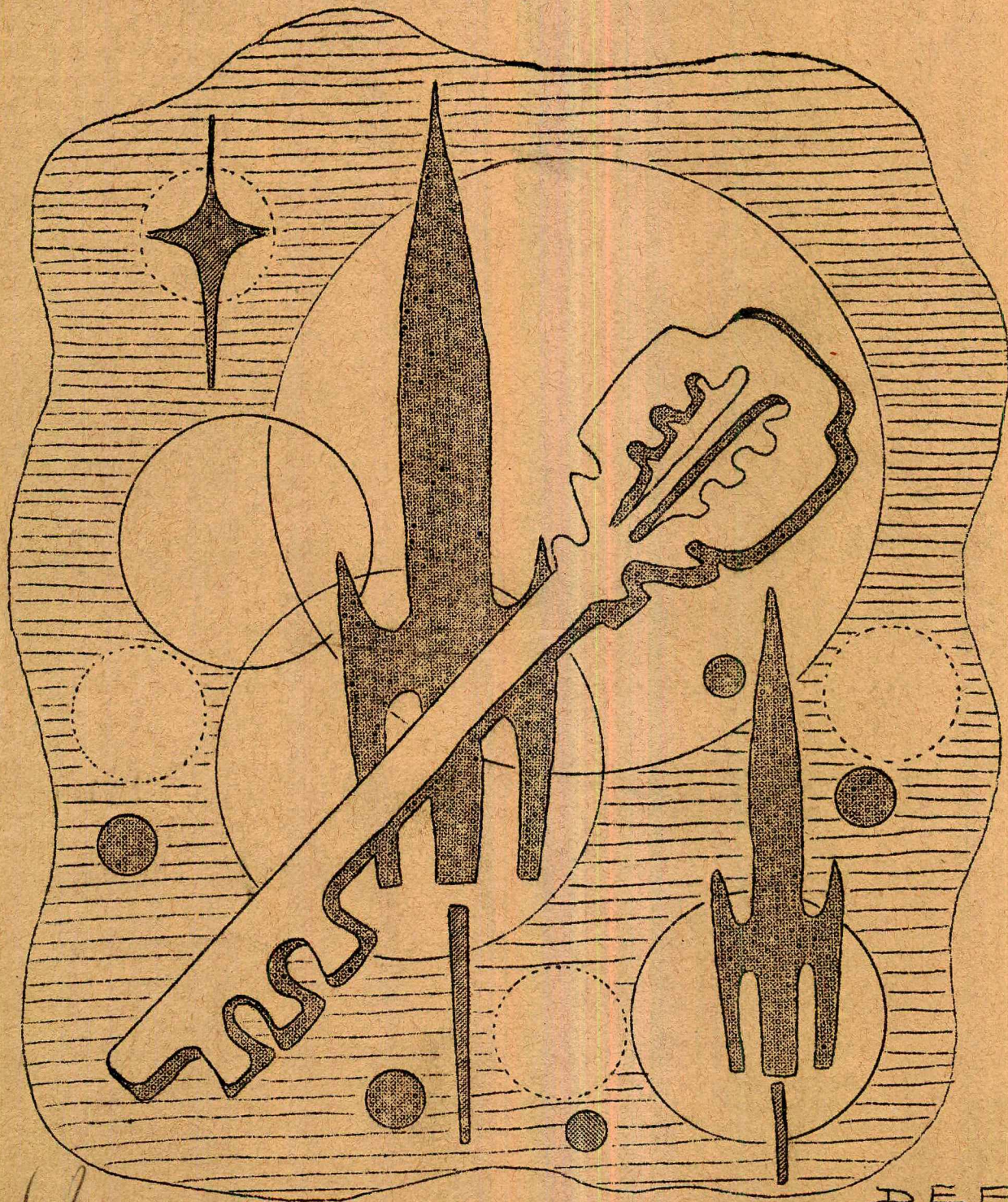
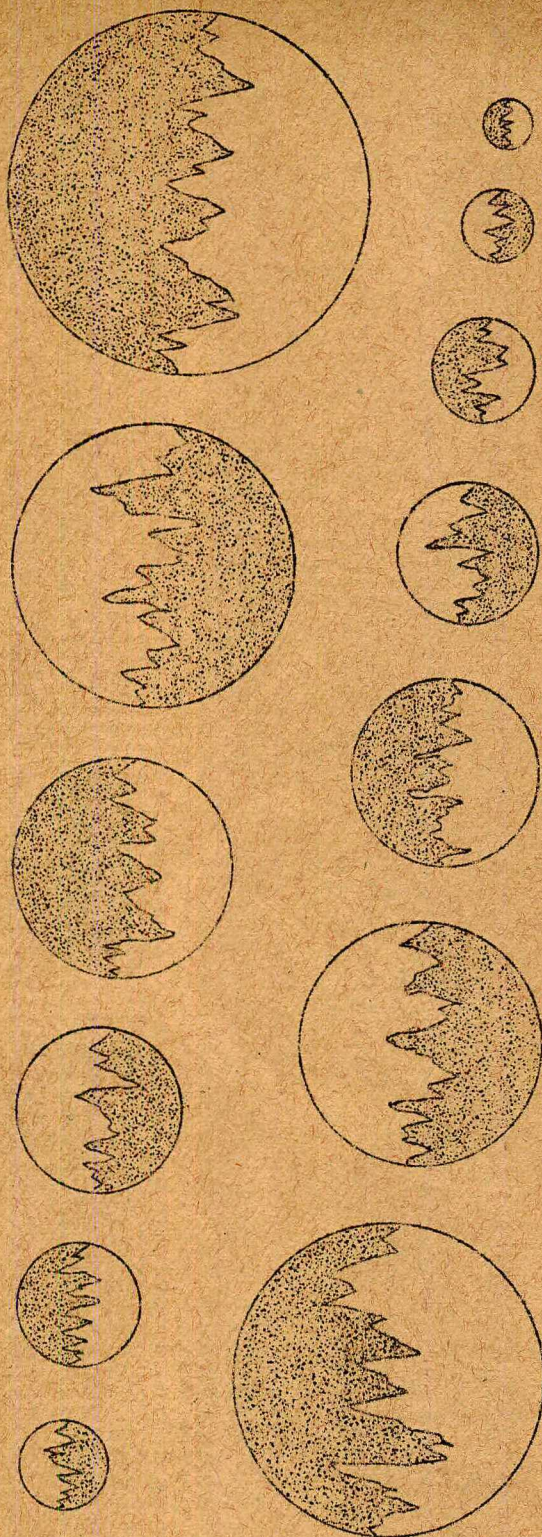


13



12

DEA.



"DANS UN VERRE D'EAU

It would seem as if I had committed myself.

Now let me assure you that that is a very bad habit, and if I realized what I was doing each time I committed myself I wouldn't do it. But bad habits are a little difficult to break, and so I'm stuck with mine.

In OOPS #11, I listed a publishing schedule that I hoped would carry me through thirty issues in the next two and a half years, and in all the reviews of OOPS I have seen so far, not one has failed to mention the fact. I even got a letter from Vinø Clarke that read: "...And I don't like this idea of OOPS ending with #30, either. I have sad memories about a fanzine that ended with #30."

See what I mean about being committed?

Well, so maybe I will reach #30, eventually, but I'm going to have to reconcile myself to a different schedule than I offered the first time. And so, from here on to the finish of this trolly ride, OOPS will be published on the 1st days of the months of January, March, May, July, September and November. But leave us not give up the magazine like rats leaving a sinking ship!

Leave us do it like mice!

Figuring this thing out, if I publish OOPS on a bi-monthly schedule instead of six-weekly, I will have only 25 issues completed by the time I'm discharged from the Marine Corps. That leaves my slightly lacking some 5 issues of my QUANDRY goal. But don't worry-- I'm gonna make it, all right. It's just going to take me a little longer than I thought. How much longer is still another problem and I'm not quite sure how to answer that one yet.

**

GREGG CALKINS...
2817 Eleventh Street
Santa Monica, California
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

**

To be sure, it's hard to keep on editing a fanzine while you're going to college, but, nevertheless, it strikes me that a woman should find an elusive something about a man with a hobby like that which would make her both curious and interested. After all, how many people does the average college girl know who are fanzine editors? Not many, I'll wager, so naturally her first thought is going to be: how can I make him forget this hobby and spend all his money on me?

You've gotta admit it's a vital question.

Naturally this gal is gonna start setting traps to snare this wily male, and since this is what the male has had in mind all along, he'll be ready. What, indeed, could be more original to say to your light-o'-love than "after this party is over, babe, how's about dropping over to my apartment to see my fanzines?"

Any woman would be fascinated by such an offer.

So once she's over there, he's got her where he wants her. And vice versa, because the wily male has just stepped into one of her traps---you see, she had this planned all along, too.

So the guy gives up publishing OOPS and spends all his money on the girl. And pretty soon they get married. Now the guy has no money to spend, and, besides, he wouldn't spend it on his wife if he did have any. Things are in a rut.

Somewhere along the line this guy is going to be digging through the trunks in the attic in search of some letter or other to flaunt triumphantly in his wife's face and show her a thing or two, when all of a sudden he finds his old copies of a fanzine he used to publish. That does it, and before you know it he's well started on his hobby again. And his wife is wondering: how can I make him forget this hobby and spend all his money on me?

It's just a vicious, vicious circle that keeps on going 'round and 'round, so I guess you can kinda count on OOPS being published for some time yet to come.

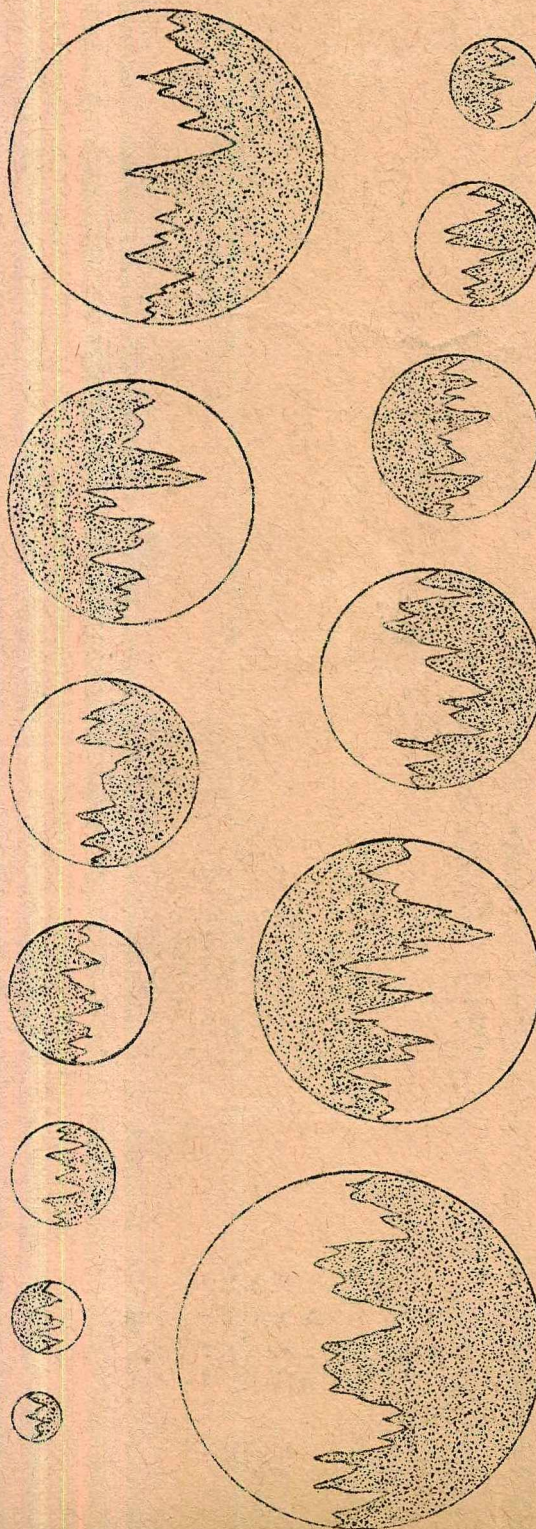
The way I see it, I'll probably be pretty lucky if I ever manage to fold OOPS and get this thing stopped...

*

Number Thirteen
1 May 1954

Fifteen Cents

*

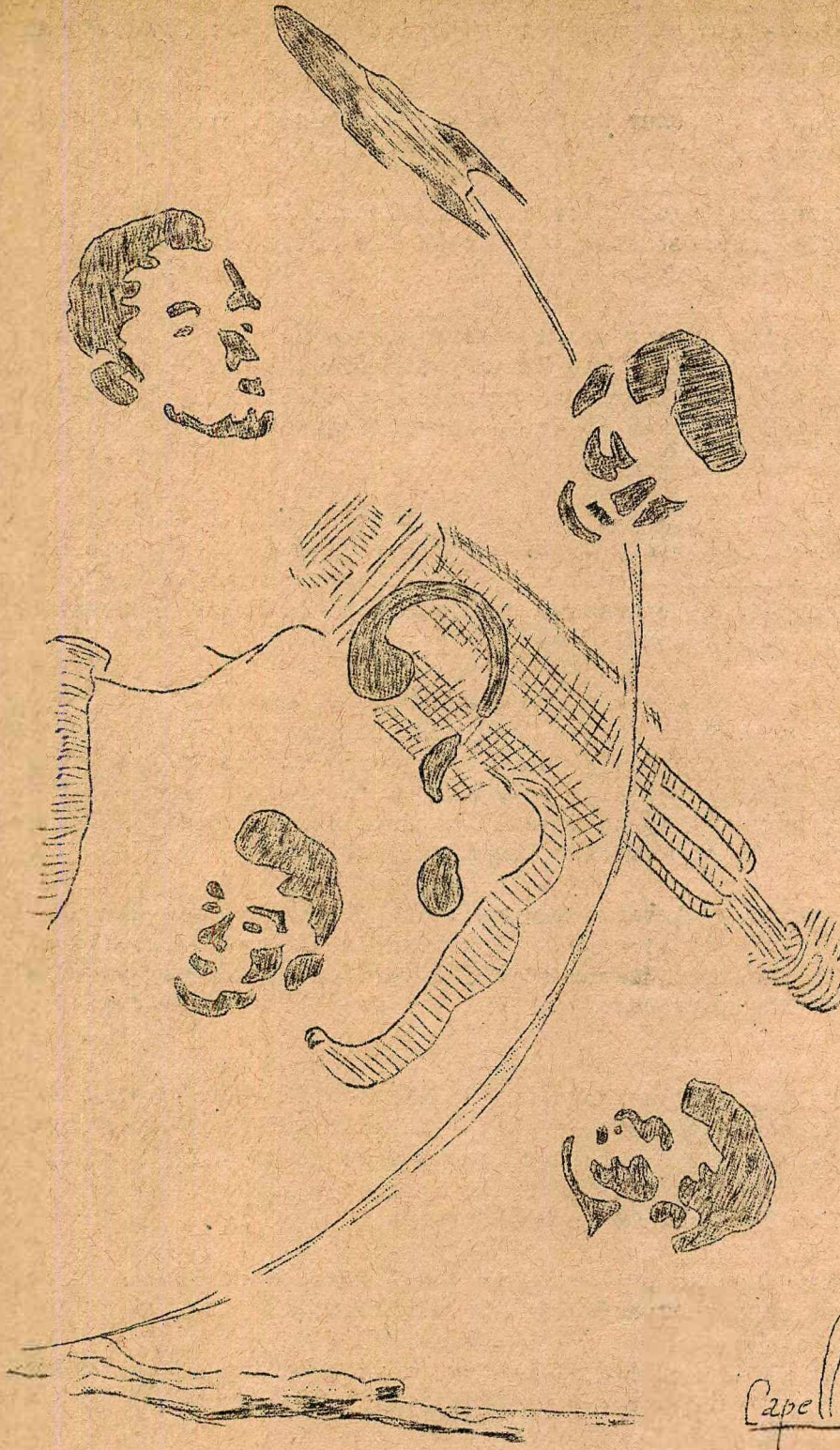


Each year, in my own fanzine REVIEW, I try to pick the three stories, novel, novelet and short which I personally considered the best of the year.

The novel selection is usually the toughest. Last year I would up with a tie in that category since there weren't any really good novels (I'm not part of the "Lovers"- "Demolished Man" clique) This year I had a tie again, for the different reason that there were a number of quite good novels. Although, paradoxically, neither of my choices can compare with such memorable and dominant fore-runners as 1951's "Journey to Bar-kut", 1950's "The Dreaming Jewels", 1949's "Needle" or 1948's "What Mad Universe."

One reason the two I finally chose were so difficult to select between was because they shared so much in common. Both were originally magazine novelets with surprise endings. Each was expanded to novel length, not through the usual procedures of padding the story up to 50,000 words or including it as one of a series of incidents, but through the completely new (to this field)

method of integrating the original story into the center of the novel with an earlier portion that leads logically into it and a continuation that carries the surprise ending to its logical conclusion. Each book was issued by Ballantine, both came out in the fall of 1953...both deal with the evolution of man into the step beyond, and both present the problem of whether the ethics and morality of man can be applied to his successor. And



Capella

THE
MARK
OF
MCCAIN

The Mark of McCain, II

each concludes with their super-being a composite mind made up of many individual humans.

The two books are, of course, Arthur C. Clarke's "Childhood's End," and Theodore Sturgeon's "More Than Human."

The Clarke book came first and since "Guardian Angel" was an old favorite of mine, it was with considerable interest that I followed the clever transference of the theme into a book. The end left me a bit stunned, but pleasantly.

While Sturgeon is my favorite author and I regard Clarke as only "something-more-than-competent," I approached "More Than Human" with prejudice. I am not fond of a magazine story expanded to novel length as practiced predominantly by Ballantine, and I knew in advance that this was "Baby Is Three" (whereas I only discovered the source of the Clarke book after I got into it.)

However, while I felt somewhat cheated at already being familiar with the middle third of the book, I was completely captivated by the novel. Comparison's to "Childhood's End" were inevitable and I found myself definitely enjoying the second book more. When I had finished it, I dismissed the Clarke novel as an interesting attempt at what Sturgeon had fully accomplished.

But several months passed by before end-of-the-year time, and, with more perspective, I no longer am able to arrive at such a simple judgement. I did enjoy the Sturgeon book more and I doubt if anyone will deny Sturgeon's superiority to Clarke as a writer. But on looking back, the Clarke book made a far deeper impression on me than the Sturgeon one. I have to dig to recall the details of "More Than Human"; "Childhood's End" is present with the briefest recollection.

I think Sturgeon's story was more cleverly plotted, but Clarke's story had a solidity and continuity which made it stronger. Sturgeon is the master craftsman, able to simultaneously juggle the most disparate and airy items. Clarke, less talented, had to select his elements more carefully for believability...and this care paid dividends.

So, I was unable to make a definite choice...for if the Clarke book wins on plot, one has to remember the characterization which was so completely three-dimensional in the Sturgeon story, whereas Clarke's characters were, as usual, fairly lustreless. Offhand I can only recall one memorable character in all Clarke's writing...the hero of "Against The Fall Of Night."

I finally decided to list them as a tie...with the Clarke story placed first (although you can regard that as a concession to the alphabet, if you wish.)

I do find the similarity of the ending of the two novels worthy of consideration, though. I think that perhaps this was not entirely coincidence.

Around a year ago, James Blish writing in SKY HOOK said that series stories fell into three types. One type where each story progresses a step farther along than the previous one, winds up, as did George O. Smith's "Venus Equilateral" series with artificial duplication of humans as a result of the initial gimmick for a new type of radio transmission.

Blish deplored this, perhaps justifiably if one considers the Smith series. I don't think this is necessarily bad, however, and believe a somewhat similar process occurred here.

Given a story with a surprise ending and a commission to turn this into a full-length novel, what will result? Basically, the surprise ending story is rather il-

DO YOU HAVE ANY -UH-ANY-
ER - SCIENCE -EH-SCIENCE FICTION?



YOU WOULDN'T KID ME NOW, WOULD
YOU? YOU REALLY ONLY WANT A
NICKEL FOR THIS UNKNOWN?



Wow, A COPY OF OOTWA!

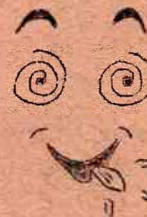


I DON'T CARE IF IT'S DATED 1911 -
IF IT'S AN AMAZING, I
DON'T WANT IT!

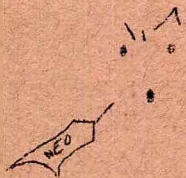


TERRY CARR'S
FACE CRITTURS
... AT A USED MAG STORE

I WANT THIS, AND THIS,
AND THIS, AND-



HOW CAN YOU CHARGE A DOLLAR
FOR THIS ASTOUNDING? WHY, IT'S
TWENTY YEARS OLD, THE COVER
IS FADED, THE



GOT ANY COPIES
OF MARVEL?



I'LL GIVE YOU A
DIME FOR THIS
FRANK READE LIBRARY
THING...



FRANK READE LIBRARY?
WHERE? WHERE?



YOU MEAN THIS IS
THE FIRST ISSUE
OF ASTOUNDING?



DEAR ALICE--

Excuse me, but I'm a bit puzzled. Nothing new, of course, but I'd still like to be straightened out. I wrote you and asked why I didn't hear from you the last time, and I didn't get an answer. Not a direct one, anyway. Instead, I recieved what was apparently the letter I should have received long ago. However, I think that I know what happened. As I get it from your letter, it must have gone something like this --

Time is a mighty funny thing, even ordinarily. And where you are -- well, you weren't at all surprised to find yourself in the middle of a May Day festove; nearly two months ago. There were May Poles all over the place, and the entire scenery was a rolling green park, from horizon to horizon. Even as you watched, a small, brown little fellow rushed by, to stop at the nearest May Pole. As you watched, you heard him say:

wuups here s another one
i ll be rich rich rich
whoopee
don marquis can t keep me penned down
all the time

Quickly he drove a small brass spigot into the base of the May Pole and then scuttled on to another one.

i wish mehitabel was here
but wotthell wotthell maybe she ll
show up later

you heard him saying as he left. He was hardly out of sight before a crowd of people came rushing up. Hurriedly, several carpenters assembled a long stand, decorated it with bunting and streamers, and then twelve men -- all wearing black cloaks and long white wigs -- mounted the stand and seated themselves. They all looked at you.

After they all cleared their respective throats, a tall one got up and stood at the center of the stand. You noticed that, in fact, he was extra tall, and it occured to you that -- since this was a judge -- the law not only had a long arm, but also long legs.

"Will Miss Alice please step forward."

As the stand had been built right in front of you, you could hardly go any closer. "I already am forward, your honor," you said.

The judge looked down his long nose at you. "Well, I wouldn't admit it if I were you, young lady!" he admonished. "It is very unbecoming of you to be forward."

"But --" you began.

"Never mind, never mind," the judge said. "We are here to judge your merits." He turned to the others. "Fellow judges, what is your opinion?"

"She's...the prettiest
the brainiest
the cleverest
the best
the most attractive
the youngest
the most satisfactory)girl here."
the most kissable
the loveliest
the shortest
the tallest
the only

The tall judge looked back at you. "Miss Alice, we find you unanimously the Queen of May!"

You looked about unbelievably. Courtiers were approaching bearing regal robes and a bejewelled crown that dazzled your eyes. Youngsters came out and began tossing flowers and dancing around the May Poles. Everybody cheered. And then --

"Har-rumph!" said the tall judge. He stood straight and erect and looked at you. "Queen Alice, as the queen it is your duty to see that everything is right and just in your kingdom, and that all disorder is corrected. You will keep things straight or abdicate."

"Straight -- or abdicate!" echoed the other judges.

"Well -- I never!" you gasped. You took the crown and placed it on the stand in front of the judge. "I didn't ask for your old queenship," you said. "I don't like it at all."

Everyone rose to their feet. A deadly silence settled over everything. The tall judge looked down at you sternly. "Do you understand how a Queen of May abdicates?" he asked.

You said "No, and I don't care."

"Then I'd best explain," said the judge. He drew one skinny finger across his neck. "Ssssst!" he said. "Understand?"

You gulped. It seemed you'd gotten into something you hadn't bargained for. "But this is unfair!" you finally managed to say. "I didn't ask to be queen!"

"Nobody asks to be queen!" roared the judge. "That isn't the way it's done! You are Queen of May, and you must apprehend a culprit, and that is that!"

"If you put it that way..." you murmured, ascending.

The tall judge beamed. "I knew you would understand, my dear!" he boomed out. "Now, this is our problem." He waved at the May Poles. "If you will notice, at the bottom of nearly every Pole is a tiny brass spigot. Someone has been defacing our May Poles. We must find out who and why, and rid ourselves of the annoyance." He smiled at you. "Or that is, my dear -- you must."

And so you set out to find the brown little fellow you'd first encountered, as it was obvious that he was the one they were after. You traveled for a long while, and your heavy robes and regal crown were wearing heavy. Finally, you decided to dump the robes of ermine on the grass. You shrugged them from your shoulders, and

hey there
you watch what you re doing
you want to crush me or something under
all this wool
wotthehellwotthehell

oh golly i m sor -- "I mean, 'Oh, golly; I'm sorry,'" you exclaimed
"I've been looking for you everywhere."

well all you had to do was
look under your collar where i was taking a
short nap
and counting all the millions i m going to make

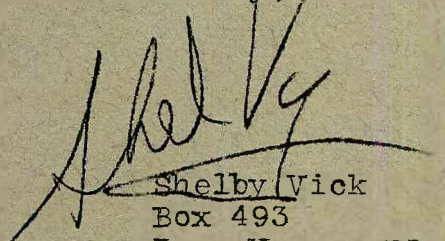
"Well, you aren't going to make millions of anything around here but enemies," you informed the little fellow. "We've got to get out of here. These people don't like what you're doing. But how are we going to get out -- and what ARE you doing?"

The little cockroach went over to the nearest May Pole and turned on the spigot. There was a gush of liquid. He said,

it s easy to get out
we ll float out
and as for what i was doing
i was tapping the may poles to get all
this delicious nectar
haven t you ever heard of
may pole syrup

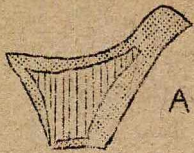
So that, dear Alice, is what I guess slowed your letter down so much. You and archie got all soaked, coming out, and the syrup was so sticky that it even slowed your letter down.

Cerely,



Shelby Vick
Box 493
Lynn Haven, Fla

THE

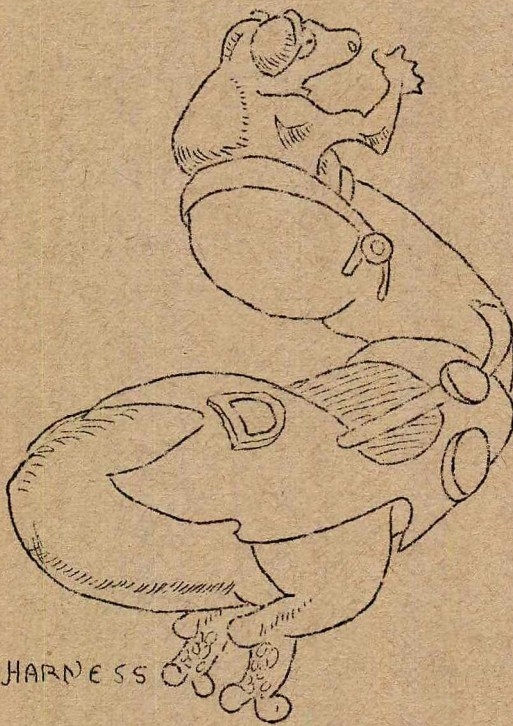


ARP THAT

ONCE OR



TWICE



HARNESS

WALTER A. WILLIS

THE FEN COMMANDMENTS

"Don't be surprised," said Anglofan Ted Tubb after he'd read THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR, "if you find yourself being called Missionary Willis." I see what he means, but 'missionary' is not quite the right word. I've no urge to go into the highways and byways trying to convert the neofans. Fans are born not made. (This does not apply to female fans, of course, some of whom are made every Convention.) No, what I feel like at the moment is more like an Old Testament prophet, an aged patriarch descending on his own tribe, tripping over his long white beard in his haste to warn them of the Wrath To Come.

I don't know whether it's just a sign of senility, but it does seem to me that neofans are not what they were in my young days. And that if some of these Neofan of today are going to be the BNFs of tomorrow, either they've got to change their ways or fandom won't be a way of life worth living any more.

For instance it used to be that the average letter asking for material or some other form of help started off politely...too politely...with 'Dear Mr Willis' and continued with some more or less extravagant compliments before coming to the real point. This was all very right and proper. You discounted the flattery automatically (some time I must draw you a diagram of my Automatic Flattery Discounter, with its built-in grain-of-salt gauge) but you recognized it as a sort of necessary ritual politeness.

But this old-fashioned stuff won't do for our modern neofan. No no. He thinks of himself, it would seem, as a dauntless young hero fearlessly confronting the aged BNF and proclaiming his demands with insolent audacity. The idea, I suppose, is that the BNF, weary of adulation and sycophancy, will be so surprised and pleased with the fine independence and manly pride of this upstanding youth that he will clasp him to his bosom, murmuring brokenly "My son! My son!" Whereas, of course, the BNF just says "My Ghod, another of these obnoxious little bastards" and is grateful for the excuse to throw away the letter unanswered.

But here's one I kept to show you what I mean. It's from a young Baltimore fan, one of this STAR ROCKETS crowd who are swarming all over the place organizing one another:

"Dear Five Of You: (you SLANTheads) (Walt, Goerge, George, Bob, James and Madeleine.) (Who's she? The dog? Irish bull?)

The Harp That Once Or Twice, II

I have been meaning to waste a dime on you for about a year.

.....I have a complaint to make. It so happens that I have publishing a fanzine since Christmas, and so far have gotten nothing from you at all...

.....I read my mother (who has rather a good sense of humor) all six pages of OOPSLA's HARP, and I got exactly one chuckle out of her. The rest of the time she was hushed, contemplating greener pastures where science fiction and its fen did not reach.

.....You sound like you need one of MY colums in one (or both) of your minor efforts. I think I'll send you an MS.

.....Care to be UK representative for my zine?

.....Chess by mail? Art? A column by one or more of you in my zine?"

Well, of course, it wouldn't be fair to be annoyed at the apparent rudeness of this letter. It's due partly to natural stupidity and partly to a desperate attempt to write what the youngster thinks is fannish humor. What's pathetic about it is that it shows the hopeless ignorance of how to get along in fandom that afflicts many of our neofen. It seems to me that many of these unhappy creatures are going to have a wretched time in fandom unless they understand fandom's moral laws, just like any other society. They've never been set down in print before, but they do exist, and this is what I think they are.

1. Egoboo unto others as you would they should do unto you. This seems pretty obvious, but it's a law that's broken by others than neofen. There are quite a few BNFs who are firmly convinced that theirs is the only fanzine in the universe that calls for comment. You may have come across some of them yourself. You work maybe an entire hour on a long and helpful letter of comment, going to the trouble to re-read each item in the mag and comment on it individually. You get an equally long reply. One sentence acknowledges your letter, another acknowledges your fanzine. The rest of it consists of indignant replies to any criticisms you may have made of his fanzine, disquisitions on his future policy and aims, explanations of why he did this and that instead of that and this, news about his activities, complaints about your not having noticed some particular piece of brilliance, and glowing accounts of the ones yet in store for you. These people believe that the world owes them a loving. How many of the faneds to whom Boggs writes those long, detailed, constructive, helpful and eminently quotable letters of comment on their zines take the same trouble to write to Redd about SKYHOOK? Yet if you write to these people next time the way they write to you, you'll get an indignant or pathetic letter asking what's wrong. There is nothing to be done with some of these people--they suffer from Browne's Disease, an incurable egotism. But it's a plague that seems to be growing among neofen and should be stamped out. Because if people cease to comment on other people's fanzines, fandom will die out. Every neofan should be made aware of the fact that he can't reasonably expect other fans to comment on his zine unless he's willing to comment on theirs and that, for instance, it's as rude to write to another fan without commenting on his fanzine as it would be to pass him on the street without speaking to him.

2. Honour the BNFs, that thy days may be long in thine own BNFdom. My Ghod, some of you will say, dig that crazy Willis--trying to make sure the flood of egoboo doesn't dry up. Well, honestly, it isn't that at all. It just seems to me that 'fancestor worship' is one of the things that keeps fandom going. Why do so many Neofen work so hard to become BNFs? For prestige of course, the admiration of every other fan. But if the other fans are taught to scorn the BNFs, what then? What incentive will there be to become one? One of the mainsprings of fanac will be destroyed. It seems to me a good thing for fandom that every fan should have a certain amount of respect for fans who have done more in fandom than he has. Speer reveres Ackerman, Boggs reveres Speer, Ellison reveres Boggs, Raleigh Evans Multog reveres Ellison, and somewhere along the line there is probably some neofan who reveres Multog. All this is just as it should be. I don't mean that neofans should be obsequious to BNFs, or even deferential--just that in fandom as everywhere else

The Harp That Once Or Twice, III

newcomers shouldn't throw their weight around until they have some to throw.

3. Never destroy a fanzine. The history, glories and traditions of fandom consist of a few tons of duplicating paper distributed in odd corners throughout the Anglo-Saxon world. They're very vulnerable to being thrown out as waste paper, because non-fans can't be expected to realize that each sheaf of those dirty mimeographed sheets enshrines not only the precious lifesblood of some distant fan, but his hope of immortality...that some time in 187th Fandom somebody will read his zine and think of him with awe and admiration. If you must get rid of your old fanzines, send them to some neofan. Don't destroy even the worst crudzine, because somebody is bound to appreciate it. It seems to be a natural law that for every fanzine there is at least one natural-born subscriber. You've only got to look at the second issue of any crudzine to realize this. I really believe that if you send out half a dozen sheets of used toilet tissue there would be some fan somewhere who would write in and say it was the best fanzine he had ever seen.

THE HARP STATESIDE I'm sure there's a lot more fannish laws I could adumbrate (a good word that) but the tongue of flame has moved on and I haven't time to wait for it to come back. If you like to keep your seats you can sit through another Willis travelogue, the reminiscences of a fannish globetrotter. I have a lot of notes here for the rest of the account of my US visit. Way back in '52 it was arranged that I'd report the Chicon in QUANDRY and the rest of the trip in CONFUSION, but Cf. went into suspended animation before I'd got more than three days after the Chicon, and you have of course all been on tenterhooks to know what happened next. Lifting you carefully off the tenterhooks, I deposit you in the main street in Amhurst, Wisconsin, where Palmer has driven us to catch the bus back to Evanston. Us is Forry Ackerman, Wendayne Ackerman, and me.

The bus that eventually arrived was the only one that didn't break down under me in my entire tour. This is because it broke down before it reached me--obviously a highly strung vehicle, prone to nervous breakdowns. As we were waiting, Shaver came along driving a truck and stopped to talk. I had a long conversation with him. He told me all about his troubles in putting the Mystery across, how his publishing plant was sabotaged and everything, and he seemed quite depressed about it all. His attitude now was that he had done his best to warn us, and he could do no more. I found myself feeling quite sympathetic. Instead of feeling hostile to Shaver on account of his Mystery, I was feeling friendly towards the Mystery on account of Shaver. He is really a pretty nice guy, just a truckdriver who took the wrong turning. (Actually he's an arc-welder by trade.) If science-fiction has to be disgraced by crackpots, we could find worse ones than Dick Shaver.

Eventually the bus tottered along. It was almost full, but there were three seats available. It was a source of continual amazement to me how Greyhound busses never seemed to be either empty or overcrowded. One got the impression that the Company had found some way of putting passengers into deep freeze and popping them into busses as they were needed. Or maybe they employ hordes of zombies to travel in empty busses to keep up appearances, and to get out when real passengers come along. Yes, I think that must be it. Haven't you noticed the vacant mindless expressions of the people who stare at you from long distance busses passing through at night? Like fish in an aquarium.

Soon we were passing through Oshkosh, which I was thrilled to discover was a real place, and through Fond du Lac, a name soon to ring through the world as the home of Dean Grennell, and then into Milwaukee. Here we found we had missed the connection to Evanston and had to wait for the next. Forry started on his habitual round of the newsstands looking for science fiction magazines--presumably just in case someone in Milwaukee had started a new prozine. I had then gotten over my initial awe of seeing US editions of sf magazines just lying around loose to be picked up by anybody and was looking along the comics for the latest POGO when a new

The Harp That Once Or Twice. IV

thought struck me. Here in Milwaukee should it not be possible, theoretically at least, to speak to Robert Bloch on the telephone? Congratulating myself for remembering the heading on his business notepaper I looked up the number, studied the directions in the phone booth, mastered the outlandish equipment, dialed the number and spoke with Robert Bloch. Yes, actually and literally! Later, still dazed by the wonder of it all, I got in the bus and we set off again for Evanston, where Rog and Mari Phillips and a De Soto sedan were waiting to take us to Los Angeles. Unfortunately, incidentally, I had revealed our destination to Bloch. No sooner had he laid down the receiver than the fiend dashed off a letter to Phis Rasch warning him that Forry was being hoodwinked by a Bowery layabout who was passing himself off as Walt Willis. Rasch believed him and telephoned Forry in Los Angeles to warn him and wasn't convinced until Forry told him he'd met me before in London and Belfast.

Rog and Mari were waiting for us at the Evanston bus station and so was one Jim Webbert. As Wendayne had uneasily suspected, he was going to be given a lift as far as Salt Lake City. We all stood looking helplessly at the back of the car for a while. What with the Phillips' luggage and a small mountain of prozines and fanzines Webbert had accumulated at the Chicon, there seemed nothing to be done with our poor belongings but to tie them on with string and let them trail behind. But Rog was undaunted. He pushed and pulled and swore for several minutes until most of the contents of the boot shrank with fright into a condition resembling collapsed matter and then slammed the lid. The front wheels of the car were still in contact with the ground, so off we went.

We called first at the OTHER WORLDS office to pick up Bea and then continued to Hamling's house where we were served with daquiris. This was the first drink I had come across that you eat. It consists mainly of crushed ice and comes in a glass wearing a bedsock, presumably to keep your hand from getting frostbitten. This is the only drink which carries its sock outside. Munching my drink, I looked admiringly 'round the editorial offices of IMAGINATION. This was more like it! It was a long pleasant basement room in his house with a bar and a television set at one end, shelves of books and a desk at the other, and a big couch in the middle. Everything for the Rich Full Life. Later on Hamling wrote something on a piece of paper and handed it to me. I looked at it perplexedly. It appeared to be a cheque for \$50. I demurred incoherently, but Bill insisted, saying it was his contribution to the Fund and adding some tactful nonsense about it coming out of his income tax. I thanked him gratefully and took it. If I'd known what that \$50 was going to mean to me I'd have bowed down and worshipped him.

Round about seven o'clock we started off for Los Angeles. There were six of us. Forry Ackerman--big, easy-going, gentle, an inveterate punster but with also a quiet subtle humor that doesn't come out in his writings; his wife, Wendayne--vivacious, impulsive, almost childlike in some ways; Mari Wolf Phillips--beautiful, intelligent, with a wonderful sense of humor, and at the time very much in love with Rog in a timid sort of way; Rog Phillips--big, blunt, a strong man who knew his own strength, and suffering horribly from neuralgia; and Jim Webbert.

Webbert had been as prominent a feature of the Hotel Morrison as the house detectives. He had seemed to be trying to run a sort of Room Service on his own in opposition to the hotel's. Wherever two or three pros were gathered together, there was Webbert in the midst of them...mixing drinks, proffering cigarettes and information, and generally engaging in his own peculiar form of fawn activity. If consisted, above all, of lighting people's cigarettes. He was a new type of fan, a lighterhack. He had a trick cigarette case incorporating a cigarette lighter--and for all I know, a shoe-polishing set--and this he could cause to materialize within an inch of your nose the moment a cigarette touched your lips. Most of the pros at the Chicon seemed unable to make up their minds how to regard Webbert. The sole exception was Mack Reynolds. He took up the logical attitude that if Webbert wanted to be a lackey, the thing to do was let him. He ordered him about like a dog.

The Harp That Once Or Twice, V

"Webbert, fix me a drink," "Webbert, cigarette!," "Webbert, how about rustling up some women?" Webbert's organization didn't extend to this last, but I'm sure he'd have done his best if Bellhop No. 31, the one who'd turned out to be a fan, hadn't already had the callgirl situation well in hand. It was curious to find in the same hotel a bellhop with the soul of a fan and a fan with the soul of a bellhop.

Phillips' attitude to Webbert was one of gruff reserve. He hated having Webbert light his cigarettes, but Webbert was out to be lightly thwarted in his mission in life. A strange form of contest developed. Rog would glance sidelong at Webbert to make sure he wasn't looking and then, like a Western hero on the draw, make a desperate attempt at pulling out a cigarette and lighting it before Webbert could move. But Webbert was very vigilant and Rog seldom got the drop on him. Mari and Wendayne were highly amused at Webbert's attempts to make himself useful to Rog. At the diner where we stopped for supper, Webbert followed Rog closely into the restroom and I overheard them speculating lewdly just what he was going to offer to do for Rog in there.

((These adventures of "The Harp Stateside" will be further continued in the following issues of OOPS.))

--- Walter A. Willis

* # * # * # * # * # * # * # * # * # *

BETTER NOT READ THIS. IT'S AN ADVERTISEMENT

You know, I've always admired Warren A. Freiberg tremendously. He has a flair for writing ads that make you want to rush right out and buy BREVIZINE ADVENTURES the minute you read them. I can't write them as well as waf, but I can try, can't I? For instance, VULCAN #4 contains some excellent artwork by the dean of science fiction writers, Poul Anderson. Of course, they're only fillers but the line sounds nice, doesn't it? David English appears in that same issue with some of his "detoons" (in quotes because we discriminating people always do that when using colloquialisms.) There's a story in the issue by top-flight pro author J. T. Oliver (he's had three stories printed professionally) and a poem by our own discovery, Helen Louise Soucy, who is good enough to make Longfellow look to his laurels. There's other good (pardon, great) material, too, but you can see for yourself if you send 15¢ to Terry Carr, 134 Cambridge St, San Francisco 12, Calif. VULCAN is 50¢ for four issues, incidentally.

* # * # * # * # * # * # * # * # * # *

A

second tender poem of the Old Spaceways titled...

"Watch That First Step--It's a Dilly!"

Had a little trouble, this trip.
Coming back from the Luna run I over-corrected.
The Captain says I used up a wee bit too much fuel.

Gosh! White Sands is big!
I'll bet they have a million acres of concrete down there.
And just think--it's all level as a tabletop.

Usually, I love landing time.
There's a terrific thrill to setting a ship down on a pillar of fire.
This time, of course, it will be a bit different.

I wonder if we'll make a very big hole?

---anon

In
which

gives
letters

and
reviews

and
mish-mosh

HERBLIGS



My thanks to Art Rapp for the title of this section of OOPS, hence-forth to be run in the place of "Dribblings" and including a fanzine review of sorts and a letter column. You might call it a sort of a Hodge-Podge, only Nancy and Marie-Louise thought of that first. Instead please consider it as a sort of Gulliver's Travels through Fandom with quip and query... or "but the eggplant over there." (Courtesy Bill Morse)

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC APOLOGIES: Those of you who remember things like this might think back to last issue and recall a statement I made in "Dribblings" to the effect that Brackett's "Sword of Rhiannon" was published originally in PLANET STORIES. New York has this to say -

"Dear (?) Gregg,

Back in the doghouse for you!

THE SWORD OF RHIANNON appeared in PLANET did it?

Ye miserable spalpeen, it appeared in THRILLING WONDER STORIES, June 1949, under the title THE SEA KINGS OF MARS. Doncha know nuthin'?

We demand a public apology and the wearing of sackcloth and ashes for 60 days.

Weren't you changing the name of OOPSLA! to STARBRIGHT?

Sam" (Mines)

--Looks like I pulled a blooper, huh? What's the price of good sackcloth nowadays?

PEON (Charles Lee Riddle) #31 received and noted, along with the following post-card.

"Boy, I must be slipping to send you not one, not two, but 3 issues of PEON! Oh well, you must have enjoyed them, to say the least! Have just completed the March issue, and it will be in the mails this weekend, as soon as I can dig up enough cash for the postage on the darned things. 38 pages this time, more than I normally run! YOU'LL GET ONLY ONE!

If you're about to publish, here's a note for you--Rog Phillips just wrote me that he is now working nights as a guard in a casket factory--so he can type there without being disturbed! Incidentally, he wrote all the stories in the #3 MYSTIC (except the short-short!)"

PEON #31, 108 Dunham Street, Norwich, Connecticut, is published



bi-monthly at 10¢ per copy, 12 for \$1. True enough, I received only one copy of this issue, and though I have watched the mailbox dilligently for the last few weeks it hasn't budged an inch. My only consolation, however small, is that my copy of this issue had two front covers. Behind the covers was found some wonderfully excellent mimeography and top-flight fiction. I cannot reconcile myself to fan-fiction, so OOPS shall never run any, but that does not stop me from appreciating good fiction in PEON. Jim Harmon is present with a column I find neither interesting nor inspired, for the most part, but this issue manages to be remarkably well done and undoubtedly well-written. T E Watkins' KAN-KAN KABITZER has an excellent column illustration and equally excellent writing. A page of drawings, titled DENESS'S MENACES is fine filler; Terry Carr's column, FANTASTUFF, is easily the best writing Carr has produced anywhere in the science fiction field. Not to be overlooked are Dick Clarkson's KUMQUAT, Ian Macauley's fine fanzine review, and the delightful PEON NOTES by the editor himself. This fanzine, now in its sixth year, is a welcome addition to any library shelf.

"The imagination boggles at the thought!"

That, in case you are wondering, is an interlineation. I hope that those of you who worry about such things are gratified at this concession I am making. OOPS has never before run interlineations and does so now under pressure. Incidentally, while we're on the subject of what OOPS does and doesn't, I wonder what shape your copies have been arriving in since I've been mailing them flat instead of folded? Are they in good condition, or has the post office been respectfully mangling them into some semblance of typical 3rd class mail?

DEPARTMENT OF ALMOST FORGOTTEN STATISTICS: My apologies to the fine artists working for OOPS whose names I invariably forget to mention on the contents page. Artwork this issue is by DEA, Ray Capella and Terry Carr. Cover by DEA.

A. VINÇ CLARKE, Kent, England

"I have a Thing about writing to US fmz...I expect my Ma was frightened by an early Bloch article...but Willis Himself passed along the OOPSLANNISH addressed to SLANT-HYPHEN and directly I saw those magic words 'Sixth Fandom' a great wave of sentiment passed over me. I felt as if I'd just finished a Sturgeon story or had an apartment wrecked at the Chicon. A last little bastion...that is what I mean, bastion...of the Roaring Sixth; a small spark, unquenched by the-er-waters of the Seventh, that only wants a little fanning to grow into a hotfoot...

Of course, sentiment aside, there are several ways in which it could be improved. It's far too tidy looking, especially in the art department. There are hardly any typos...no pleasant speculation as to what a word means...and what is worse, no interlineations.

And I don't like the idea of OOPS ending with #30, either. I have sad memories about a fanzine that ended with #30.

Oh well, the paper's good, anyway.

Therbligs III

And Bloch, of course. I particularly liked the 'middle initial' gag, and shall be very glad to see this article by him about 'Is Science Fiction In A Rut?'

And McCain. V. scholarly. And a darned good illo at the heading.

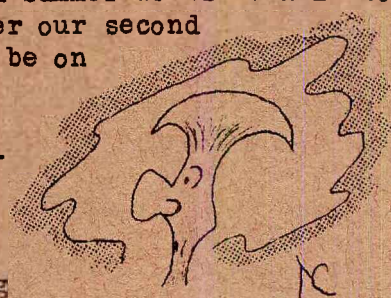
And Vick. His style is so infectious.

And Willis. Haw. I don't know that it was entirely wise publishing something with so many topical references, and how many will be able to appreciate such references as the injunction to George to comb his hair (it sticks up like a baby porcupines) but it's nice re-reading 'em together. Pity you missed the first "konck."

And Dribblings, 'specially the STATEMENT.

Hard to comment on the thing yet, but I suppose by mid-Summer we'll be able to make a smo-o-oth transition from 6th to 8th Fandom and enter our second childhood. About that time Chuch Harris and myself should be on holiday in Belfast. Sometimes I wonder if we'll ever come back. Come to think of it, why should we?

Oh, and before I forget it, I admire the title lettering on the cover. Will be looking forward to the next 19 OOPS. Vincerely, Vinø"



...but hard on the heels of this is a second letter, saying

"OOPSLA! 12 came along today via Walt and Chuck with the legend scribbled on its cover - "Please Circulate Rapidly." Ah, thinks I, it must be a stirring issue this time. But...nope. Nothing controversial. Nothing to scream and cry FEUD! about. Wazzamatter, dontcha wanta fight?

Oh, well, out with the old scalpel.

Cover decorative, if in a sombre vein in colour and content.

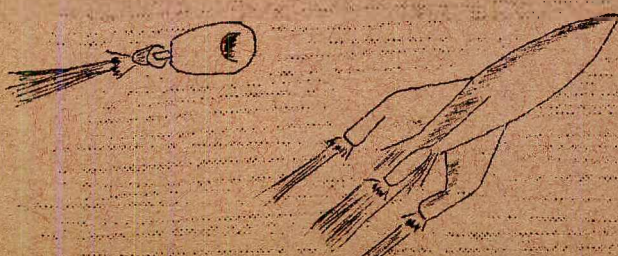
Contents page. Do you think that having your name and address twice here and once on the bacover is really necessary? How do you manage to avoid offset - have you an automatic slipsheeteer? Has your street really got 28174 habitations in it or do your local planners count separate offices? Why should I be interested anyway?

Dans Un Verre D'Eau... Ah yes, but do RDM and SFAd sell? At least you're as good as TWS and STARTLING...they're not selling either.

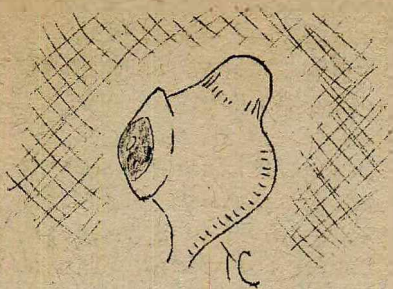
Mark of McCain. Can't give much of an opinion on this as I've only seen one MAD, the first. The Authorities (who, of course, Know Best) clamped down on the import of US comics here 3-4 years ago...too bloody, or something...and now we have mostly British Reprinted Editions. As adults buy fewer comic books here than they apparently do in the States, those reprinted are the real kids stuff...Superman, True Crime, Superboy, John Carter of Mars, etc. And of course, almost anything appertaining to peculiarly US news is out. That excludes POGO, and I suppose MAD and similar things are looked upon as too sophisticated for our kids.

Our most popular (not with me, natch) daily, the DAILY MIRROR (alleged to have the world's largest daily sale...somewhere about 7,000,000...or is that a Sunday rag, and this is about 3,000,000...what does it matter, anyway?) devotes just over one of its 16 pages to strip cartoons, the largest proportion of any paper. Some idea of its high intellectual level can be gained from the fact that international news sometimes takes up all of 1/3 of a page. With the exception of one children's comic animal strip, all these are aimed at adults and all are realistically drawn. There is a detective, Buck Ryan, a family, the Ruggles (which really grew up...the kids got married, had babies, etc), Belinda, a sort of BRE Orphan Annie, Garth, the

nearest thing to s-f we've had...a muscle bound he-man who gets shoved by a Professor friend into the future or past or tackles flying saucers and stuff; at the present he's battling a man from the future who plans to bury a bomb now and explode it in the future when it will be under World Headquarters or some such... the strip is anonymous but no one we know



FIRST CONTACT



does it; there's a strip about some chronic gamblers who are having slapstick adventures in each sport in turn, and lastly, but definitely not leastly, Jane, a well-drawn virgin who loses most of her clothes but not her virtue with great regularity. Some of these fanzine so-called artists who depict dames in various states of undress could learn a lot from this artist...he's good.

One or two other papers carry strips, sometimes US stuff, but not in the same quantity as the MIRROR.

Passing on through OOPSLA!, the pome was very much appreciated.

THE HARP...Ahhh. The ould master hasn't lost his touch, even tho' his appearance has altered a lot. When I knew him he had only 3 antennae. And it made me go all nostalgic to see the old Q lettering-guide used. A nice touch. Walt continues to be maddenlingly (if that's a word) accurate. I counted through that first HARP paragraph and there were 13 jokes. If only I could have found 14. Yeah, Lee was so disarmingly casual about being plump and brown-eyed. I remember her burbling about horse-riding in an early letter in a way which, like Walt and the Valentine, I put down to pure fan eccentricity. It didn't seem to ring true with my mental picture, but, Ghod, what fan ever does?

Bloch on Leiber. Hmmm. THE GREEN MILLENIUM I was disappointed with. The humour/satire was much too forced. I don't think Leiber does well at funny satire...his medium is savage satire. Nice crack of Bloch's about FANTASTIC A.

Dribblings. I like this, but I think you could tighten it up a little and run a letter column. Always like to read the other guy's opinion, even when it's fugg-headed. Liked your piece about the correction fluid best here. Looking rather far ahead to next Labor Day, aren't you? Look, if you've got any spare OOPSLA's send 'em across and we'll see if some British faneds will exchange. Get a little of the Q International flavor in OOPS.

Doesn't look as tho I'm going to catch the post tonight, but I'll try. Liked the comment on British cons in your letter in HYPHEN.

With best wishes, Vinø"

--comments, anyone? No, I don't have an automatic slip-sheeter and your guess is as good as mine as to how I avoid offset. I just use absorbent paper, fast-drying ink and crank like mad. And what's wrong with John Carter of Mars?



"Hawning beys ate hanr levy"

You know, I'm just now getting around to really reading WAW's Stateside Report in Quandry #27-28 and I find it extremely enjoyable, even at this late date. Willis is like cheese, he improves with age. Once I got started reading my old Q's, I couldn't stop. I originally started out looking for ideas for OOPS but I kept laughing. Before I knew what was happening, I was working my way through from #8 to the last issue. There are all sorts of interesting things in Q for me...two articles I wrote and had printed at various times...mentions of my name here and there, a fanfile and such...and an old advt I once ran for a contest I tried to start, but I only got one reply and that was from WAW himself. Since he was the winner, I was going to give him his prize in Chicago, but I don't remember now if I did or not. It so happened that it was to be his own contest entry, so I don't imagine he was too excited about it all.

I do have one thing I'd like to excerpt from Q--a comment by Bob Silverberg in #10 about GALAXY

"Galaxy's recent jump to the 35¢ stratum has made this shiny newcomer just another magazine in my book. Good thing I had a sub, too, because I wouldn't pay 35¢ for any magazine."



Ah, well, autre temps autre mores, Bob. N'est-ce pas?

Therbligs V

CONFAB #3, Box 634, Norfolk, Nebraska is issued by Bob Peatrowsky of MOTE fame and rises phoenix-like out of MOTE's ashes. Now me, I don't care much for letterzines to begin with, but this one is slightly different. There has been a pun floating around the last two issues about a 'rye sense of humor' which deserves the answer that no true drinker ever uses rye for a chaucer. If you like letterzines, by all means try CONFAB...it's away and ahead of its nearest rival.



The 24th issue of SPACESHIP has arrived from Bob Silverberg (760 Montgomery St, Brooklyn 13, NY) and is worthy of mention inasmuch as it contains a very fine history of 1953 titled "1953 In Review" and written by editor Silverberg himself. This one piece is worth the entire issue. The remainder of the magazine is devoted to science fiction, being reviews and critical analyses, and so is--to me--of little actual interest. Whereas the motivation behind Sship is the science fiction field--and, indeed, editor Silverberg is even now breaking into the pro ranks with the sales of several stories--the underlying fire behind OOPS is fandom, its idiots and idiosyncrasies. Oil and water don't mix--and while science fiction is dependent in a large way upon fandom, fandom is not dependent upon science fiction. Sship is undoubtedly a leader in the field, now in its fifth year, but it's just not the type of fanzine I rave over.

R. JEWITT, YORKS, ENGLAND

"I hope you don't mind my writing to you--I filched your name and address from the letter column of a copy of STARTLING STORIES.

As you no doubt know, American science fiction is hard to get over here. I wonder if you have the same difficulty in obtaining British s-f--that's if you are sufficiently interested in BSF to want it. If you are, would you be interested in an exchange deal--

tralian. The exchange are other mags or books

If you are at all would be interested, would

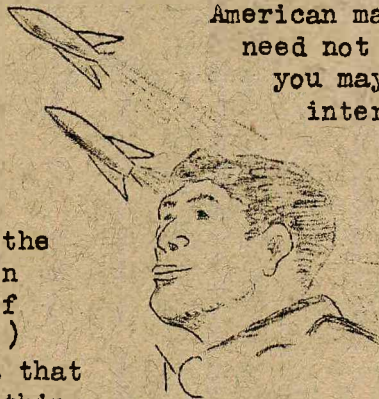
Yours faithfully,

American mags for British, French or Aus- need not be limited to SF. Perhaps there you may want.

interested, or have any friend who you please write me.

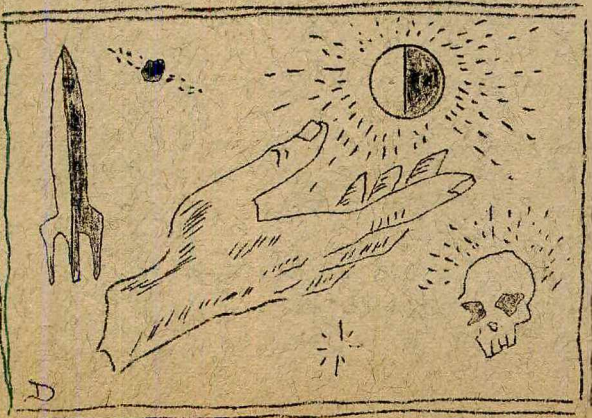
R. Jewitt"

--I can't say as I'm quite the offer, as I don't very often tion (I am deathly afraid of James White or Chuck Harris) letter in OOPS in the hopes that interested in this sort of thing address is: 62 Essex St, Gipsyville, Hull, Yorks, England) and make him some sort of an offer. Incidentally, Mr Jewitt, if you're interested in subbing to OOPS, I would be most happy to have any issue of a French science-fiction magazine, just for kicks.



one you want for this read British Science Fic- running across a story by but I'm printing this you few collectors who are will contact Mr Jewitt (his

LIERARY DEPARTMENT: I recently finished reading Simak's fine novel, CITY, and I have only one word to say for it--magnificent. This is truly a great science fiction novel and worthy of due recognition as such. Too bad more writers can't find the time to write with as much depth as this. And speaking of depthless writers, we might turn to Bob Tucker's new book, "Wild Talents" a minor variation of the oldest Slan theme in history. Truly, Tucker is not an inspired writer and never has he shown it more clearly. However, one bright points stands out in his favor, and that is his use of fannish names. If it were a really worthwhile story, it would be disconcerting to run across familiar appellations all the time, but as the characterization requires little



Therbligs VI

reading effort and the plot even less, it does not distract in the least to find Groff Conklin (named Peter) a CIC man and Ray Palmer in the FBI. Indeed, the rest of the books becomes one big treasure hunt in an effort to locate other familiar persons and there is always the hope that even your name might be included.

Also read was "Costigan's Needle" by Jerry Sohl, a wonderfully intriguing if rather impractical (towards the last) story of an invention which opened the door between the dimensions. The only catch was...the door was disturbingly one-way. This novel is highly recommended.

"A doot is a small, messy, misspelled dot"

I shall not try to comment upon the recently received "The Enchanted Duplicator" from Walt Willis and Bob Shaw except to say that this is, without any reservations, the greatest piece of fan-writing since the first issue of AMAZING. No superlatives can describe this story and it weak advice indeed to say "be sure and get a copy" but all else fails me. I only know that if you don't get a chance to read "The Enchanted Duplicator" you are going to be the most left-out person in all fandom. As a side note to Walt and Bob--this story cries for a sequel.

WILLY LEY, NEW YORK CITY

(I recently read a story in which the 'hero' jumped off a tiny moonlet where he had been marooned and landed quite safely on earth. Being slightly incredulous and more than slightly annoyed, I checked with Willy Ley and here is his answer.)

"I haven't read the story to which you are referring but I think I know about it and if it is the story I have in mind, I can only shake my head. Some months ago a literary agent I happen to know called me up and said that he had a story by "E. B." (of course he used the full name) which contained an assumption which he, the agent, thought wrong. Namely: that the space suited man could escape from a space station by jumping off and landing on the earth. I told him in so many words that this could not be done. Proved it too with figures. But now, in spite of full knowledge that the main premise was wrong he seems to have sold it anyway.



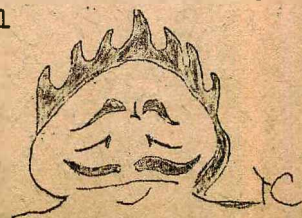
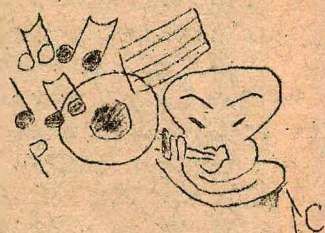
Well, all I can do now is to repeat the facts: In the case of von Braun's space station at 1075 miles above mean sea level a rocket ship which has to return to earth must reduce the speed which made it stay in orbit by 1070 miles per hour. Then it will be slow enough to be pulled into the atmosphere by the earth's gravity. Now a velocity change of a thousand miles per hour is very little for a rocketship but about twenty times as much as human muscles could supply, even if the man were not encumbered by a space suit. If the suit had what is now often called body

jets it still wouldn't work for with hydrazine and nitric acid for fuels the fuel requirement for that velocity change would be almost 3 times the mass of the man. If he, with suit, weighed 200 lbs he would need around 600 lbs of fuel. So this is out.

Now for your other question of the space suited man falling towards the earth from an arbitrary distance, you state 3 radii. It does not matter, incidentally, whether he is "ahead of" or "behind" the moving earth because he would have the same velocity relative to the sun. In any case he'd strike atmosphere with a velocity not far less than 7 miles per second (it would build up to a full 7 mps only if there were an unimpeded fall down to sea level.) It has been calculated that a feather falling into the atmosphere under the same conditions would burn up. This would apply also to a space-suited man. But it might be possible to develop a landing capsule for just such a purpose.

Sincerely yours,

Willy Ley"



Therbligs VII

RON ELLIK, LONG BEACH, CALIF "Lo! the phoenix arises! (or some such...) Anyhoo I for one am glad to see you back. Howsomeverabob-ble, it took you quite a while to find me, didn't it? I saw Balint's copy lo these many two or three weeks ago. I should gripe...I liked it. As you must have heard by now, I did not stay long in the realm of the innocent (nor even guilty) bystander. I too am murdering a mimeograph and you shall be the hapless recipient of a copy of my stuff in a couple or four days. 'Tis called, yea verily, FANTastic Story Mag (now where have I heard...) Merwin and Mines are both trying to see if they can sue me, and almost everybody in fandom is trying to get me to change the title. Here's hoping you can find your way down to 3255 or 232 some day. Ron"

--yes, we're back all right. And I appreciate the copies of FSM, too, even though I think you could use a great deal of improvement in your artwork and mimeo'ing. And, yes, why did you pick that title? Surely not because you liked it...

ROBOT PRESS, BILLINGS, MONTANA "'Sorry to be so late' as the expression goes. For some reason, OOPS got mixed up with SPACE. SHIP and I couldn't find it for the life of me. I just found it by accident now. Yes, I still pub and edit SCINTILLA, and you will be on the trade list from now on. You'll probably get reviewed in the process, too. I hold that Ghu-awful post of sacred sanctimonious reviewer or the Most High for short.

Me being one of the traditional legion of seventh fans as I am, I'm downright ashamed to admit just how much I like to see OOPS back. It was sort of a crash for me, too, when sixth fandom went down. I felt sort of besaken. But, strong of heart and mighty of spleen I held out. My little fortress of fandom girded its pages and slowly but surely improved. I am proud to say that I DIDN'T GO DOWN WITH THE SHIP, I JUMPED OFF LIKE ANY OTHER COWARD. oh, well, scincerely, larry anderson"

--what I can't figure out is why everybody keeps claiming Sixth Fandom has fallen.

ODD-BALL NOTES: I notice fandom has a new fad. Ellik types "I'm going to sell leather-neckties at the con..." across the bottom of the post-card, just beneath the address, and I recently got a letter from Grennell with "beware of greggs bearing gifts" typed in approximately the same location. Is this the successor to interlineations?

SSgt STEVE SCHULTHEIS, SHEPPARD AFB, TEXAS "...Ya slipped up, McCain! Now, I don't think a whole lot of MAD myself. But I don't think much of L'IL ABNER either. It's funny, yes. It's good satire (occasionally), true. But, in common with almost every other comic (ha) strip, the humor is forced. Behind it all you can see the harrassed brain of Al Capp busily grrrrrinding out another installment. As for comparing Capp with Swift, once the satirized events have been forgotten the author's work must rest on its other merits as literature. Witness the fact that Gulliver's Travels is best known today in pared down versions as a children's book. People who read it today see only the plot and little or none of the wit or satire which has now gone pointless. Those few who do appreciate it as a satire (with the exception of literary scholars) appreciate, not as a political satire but as an underlying satire on the human race which, unlike the politics of Swift's time, is still with us (and one hopes that it will continue to be for some time to come.) Swift's claim to literary fame is not as a political satirist, but as a misanthrope: a man who hated the human race and who could express his viewpoint brilliantly. Human satire is a much more lasting thing than satire on a certain personality or period. What will Orson Waggon be when Orson Wells has been forgotten?

POGO, on the other hand-- Well, Pogo, by his own admission, is "more the human bean type" and long after Washington and Moscow have become "as Nineveh and Tyre" people, no doubt, will still be acting like Cowbirds and like Mole Mc----- (whatever, exactly, his name is). As a matter of fact, I appreciated the character of Mole for a good many months before it suddenly dawned on me (when they mentioned

Therbligs VIII

his last name) that he was intended to satirize a particular person.

All these, however, are for the most part matters of opinion; but in one point ya really did, yes, ya really did, ya did slip up, McCain. It was, perhaps--or I should say, probably--your personal preferences that led you to the fantastic supposition that LI'L ABNER held a secure place in fannish hearts before POGO moved in. LI'L ABNER, of course, has long had a scattered circle of admirers in all walks of life, but, to the best of my knowledge, it has never made a particularly apparent splash in fandom.

Ah, how the mighty have fallen! How temporary are the laurels of fame! Where are the snows of yesteryear!? Does no one yet remember the once so highly esteemed BARNABY? There, friends, was a cartoon strip! From the moment it burst upon the American public in the pages of the late but not very much lamented (in most circles) PM, BARNABY was the ne plus ultra of the comix. With KRAZY KAT and later POGO it was the only cartoon that ever made habitual non-comic page readers lay down their sociology texts and take notice. The 'liberals' loved it, and so did most of the conservatives. It was one cartoon strip that one could read in polite society and and still not be looked down upon by the initiated. This, alas, can still not be said of POGO under all circumstances. (Perhaps because, after all, POGO is actually published as a--pth!--comic book.) One reason--the main one, I think--for BARNABY's extreme acceptability, was its fine cleanness and brilliance of line and composition. The main reason for its popularity among non-comic strip readers was its relaince not upon slapstick (as in POGO) but upon extremely dry wit for its humor. The satire was not so strong as in POGO (in fact, I don't think the intent was particularly satirical) but what satire there was was wonderfully subtle.

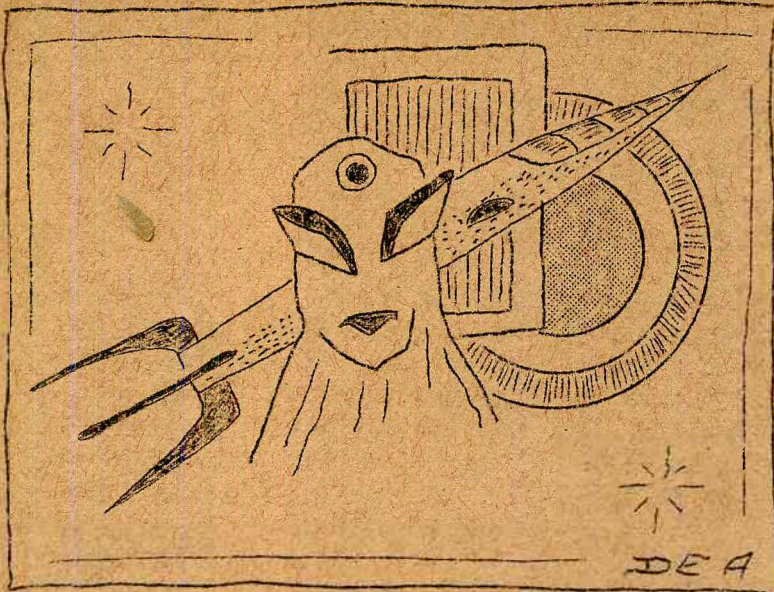
It can't be said, I suppose, that BARNABY took fandom by storm. But it grew immensely popular all over the country with people who didn't mind over much cerebrating a bit with their entertainment and, naturally enough, some segments of fandom became BARNABY conscious. (Of course, due to the nature of the strip, it couldn't have been very popular with the children. --This statement is an afterthought and not intended to allude to fandom. You can holster your mimeo cranks now.) Alas, BARNABY declined both in quality and in popularity after Crocket Johnson, its creator, quit drawing the strip. He was one cartoonish who admittedly hated cartooning and had the courage to give the whole thing up at the height of his success. About the time that Pogo was feeling his oats and elbowing Bumbazine out of the way in ANIMAL COMICS, BARNABY slipped quietly into oblivion. Its only lasting impression on the American scene, to my knowledge, is in the name of the "Little Men" of San Francisco. Thus, fandom preserves at least a monument where glory has been forgotten.

I still think BARNABY was a fine comic strip. It left behind it two collected volumes (in hard covers, yet, while POGO gets only wrappers) which still turn up from time to time in fantasy booklists. There was also a BARNABY QUARTERLY published around 1946 and (just in case you decide to run a letter column, Gregg, I'll try to slip by this little ol' unpaid advert) I would gladly pay 50¢ per copy for any issue of it in excellent condition (proportionately less for lesser conditions.)

"The Harp" in the last OOPSLA! was fine, fine. I always hate to comment on Walt's columns. First because any witty remarks that I might make in reference to them are already so far eclipsed by the columns themselves that to do so would show me up for the dolt that I am, and second, I can never think up enough superlatives with which to describe them. So I won't say anything more about the "Harp."

By the way, if you wrote all of the incidental verses in this last ish, you truly managed to maintain a high level of inspired triviality. They were all of them fine, fine.

Oddly enough, Bloch's little scribble was quite fine. Fine, fine. (I seem to be out of superlatives for ANY occasion.) His article was a bit of a tooth gnashing experience for the collector, tho. QUESTIONS: Did Leiber's "You're All Alone" appear IN a pocket book or AS a pocket book? If the latter is the case, by what publisher was it published? I consider my PB collection fairly complete but I don't recall that title at all. Also, where oh where did Leiber's "singularly erudite" essays on Lovecraft and fantasy fiction appear? In fanzines, I presume; but where?



Also, I file away the reference to NEW PURPOSES for future investigation with the sub note that I'll probably have a heck of a time getting copies when and if I try.

Except for, or perhaps even more so because of, the purely personal note of exasperation, Bloch's article was much enjoyed. Here's looking forward to his next. If this boy keeps on like this I predict he'll become a big name in fandom.

Yours truly, Steve

--remarkable how much you can say about BARNABY without ever giving me the slightest inclination of

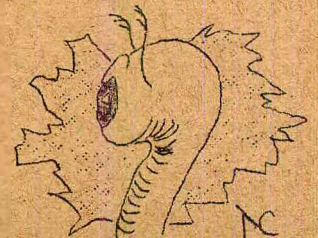
who...or what...he is. To my knowledge, I've never seen the strip and I haven't the foggiest notion of what it's all about. I think I'll stick to POGO. And to...

HYPHEN, #7, 170 Upper Newtownards Rd, Belfast, N. Ireland published in between the issues of SLANT by Walt Willis, Chuck Harris, Vinø Clarke and Bob Shaw. At first glance it is a thoroughly boring publication and hardly worth reading. But when you settle down and go back through the issue, reading carefully, you find a mine of golden charm and silvery tongue. Bob Shaw displays an artistic style and flavor all his own and his covers deserve mention. The entire issue is highly enjoyable.

I must not forget PSYCHOTIC #10, 2631 N Mississippi, Portland 12, Oregon, which is (along with HYPHEN) just about the #1 fanzine in the field. It travels all over the place from one subject to another; it runs a big fanzine review that gives OOPS occasional good reviews; fannish articles and columns; a lo-o-ong letter column that ranks with the best of them (by that I mean that it's just as rank as they come) and is just generally readable all over. Not only that but Geis got #33 out of 200 copies of Willis and Shaw's "Enchanted Duplicator" and mine was only #37, and that should go to prove something. By all means get PSY.

Guess what, Willis? A copy of the VARGO STATTEN magazine (first issue) arrived in yesterday's mail from Dale R Smith (3001 Kyle Ave, Minneapolis 22, Minn) as part of an advertising stunt. For those of you unfamiliar with the magazine, it's sort of a British version of Captain Future only with Ed Hamilton as the editor instead of Sam Mines. Statten, who seems to be some sort of British national hero, edits the magazine and features a wealth (?) of material written by himself. Actually, I wish we had a counterpart of the magazine here in the US. This magazine has really gone overboard to please British fandom. The editorial is slanted directly at fandom, as are the several departments and the letter column. If we had a magazine like this in the US we couldn't ask for more. Maybe the reading material isn't of the best--I frankly don't know, I haven't read it--but who reads the stuff anyhow? You can get a copy of the first issue, if you like, by sending 5¢ in stamps to the above mentioned address.

I have a letter here from Robert Bloch which I'm not going to print, as it isn't a letter-column type letter. But, in explanation of why you find no material from him in this issue, I would like to say that his wife is in the hospital right now and Bob is having a bit of a time doing the housework as well as his own. However, if things look up, he'll be back again in OOPS #14, so look for him.



lies X

K RYAN, COLUMBUS, OHIO

"Without even looking at the rest of the crop, I'd say your zine is a likely candidate for top fmz of the current batch. Layout and format quite good, reproduction darn near perfect.

Enjoyed your story of OOPS' venture into news-stand competition. Maybe you didn't do so badly after all; who knows if Rhodo and SFA ever sell any of their displayed copies?

The Mark of McCain, eh. As long as you have him for a columnist you'll never need to worry about filling the magazine--although he was pretty wordy as usual, I enjoyed his column. I first heard of the comic book MAD about the middle of '52, I think it was. Dave English remarked that he had heard of it but had been unable to get a copy and noted the coincidental title. (My MAD was still wheezing erratically along at that time.) Naturally, being intrigued, I looked for it but never found a copy until about a month ago, over here in Columbus. It contained, among other things, an adventure of "Flesh Garden" and a case from the files of "Dragged Net." I enjoyed it thoroughly. I didn't quite follow McC's explanation of the type of humor contained therein; I would say that this is not a comic book but a satire on comic books, and let it go at that.

I can think of a couple of other comics for mac's ideal comic selection. One is "Peanuts," a fairly new one involving several small children and a dog. You may hate small children and detest dogs but that won't detract from your enjoyment of "Peanuts." And then there is a strip called "King Aroo," a sort of Alice-in-Wonderlandish sort of thing. There's a dreamy quality about it that reminds me of "Krazy Kat." The rest; Willis and Bloch. Yes, especially Bloch. A most interesting glimpse at a fine author by another fine author. And so to the end...

regards,

Dick"

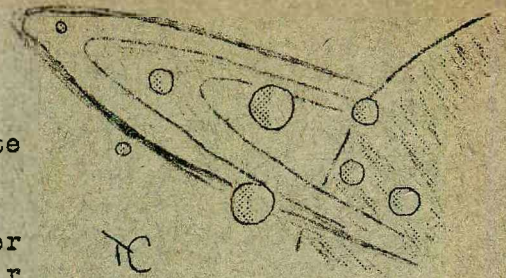
--for my part, Dick, I found MAD highly entertaining...both the comic book and your own particular fanzine. I'd be glad to see you revive it anytime you felt like it, tho I don't imagine that's probable. A few more views on MAD are expressed by...

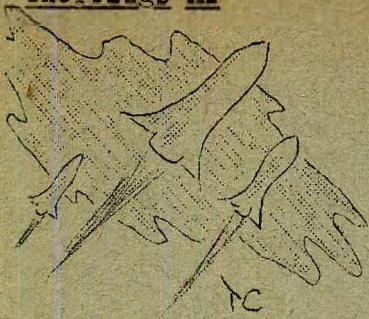
VERNON L. MCCAIN, KELLOGG, IDAHO

"...What happened to OOPSLA's letter column of yore? Hmmm? Not that OOPS isn't a good enuf mag to get along without it (wait'll you see the review you get in the next mag of the same name), unlike to many current zines where that's the only good feature... but it was such a prominent part of the old OOPS that I miss it. You do a nice job of writing on that first editorial. Much the best thing I've yet seen from you.

...The "Harp" was wonderful, but then when wasn't it? As I just informed Bloch, his serious articles are a shabby thing indeed compared to his humor, although still far better than almost anything else of a similar nature to be found in fanzines. Imagine, in his last letter he informed me he likes writing the serious articles but usually doesn't have the 'free time for thoughtful pieces' so confines himself to the light stuff which apparently he does subconsciously while plotting his next pro sale. Does that make you as jealous as it does me?

Shan't exert myself to try to argue with your views on MAD since the mag impresses me as so completely trivial as to be not worthy of attacking, much less defending, except to query since when are "The Lone Ranger," "Flash Gordon" and LIFE magazine sacred cows...especially the first two named. I can recall hearing the first ridiculed on countless radio programs when I wasn't much more than tall enough to put my ear to the receiver...and Flash Gordon is synonymous with trashy-style sf...all sf as far as the public is concerned. There are sacred cows among America's magazines...."Reader's Digest," "Saturday Evening Post"....conceivably even "Time" but "Life" hardly rates such a designation. The only reason I ever bothered puncturing the MAD bubble in the first place was that I was so weary of hearing endless paeans of praise for something so poor and figured it was time someone let a little fresh air into the discussion. But I have absolutely no intention of pursuing the matter further. Not only does MAD bore me...discussions about MAD





bore me...unlike LIFE which also bores me but which gives me endless satisfaction in the panning of it...ditto for "Readers Digest."

... For now, best, Vernon"

--Buck Rogers, its merits and dismerits aside, is panned by the American reading public not because of how poor it may be--they wouldn't know, anyhow--but because of the ideas it advances. If the strip were of the highest quality and written by Eric Frank Russell the American public still would pan it. And it is all simply because the average person isn't yet ready to think in terms of space travel. And, personally, I like LIFE magazine...

PLUGS AND OTHER STOPPERS: I guess I should mention that Harlan Ellison's old SFB will be revived under the title of DIMENTIONS (which is actually a typo, but so good I could not bring myself to correct it to -SIONS right then and there.) Since I'm plugging Harlan's zine (41 E 17th, Columbus 1, Ohio) I might as well tell you that a chap named Calkins runs a modest little column in there that you might find of interest. While we're plugging, we might as well mention Chamberlain Press (Box 7713, Philadelphia 1, Penna) by Alan E Nourse--remember him?--and its first selection, "Born Of Man and Woman," a collection of 17 stories by Richard Matheson with an introduction by Robert (pay me) Bloch. Personally, I'll stick with the SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB (Garden City, New York.)

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS AND LITTLE CARED FOR: Do you know that in these ten and a half pages of Therbligs I have already made 87 or more mistakes and corrected them with good old correction fluid? Boy, that blue stuff's l'eau de vie if there ever was any.

RAYMOND L ALLARD, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA "OOPSLA! is better than ever. It is worth your mad dash and struggle with the Marine Corps to put out. Actually what is wrong is that the last page arrives too soon.



With the rejection slips I have accumulated and criticism that has appeared on what I've had published--I won't help any--but I wish there was more material for your zine.

If the sweat and toil you put forth on OOPSLA! doesn't seem to warrant the expenditure, remember on this end of Uncle Sam's mail house we're waiting patiently and gobble up every word of it.

Keep 'em coming, Ray"

--Ray, it's guys like you that keep guys like me publishing. I sincerely hope that you continue to get as much enjoyment out of future issues of OOPS as you have in the past, and I'll do everything I can to see that you do. Looking through my records, I find that only one person has a longer sub to OOPS than you have, and he sent me two subscriptions by mistake. Yours is a tremendous vote of confidence. Thanks!

Zines I'm not going to get time to review are: CONFUSION (Box 493, Lynn Haven, Florida) which is pubbed by Shelby Vick and is highly enjoyable and also another revival from 6th Fandom: SPIRAL (214 Ninth St, Wilmette, Illinois) an up-and-coming fanzine of the most wonderful type, by Denis Moreen, which will undoubtedly replace VEGA soon, and which I wouldn't go another day without: ABSTRACT and a couple copies of VORZIMEZZINE (1311 N Laurel Ave, W Hollywood 46, Calif) the former having great possibilities because it is rather big and will certainly improve, for rather obvious reasons, and the latter being a two-page zine on the type of Chas Wells' GREY, both of which I find quite interesting. The latter is by far the better of the two, as I found the two pages of VORZ much better than the 36 or more of ABBY. However, I think a big future is in store for both of them, so go ahead and sub.

Therbligs XII

Also included is FOG (2444 Valley St, Berkeley 2, Calif) from Don Wegers. Another up-and-coming fanzine, and haven't we got a fine crop nowadays? Compared to the recent dearth of fanzines, the place is really booming. I would be happy if the pro field was doing as well. FOG has an excellent typo on page 10 and a very complimentary review of OOPS on page 13 and a total of 24 pages of so-so material.

LOOKING OVER THE FIELD: I think that the current crop of fanzines will produce some of the finest to be seen for two or three years. With the continuation of HYPHEN, the return of CONFUSION, and the addition of PSYCHOTIC, CONFAB, FOG, ABSTRACT, SPIRAL plus one or two others, we're in for some mighty entertaining reading come fall, maw, and you'd better believe it.

ADDENDA: As of 4 May 1956, Calkins completed his first year in the U. S. Marine Corps, leaving some two years yet to go and some 17 issues of OOPS still in the planning stage. ## Convention time is getting nearer and nearer and I'm going to go, maw, I'm going to go! ## Total corrections thus far are now over the 100 mark for Therbligs alone. Can any other fanzine editor make that statement? Does any other fanzine editor want to? ## For those of you who have done military service and have fired the U. S. Rifle, Caliber .30, M-1, I'd like to tell you that I came off the range this year in March or April, I forget which, but I shot a score of 235 out of a possible 250. I hit the target, maw, I hit it! ## For those of you who are wondering about the remark I made in HYPHEN about American conventions--the one Ving Clarke remarked on in his letter on page IV of Therbligs--I'll run it here: "I wish I could attend a London Convention. Harris's account was wonderful. You know, American fans are so stuffy..." I'll be glad to defend that statement to anyone who feels like taking me to task on it. ## I have yet another poem for you, which follows. I call it...

'discretion'

(or, 'hold it, Sam; he's bigger than you')

So far, no living man has dared
To say E is not mc²!

-- Albert

Well, after twelve pages of Therbligs I'm just about at the end of my rope. I do wish half a dozen of you people would write in and tell me whether you like OOPS this way or whether you'd rather have separate letter column, fanzine review column and editorial. And how long would you like Therbligs to be? Personally, I have hopes of expanding OOPS to around 30 pages in the not-too-indefinable future, with the balance going about 14 pages to columns, 4 pages to the editorial and the two covers, and 12 pages of Therbligs.

AND THE ANSWERS I GOT FROM THE THOUGHTS I USUALLY THINK WHILE THINKING: You must remember that little sub-heading I ran last issue, and here are the answers--I got three or four reviews the last month or two--I know where Ellison is, now, and I also heard from Tucker--ditto for Peatrowsky and MOTE--Dean Grennell cleared me up on Art Wesley, but now I'm half sure that Grennell is a penname for Bloch--Science Fiction Plus has gone under (and I miss it)--Courtney never had a boat; it was just an ordinary board they were talking about--latest circulation figures show MAD outselling GALAXY by 58,603 copies.

"The best-laid plans of mice and men gang aft agley..." True, and mair puir lach 'twould be if nae icht was ...or wouldn't you say so?


Gregg Calkins, Editor
Starflame Publications



STARFLAME PUBLICATIONS

PUBLISHERS OF:

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

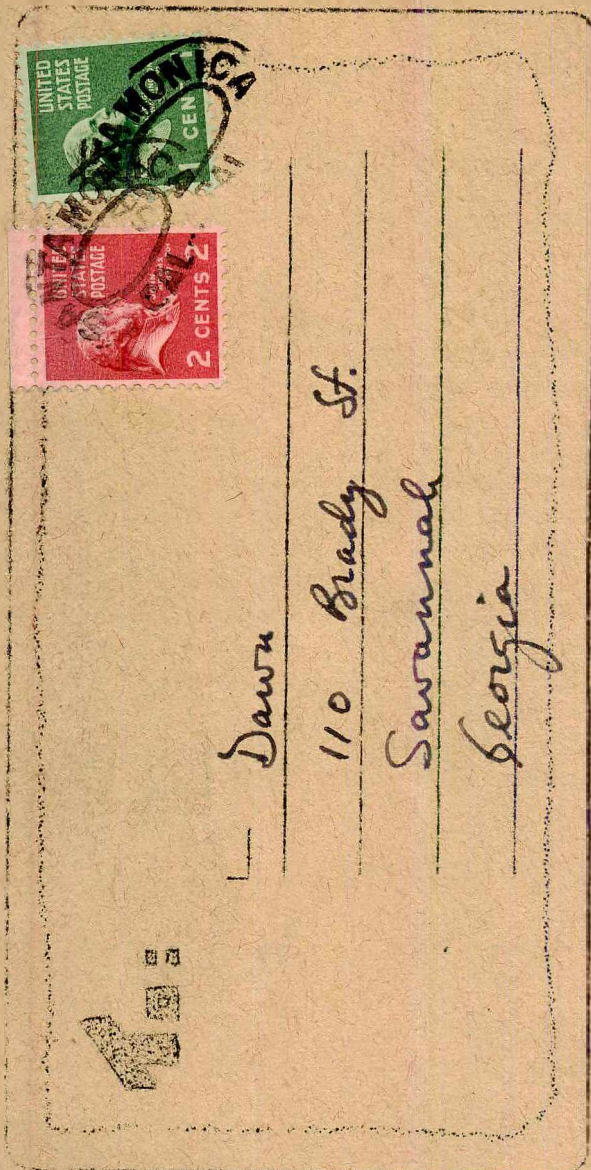
Subscribers Copy
Single Copy
You have one more issue due
Your subscription is expired

Trade Copy

Review Copy
Sample Copy
Issue worth your interest
Consider us for contribution
Issue given out of respect
Have you any comments?

Please inform: are you
Still editing your fmz?
A reviewer?
An ex-faned?

If not, your sub requested
(This information is required
to mail your further copies.)



3RD YEAR OF
PUBLICATION

Mimeographed Matter Only!
Return Postage Guaranteed

GREGG CALKINS, EDITOR
2817 - 11TH STREET
SANTA MONICA,
CALIFORNIA
"Standard's Finest Language"