Wally, who grinned with appreciation. Being a Gemini, I found you hit your mark fully on my sign and I suspect on a few others as well. Isn't it odd how a faith (for it must be considered so) can have so many detractors, but who yet can tell you not only their signs but what personality traits supposedly adhere to them? Tiz a puzzlement.

John Berry's article was a delight! He is giving me fits of jealousy though, traipsing all over the continent like that. Hadrian's Wall one time, Ibeza the next. He gets around more than Clifford Irving managed. Perhaps crime doesn't pay as well as more honest toil after all. I do hope that he will continue in his efforts at learning to swim (don't they have the equivalent of the YMCA in Britain?); after all, even if the salt water gave him a measure of buoyancy, he was making progress through it, which is swimming. Perhaps John is one of those rare individuals who simply sink when in fresh water. I've never seen one, but I've heard that they exist. In that case, he'll have to learn to perfect his speed stroke in water, momentum being the only thing that could keep him up. Treading water would be definitely Out.

I liked your responses to Ellison's put-down of amateurism. There are good amateurs, and poor ones; just as being paid for your work doesn't make you instantly Great, so not being paid doesn't make you instantly lousy. In order to sell, a writer has to present his material to someone who will buy -- and not everyone can or wants to do that. A writer is a person who wants to write, does it competently, and gains some sort of reward from doing so. The reward may be totally within his own mind. It has no bearing on the relative value of his work what sort reward it is -- cash or a feeling of self-worth. Diaries have been published after their writers' deaths, and have been the only written

material by them that ever saw print. They were never paid for their endeavors. Does that make them Lousy? In order to be a writer, does one have to be the sort of person who can draw attention to himself? who has the right contacts, the drive, the push to be published? I don't think so.

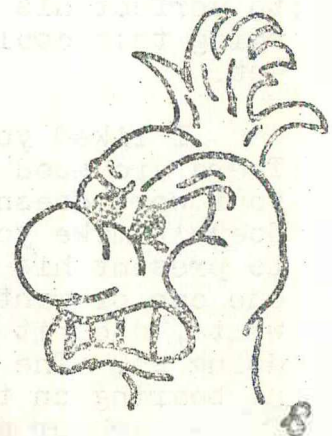
Being unpublished is no guarantee of talent, but being published is no guarantee, either. There are hundreds of books published every year that have no business seeing print, while some poor, shy soul who may scribe words of incredible beauty or truth onto paper and then do absolutely nothing with them is doomed forever to be termed an Incompetent Amateur? In a way, I wonder if Harlan isn't reacting to the various accusations made regarding his self-salesmanship -- some would call it arrogance -- and is more-or-less saying that every person who is a Writer Has to be Pushy.

((You've brought up here another definition of the term "amateur." The ones described in the Again Dangerous Visions essay are specifically those who do push themselves forward, and thereby waste the time of the editor who might otherwise have a little time to spend encouraging the competent, but shy amateur. Harlan, I think, suggests that there's no such thing as a shy, talented writer, because anyone with a talent will be driven by the need to use it. I think I'd agree with him that Writers do go on writing -- but they don't always go on submitting mss. for publication. Perhaps the most famous example is Emily Bronte, who wrote poems in secret and did not even show them to her sister, Charlotte. When Charlotte discovered the poems, she talked Emily and their younger sister Anne into publishing jointly a collection of their poems. The book didn't sell, so they tried novels, with somewhat more popular success. Without Charlotte's pushing, Emily might not have written Wuthering Heights and almost certainly would never have published anything. The problem from the editor's standpoint is to distinguish the badness of the beginner from the badness of the hopeless. Harlan's letter points out that the two kinds of badness can usually be distinguished in the workshop situation, but that's not much help to an editor.))

from Harry Warner, 423 Summit Avenue  
Hagerstown Maryland 21740

I was intrigued with Jean's reaction to There'll Always Be An. It comforted me in my stay-at-home pattern to know that I've driven on the left without crossing an ocean. Right here in Hagerstown it happened a while back. Most of the

For the thousandth time, not to -- NO!





city's main streets are one-way, and one day it was necessary to close four of five blocks of one street. This forced a temporary two-way traffic pattern on a parallel street and the way other one-way streets intersected forced police to bring opposing traffic through the left lane. Driving on it gave me the same guilty thrill that I get when I start rooting for a murderer or rapist who is giving authorities an unusually good battle in a movie.

As for Jean's antique impulses, I have a new theory about nostalgia. I suspect that the whole mania for collecting golden age radio premiums and comic books and World War Two ration coupons and the like is really a defense mechanism which is adopted by all the people who would really prefer to be collecting highboys and rare pottery and the other orthodox antiques. The older kinds of antiques just don't suit the modern world too well with its tendency to put people into smaller and smaller houses and apartments and to move families all over the continent every year or two. Most nostalgia collectibles take up little space and are as good after they've been dropped a few times as they were before.

The Underwater World of Jacques Berry is remarkable proof of how the world is changing, wet or dry. It has been only a few years since you could read any John Berry article in confidence about the tiny sector of one very small country which would be its setting, and with almost equal certainty that the article would involve one or more of a group of perhaps a dozen people. Here we are, still more than a quarter-century away from the end of the century, and already John is writing articles about adventures in Spain with an almost-exclusive German hue for the extras, and all this occurs without the slightest hint of explanation on how the great change took place.

Connie's cover is an ingenious idea that is very well executed. I thought at first she'd done it by some kind of folded-paper technique, but closer inspection shows a minor difference (other than positive-negative) between the two halves. I'm too old to have watched Captain Video, but the back cover teaches me one thing, at least: control panels weren't any more believable in the early science fiction on television than they are on current productions.

from Loren MacGregor, Box 636 Seattle WA 98111

I'm afraid I couldn't finish the Letters from England; it had too much of the flavor of soap opera/Gothic novel/diary-type thing for my own taste. I also got the feeling that Jean really didn't care a great deal for many of the people she met or was traveling with, since a lot of the comments were either non-committal or negative.

On the other hand, I did enjoy your Zodiac. I've always said that I'm deathly ill and had a lousy disposition, but now I can be sure and secure in the knowledge that I'm simply a lunatic; this, of course, allows me to decide that my deathly illness is purely psychosomatic.

John Berry's account of his swimming trials really struck me to heart, as a confirmed non-swimmer who tries every summer to earn his water-wings. I go out each year with the utmost in confidence, certain that somehow during the previous winter the knowledge has osmosed itself into my body. So I dive into the water, calm and secure in my abilities, and swim halfway out to the docks before realizing that I'm shipping water at points where I shouldn't be. That knowledge is usually enough to send me scurrying back to the shore, but occasionally I've gotten over halfway, and decide (through necessity) that the dock is the closest point of refuge.

Then I spend the next few minutes recuperating.

Conreport: well, yes, an egotrip. Fairly easily read, tho.  
from George Scithers, Box 8243 Philadelphia PA 19101

Olaf Loudsnore less than par -- it took too long for me to figure out the joke. Perhaps puns and other jokes require an optimum time to figure out -- those too obvious and caught at once, and those too obscure and caught only after prolonged study don't "click" right, whilst there is an intermediate degree of difficulty and delayed reaction that is perfect for the funniness of a joke. Um?

from Sheryl Birkhead, 23629 Woodfield Road Gaithersburg MD 20760

Your sister must have had a very good time. I doubt if I could have nutshellized any trip I've taken and gotten so much said.

John Berry's tale was great! I almost drowned when I was about seven and from then until I was about fourteen I wouldn't go out of my own depth. Then one day at the swimming pool for some unexplainable reason the sight of a four year old paddling several lengths of the pool gave me that IF\*HE\*CAN\*DO\*IT\*I\*CAN\*DO\*IT feeling, and I did.

I like the Olaf... Stories -- are you planning to corral them one of these days and make a booklet out of them?

Bill Rotsler writes a, um, er..."different" type of loc.



from Jon Wilmunen, PO Box 7, Buhl MN 55713

Actually, No is not precisely my bag of tea -- I'm not much of an SF fan. Presently I'm more interested in classic fantasy -- am reading Hodgson's The Night Land -- weird, compelling, and fascinating. I don't find the literary style anywhere near as objectionable as Lin Carter does in his introduction. The steady slow plodding gives me time, as Holmes would say, "to introspect."

If you know of other zine editors who might be interested in some sketches, let me know.

from David Jenrette, Box 374 Coconut Grove Miami FL 33133

Would you run a note on TABEBUIAN? TABEBUIAN: new underground science/math/education mini-mag. Read/contribute: 6/\$1. Box 374, Miami FL 33133.

from Ted Schulz, 180 Mount Lassen Drive San Rafael CA 94903

Travelers' comments are always interesting, and your sister's most perceptive. Her last phrase really hit home. "...sad for myself that I have none" -- how pleasant (not really the right word, but...) it must be to believe.

Your cover is great -- and your artwork is generally good -- sometimes a little gray, but it's hard to get more ink on the page without spoiling too many.

from Frank Balazs, 19 High Street Croton-on-Hudson NY 10520

The main problem with the letters from England article was that I kept mixing up the alphabet. Was that A or C? Has G been mentioned before? Wasn't F the one who...? Why me?

from Laura Ruskin, c/o Mythrill, Mythopoeic Society, Box 24150 Los Angeles California 90024

Would you consider mentioning us? We certainly could use the exposure. People who take Mythrill remark how much they enjoy it, etc.

((Mythrill, 75¢/one or \$2.25/four, is a fanzine of fantasy fiction and poetry, mostly along the lines of Faerie as described in Tolkien's Tree and Leaf, although they've published some sword-and-sorcery, some Weird Tales kinds, etc. Not the quality of a professional magazine, but there aren't any professional fantasy magazines at present, and the material is good enough to be pleasant reading.))

from Buck Coulson, Route 3 Hartford City IN 47348

"Tauruses are generally pretty dumb" are they? I'll remember that remark.... I'll come to Minicon and not speak a word to

anybody, so there. You'll have to converse in sign language.

I suppose one way to tell an amateur writer from an unknown writer is to find out how long the individual in question has been collecting rejection slips. If he's been writing steadily for 10 years with no sales, then he's an amateur.

from Dorothy Heydt, 386 Alcatraz Avenue Oakland CA 94618

Your discussion of Jewish science fiction was interesting. It brought a couple of things to mind:

(a) You made only a little mention of Avram Davidson's "The Golem." Did you consider it fantasy? It isn't. The incredulous might dismiss the story of Rabbi Löw's golem as fantasy, but the rest of the story involves a perfectly good (or wicked) robot.

(b) which reminded me of a conversation Hal, and Poul and Karen Anderson and I had a while back. We were talking about Isaac Asimov. More or less simultaneously, Hal said, "Dr. A.'s father created a mechanical son -- plug him into the wall and he writes," and Poul said, "Dr. A.'s father, as a devout man, was trying to bring about the coming of the Messiah, and almost made it." So then we said, "But Dr. A.'s father wasn't an engineer, he was a Talmudic scholar; if he were going to produce somebody by other than ordinary means he wouldn't have plugged him into the wall, but written the Tetragrammaton on his forehead. But Dr. A. doesn't have a Tetragrammaton on his forehead, therefore.... But perhaps he put it on with microfiche instead of clay? But I thought we agreed he wasn't an engineer." Anyway, we may have come up with a means of disguising the nature of a golem, if that's what you crave to do: put the Tetragrammaton on in sub-microscopic size. Nothing in the books says you have to be able to read it.

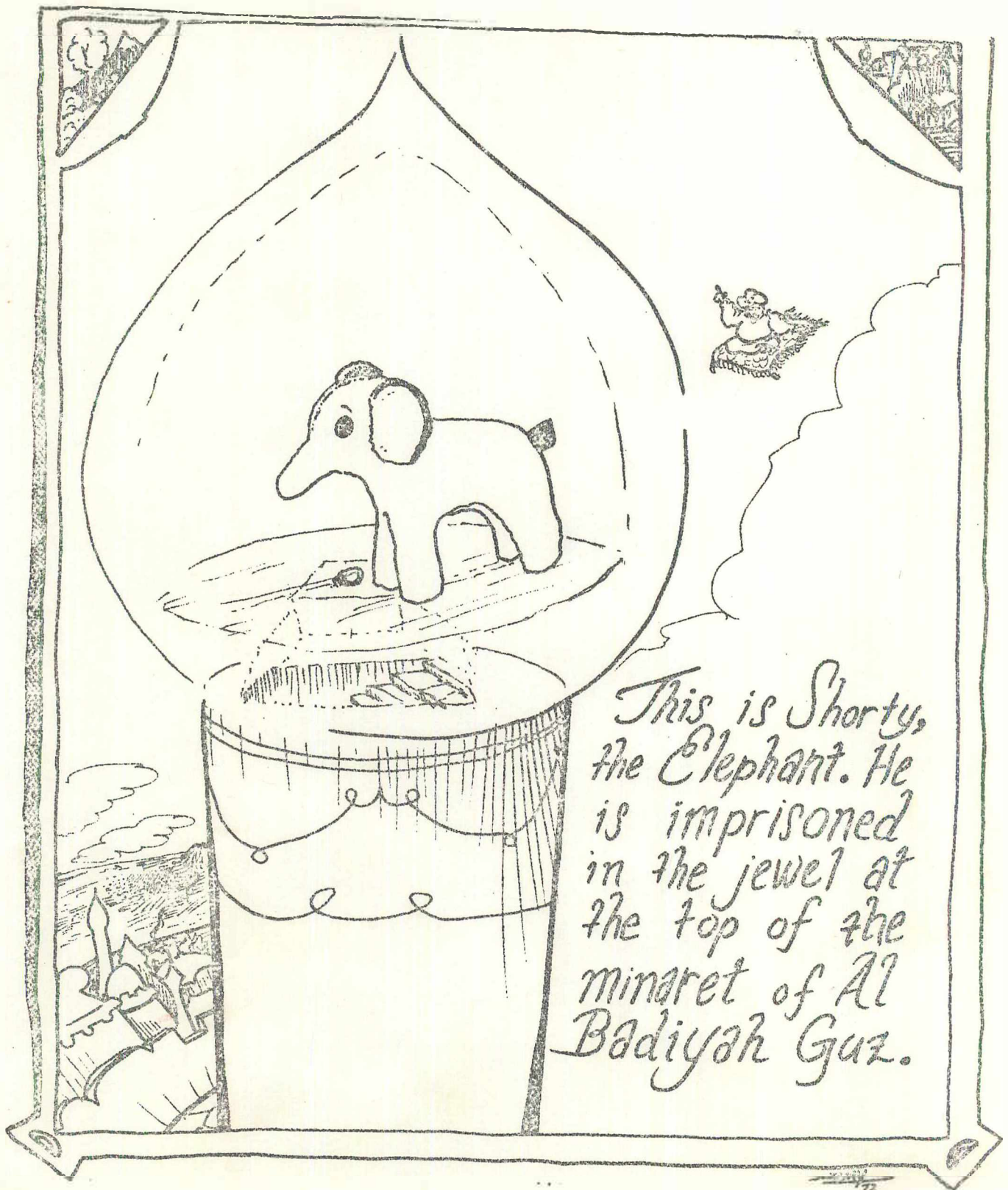
(c) Hal and I saw Fiddler on the Roof the other night, and watching Tevye dancing around singing about TRADITION called to mind that you could probably get good story material out of a batch of Eastern European Jews who, finding that life in Israel wasn't sufficiently tradition-oriented, emigrated to Antarctica, Mars, Delta Vega, you pick it...it would at any rate be a means of getting your umpteenth-century hero in contact with a culture which I gather is tending to disappear, what with modern customs creeping in.

from Sandra Miesel, 8744 N. Pennsylvania St. Indianapolis IN 46240

How did your sister get the impression Our Lady of Lourdes isn't an authorized Catholic devotion? Rome is shrewd, of course, and never approves of these things with much official enthusiasm. She says only that such and such a practice does no harm. (The benefit derived from visiting Lourdes is that the afflicted almost always come away better reconciled to their problems.)







This is Shorty,  
the Elephant. He  
is imprisoned  
in the jewel at  
the top of the  
minaret of Al  
Badiyah Gaz.