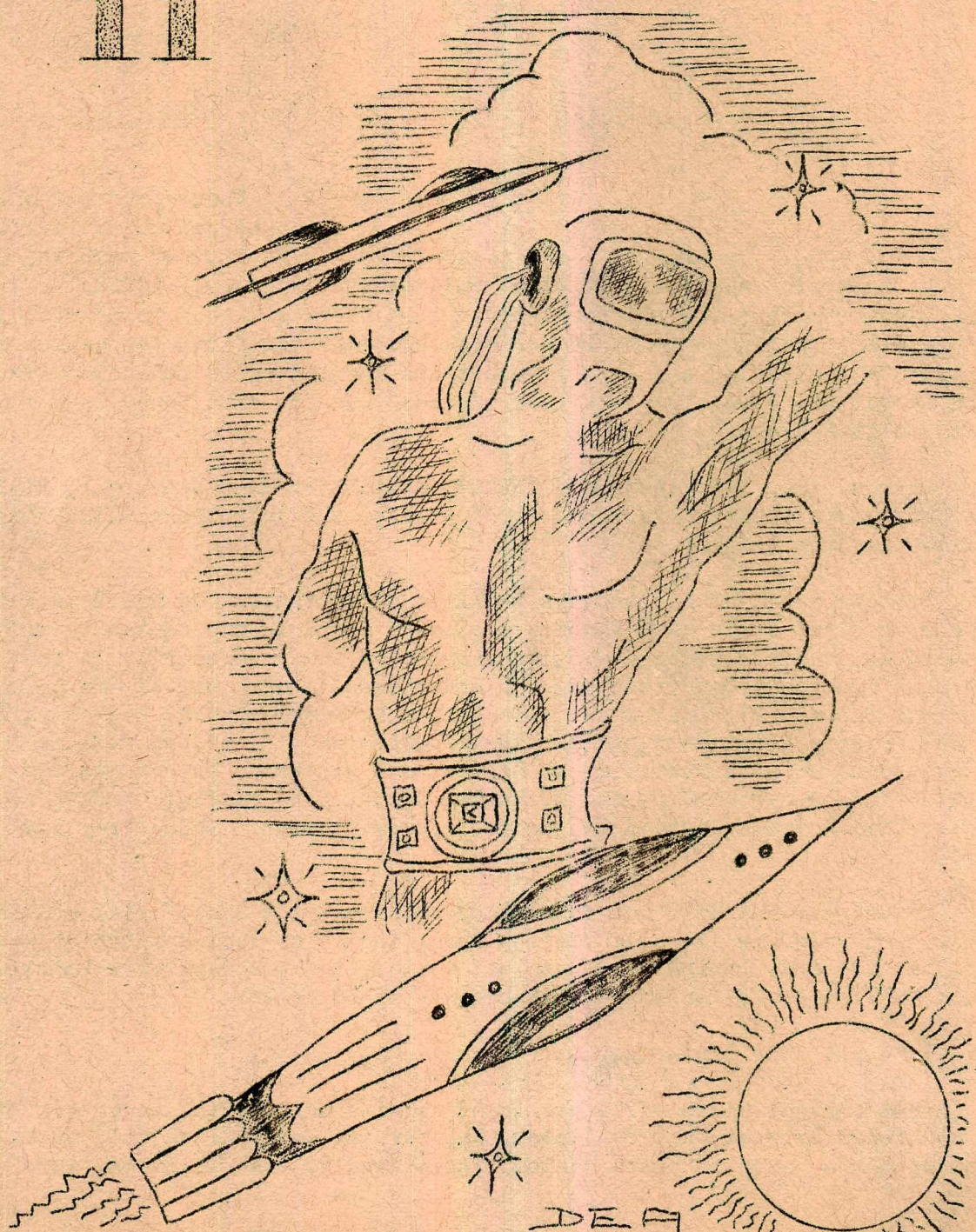
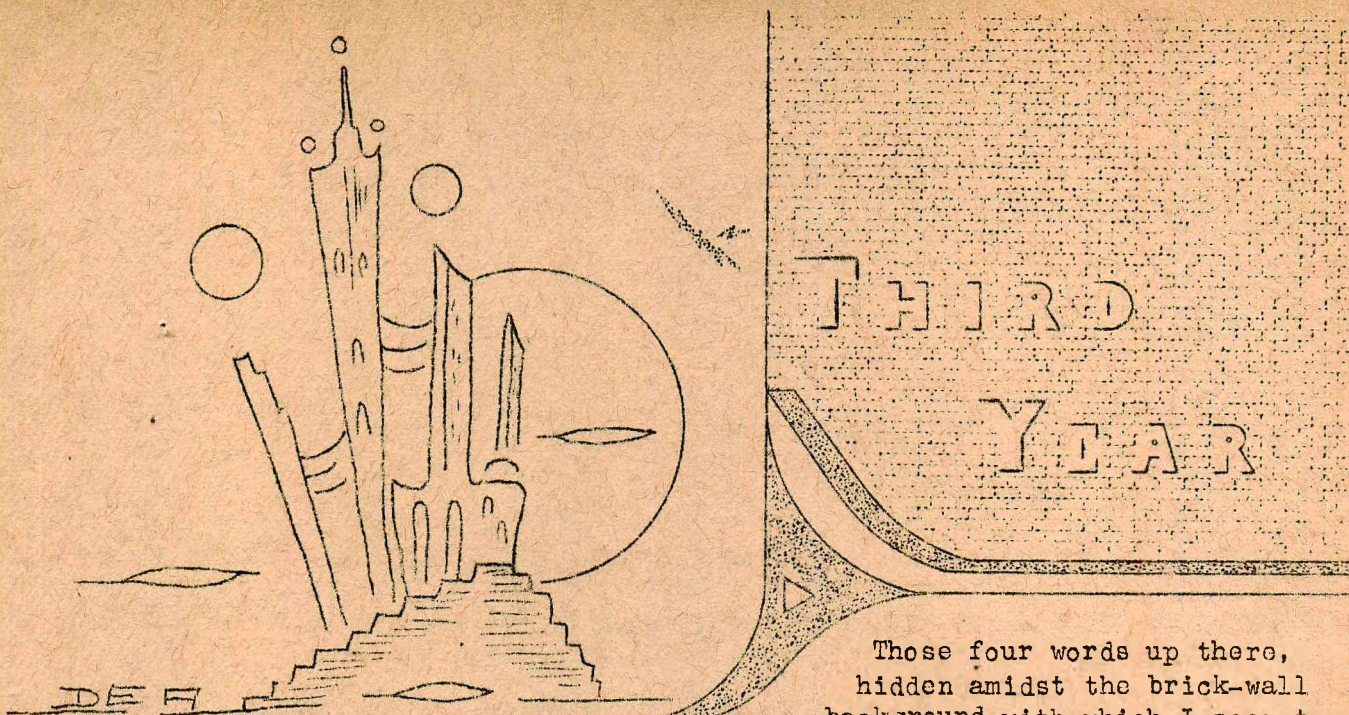


II



DEA

OPS LANNISH III



have been carried away, signify that this eleventh issue of OOPSLA! has taken some two years or more years to promulgate. (Now there's a good word: promulgate. To the innocent bystander it would seem to mean that the first ten issues of OOPS have already been promulged and that the next one has yet to be promulgated, when actually such is not the case. Or tense, as the case may be. But tense is not pertinent-- that was last issue.)

Anyhow, the first issue of OOPSLA! was published on January 1, 1952, exactly two years from today. Therefore, 1954 will be the third year which finds me at the publishing helm (silent "m").

Perhaps a bit of explanation would be appropriate. On New Year's Day, 1952, I issued my first issue of a fanzine, followed in rapid succession by eight more issues and an assorted science-fiction convention, not necessarily in that order. On the same new years day (this time in lower case to mark the solemn occasion) only one year later (1953, for those persons caught without their pocket calendar handy) an anniversary issue came about. The effort exhausted me, as well as fandom, and things dwindled along until about May, when I attempted to get out #10 before my rather rapid departure for the US Marine Corps, and, failing, turned the works over to the Utah Science Fiction League for...promulgation. Which they did, about late September.

Apparently the USFL was fascinated by "September Song," also one of my favorites. You know how it goes: "it's a long, long time from May (which was when I left) to December (which was just last month), but the days grow short when they reach September..." So they published #10 in September.

It's all very confusing.

This curious chain of events wound up with me deciding to revive OOPS while I am stationed here at Camp Pendleton, California, and publish said magazine from my grandmother's house in Santa Monica. Accordingly, each week-end finds me hitch-

- G R E G G

O T P U B L I C A T I O N !

hiking the 90-odd miles from Camp Pendleton to Santa Monica for the equally odd and rather dubious pleasure of publishing OOPSLA! once again.

The fault, quite properly, is all Lee Hoffman's. And, improperly (which is quite normal for him), Bob Tucker's. This excerpt from a letter of Lee's might explain it all. "... You're too fine a faned to fall by the wayside like so many. You set the goal of pubbing more Oopsla!'s than I pub Q's. Then you'll be alright. I aim at more Q's than Tuck did LeZ's. I figure Q should make at least 100 issues. Hah!"

Well, Lee, you made it to 29 complete issues, anyhow, so that leaves me about 19 more issues to go to top you. You see what I mean about it being all your fault? And if you hadn't been following Tucker..... To reach OOPSLA! #30 will take some doing. Glom onto this schedule my IEM computers have prepared.

#11	January 1, 1954	#19	January 1, 1955	#27	January 1, 1956
#12	February 15	#20	February 15	#28	February 15
#13	April 1	#21	April 1	#29	April 1
#14	May 15	#22	May 15	#30	May 15
#15	July 1	#23	July 1		
#16	August 15	#24	August 15		
#17	October 1	#25	October 1		
#18	November 15	#26	November 15		

As I will be discharged from the Marine Corps on May 4, 1956, publishing 30 issues of OOPSLA! will take up just a little more time than my military service. With issue #30, I will probably drop OOPS once again and plunge back into the rather hectic abnormalities of college life. Whether or not OOPS will be revived a third time is mere conjecture. But that time is a long way off, yet, and the best issues of OOPSLA! are still unpublished.

With pen in hand and hope in heart, then, issue #11 is being...promulgated. First I put it on the stencil and cut the stencil all to flinders. Then I publish it and wait for the readers to cut it all to flinders again. Gives OOPSLANNISH! #2

.....third year of publication.

C A L K I N S



I happened to be going through my files the other day and when I got as far as F (for Fingernails) I came across a small section labeled FANS.

This so intrigued me that I crawled back out of my files again, banging my head on the drawer in the process, and sat down to contemplate the dust-covered memorabilia of another day. (Memorabilia, for the benefit of those who came in on free passes, is a fancy name for the kind of thing you look at and say "I wonder whatinell I saved this old crud for?").

But there it was...a dusty, musty bundle of fanzines containing my own minute contributions to the field. Now unlike the Big Names -- men like Wilson Tucker and Dr. David H. Keller, MD -- I have never made a regular habit of writing for amateur publications. In recent years I've been a bit more active in this direction, having published a number of items under the pseudonyms of Walter Willis, Lee Hoffman, Harlan Ellison and Hugo Gernsback -- but no great volume. Still, I was surprised at the number of magazines represented.

And it occurred to me that, in a piddling sort of way, I had amassed through the years a sort of capsule History of Fandom. The kind of capsule you take with a glass of water and a

THE

OF THE FANTASY

ROBERT

FAN

BLOCH

fervent prayer that this will put you to sleep, that is. So while you're sleeping, I'm going to take a casual ramble through Memory Lane, and let the toes stub where they may.

The first item I pick up is a little orange-covered magazine titled MARVEL TALES. It's a printed job from Everett, Pennsylvania, dated 1934. Its editor, one William L. Crawford, put out several issues and hoped to attain a pro circulation for this combined sf-and-fantasy book. My first yarn appeared here...along with P. Schuyler Miller's 4-part serial, "The Titan," and (oops, I told you!) David H. Keller, MD, offering "The Golden Bough." The associate editors of MARVEL TALES were

The Demolished Fan, II

Walter L. Dennis, who has gone on to distinguish himself, and one Lloyd A. Eshbach, who has completely disappeared. Anybody know whatever became of Lloyd Eshbach?

The next effort to hand is the 1934 (December) issue of THE FANTASY FAN, edited by Charles D. Hornig, who styles himself Managing Editor of WONDER STORIES. It contains Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert Nelson, and a particularly precious bit of Bloch, along with a column by Schwartz and Weisinger.

Schwartz and Weisinger...there are two names to conjure with! (Say 'em often enough and you get rabbits out of hats.)

These two boys were also involved in FANTASY MAGAZINE, which boasted as Literary Editor one Raymond A. Palmer, and as Fantascience Film Editor somebody named Forest A. Jackerman, or some such name. The issue of FANTASY I have at hand contains material by those boys...and believe it or not, they did show up, did Messrs. Weisinger and Schwartz, in Philadelphia in 1953. It gave me a great thrill to see those venerable men pounding on the floor with their canes and waving their false teeth about with all the enthusiasm of a vigorous second childhood.

In 1936 they had already attained the dignity of a 38th issue...featuring, believe it or not, material by Eando Binder, Jack Williamson, Edmond Hamilton, Raymond Z. Gallun, John Russel Fearn, H. G. Wells, Walter Gillings, Festus Pragnell, Stanley Weinbaum, RAP, Robert E. Howard, George Allan England, Clay Ferguson Jr, Forrest J Ackerman, and yours truly, who was doing an alleged column of alleged humor.

As they used to say about Notre Dame, quite a lineup.

And here's a companion to MARVEL STORIES, called UNUSUAL STORIES. Winter, 1935, and it contains a poem by one Robert W. Lowndes. Meanwhile a young friend of his named Donald A. Wollheim was editing THE PHANTAGRAPH...the last line of which reads as follows:

"IS STF. IN A RUT? LEFT OUT TILL NEXT ISSUE."

There's a question for you. Is STF in a rut, in this, the year of Our Lord, 1935? I dunno...I never got the next issue.

Come to think of it, as I peruse these early offerings with their Lovecraft, Howard, Clark Ashton Smith items and frequent references to Poe and Bierce, I am forcibly reminded that fantasy was given equal or greater consideration than "STF" in those days. In early 1937 David A. Kyle was putting out PHANTASY WORLD alias FANTASMAGORIA, dedicated to H. P. Lovecraft and apparently hand-printed by a victim of paralysis agitans on the back of some used cleansing-tissue. Science came first in the title of the SCIENCE-FANTASY CORRESPONDENT, edited by Corwin Stickney and Willis Conover, Jr, but it features, heaven forbid, a something called "A Visit With H. P. Lovecraft." The 'science' is largely evident in a scholarly article by Forrest J. Ackerman entitled "Will Color Kill Fantascience Films?" The writer fears that this might well be the case...a pity he didn't stick around long enough to see DESTINATION MOON or WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE or some of the more recent efforts.

Comes now a rash of BLOOMINGTON NEWS LETTERS and VOMs and such-like manifestations of the early '40s. These were the days of West Coast Fandom, with a vengeance. Through the pages of THE ACOLYTE and MADGE and CHANTICLEER and THE FANTASITE parade the names of Francis T. Laney, Samuel D. Russell, Duane W. Rimel, Carlton J. Fassbeinder, Milton A. Rothman (apparently you had to have a middle initial to get into the act.) Tucker is largely in evidence here and so is Burbee, Warner, Walt Leibscher, Carlson, Joquel, Daugherty, Tigrina, Ashley (what, many of you don't know these names? These were BNF of just 8 short years ago! Apparently SF moves faster than the speed of light.)

The Demolished Fan, III

AGENBITE OF INWIT, very arty, by Lowndes, in '45. The East is rising once again as the war ends. And now the names grow recognizable...in 1945's GROTESQUE, edited by Judy Zissman, a young fan name of Larry Shaw explains the mysteries of silk screening...a Jim Blish (oh, he was around in the '30s, for that matter, running ads for magazine wants) writes about viruses as possible zombies...and now we are getting close to the familiar material of recent years. But here's 1949-50 with over a dozen issues of a magazine called NEW PURPOSES, edited by one Fritz Leiber Jr. Never heard of that one? Well, it existed. And Don Day's FANSCIENT, and FANTASTIC WORLDS, the JOURNAL OF SCIENCE FICTION...these offer a rather (as Mines would say) startling contrast to the tone of the earlier 'zines. No longer do articles attempt to "introduce" readers to the field...instead they glibly comment on the latest commercial developments; the recent sales, the Big Deals in Hollywood and Tv, and the launching of new pro ventures.

And now we're up to Sixth or at least Five-and-a-Halfish Fandom, with the British invasion...SLANT, HYPHEN, PERI, etc...and the "intimate" magazines, QUANDRY, CONFUSION, et al...plus the still-current crop (SF BULLETIN, SPACESHIP, VEGA, SKYHOOK, DESTINY, FAN WARP, VARIATIONS, etc.)

On the face of it, one might well believe that great changes have been made... great strides taken in fan publications. There are more magazines today, there are more ambitious efforts running to a hundred pages or even greater lengths. There are such mighty organs of public opinion as OOPSLA! for instance.

And, yet, I wonder.

Today I received in the mail a magazine which shall remain nameless and blameless. It contains material from prominent fans and prominent pros. It is well-designed, with handsome artwork and even semi-legible reading content. It might easily be representative of the Fanzine of 1954.

In the back is an announcement of next issue's lineup. The feature article, I see, will be "IS SCIENCE FICTION IN A RUT?"

I think I know the answer to this one.....

-- Robert Bloch

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Starflame Publications

WISHES ALL FANDOM A

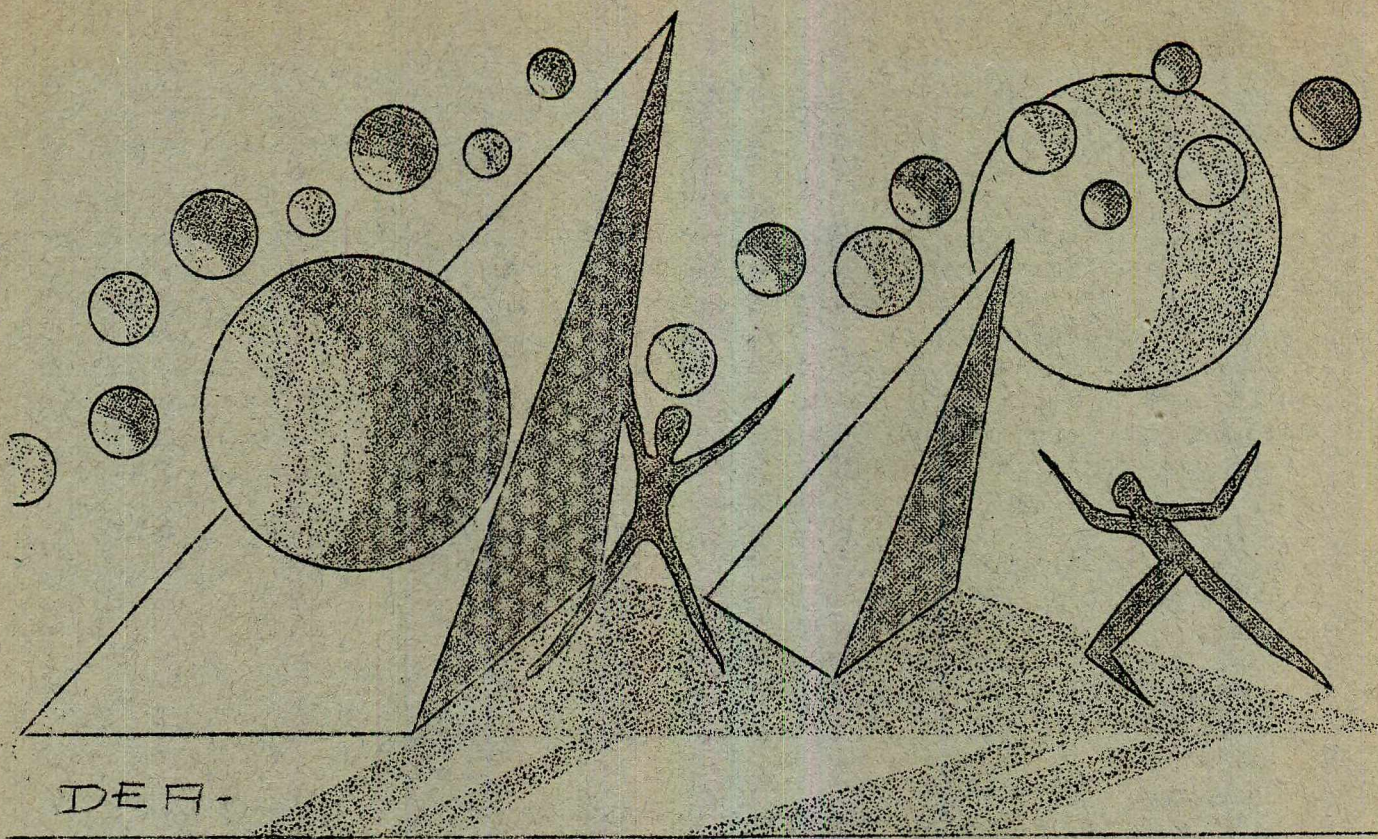
MERRY CHRISTMAS '33

for
SHELBY VICK
VERNON L MC CAIN
ROBERT "BOB" BLOCH
WALT WILLIS

DEA
RAY CAPELLA

and

Meggy Calkin
EDITOR



DEA-

THE MARK OF MCCAIN

BY VERNON L MCCAIN

In a recent article for a writer's magazine, L. Sprague de Camp succinctly outlined the taboos and idiosyncrasies, rates and policies of the various leading magazines. While there was little in the piece which would be new to the hardened staff, it came as a trifle of a shock to realize to what extent it is necessary to slant for most magazines. He also mentioned, in dissecting the various markets for serials, that H. L. Gold requires a tremendous amount of rewriting.

About the same time, one of Damon Knight's fine book reviews appeared.....this one on Bradbury's "Golden Apples of the Sun." Knight did a rather extended essay on the Bradbury phenomena and included one comment to the effect that he felt sure Bradbury himself had never been in doubt about the scope of his own talents.....no matter how alone he may have been in his view. He recalled how for years Bradbury has eschewed the commercial pulp formula, his sales few and far between and to low-paying corners of the pulp market, but that the stories were always distinctly Bradbury. The obvious conclusion, which Knight did not feel necessary to draw, was that it was this faithfulness to his own individuality and talent which enabled Bradbury to become eventually the most celebrated and prosperous writer from the sf field.

These two items highlighted for me two different aspects of a situation of which I've been growing increasingly aware. It's something you'll seldom see in print because editors and writers are harnessed in a financial symbiosis which necessitates a semi-truce. But, basically, editors and writers are enemies; the two trades are antithetical. It is perhaps an oversimplification to say that the writer builds up and the editor tears down, but this is the heart of the matter.

It is difficult to pick up a writer's magazine which fails to contain an article or at least a squib cooing over what wonderful people editors are and denying

The Mark of McCain, II

the general idea that they are monsters. Why such a fervor to refute something which seldom is affirmed in print? How many pieces (serious ones, that is) have you seen which actually accuse editors of being unspeakable vermin? Not many...and yet the denials.

However, a few do hit print. There was the Jack Woodford book "Loud Literary Lamas of New York," and if you hunt for them you'll find quite a few obscure pieces by successful writers taking cracks at editors whom they feel butchered their work. But these are hard to find. Writers magazines are supposed to help novices learn how to sell. This is not done by taking potshots at the hand that holds the check-book. And in the general magazines the appeal is to John Q. Public, who neither knows of nor takes the slightest interest in author-editor relations. Furthermore, it takes a very successful editor to get away with writing this sort of piece. Financial repercussions to his lesser brethren would be severe. In addition, any such publication has its own editor who may be sensitive on the subject, so it is really surprising how much dissatisfaction does find its way into print. It evidently wells from a deep subsurface strain of resentment.

It has been commented on frequently that the most successful writer of the forties, Ray Bradbury, sold only one story to the most successful editor of the forties, John W. Campbell. But actually this is logical only upon examination.

To be a good editor or a good writer takes a very strong personality. The stronger the personality, the greater the ability to work one's will on others. The editor's aim is to produce the best magazine possible; the author's is to write the best stories possible. The two aims do not, as the casual glance might indicate, coincide.

The good editors always plant their own personalities very firmly on their publications. Complaints are occasionally heard that such magazines sound as if all the stories had been written by the same person, although examination of the contents page shows the same writers selling to each of these diverse magazines and their competitors. Part of this similarity can be traced to economic causes. The writer studies the magazine, sees what elements are desired in each story by the editor, and inserts these elements in his writing, thus sharply upping his own chances of selling to the magazine. (As master of this process take Henry Kuttner. Compare his Padgett stories to those appearing simultaneously in the Merwin magazines, for instance.) These story elements reflect the taste and personality of the editor. It is indeed rare when an author's personality is such that he would voluntarily select precisely the same elements in writing his story that appeal to the editor in question.

There is a second reason for the apparent similarity. This one is also economic. The writer turns out a story with which he is finally as nearly satisfied as possible; this he submits to the editor. The editor recognizes its worth but is reluctant to print it since it does not match his editorial policy. He can (a) reject it, (b) demand changes which bring it into line before buying, or (c) buy it and make the changes himself. If the writer wants the sale bad enough he will probably swallow his pride and satisfaction in the story and alter it (usually for the worse, he feels) to suit the editor. In the case of (c) there is little the writer can do except refrain from submitting stories to this editor in the future.

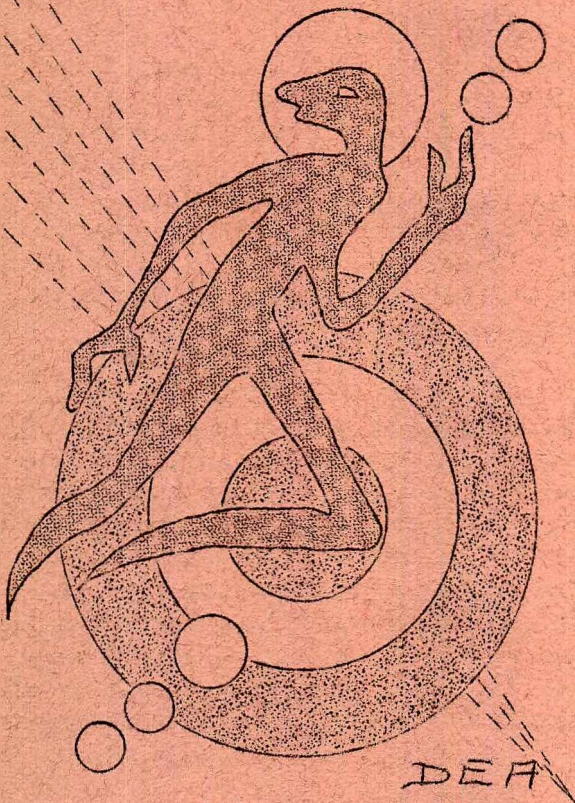
Apparently Bradbury managed to evade both these economic compromises during the lean years. The more weakly edited a magazine was, the more they would let Bradbury get away with. Thus we find ESQUIRE reprinting stories which were originally sold five years earlier to PLANET STORIES, one of Bradbury's two best markets in the early years.

The Mark of McCain, III

The humorous stereotypes of the writer and editor also indicate the basic truth...the author seated at a typewriter, despondently searching for inspiration, the editor sour-facedly defacing a manuscript with a huge blue pencil.

It might appear that the good editor would recognize the best stories and print them without touching them, but this does not work. In case the foregoing has sounded unfair to editors and prejudiced against them, I must in fairness say that it is only from the writer's viewpoint. From the editor's viewpoint the Bradbury-type writer must be a sore problem indeed.

Several editors have at various times claimed their magazines would print any good stories, regardless of policy, but the magazines have always given either mere lip-service to this principle or else their produce has been short lived. When Joe Fann puts down his quarter or thirty-five cents for an evening of stf reading, he wants to know just what he's buying. Maybe he reads all the various magazines, but nevertheless he still wants to know what is in store for him tonight. Imagine the outrage if aSF were to print a Bradbury fantasy such as "The April Witch"; or if WEIRD TALES were to feature a van Vogt "superman" novelet; or if PLANET STORIES would feature one of Sturgeon's tales of subtle interplay between the human mind, with no action whatsoever....and these cries would arise from fans reading all three magazines!



A magazine builds its reputation by featuring certain things. The best magazines feature the editors personality, his likes and his dislikes. Most successful at grafting this quality onto paper has been Campbell. But an editor hasn't time to write all his stories himself. Besides, most editors are second or third rate authors at best. Certainly not enough stories come in which fit the policy without some work on the part of the editor. So, he can (a) write some of the stories himself, (b) feed plot ideas for yarns typical of his magazine to authors, or (c) resort to the practices mentioned before about unsatisfactory manuscripts.

Both the author and editor are trying to please the reader: the editor by giving the reader a magazine that satisfied him, one that will consistently feature stories he likes and which will cause him to buy the magazine again; the author by writing the best story in him and doing it so well that the reader will remember the author's name and buy any magazines or books featuring that name. Obviously this last is of no particular value to the editor printing that story, while magazine identification is of little value to the writer's regular selling to a dozen magazines.

So the editor produces a better magazine by deliberately producing poorer stories that will satisfy his readers more and the author's readers less. Endless examples of altered manuscripts and titles have turned up when magazine stories have been reprinted in book form. I can recall only one case in which the reviewers did not agree the book version was better than the magazine version. (The sole exception being one book reviewer who was reviewing the novel in question for the same magazine that had serialized it.)

The Mark of McCain. IV

Certain editors such as Howard Browne, Malcolm Reiss and Ejlar Jacobson of the defunct SUPER SCIENCE STORIES were loath to ever allow a title to remain unchanged. In the cases I have known, every one of the author's titles were distinctly superior to the substitutes used in print.

It seems we must conclude that the author remains the best judge of how a story should be written. (There are exceptions of course...sometimes an editor will suggest a brilliant innocation which had not occurred to the writer and which even he feels is superior. And in the case of the new and inexperienced writer, an editor may be able to show him how to rescue a hopeless story. But these remain exceptions to the rule.)

It is interesting to note the change in attitude when a man portrays both roles, most noticably Horace Gold. According to a report in the fan press several years ago, Gold's outstanding achievement as a writer (the novel "None But Lucifer" which appeared in UNKNOWN in 1940 as a collaboration with L. Sprague de Camp) was actually a solo novel which John W. Campbell refused to accept as written. It is indicated that over Gold's opposition he was forced to allow portions of the story to be rewritten to Campbells specifications by de Camp and that is a hurt which still rankles with Gold the author. Not too surprisingly he is said to have acquired the rights to the story and plans to have it published in book form in the original version. And yet this same Gold, as an editor, is the man who demands tremendous amounts of rewriting from anyone wishing to sell him a serial, and who bragged over the number of times he made one writer rewrite a novella.

Perhaps this easy ambivalence is the reason Gold comes nearer to being at the top in excellence in both the writing and editing fields than anyone who has tried both.

Perhaps the fable nurtured by the writer's magazines of the wonderful co-operation between editors and writers is true and they like nothing better than sending each other valentines. Perhaps, but I am convinced that the two professions to not mix and only necessity keeps them from active warfare.

I'll freely admit to being a 100% amateur and quite likely will stay that way, so I cannot prove my points. But the conclusions drawn in this piece stem not only from information picked up from various sources in the pro fields, but also from personal experience in the fan field. I have been both a fan editor for a brief tour and a fairly prolific contributor to fanzines. In the only fanzine I edited which featured outside contributions I used to alter about two of every three titles (always for the better in my opinion--at least the new titles suited the magazine and the other articles more and made for more of a "oneness") and while I couldn't bring myself to make any serious changes in the pieces themselves I frequently changed the grammar or sentence structure. On occasion I have rewritten whole paragraphs. I feel the changes invariably helped the magazine and the magazine achieved no more distinction that it did simply because I was not as violent in my alterations as I might have been. Walt Willis, editor of the fabulous SLANT, confesses to treating most non-fiction contributions as so much raw material.

But as a fan contributor I deplore these practices. That is one reason why I tend to write much more heavily for new magazines which lack material than trying to consistently hit the better-known more widely-circulated ones. I think I've hit most of the top zines at least once but I appreciate writing for the new ones more. The top zines have strong editors, editors who can afford to be picky. To write for them is to be confronted with specifications as to what you should write, how, and even methods for preparing the manuscript. If something doesn't live up to their standards they reject it or request it be rewritten. This is fine and I'm all for it. I've consistently recommended fan editors do just that. But as a fan-

The Mark of McCain, V

writer I find it cramps my style. Since there is no cash payment for writing for fanzines the economic necessity of adapt to the editors tastes is not present, so I go ahead and write what I please. I flatly refuse to revise a piece to a fan-editor's tastes. It may be discarded or sent elsewhere, but it won't be changed in handling. (There was one exception...a piece of fiction I was determined to make Manly Banister accept in my neofan days. He finally took it on the third effort. And while I learned a good deal about writing in the process and am proud at having appeared in the magnificent NEKRO, I also know it is one of the worst stories I have ever written.)

So the battle rages on, in both prodom and fandom. The editor tries to force the writer to adhere to a pattern which will produce a better magazine; the writer tries to get the editor to accept an item at its best, no matter how unsuitable. Compromises must and will be made, and probably the reader profits in the end from both pressures.

But editing and writing remain two professions working at cross-purposes.

-- Vernon L. McCain...

[illegible]

XY CRYPTS -

IN LIEU OF A LETTER SECTION....

--- writes Mrs. M Dominick (DEA) in answer to a letter of mine praising her artwork. I told her that I had previously felt her work only mediocre drawing, but that I now knew that most of her published art has suffered from careless stenciling by careless faneditors.

Dear Gregg Calkins:

Received your nice letter and thanx for the praise. Usually I get a different criticism, the latest in Fantasias from a chap named Al Leverenz. To my greatest delight he wrote "every line she puts on paper gives one the impression that she suffers from the palsey." The poor guy saw only the Fantasias cover; he should see some from me in A La Space where my art gets really royal treatment. Sometimes(((in other fanzines, apparently))) I don't recognize my work except by the signature. But who cares. It is all for fun, and if somebody looks for perfection they should buy the pros...

DEA

---- writes Richard Harter, submitting a dime for a sample copy and a manuscript...

Dear Greg,

I hear that you are a science fiction fan. It's a shame, you sounded so intelligent otherwise. You've never met me or even heard of me probably but I read the stuff too. In fact I even tried to write some of it. I sent a story into Sam Mines and he sent it back. The rejection slip said that it was never meant for a promag but that a fanmag would like it.

So, not being in touch with organized fandom, I decided to pick out the wildest and wooliest character that romped through the pages of the thrilling twins. That was easy....

Richard Harter

--- Sam, how could you do this to me? What have I ever done to you? --- and that is the total of the letter column this issue. I hope to have enough letters to fill the Slush Pile by next issue, instead of another Xycerpts.....wgc

The letter you are about to read is true. Only the facts have been changed...

Dear Alice --

Friday, 1:45. Your name is Alice. You work out of OOPSLA!. I'm writing this letter for the facts, ma'm, the facts, just the facts.

I had recieved a strange note -- a slip of paper with seven skulls on it. Seven. So, thinking that might be some sort of a threat from Seventh Fandom, I sent it to you in hopes that some of your contacts might be able to tell me what it meant. But are you sure that what you sent me was the facts...?

At the time you recieved my letter, you were drifting along on cloud #9. Having nothing better to do, you decided to get on this caper right away. Getting on, you rode the caper down to earth. As the caper scampered away, you looked about you. The first thing you needed, you realized, was a stool pigeon. However, there was no stool around with which to lure a pigeon, and you knew of no other way to catch one. (Sprinkling salt on their tails became outmoded long ago.)

Then you saw someone you recognized.

He was a little runt, scuttling along where he thought he wasn't seen. "Just a minute, please!" you called. He started to run. "Wait! Wait, Yngvi!" you shouted.

Startled, he looked back over his shoulder and recognized you. He heaved a sigh of relief. "Oh, it's you," he said. "I -- I was afraid it'd be somebody else wanting to make fun of me." A tear rolled from one compound eye.

"I'm sorry, Yngvi," you said gently. "I didn't mean to scare you. Only I'm trying to find out something and it's very, very important, and I thought maybe you could help me."

He brightened. "Me?" he squeaked. "Help you? Well, gosh; gee, I'll be glad to, if I can. What do you want me to do?"

You showed him the note with the seven skulls. "Do you know anything about this?"

He paused. "Well, I... I'm not sure." He paused again, then made up his mind. "Really, I'm a louse for saying this, but I think The Grulzak could tell you what it's all about."

"Oh, thank you, Yngvi!" you cried. "I could hug you!"

Yngvi scuttled under a blade of grass. "You just keep your hands to yourself," he admonished. "I bruise easy."

Well, it wasn't hard for you to find The Grulzak. Seems he's always somewhere around. This time he was in the park, teaching some youngsters a complicated new dance called the Brownian Movement. On his back, between the feathers and the scales, was a sign reading: I ANSWER QUESTIONS -- TWO BITS.

You waited until the dance was thru, then approached him, your pretty blue eyes wide at the sight of one of his heads arguing with another. For a moment you stood beside him, but went unnoticed. Finally, in a ladylike manner, you cleared your throat.

"Uh -- pardon me, Mr Grulzak. Excuse me, but..."

"Har-RUMPH!" the Grulzak snorted. "What can I do for you, little lady?"

"You're in a new business, aren't you?"

"Yes, yes indeed." One of his tentacles snaked a quarter from your purse. One of his arms produced a cash register, and he rang the sale up. "Answering questions, that's my line now. The facts, ma'm, just the facts; the facts, that's what I have." He preened his feathers carefully. "I'm a natural for police work. With my invisible head (you know, the one that's been dianetically cleared) I possess the most private Private Eye ever. It's so private, I'm the only one knows where it is."

Having seen your twenty-five cents disappear so rapidly, you decided to be more careful with your questions. You showed him the note. "I want to find out who sent this," you explained, "and what it means."

"Just ask me a question, ma'm; any question," The Grulzak instructed. You noticed that his voice was low and calm. "Try me out. Two questions free."

"Well, that's fair," you told him. "What's the square root of nine?"

"Two thousand, nine hundred and ten," he replied, quietly.

One thing you'd often wondered about. "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?"

"The egg, naturally." His voice was unhurried, hardly above a whisper.

"That sounds good enuf. Well, then this one will count---toll me, who sent that note?"

"John Wilkes Booth," The Grulzak instantly replied. The cash register rang. "That'll be two bits, ma'm."

You handed over the quarter, numb. "But -- John Wilkes Booth..." you began.

"Sign doesn't guarantee the answer will be right, ma'm," The Grulzak said calmly. "Just that I'd answer you. Each answer costs a quarter."

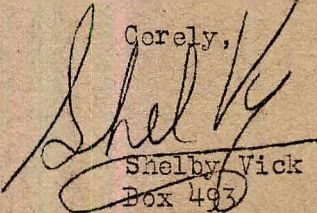
"Oh, you -- you beast," you exclaimed, tears starting. "You horrid beast!"

"No, ma'm," said The Grulzak calmly, shining his scales. "More of a bem, if you please!"

Just then, a skinny little guy in black rushed onto the scene and grabbed the note from The Grulzak. "This is mine," he screamed, "mine! I'm Sam, the Friendly Credit Man. This was my friendly way of informing that lowlife that he owes me seven more payments! And he'll pay, do you hear? Pay, pay, PAY!" Calmly, The Grulzak clubbed the man, and watched him crumple to the ground. Horrified, you looked from Sam, on the ground to The Grulzak.

"Why -- why did you do that?" you asked.

"Simple," The Grulzak said, in his low voice. "He was talking louder than the script allows." The cash register rang. "That'll be twenty-five cents, please."

Corely,

Shelby Vick
Box 493
Lynn Haven, Fla

PEACE
ON
SOL
III

GOODWILL
TO
MELLOW
FEN

(Editor's Note: The following are three Christmas Cards sent by Walt Willis over the past three years. I offer them as a prelude to next issue's first installment of that famous QUANDRY column, THE HARP THAT ONCE OR TWICE written by that bard of Irish Fandom, Walter A. Willis.....wgc)

P RELUDE FOR THE HARP

1951:

In this year of disgrace, 1951, amid a world rent by discord, let us turn thankfully to that tranquil oasis known as fandom. And especially to that haven of peace and refinement in the land of saints and scholars--Irish Fandom.

So come with us now to Oblique House. As we wend our way past the snow-laden dandelions on the edges of the flowerbeds and the icicles on the bicycles we spy a cheerfully gleaming window. We press our frozen faces to the pane and, through the tinkling of falling glass, we hear the cultured voices of the SLANT staff.

WALT: For crissake, James, knock Bob's head against the other wall. The neighbors have been bellyaching again.

JAS: He called my new model spaceship "shiftless."

WALT: I know it's all balsa, but why "shiftless"?

BOB: He couldn't put any thrust in it! (He laughs heartily at his own joke.)

WALT: 'Pit in Momma's hand.

BOB: Huh. Bet we see it in THE HARP though.

JAS: What I need is lighter fuel.

BOB: I have a bottle of it at home...and flints, too.

JAS: Not lighter like that. Light like a...a...A FEATHER! (In the awed hush he goes on.) At least I try to do things, not just read about them.

BOB: Well, you should learn to read too.

WALT: He's never been the same since he joined the BIS and rode in Bulmer's van and Arthur C. Clarke spoke to him at the Con. Next thing he'll be expecting us to buy him a chronometer. (James falls to the floor, foaming at the mouth.)

BOB: There now, you would mention Bulmer's van.

JAS: (weakly) It wasn't the van. It was the thought of the unutterably horrible and mindwrecking sight of the Bulmer Thing getting out of bed in the morning before it puts on its glasses. (They all shudder.) Anyhow I can read -- I have just been re-re-re-reading THE GREY LENS MAN.

WALT: Still looking for something good, eh?

BOB: Bah. Pseudo intellectual. Just because you said you understood THE WORLD OF null-A you think you're Vince Clarke.

WALT: You're just jealous cos Vince never promises to write to you.

BOB: Campbell said null-A wouldn't sink in till 2 days after you read it. I waited 2 days and nothing happened.

JAS: It's got to have something to sink into.

WALT: Stop rowing, galley slaves, while I open the mail. Hmm. Another letter for Bob from Cartier's solicitors. A postcard from Lee Hoffman. I glee. And an MS. James, an idea here for an illo. You could draw the heroine taking off her clothes....

Prelude to the Harp, II

JAS: No. (firmly)
BOB: But I think...
JAS: NO. (loudly)
WALT: I don't see...
JAS: NO!!! (hysterically)
BOB: There he goes again. James, are you intimating that you don't like the idea?
WALT: Pick him up again. This is as bad as the time he saw that letter from Chuck Harris. Ah well, put the MS on the reject pile. Can you reach?
BOB: Have a heart. Look what happened the last time we turned that bloke down. Engrams to the eyeballs.
WALT: Where's your editorial integrity?
JAS: (ritually) He left it in his other suit.
BOB: Ah well, so much for van Vogt. Anything else for Campbell this month?
WALT: No, remember we sent the good stuff to Gold for a Christmas present. Which reminds me, what do we have to buy: A piggy bank for the London Circle and a chronometer catalogue for Arthur Clarke, a perpetual calendar for Derek Pickles, a Boy Scout knife for Chuck Harris, a new gavel for Dave Cohen....
and Christmas cards for Marly and Lee and...
BOB: Which Lee? Hoffman or Jacobs?
WALT: Doesn't matter, they're both in Savannah. We could mark it "From the cregs of Belfast to the Lees of Savannah."
BOB: Oh no!
JAS: Does he mean what he sediment?
(Enter George Charters, the worst punster of the lot. They cower, terrified.)
GEO: Don't sham pain. Are you working on your magnum opus? I heard the sounds of bottle and assumed you were pouring over some documents....
.....
WALT: All right, let him up now and take the gag out of his mouth.
BOB: You want to use him in THE HARP too?
WALT: (disdaining him) You know, the trouble with Christmas cards is that there isn't much reading in them. Poor ayjay jobs. Why don't we bring out a little Christmas tmz instead?
JAS: You mean just for a few special friends?
WALT: Yes.
ALL: Let's do that thing, and wish them all a very
MERRY CHRISTMAS!

1952:

A year has passed since last we visited Oblique House, and now as we join our camera in panning the happy hone of Irish Fandom we eagerly look forward to sharing once again the life of these simple unspoiled fans with their innocent unworldly ways. But stay! What is this? Who are these languid sophisticated figures so strenuously ignoring earnest country fan George Charters? What terrible transformation is this? Where are the schmoes of yesteryear?

JAMES, putting down his coffee cup: Ah, but there's no one can make coffee like the French. They have a certain je ne sais quoi, you know.
MADELEINE: I tried to get some but the shops had never heard of it.
JAMES: Of course, of course... Mon Dieu!
WALT: Yeah, the stores over here are sure kinda colorless.
GEORGE: I had my name in hard covers.
JAMES: True. Why on the Boul Miche--
WALT: Or Sunset Boulevard--
GEORGE: I had my name in hard covers.
JAMES: What is the peasant talking about?
WALT: Some book by Darrell G. Richardson. He wasn't introduced to me. Apparently everyone who buys the book gets his name mentioned in the acknowledgements.

Prelude for the Harp. III

JAMES: How quaint. By the way, was Gold annoyed because I haven't been sending him any of My Work?

WALT: No, because I wouldn't help him edit GALAXY. It was a Horace of a different choler.

GEORGE: That's the last straw. I'm going to live in London. To hell with you soft cover upstarts anyway. Ephemeral, that's what you are!

Enter BOB SHAW: It's not worth while going to London now, George. I'm not there any more. Hi Walt. Hi James. Look, I'm back. Aren't you glad to see me? (Long pause.) Yes, I know, you're just too overcome with joy to speak. Can I have a couple of these sandwiches?

WALT: Er...written anything recently?

BOB: Only a minor masterpiece for '---' about me being thrown out of London and a little gem for Vinç. Can I have a few of these scones?

JAMES: But aren't those for fanzines...?

GEORGE: Bob, I had my name in hard covers.

MADELEINE: Put down that megaphone George and comb your hair. He's sitting right beside you.

BOB: Yes, George, hard covers. I knew your name was bound to appear. (He bursts into loud laughter.) Can I have a few of these biscuits?

GEORGE: (sadly) There have been great and terrible changes here, Bob. They don't hardly ever talk about rain on Venus at all at all. Just about some pent-house in Chicago or some dirty little caveau in Montmartre. And what with mispronounced French and phoney American I can't understand a word.

BOB: I had the same trouble with Arthur and Bill. Can I have a few of these cakes? Arthur sometimes gives the impression that he's been in America, too, and of course Bill is still crazy about his Babs. As Ken says---

WALT: Ken Slater?

BOB: No, Bulmer.

ALL: KEN BULMER?

BOB: Shure. I mean, sure.

ALL: Not THE Ken Bulmer! Editor of NIRVANA? The inventor? The columnist for SFNL?

BOB: Why yes. Ken is democratic you know. Even let me slipsheet a page of NIRVANA.

JAMES: Gosh.

GEORGE: Gad, man, how you've lived.

WALT: I met van Vogt and Bradbury and Gold and Smith and Smith and Schmitz---

JAMES: Buried here in the provinces we don't get much chance to hear about really important people. Tell us all about Bulmer. Is it true he's seven feet tall? Did he really speak to you?

WALT: ---and Boucher and Bixby and Campbell and Simak and Elsberry and Ellison---

JAMES: Ah shaaaaddap.

BOB: I'm afraid I can't release any information about Bulmer until the publication of my biography. The Government is putting on some sort of a show next June* to coincide with it. However I reminded him of your existence and he sent you his kind regards. Can I have another cup of coffee?

JAMES: Gee, that was nice of him. Do you think we dare send him a Christmas Card? And could I have that sandwich back? I hadn't finished eating it.

BOB: Oh shure. I mean, sure. Any more buns left? You mean like that little one-shot we sent out last time?

WALT: Yes, just for friends like Gregg and Chuch---

JAMES: Over my dead body. None for Harris. You said friends, not fiends.

WALT: Come now, goodwill to all men---

JAMES: Since when has that included Harris? Why on earth did you stop me that time? I could have saved you a 1½ stamp. You know how I hate him, er, it.

BOB: It, er, he isn't as bad as all that. In fact he sent you a Christmas present. It wants to declare a truce.

ALL: NO!

(* the Coronation)

Prelude for the Harp, IV

BOB: Yes. Look, here it is. But you're not to open it till Christmas. He said something about a half-life...

JAMES: Half alive indeed. These Londoners are all the same. Let's see what it is anyway. I hope it's not another book on...er, anatomy.

BOB: Nothing left to eat? (He leaves the room, whistling.)

JAMES, opening the box: A clock, eh? I must have gone up in his estimation-- (There is a terrific explosion and James disappears through the roof.)

WALT: (peering upwards) He's gone up in my estimation, too. Ah, these rising young authors. Won't Arthur be sore if he beats him to the Moon after all.

GEORGE: No, he hasn't attained escape velocity. Look, he's going into an orbit. Isn't it terrible to think of him stuck up there circling the Earth for eternity, looking down on us all?

WALT: Yeah, it was bad enough when he was just stuck up down here. But it's all right, he's got his waterpistol with him, like a good member of the BIS. A few sharp bursts into outer space...there, he's falling back to Earth. Looks as if he's landing in Bob's back garden.

Enter BOB SHAW: Well, if that isn't the limit. White has got his hands on another of my plots!

WALT: Was he hurt?

BOB: No, landed on his head. A perfect one-point landing.

Enter JAMES: An infernal machine. Of all the dirty mean underhanded tricks--

WALT: Oh, I don't know. He might have sent you his duplicator.

(The room lights up brilliantly for a moment and the Earth shakes.)

GEORGE: That looks like an 'H' bomb.

JAMES, reflectively: Hmm. There must be an evening postal delivery in Rainham.

WALT: Oh, James, you didn't!

JAMES: Heh heh heh. I think I've won my second clash with harris all right.

WALT: I think that's going too far.

JAMES: Oh no, the postage wasn't so much. I sent it by second class mail.

WALT: No, I meant sending a hydrogen bomb. It seems kind of vindictive. Wouldn't an ordinary atomic one have done?

JAMES: For someone as thickskinned as harris?...But maybe you're right. After all, it is Christmas. I wish I hadn't done it now. Or at least sent a greeting with it.

(There is a knock at the door and a Post Office messenger delivers a telegram.)

JAMES: Who was that?

WALT: Western Union.

JAMES: Well, isn't knocking at the door good enough for them? What did they have to go and knock at it for?

WALT: Because I'm running out of correction fluid of course.

JAMES: That's all very well, but we can't have people going around knocking at people's doors. I mean, where is it all going to end.

WALT: Right down at the bottom of this page. Look, this telegram from Chuck.

JAMES: What does it say?

WALT: He's typed it all out in capital letters. He says to thank you for the hydrogen bomb, it's made his duplicator start working. He'd always figured it would take something like that. He's so pleased he warns you not to drink the bottle of soda water he sent you because it's really swampwater, and he hopes we all enjoy our Christmas as much as he will experimenting with means of reproduction.

JAMES: Hmmm.

WALT: You have a dirty mind, James. I'd like to give all our friends the same message, as Spokesman for the Wheels of IF.

BOB: That, in case you missed it, was a pun.

1953:

Yet again as the season of Christmas draws near the eyes of the world turn anxiously towards Oblique House. What will be the Message this year from the

Prelude for a Harp. V

land of Saints, Scholars and Actifen? What is the word from this last great bastion of Sixth Fandom? As we hack our way through the garden overlooked by the house, and too obviously by its owner, we hear voices from the brightly lit window of the front attic. James White has just arrived, first as usual.

WALT: Is there aught of import, or export?

JAMES: Naught.

WALT: Not even a dejection slip? Not even another story started on its peregrinations?

JAMES: Not a sausage. I've a good mind to break into my postman's house some night and tear up his floorboards. Any ego-boo?

WALT: Nothing that won't keep. Help yourself to a bat out of the belfry.

(There follow sounds of scuffling feet, gasps, sharp blows, and shouts of 'dead!' Alarmed lest Irish Fandom is being wiped out by internecine strife, we chamber up the drainpipes and press our frozen noses to the window. Through the cracked pane--our noses must have been even more frozen than we thought--we see that they are all right after all--physically, that is. They are merely playing a furious game of Walt's invention called goodminton, with pingpong bats, a shuttlecock and virtually no rules. James has developed a devastating new technique for scraping the shuttlecock off the floor and back over the table before it has quite ceased moving and has won the first game 21-17 when Bob arrives.)

JAMES: Hiya Fyodor. How's life?

BOB: What is Life? What is Death?

WALT: Did you get that cover finished for Hamilton?

BOB: Yes.

JAMES: Did you do anything more with that story?

BOB: Yes.

WALT: Well, where are they then?

BOB: I tore them up.

JAMES: What, again!

BOB: They were meaningless, futile. Life life. What is the meaning of it all? Nitchewo. (He moved to the fireplace and sits down, staring moodily at the accumulation of empty cigarette packets, old stencils and inky rags.)

WALT: I wish Groff Conklin had never said he was a second Dostoevsky. (He picks up the helicopter beanie Rich Elsberry gave him at the Chicon and puts it on Bob's head.) There. I defy him to behave like Dostoevsky wearing a helicopter beanie.

(James makes a note of the remark on the interlineations sheet hanging on the wall. Bob takes off the beanie and looks at it, brightening visibly.)

BOB: I wonder how they make enough propellers to go round?

WALT: See, he's all right now. He's made a joke.

JAMES: He may be all right, but what about us?

WALT: Come now, it wasn't so Dostoevsky. At least it was a revolutionary joke.

BOB: It was a hell of a lot better than those two.

WALT: That's just Tsar grapes.

(There is a clatter on the stairs. Enter George Charters, country fan.)

BOB: Ah, a revolting peasant from the steps. What news from the Good Earth of Mother Northern Ireland, comrade Gregor Gregorovitch?

GEORGE, flourishing a stencil: Look, another page of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR! How do I do it? Why am I so gifted?

BOB: Did you use a pink stencil with white correcting fluid or a white stencil with pink correcting fluid?

GEORGE, indignantly: I resent that remark, coming from one who never cut a stencil in his life. Call yourself a fan. You're not worthy to wear that beanie, you...you Shaver illustrator. BRE Bergey! Vile pro! AMERICAN SCIENCE FICTION indeed.

BOB: Let me tell you, when the day comes for the honours to be awarded in the Fannish Hall of Fame, I will have a niche.

Prelude for the Harp, VI

GEORGE: You could always try DDT.

WALT: Don't get your rag out, George.

GEORGE: Of course I'll get my rag out. Isn't it outrag-ecous?

JAMES: Well, you needn't get into a stew about it! (He snorts with laughter. Walt gets up and opens the window.)

BOB, tiredly: I got the outrag-ecous one, though I didn't want it, but what's this about stew?

WALT: 'Ragout' appears to be the French for 'stew.' Heaven help us all.
(There is a knock at the door.)

BOB: I hope that's Little Mother with the samovar. Who's there?

VOICE: An Agent of the Galactic Federation, with tea.

BOB: It's Madeleine all right. Open the door someone.

(James gets up and opens the door. Enter Madeleine with a tray.)

ALL: Mind you don't trip over the foot of this page.

(As they sit drinking their tea the sweet sound of childish voices raised in plaintive song is wafted through the open window.)

WALT: Do you feel a waft from that window?

JAMES: Yes. It sounds almost like childish voices raised in plaintive song.

WALT, looking out: So it is. Why it's Seventh Fandom! Listen...

CHILDISH VOICES:

Good King Charles Wells looked out
(He surely was a grand homme)

(JAMES: This must be a French window.)
He watched Lee Hoffman gallop past
Then founded Seventh Fandom.

(BOB: Has anybody here seen Kehli?)
Hari Silverberg has said
That cycles run in fandom.
But surely Q's one isn't dead?
That cycle was a tandem.

WALT, pleased: Why, I think they want me to accompany them on The Harp.

BOB: Are you going to?

WALT: Yes, in the new OOPSLA! Let's all try to be Big Wheels in this new cycle.

JAMES: Hear hear. Are we disenchanted?

ALL: NO! (They join with the singers outside for the next verses of the carol.)
Friends, the night is darker now
The prozines help no longer,

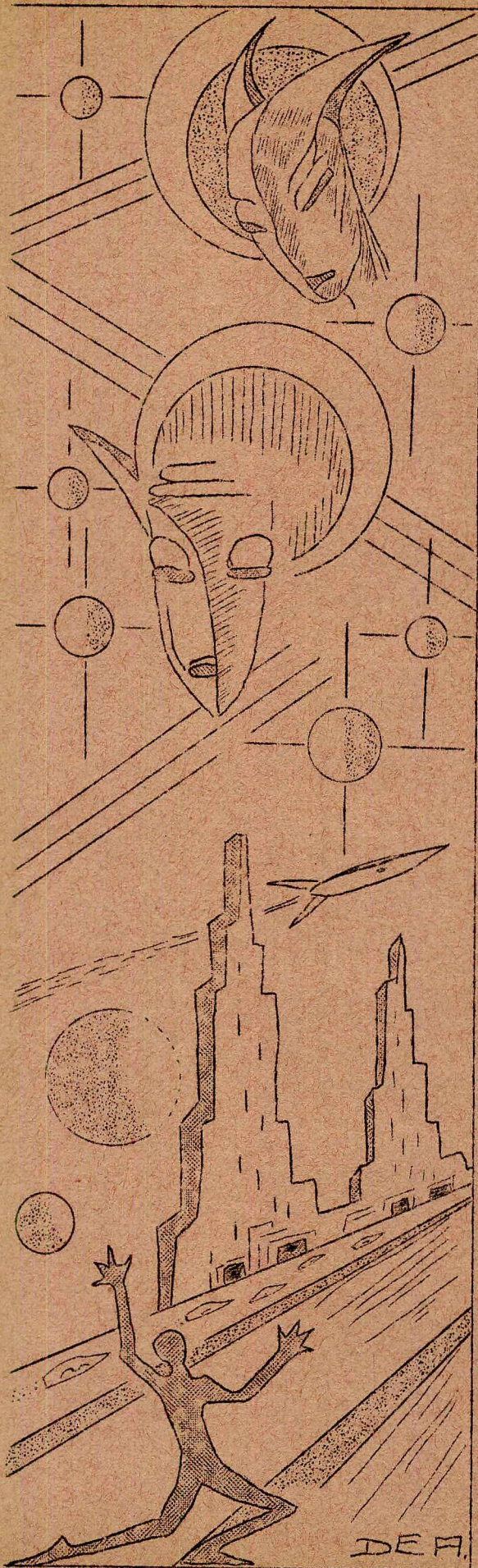
(WALT: Except good old Bill's IMAGINATION.)
But alone we'll show them how
We'll make fandom stronger.
London, L.A., do not panic
Rally our resources
Frisco, Glasgow, join in fanac
Our 1954-ces!

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND AN ACTIFANNISH NEW YEAR TO EVERYBODY.

This 'card'--published in furtherance of the More-Reading-On-Christmas-Cards movement--is from me to my special friends, but Madeleine, James, Bob and George have all had an inky hand in it and would like to be associated with the good wishes it sends.

WALT

Spokesman for the Wheels of IF



DRIBB

The problem of beginning my final editorial is an ever-present one, one I never seem to solve in advance and consequently it is always there waiting for me every time the last few pages of an issue are ready to be cut.

However, this time it was easy.

On the whole, this issue has been very satisfactory to me. I have not only garnered a capable group of columnists and artists, I have once again captured the thrill of sitting behind a typewriter and editing a magazine. The day this fails to give me a kick will be the day I stop editing a fanzine forever.

It would seem to me, just like a man in a race for a political position, that the editor of a fanzine should state some sort of platform, however shaky it might be. So I'm going to give you an idea of what to expect from OOPSLA! in the next few years.

Fanzines, I am told, live or die because of the personalities of the people behind them. Not willing to take a chance solely on my own, I've decided to gather as many good personalities as I can and put them all into one magazine. So you have Shelby Vick, recently recovered from polio, returning once again with his own whimsical personality in the form of "Dear Alice" which is, as he once styled it, 'a letter to a mythical girl in a not too mythical land.' Robert Bloch, that venerable grandfather of certain well-known fen, peers in with his rather indefinable brand of pun and humor and adds another flavor to the pot. Vernon L McCain is here, too, peering among the musty tomes of buried fiction both real and fannish. Spice generously with art from DEA and Ray Capella--a foreign born housewife who still speaks English with a little difficulty and an ex-NYC fan now in the Army--and top it all off with the ample stirrings of that Bard of Belfast, Walt Willis, writing his famous column from QUANDRY, "The Harp That Once Or Twice." Throw in half a dozen pages of editorial for roughage and there you have it....a dish fit for a king.

LINGS

I have my doubts as to how well a king looks wearing a dish fit for him, but it is merely an allusion, after all, and my job is writing editorials. Allusions are what artists draw ...or is that conclusions? No, those are the things people jump to, I believe...

It's all very confusing.

While we're on this platform (watch that middle board, it squeaks) I might as well take issue (no, you take it) right now on which Fandom I belong to. Truly these are strange times. It used to be a man could merely take his Loyalty Oath and then go about his business like any dishonorable citizen, but now that is not enough. Now one is forced to claim a spot in time as well as a spot in (or on) character. This must be the fourth dimension.

Well, that's progress for you.

STATEMENT of the Era of Fandom required by Issue of Quandry of October 10, 1952 as amended by Various Other Acts (Title "First And Last Fans" by Bob Silverberg) of OOPSLA!, published six-weekly at Santa Monica, Calif., for January 1, 1954

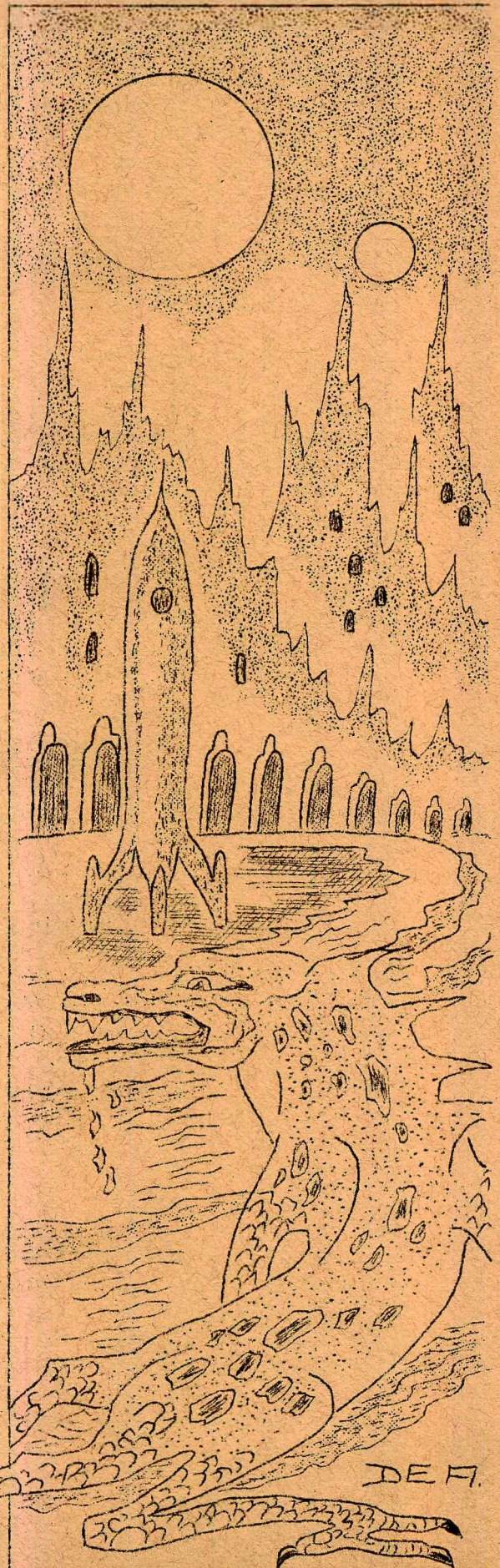
1. The name of the editor is: Gregg Calkins.
2. His era of Fandom is: Sixth Fandom.
3. Paragraph 2 applies to Fandom's numbered First through Eighteenth and designates proper position in Stapledon-Silverberg Law of Temporal Relationship.

GREGG CALKINS, Editor/Publisher
Starflame Publications

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of December, 1953. Anold N. Graefan, Notary Public No. 66-6666666, Los Angeles County (my commission expires June 30, 2061)

"What's easier? To climb a hill or
Write a simple two-line filler..."

-- anon



Dribblings, III

That statement you just read needs a little clarification, I think. If you re-read Silverberg's article you'll find that he claimed me to be part of the "vanguard of Seventh Fandom" and my lawyer's are working on a slander case against him now. However, that is not true. I read my first fanzine in 1950 and had my first fan writing published in 1951, strangely enough by Quandry. By late '51 I was in production on my fanzine. Accordingly, Bob Silverberg to the contrary, I claim my spot in Sixth Fandom, or at least late Sixth Fandom. Now Seventh Fandom has swarmed around us and only a few lights are left burning from the old Era. But we're still there.

And we are burning!

The magnificent VEGAnnish arrived recently, beautifully adorned by a glorious three-color cover by DEA. Excellent in taste and quality, Joel Nydahl manages to present the best all-around issue of a fanzine, annual or otherwise, that has ever been my pleasure to receive. Although the price is steep, 50¢, I can not condemn its charge. The situation is understandable, and who, in this day and age, can say how much is proper and how much is too much for a 100-plus page fanzine to cost? Surely not I. It is very doubtful if any more copies of the annish are available, but the next best thing is a regular subscription to VEGA (Joel Nydahl, 119 S Front St, Marquette, Michigan) which amounts to a dollar's worth of pleasure in any man's language.

WITH APOLOGIES TO NATIONAL ANTHEMS...

My fanzine, 'tis of thee
With works literary
Of thee I sing.
I love thy pages fair,
The ink splotted here and there
With typo's everywhere
Thy triumph's ring.

Oh, say, can you see
By this 60-watt light
What so proudly we typed in the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad streaks and bright smears
In that flickering light
Were the illo's we cut with such tender feeling.
And the hole here, I think,
Where there ought to be ink,
Is the dent that I made when I dropped the drum.
Oh, say, does that mimeo still work? I fear
That the stencils are cut, and the deadline is near.

--- anon

I recently read an article in the September 1950 issue of REDBOOK magazine about the first American Infantryman to be killed in Korea. His name was Private Kenneth Shadrick from West Virginia and he died on July 5, 1950. I mention this here only because it might be of interest to know that his sole diet of reading material was westerns and science-fiction.

Recommened reading is the MACO paperbound book (also in a Gnome hardcover edition, I believe) titled "The Complete Book of Outer Space" selling at 75¢ per. Head and shoulders over that little 50¢ paperback that preceded it last spring, "The Mystery of Other Worlds Revealed." This book is good enough that I would consider the hardcover edition the most advisable buy, since you'll want to keep it in a permanent place on your library shelves.

Dribblings IV

I am reminded to put in a good word for "Swarm" which is the Utah Science Fiction League's new fanzine. Not much information is on hand yet, and there first issue is not quite finished, but I rather think it will turn out to be one of the most interesting club fanzines around. Contact the USFL, 329 4th Avenue, Salt Lake City, Utah.

I suppose by now everyone knows all about all four POGO books, but just in case they haven't...., Simon and Schuster, realizing what a gold mine they had in Walt Kelly in very short order, have brought the total of POGO books to four, now--the 1st one titled simply POGO, the second I GO POGO, the third UNCLE POGO's SO-SO STORIES and now THE POGO PAPERS. The first two books have already sold over half a million copies and who knows what the total for all four is? My bet is well over a million and at \$1 per, that is no small sum. S&S have a good thing and they know it. I just wonder if they'll ever get around to putting each book--or possibly a collection of three or four books--in hardcover editions.

Never in all my publishing history have I been so hard pressed for things to write. In fact, usually once I get started I'm hard to stop. But perhaps I just haven't really gotten started again. It still seems to me to be about May, 1953, and the time that has passed in between just hasn't happened. I haven't the slightest idea what fandom as a group has done during the summer, or if fandom even exists anymore. Willis is still alive, I know, and he claims that he's one of the sole survivors of Sixth Fandom in this chaos of 7F'ers. But the other day VEGA appeared, and I even heard from Shelby Vick. So surely something has happened. But where is SFB and all the other multitude of fanzines? Was the convention too much for Seventh Fandom to stand? But if Seventh Fandom is gone, where is....

Ye gods! You don't suppose Silverberg could have been wrong...?

Enough of this editorial. I think I'll sign my name and quit for the nonce. (Nonce--that's longer than a week, but shorter than a year....someplace in between.) Do you suppose next issue I'll have enough letters to fill a letter column?

A fanzine by another name,
Just like a rose, still smells the same.

-- anon



Gregg Calkins, Editor
Starflame Publications



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PUBLISHERS OF:

OOPSLA! AND
THE RAMBLING FAP!
(F. A. P. A.)

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