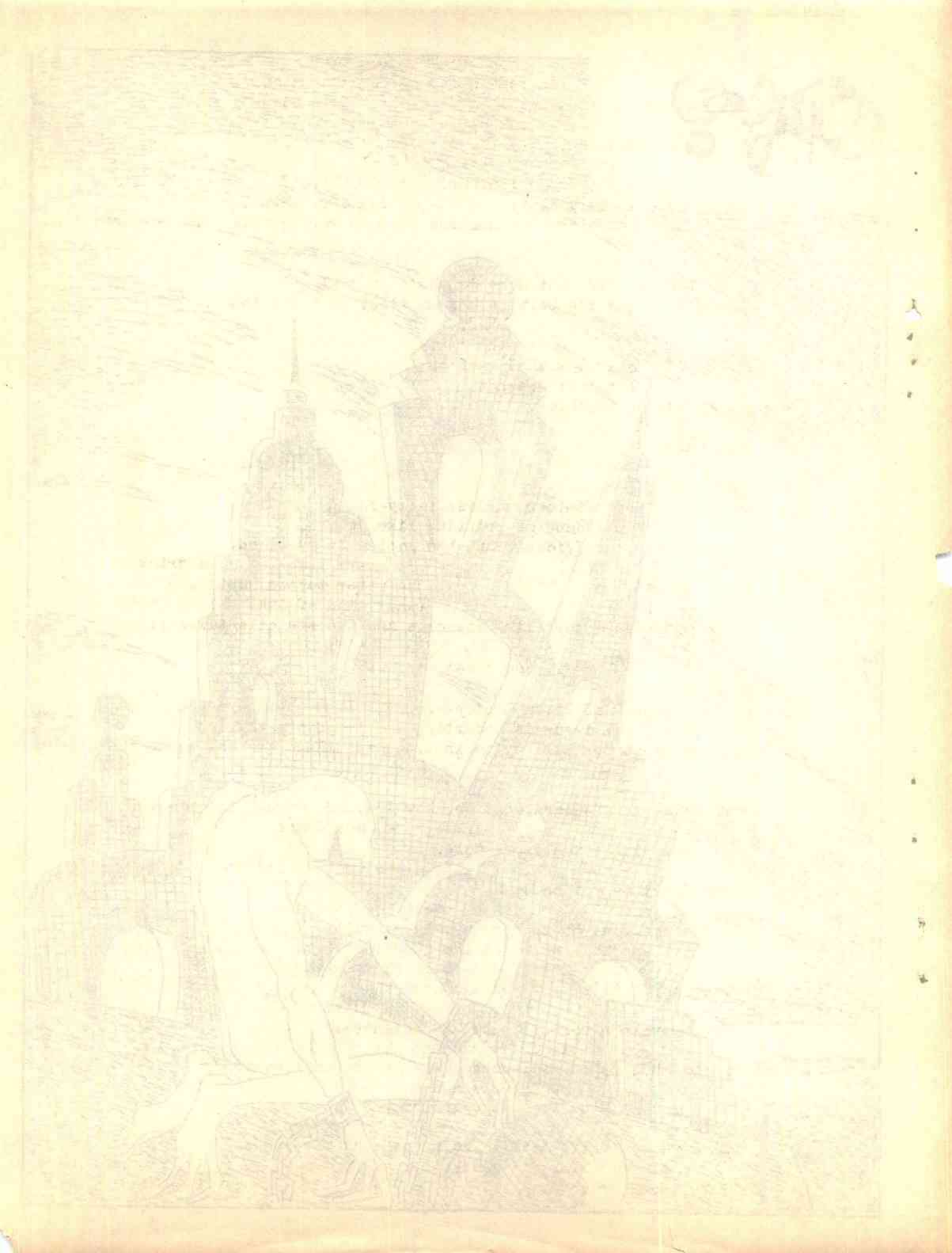
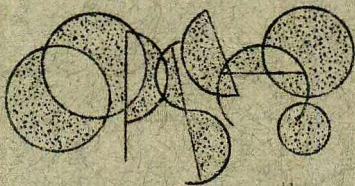


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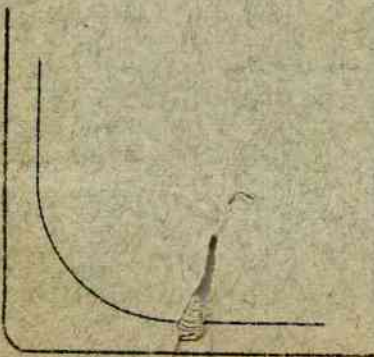
#16

THE FAKE FAN'S _ALMANAC



"Ignorance is a bane, my friends...
Now, as for me, I got knowledge what
I hardly ain't touched yet."

- Howland Owl in I GO POGO





... DANS UN VERRE D'EAU

Let me tell you a story of fortune and glory,
Of stencils and mimeo ink,
And if part of the time it sounds like it's in rhyme,
Why, then, I'm not so bad as you'd think.
Aye, the story is mine, AND IT'S TRUE...EVERY LINE!
(Like I said, it has fortune and glory)
For it's old OOPSLA!'s log...my autobiog
...and a most, most remarkable story.

1952: Today, so I said, I will publish a mag
That won't end up just as any old rag...
It's a cinch, it's a cake-walk, it's all in the bag.
So I thought.

#1 was quite funny and as quaint as could be
Though the writing was poor (it was mostly by me)
While the printing was worse and the typing much poorer
"It's GREAT!" I was sure, and I couldn't be surer
Today.

Or could I?

The letters said 'keep trying' though the grandeur of my sighing
had approached the great proportions of the waves along the shore,
Yet I took another stencil, stylus, manuscript, blue-pencil
and contrived to make another issue better than before.

It was better, all right. The less said the better!

OOPSLA!

Published as a very
irregular bimonthly
from 2817 Eleventh
St., Santa Monica,
California, for 15¢
per copy, 2/25¢ and
4/50¢, it is mostly
the fault of one
Gregg Calkins - 6th
Fandomer. Sixteen.

#3 followed, and then #4,
#5, #6, #7;
and if the last suffered, 'twas reason enough--
for I had just come back from...heaven.

inbetween#6and#7I
wenttoChicagoand
AtlantaandLynnHaven
andbackagain!

1020
1020
1

Editorial II

The reason for my circumvention
of my mailing date was the tension
brought on by the Convention
where much went on but is too very much to mention
here because we'd all be on a pension
before I was finished and our detention
in such reverie would probably be called condensation
by the neofans who are very jealous and very neo indeed!

8, 9, 10, 11, and what more is there to say?
except I joined the service and am still in there today
USMC,
that's me,
only I wish I wasn't.
But that doesn't
get me out of anything.

Such was 1953.

I'm laughing.

Nineteen hundred fifty-four
found me printing like before;
Fanediting, as I found out, had gotten in my blood,
For every time I took a drink
the water tasted just like ink
(what kind of ink? MIMCO ink!)

And mud tastes just like stencils and the stencils taste like mud.

Try one sometime.

I'm bitten, lads, and I can't stop--I'll publish to my dying day;
But when that final issue is assembled and is on its way,
Perhaps the great men will write in...perhaps these are the words they'll say:

"If life had a second edition, how I would correct the proofs!"

- John Clare

"Please, sir, I want some more."

- Charles Dickens

"The worst is yet to come."

- Tennyson

"Waste not your Hour, nor in vain pursuit
of This and That endeavor and dispute."

- Omar Khayyam

"That's why it's time for a change."

- Dewey

"The frivolous work of polished idleness."

- Sir James Mackintosh

"Books must follow sciences, and not sciences books."

- Francis Bacon

"Second thoughts, they say, are best."

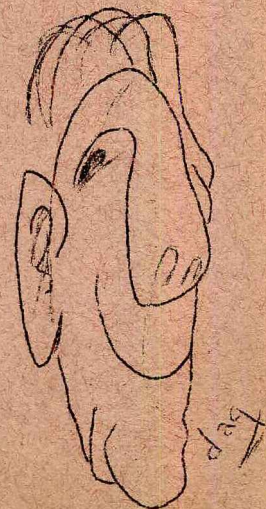
- John Dreyden

"He does not write at all whose poems no man reads."

- Martial

"Inkstained wretches."

- Alexander Woollcott



VERNON
L.
MC CAIN

THE MARK OF MC CAIN

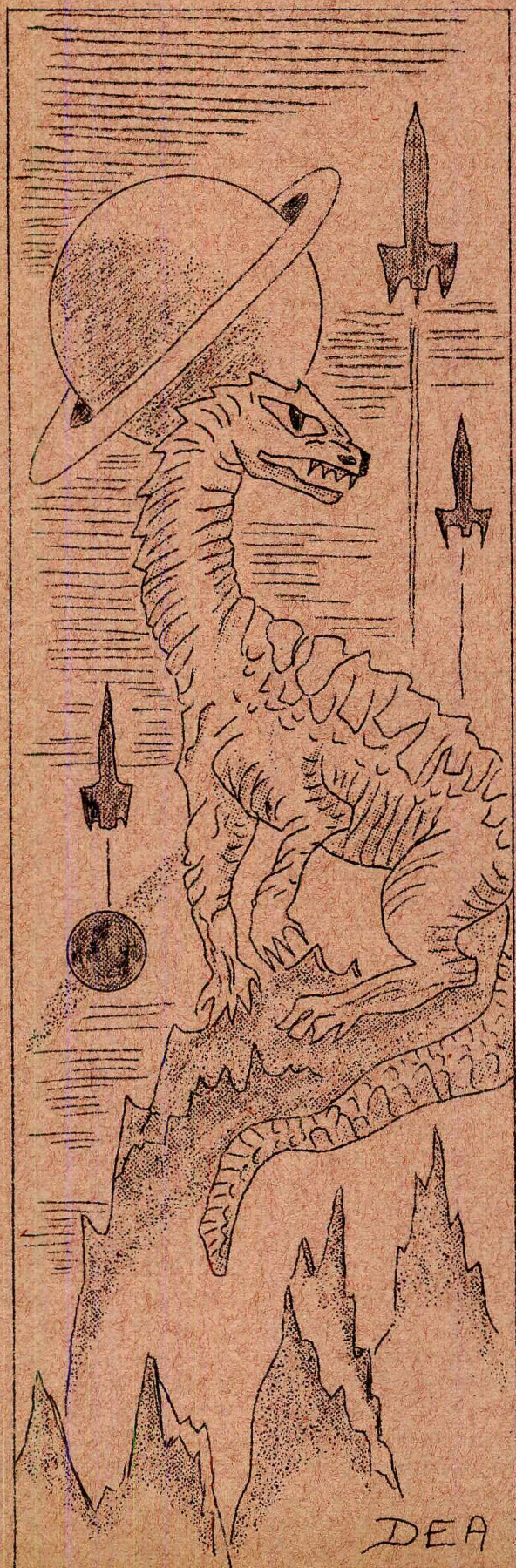
THE MAY ISSUE of the Oklahoma fanzine NITE CRY contained the following statement in its editorial, in reference to recent discussions of age in MOTE:

"Of the fen I know in the elderly class, there are none that have become active fen after leaving their teens. Now if there are cases, I would be interested in knowing of them but it is my belief that the older fan is but the teen age fan who did not lose his interest as he became older and indulges in active fandom as a hobby much as others collect stamps. The teenage fan is the very foundation of fandom. It is he, that with a couple of years of real activity, that heads up and carries on fandom. Without these younger fen, fandom would be no more."

The second paragraph is open to discussion, and I intend to discuss it later in this column. But as far as the first one is concerned Chappell couldn't be more wrong. He indicates in the current UMBRA that he is in his middle twenties and apparently the description fits him and he thus assumes that the same is true of everyone else. I'll admit there are a few notable cases where this has happened, most noticably in the case of Bob Tucker. But these are very definitely the exceptions.

Since CONFAB sparked Mitchell's editorial and it is apparently the fans who are discussing their ages in that magazine whom Mitchell feels have started an age 'feud', the records of the individuals involved would appear to be the most important qualification; or at least they should supply a representative sample.

I've gone through the CONFAB issues to date, checking, and find the older fans who've been indulging in the "Fan-Dad" discussion are editor Peatrowsky himself, G. M. Carr, Lee Riddle, Richard Geis, Russell Watkins, Dean



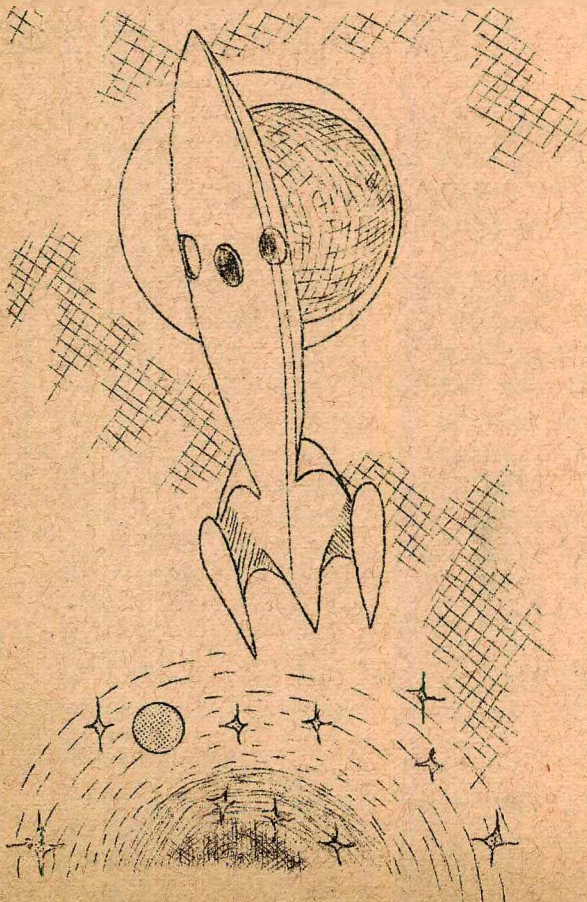
The Mark of McCain II

Grennell, Stephen Schultheis, and myself.

Peatrowsky is 28 and has been active in fandom only two years. I don't know Mrs Carr's age and would not be so ungallant as to reveal it if I did. But she publicly admits to being a grandmother so she surely can't object if I term her middle-aged. She has been in fandom only four years. Lee Riddle is 31 and I believe in one of his PEON histories he mentioned entering fandom shortly after the last war ended...sometime between 1945 and 1948, anyway. That would put him well beyond the teen-age bracket also. Geis is 26 (27 by the time this sees print). He has only been really active for the last year although he may have been around on the fringes for as long as a couple of years prior to that; not more, anyway. Watkins is 27 and has been active since 1949, I believe...five years. Grennell is 30 ...it was late 1952 when he first plunged into fandom in earnest. The youngest of the group, at 23, is Schultheis and I know least about him...he might adhere to Chappell's pattern but I have a hazy idea he hasn't been active more than three years. I don't recall him from during the 1951 period when I knew the name of almost every actifan (that was before I learned that less than half stick around long enough or do anything important enough to make it worthwhile to recognize their names). And I entered fandom four and a half years ago, right after my 22nd birthday.

So there are the names for Mr Chappell of seven older actifans and possibly an eighth who aren't persisting in a teenage hobby. Several, including myself, came very close to entering fandom in our teens, even going so far as to subscribe to a fanzine or so in some cases, but we waited until later to become really active. I can think of other names but those should suffice.

As for the theory that teenages are the soil from which fandom springs, I might go along with Mr Chappell if he is referring to total activity. No doubt about it, on a strictly quantitative basis the teenagers are 80% or 90% of fandom. They have the necessary time and enthusiasm to indulge in heavy publishing and writing.



But viewed from the standpoint of quality one sees another vista entirely. Don't interpret that to mean I am claiming no teenager produces worthwhile material. Some of the most brilliant productions in fannish history were the brain-children of individuals not yet 20. Many teen-age fans are mature far beyond their years. Two outstanding editors in this class which come to mind are Bob Johnson (who did his most brilliant work at 15) and Lee Hoffman. There are many others. The editor of this magazine is still technically in his teens. ((4 November 1954...wgc))

But to a considerable extent the teen-age fanzine is the butt of ridicule, and justifiably so. A glance at your mail for the last week will show at least two or three fanzines published by very young editors that feature very poor material crudely assembled and interlaced with embarrassingly gauche editorial comments. Most of these fanzines are utterly hopeless and will die after two or three issues. A few will continue over a long period of time. But the remainder will serve to prove conclusively that youth and inexperience

The Mark of McCain III

ience are the villains; for about two thirds of the really bad zines which survive evolve, after two or three years...sometimes less...into excellent ones. Part of the explanation is the experience gained by the editor, but mostly it is just a more mature viewpoint. Naturally there are some fanzines published by older fans which also can be described in the same terms. But the majority of the product of those in their twenties or older can be classed as quite good from the first issue, or if it isn't it becomes so after the second or third one.

The fatal drawback of the teenagers, however, is not youth, as the above may have indicated. That can be outgrown. Lack of staying power is the real villain. To quote from a Walt Willis Christmas card: "Ephemereal, that's what you are!" I mentioned Lee Hoffman and Bob Johnson a while back. Where are they today? Lee's in her twenties and Bob is approaching them. But Lee, once voted #1 fan, is now 98% withdrawn from fandom and for all practical purposes Bob has vanished off the face of the earth. The same is true of most of the other actifans of similar age from that same era, just three years ago. Most of them were lesser known and dropped out without leaving such obvious gaps. But there were also the Keaslers, the Venables, and the Snearys.

There was also Henry Burwell, an 'older' fan who came, flourished brilliantly for eighteen months, and dropped fandom with a familiar thud. But there are exceptions to every generation.

As one who appreciates fandom's virtues I become increasingly aware that the personalities I appreciate, the fans I respect, are almost invariably those who have put in at least a couple of years of fandom...(exceptions again, of course--at the moment I'm thinking of Geis and Grennell)...and three of the people I esteem most highly in all fandom are the three who have probably been active longer than anyone else; Bob Tucker, Robert Bloch, and Redd Boggs. (Many do not realize how long Bloch has been around fandom and how consistently active he has been; but you can pick up a representative selection of fanzines from almost any ear and find at least one Bloch appearance although I believe he is more active now than any time for the last fifteen years.)

As Jophan doubtless learned, true fannishness requires tenure. And the biggest objection I have against teenagers is that they become active for a mere two or three years and then 'phfft,' gone before you've really gotten used to them. And just when they are reaching their most attractive stage.

For instance, a few years ago there was one fan who published one of the worst fanzines I'd ever seen, wrote columns which I thought nauseating and served as one of my pet examples of a 'teen-age fan' when I was in a bad mood. After a couple of years I began noticing that his writing had become not only readable but entertaining...in fact his viewpoints dovetailed with my own to a surprising degree and I found his magazine, which he'd persisted in publishing, had become slicked up so attractively that it was beginning to take on SKYHOOK style prestige. For the first time I realized a person cannot be judged by material they produced prior to a certain age. After about another year a correspondence sprang up between us and he is now one of my most valued friends in fandom, a person I have tremendous respect for. What is happening? He is growing out of his teens and also feels he is growing 'beyond fandom.' Fannish feuds and silliness bore him, the wide-eyed open-mouthed brand of teenagedness so prevalent reacts upon him precisely as his own did on me several years ago. He is already curtailing his activity and plans dropping from fandom completely in the not too distant future.

This illustrates why I question Chappel's view that the teenager is breathing life into fandom. It would be just as accurate to say the teenager breathes death into it...or perhaps you could call it a phoenix-like circle. Fandom, because of its adolescent air, attracts uncritical adolescents predominantly rather than the

The Mark of McCain IV

more intolerant adults. At present it seems to be attracting younger and younger fans. These fans in turn make it even more adolescent until, when they mature to the point where they can make a real contribution, they lose interest in the "adolescent" activity of fandom and move into college, marriage, or some other activity which curtails their time or tolerance for fandom. Thus fandom is continually feeding off of, and reproducing, its own weaknesses.

And every such defection carries with it a contagious virus. Thus the anticipated exit of this friend I find depressing, especially when I compare his present activity with that of so many of the younger fan. And I begin to feel the same way he does...so much fannish activity is not only worthless but downright annoying...the fans I consider my associates are drifting off (and after you've been in fandom over four years the brief careers of the typical teen-age fan reminds you of those sf stories about an immortal observing people with normal life spans) and those who remain are far less interesting. I hope that sooner or later I'll discover what it is that has made fandom worth continuing for so many years to such tremendously intelligent and un-adolescent people as those three unique exceptions, Tucker, Boggs and Bloch. Meanwhile fandom has its advantages as well as disadvantages.

The reasons for the teen-age fans exit as he approaches his majority are several. The time, of which he had so much during high school years, dwindles alarmingly as he goes to college or starts working for a living. He hasn't time for such intensive fanning and perhaps there are other ways he'd rather spend it. If he marries, an almost insuperable barrier is raised. Wives are notoriously intolerant of husband's spare-time activities in which they do not fully share. Until recently practically no women had any interest in fandom and even today the odds are greatly against any teen-age fan growing up and marrying a feminine opposite number. That is one reason teenagers desert. Their lives are unsettled.

Secondly, teenagers are still in a period of general impulsiveness. Perhaps a majority of all fads start in the teenage period. They are quick to pursue the new and different...and just as quick to drop it for something newer and different. Thus the fan who discovers fandom, indulges in crifanac madly for seven months determined to make his permanent BNF mark on fandom, and then drops out disillusioned with the whole thing.

And, third, time moves more rapidly as you grow older. This subjective phenomenon has been explained on the basis that at the age of two, one year is half of your whole life; at five it is only one fifth; and so on. By the time you are 90 it is approaching a point where it is only one percent of the total and thus comparatively insignificant. It is necessary to put in several years in fandom to be a really worthwhile addition to the microcosmos; but to a fourteen year old that means devoting over a quarter of his lifetime to this pastime. He doesn't sustain interest that long nor is he accustomed to laying long-range plans for such a period. After all, four years ago he was a mere infant in the fourth grade! But a person of twenty-five already has his life more or less mapped out. He can probably guess pretty accurately what he'll be doing in the next four years. He won't be drafted, enter another school, or take on a new job. And the four years has shrunk to less than one sixth of his lifespan--a very comfortable chunk.

Per Perhaps as a subheading of this last cause we should point out that the older fan is able to decide what he'll do with his spare time in the future. He isn't subject to adult pressures nor constantly changing circumstances. An adult knows his situation and thus does not enter fandom unless he has the spare time for it and is apt to have it for some time to come. This indicates why fans who enter fandom in their 20s tend to make a longer and greater contribution.



The Mark of McCain V

I'll be frank that I'd like to see fandom oriented along much more adult lines. I'll admit there are times when, like my maturing friend, I feel I'm indulging in a premature second childhood, playing around with something not worth my time. But I really see no reason why an adult fandom couldn't exist. Save on a college campus (and unless you are a professor or a perpetual student your tenure there is a temporary one) there is no place I know of where a person whose tastes incline that way can relax and talk about things more profound than whether the weather this spring is better than last year. It indicates an over-developed ego to say so, but the vast majority of people are completely uninformed about practically everything but their own little specialty--and, worse yet, they are uninterested! To a person who is interested in whether bottle feeding actually could be responsible for a sex killer's crimes, the aims Stravinsky has in mind in his current music, or whether our government must inevitably evolve into a totalitarian form in the present-day world, the comfortable vegetable existence of those who are solely interested in the latest basketball scores and whether their own plant will go on a strike are not only annoying...they tend to smother ones own inclinations in such directions. In large cities you may find little cliques of alert people but for the most part a person is cut off from any outside stimulation save through magazines or books. Fandom, in a highly inefficient way at present, provides the solution for this need. But a fandom which jettisoned its more useless adolescent inclinations could do so far more efficiently. And perhaps some of our most promising fans would quit deciding they had 'outgrown' fandom.

What is the solution? I'm sure I don't know. It would be completely impossible to bar adolescents from entering fandom and I wouldn't if I could. As I pointed out, many of these adolescents are fully as mature in viewpoint and ability (if not necessarily in emotional reactions) as fans twice their age. And many others grow into a similar outlook. At any rate, one of fandom's greatest virtues is that it is there for the taking for anyone who wishes it. If BNFdom is what you want, anyone can become a BNF if he is sufficiently active over a long enough period of time. (See Lee Jacobs "The Mathematics of Fandom.")

A few years ago I had an optimistic attitude. This was during Sixth Fandom, something of a golden era, and like the people at the turn of the century I thought that 'every day in every way we were getting better and better'...and with some backsliding we were. The illusion came in the idea that we would continue to do so. We could point out that where fandom of the '30s was almost wholly adolescent, it had been growing older and older on the average; and since the end of the war was for the first time attracting adults in noticeable numbers who had never before been fans. In those days I tended to lump neofannishness with age (and justifiably had my ears pinned back for it by Rich Elsberry, once) and felt that anyone under 18 was pretty much of a newcomer. But then came Seventh Fandom and with it the reversion to the age level of the '30s and some other justifiably abandoned practices of that era. And fandom is now more an adolescent activity than any time in over a decade.

The older fans are muchly in the minority but they stay around longer watching one generation after another of teenagers who are going to 'make over fandom' and drop out eight months later. A few of them got to comparing ages in CONFAB and making jokes about it. For some reason that magazine seems to attract the older fan and is more and more being slanted in the direction of their tastes.

I think, through no fault of their own, teenagers are unable to contribute as much to fandom as we would all like them to...and that because they predominate so heavily, we do not draw in the older fans in the quantity that would be desirable. It's a vicious circle and one whose solution is anything but obvious. Certainly it is not such inaccurate generalizations as that the older fan is merely the teen-age fan grown up.

--- Vernon L. McCain...

GRENADEAN

T
C
H
I
N
G
S

Not long ago Chuque Harris wrote, "Someday I'm going to write a postcard to Charley Pagel...always thought that 'Kards for Kincannon Kontest' was a beautiful gag."

If Harris ever has written that card, or ever does ...but let's arrive at the rest of that sentence by a more picturesque but tortuous route, shall we?

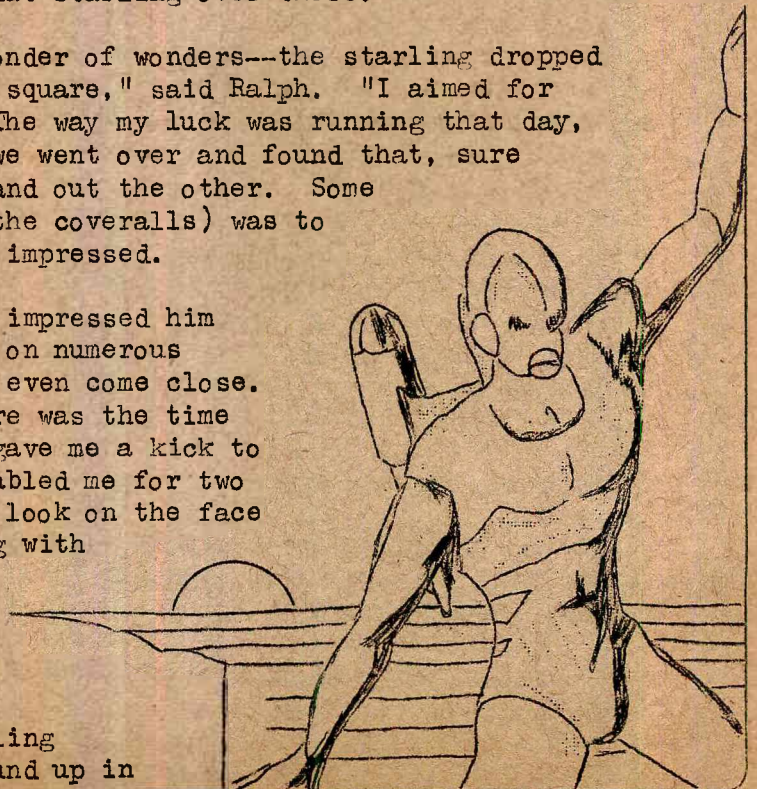
To appreciate the real lowdown on the KKK, which I'm finally about to give, you need a little of the background. The roots of the matter go back to our first meeting.

My brother Ralph, who lived in Brandon at that time, had been talking about a new dentist that had set up shop there, saying that he was a Character, also that he liked guns, shooting, etc. I recall that when Ralph brought him around to meet me, we'd just driven over to Brandon of a Sunday afternoon and I was standing on the front porch of Mother's house, about to startle a starling with my .22 Hi-Standard target pistol. The bird was sitting on top of a pine tree which stood upwards of fifty yards away and, candidly, I really didn't expect to hit it. But Ralph came out the front door just then, followed by this chap in a pair of delapidated coveralls. Ralph said, "Dean, I want you to meet..." and I interrupted with, "Pardon me, I don't like the look in the eye of that starling over there."

So I let fly with the .22 and--wonder of wonders--the starling dropped like a rock. "Must've hit him pretty square," said Ralph. "I aimed for the left eye," I murmured casually. The way my luck was running that day, nobody was especially surprised when we went over and found that, sure enough, the slug had went in one eye and out the other. Some years later, Kincannon (it was he in the coveralls) was to confess that he was at least slightly impressed.

All I can say is that I'm glad I impressed him once anyway. Though I've tried since on numerous occasions--the KKK for one--I haven't even come close. Not that he hasn't impressed me...there was the time that he was showing off his judo and gave me a kick to the side of the knee that all but disabled me for two or three days. I'll never forget the look on the face of a customer who asked what was wrong with my leg. "You'd never believe me," I protested. But he insisted that he would so I said, "OK, so I got kicked by a dentist."

But I'm veering. After the starling episode, we went dump-shooting and wound up in



Grenadean Etchings II

the car with a memorable bull session wherein we discussed the social significance of H. Allen Smith, discovering that we were both José Maniah fans. Also, in the course of things, Kincannon told his Cree Indian Story.

The next day, driving around northern Wisconsin, I got the idea of bombarding Kincannon with anonymous postal cards (alas for those happy days of the penny post-sarcd!) No sooner said that diddled, I dashed off one which read, "Dear Dr Kincannon: Can you recommend a good book on Dental Hygiene? I think I am coming down with the stuff. Gratefully yours, Mrs Abigail McIlhenny." I added a spurious address and dropped it in the mail.

Next day I sent another: "Dear Dr Kincannon: Thank you so very much for the jar of brandied peaches. My wife and I thought they were delicious. But, even more than the peaches, we appreciated the spirit in which they were sent. Bless you, my son, Rev & Mrs Epworth Dodds."

The next night a cousin dropped by and I had him write a card in my own name--belatedly, I'd realized that the others were in my undisguised handwriting--saying that I'd left my golf clubs over there or something. The important thing was that I wanted him to have a sample of "my" handwriting which wouldn't match the rest of the cards.

But this added touch of deceit was all in vain. He came storming into our house that Friday night, waving a fistfull of post-sarcds like a cavalry saber. Seems he'd taken a more direct track: he'd gone into the telephone office in Brandon and had asked my mother (who runs the switchboard) if she recognized the writing on the cards. "Why sure," she said promptly, "that's Dean's writing."

An amusing sidelight was that he denounced the card my cousin had written as a palpable hoax, written by me in a vain effort to cover my tracks. He had, in his best Dick Tracy manner, discovered some fifteen or twenty points of similarity between the cards I'd written and the one my cousin wrote. At any rate, he asserted that he was going to teach me a lesson I wouldn't forget. He said I'd bitterly rue the day I crossed swords with him. He also said he was "gonna fix (my) clock."

He did, too...

Results weren't long in showing up. Normally we didn't get much mail in those days...a few handbills and throwaways, now and then a letter or picture card. But that was soon to change.

I got home one night and Jean asked, "Did the man from ICS find you?" I said howzat again? in some puzzlement and she went on to relate how a salesman from International Correspondence Schools had stopped by to see me--quite anxious, she said--seems they had an inquiry from me regarding a course in taxidermy and he was faunching to sign me up for it. When Jean told him I was out on the road that day, he demanded to know my license number "...so if I see him I'll be able to flag him down."

This was but a harbinger of things to come. Though most of the rest of them were content to just befoul our mailbox with crud of all descriptions. I think the ICS man was the only one to call personally and he finally gave up after Jean had assured him, sincerely and repeatedly, that I had surprisingly little interest in learning to taxiderm.

I admire persistence. That, I think, would have been the summer of 1950 or thereabouts and only last month the Paw-Paw Chemical people sent me what must have been their 109th direct mail appeal to purchase some of their patented de-odorizer for outdoor toilets. I feel such determination should be rewarded and someday, time

Grenadean Etchings III

permitting, I shall construct an outdoor biffy, just so that I can throw a bit of business their way.

Of course you realize by this time what he'd done. Not for him to bombard me himself...no, nothing like that. He'd called in a squad of mercenaries. He'd sent a quarter and my name and address to one of those mailing-list compilers who advertise, "Get big mails for only a quarter." I still say it was a low, scurvy Black-Scotch trick.

The National School of Meat-Cutting tried hard and the Franklin School of Voice Culture gave it their all, as did scores of others. But the pinnacle of ingenuity was reached by the School of Swedish Massage. As their piece de resistance they sent a picture of a very shapely blond wench entering an office. On the door of the office, they had painstakingly hand-lettered, "DEAN A. GRENNELL, SPECIALIST IN SWEDISH MASSAGE." Talk about loaded appeals!

So I just bit my lips and bided my time. Sooner or later, I knew I'd get the opportunity or inspiration for revenge in the grand manner. Finally, some few years later, it arrived in the shape of Shelby Vick's late-lamented fanzine, CONFUSION.

The whole idea seemed so beautifully and fiendishly simple at the time. All I had to do was to buy up an ad in Cf., offer some choice old prozines for prizes and set the whole readership of Cf. to writing cards to Kincannon. Vick had around 150 or 200 readers and I figured that if only 100 of them wrote an average of only a dozen postcards apiece, it would still inundate the Brandon postoffice and earn GWK the undying enmity of Brandon's slightly dour postmaster, the aforesaid Charley Pagel. It would be a coup to end all coups and I was prepared to go to almost any length to see it through. I could picture the gossip running through Brandon (Pop. maybe 200 or 300, if you count dogs and cats) like wildfire: "Did you hear about Kincannon? Charley says he's been getting tons of postcards from all over the world!" Ah yesss...

And then we started smacking snags. In my dewy-eyed neofan innocence, I'd assumed that fanzines appeared as regularly as the rising sun. I didn't dream that, a year or two later, a fanzine would set all fandom agog by bringing out several consecutive issues on a regular schedule (Paul Enever's ORION, in case you wondered.) So I sent in the copy and the dough to pay for it, laid aside some of the choicest items in my collection for prizes and sat back and waited. And waited. And waited.

Meanwhile, Vick had mentioned something about it to another dentist, one Dr. Carpenter of Elizabethtown, Tenn. And Carpenter had written back, cautioning Vick against running the contest for some reason of professional ethics which still aren't clear to me. And the next issue of Cf. finally came out with no mention of the matter. The deadline mentioned in the copy was past, or nearly so, so I wrote Vick to cancel the whole deal, keep the money for his troubles, and forgot about it, except for occasional wistful sighs of regret that such high-flown plans had fallen in such an ignoble fiasco.

Then, lo and behold, the next issue of Cf. announced the contest. So I wrote Vick, very well, bring the copy up to date and we'd still go ahead with it. By this time I'd confessed to GWK what he'd narrowly escaped and the element of surprise would be missing but I thought I'd still like to see what would turn up.

So, eventually, some six months after the initial inspiration, the Kards for Kincannon Kontest was finally broached upon Cf's readership. There were old AMAZINGS and pre-war ASTOUNDINGS and UNKNOWNNS to be won as first, second and third place prizes for contestants who sent in the most cards, the funniest cards, the funniest poem, cartoon, etc. Kincannon still didn't know that the thing was going ahead after all so I sat back to await results.

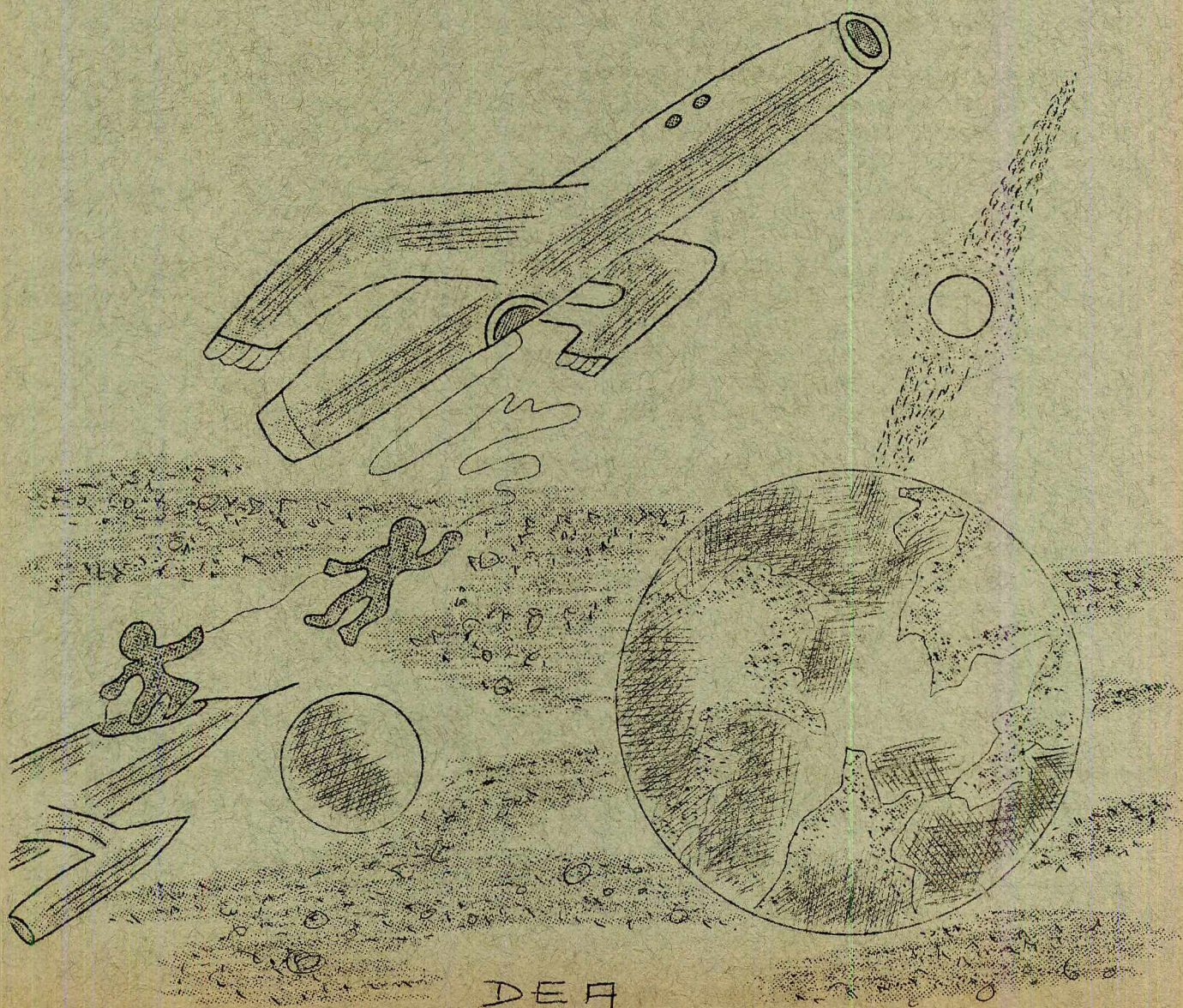
Grenadean Etchings IV

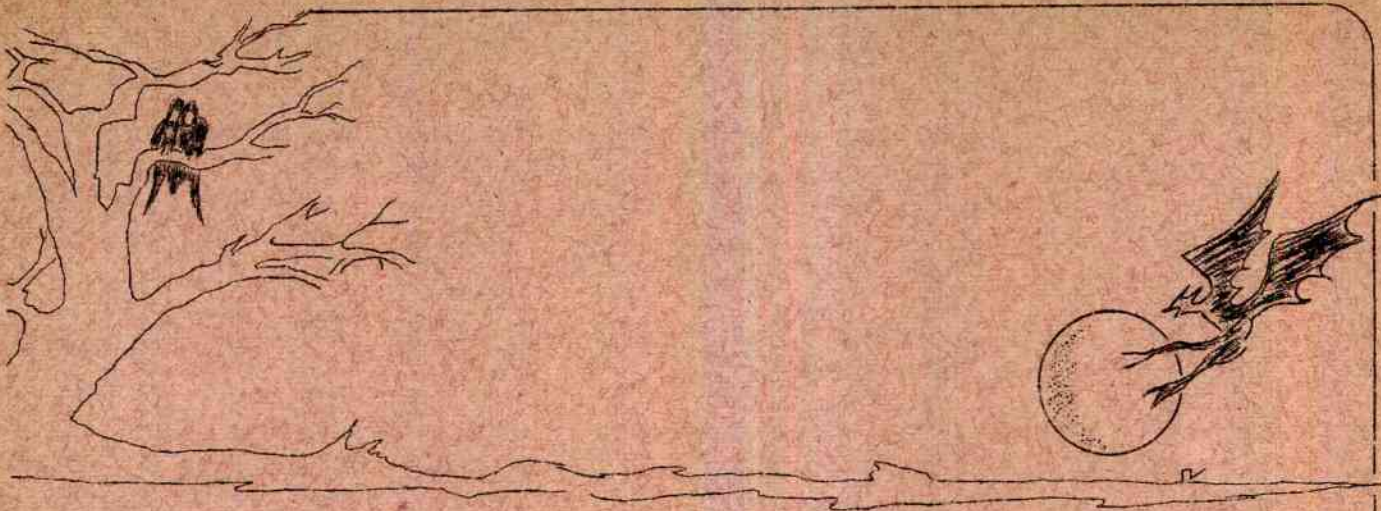
He came over a couple weeks later and I braced myself for almost any sort of reaction except the one I got. He was just his usual rancid, loutish self and he behaved as if nothing unusual had happened in Brandon since I'd last seen him. As the evening wore on I finally asked him, point-blank, if he'd received any extra pootsarcs lately. He said no, he hadn't, and what made me ask. I explained that the KKK deal was finally getting ready to roll. I suggested that, since we'd have to keep track of the things for the purpose of passing out prizes, perhaps he'd best set aside a shoebox or two to put the cards in until we could figure out who'd won what. So he went back to Brandon to watch for the KKK cards to commence pouring in. If he still lived in Brandon, which he doesn't, he'd still be watching for the first one, which has yet to arrive.

The KKK is officially over, long since. I don't know if the response might have been heartier if I'd waited till a few people had heard of me so they wouldn't think it an empty hoax on the readers...or if I'd waited till I had a magazine of my own wherein I could spring the thing with all the timing it deserved and required... All I know is that even the feeblest of entries would have won prizes by default.

Some day I'll even the score with GWK if it's the last thing I do.

— Dean A. Grennell...

[illegible]



FANZINE FANFARON

BY

BOB SILVERBERG

Fanzines for review are to go to Bob Silverberg, 760 Montgomery Street, Brooklyn 13, New York.

TELLUS -- Page Brownton, 1614 Collingwood Ave., San Jose, Calif. Quarterly, multi-lithed, 46 pp. 15¢. #2, Summer 1954.

An unpretentious little mimeographed pamphlet metamorphoses into a bulky and worthwhile fanzine with this issue. Editor Brownton is an ambitious and apparently talented 14-year old who, like Dave Ish at the same age, is fully capable of holding his own with older contemporaries.

Reproduction in this issue is excellent and most of the material is fine, particularly George Wetzel's item about a possible forgotten A. Merritt short story. Fiction by Paul Powlesland and David Bunch is unfortunate. "An SF Fan's Dictionary" by Trina Perlson has some lively touches: "G is for Galaxy, which is what scientists say our solar system is in. But I read the latest issue and one of the sneakier ones moved it...I is for Pogo. Who is you for?"

The format of TELLUS is simply awful. Suggestions: less artwork (the illustrations in #2 are well-done but too profuse), more careful planning, and wider margins justified on the right side. This is a mag worth watching, all right. As soon as its editor discovers that sloppiness is not a virtue, TELLUS will move into the top rank.

MINI -- Jacob Edwards, 1010 N. Tuckahoe Street, Falls Church, Virginia. Mimeographed, 16 pages. 10¢, 3/25¢. #1 (November 1954)

This is quite an ordinary first issue, neatly stencilled and reasonably legible, consisting mostly of a running feud between the editor and Ted White. There's neither much to criticize nor approve in this issue, but one comment is worth repeating. Edwards, in reviewing one of White's fanzines, says: "SPLOTCH is pretty putrid. The material is, for the most part, reprinted and is out of date besides being by some fellow I never heard of: F. T. Laney." Sic transit gloria, eh Towner?

I wish fanzine editors would have enough thought for posterity to date their works.

CONFAB -- Bob Peatrowsky, Box 634, Norfolk, Nebraska. Irregular, 12 pages, dittoed. #7, October 18, 1954.

I don't know whether there's much point in listing this one, since no subscriptions are accepted, but Peatrowsky should not thereby be deprived of egoboo. CONFAB is a

Fanzine Fanfaron II

letterzine, carrying on in a tradition which descends from Ackerman's VOM of the early '40s, and in these days of letterless prozines performs a valuable service to the inner circle of fandom which it reaches. Circulation is limited, but doubtless if you send Peatrowsky a couple of 2¢ stamps he'll add you to his list. Peatrowsky functions as a mere arbitrator, offering little of his own to the discussions currently going on, which is perhaps just as well.

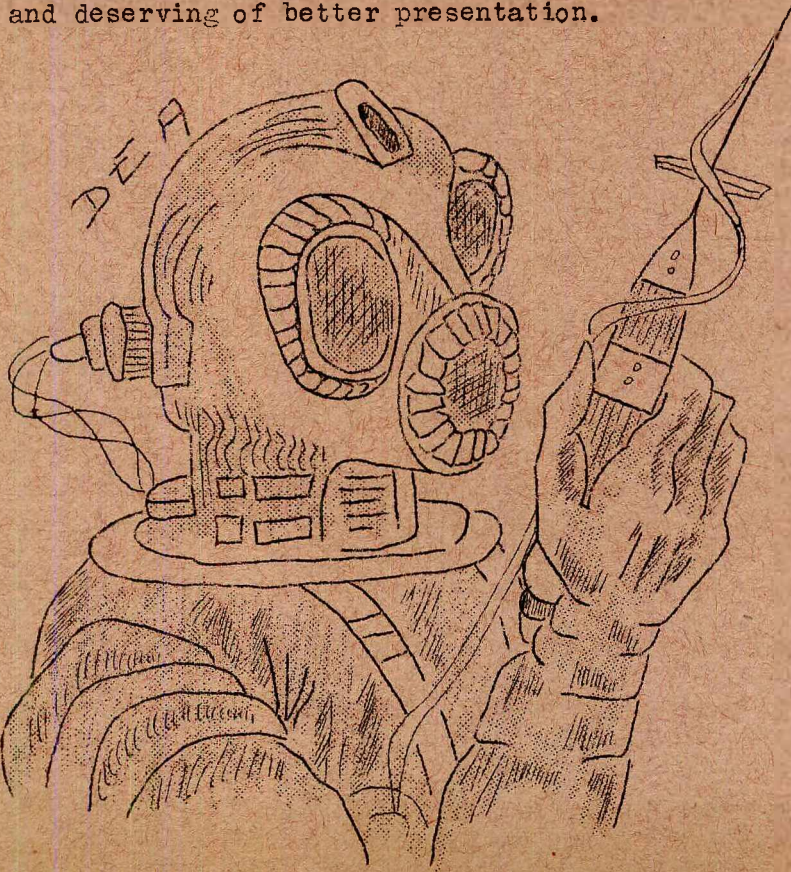
DAWN -- Russ Watkins, 110 Brady Street, Savannah, Georgia. Irregular, dittographed. 17 pages. 15¢ (?). #23, September 1954.

Russ Watkins is a Nice Guy. But six years of fanzine publishing still haven't taught him enough to make his magazine more than mediocre, and a pretty low mediocre at that.

This issue, two months late, is printed in Eyestrain Green. The physical aspects of a fanzine have a lot to do with the reader's reaction to the material, and this reader found himself so pained by the green print as to be pained likewise by what it was conveying.

Art Kunwiss (who is Watkins in a would-be humorist facet) contributes an unfunny essay, "How to Encourage Fans to Live to the Age of 135." Ray Thompson offers his customary empty column. John Pembroke uses some stately language in reviewing Siodmak's "Riders to the Stars," but whatever critical statements he makes are invalidated when he reveals his ineptitude by suggesting that the science in that preposterously bad novel was "sound." As most professional reviewers pointed out, the scientific basis of the story was superior only to its plot, which was of the weakest. Mr Pembroke seems to think otherwise. Andy Offut, a prizewinner in IF's recent college contest, discusses George O. Smith's books with some skill. Denis Moreen, one of the most perceptive of the newer crop of fans, intelligently discusses a pair of prozines.

This assortment of material is not of high lever, but not particularly bad, either, and deserving of better presentation.



THE NEW FUTURIAN -- J. Michael Rosenblum, 7 Grosvenor Park, Chapel-Allerton, Leeds 7, Eng. Quarterly, 15¢, mimeographed, 34 pages. #3, Autumn 1954.

This is a revival of the famed Futurian War Digest, the lone fanzine which kept British fandom alive from 1940 to 1945. The accent here, as in the old magazine, is on critical articles, essays, and book reviews. This is one of the most important fanzines now being issued.

In this issue Walter Gillings, veteran British sf editor, continues his serial history of British fandom, bringing it as far as 1931 this time. A. Vincent Clarke comments on the passing of the sf collector. J. K. H. Brunner, one of the leading young British sf

Fanzine Fanfaron III

authors, analyses some of the techniques which characterize science fiction in the second in a series of articles on the literary values of sf. The rest of the issue is devoted to reviews, letters, and essays of a type all but extinct in America. Highly recommended.

UNDERTAKINGS -- Sam Johnson, 1517 Penny Dr., Edgewood, Elizabeth City, N. C. Irregular, 32 pages, mimeographed. 15¢, 4/50¢. #2 (?). December 1954.

This is published by a rich man. Presumably fools don't publish fanmags, or so I once felt, and only a rich man or a fool could have published this magazine. The 32 pages are lavishly offered on one side only of good sturdy paper, making UNDERTAKINGS a bulky affair a quarter of an inch thick requiring 5¢ postage.

I'm afraid this issue isn't worth the quarter-inch of precious space in my bulging fanzine files. Enough paper to publish a norman fanzine with is wasted on a short story by Hal Annas which Imagination or some other prozine didn't want. Another sizable chunk is used up on six pages from Philip Wylie's novel Tomorrow, published without permission. The only items in the issue which merit fanzine publication are George Wetzel's further account of the forgotten Merrit story he has excavated from the American Weekly and Paul Mittelbuscher's trenchant fanzine reviews. The mimeography is poor and the pages are too crowded. In short, this is an unskillful and awkward attempt at fanzine publishing, notable only for the curious misspelling "mediochre," which conjures up all sorts of new color possibilities. "Mediorange," "medicerise," and "mediultramarine" spring to mind at once.

Editor Johnson is another not sufficiently future-minded to bother to date his zine.

BIBBILTY -- Ray Thompson, 410 South 4th Street, Norfolk, Nebraska. Quarterly, 16 pages, mimeographed. No price listed. #3 (December 1954)

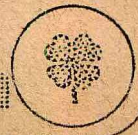
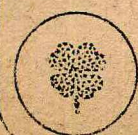
This seems to be the embodiment of the 1954 fanzine. Poorly reproduced, informal in nature, consisting almost entirely of fanzine reviews, letters, and so-called "art," with some borrowed Lewis Carroll and Longfellow thrown in, and without the time-binding mast-head I like so much to see. Thompson obviously doesn't have much interest in what he's doing, and the editorial, which expresses the sentiment most fans discover eventually ("...I've discovered that there are other things besides fandom") presages a short life for this publication. Which will not be unfortunate.

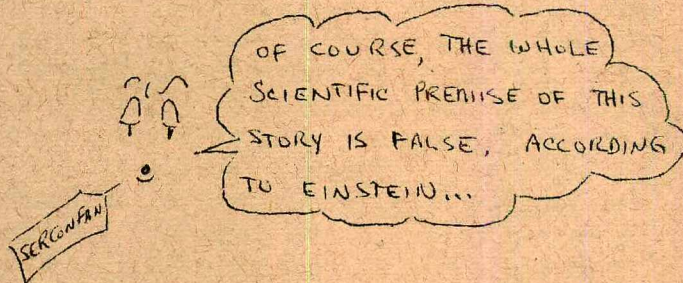
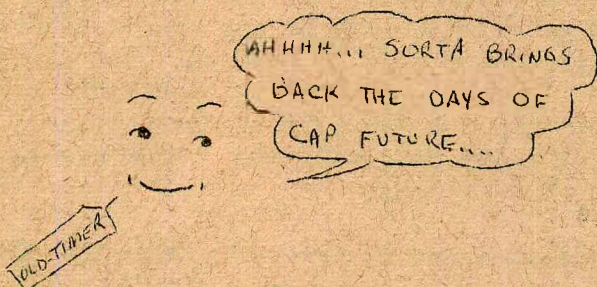
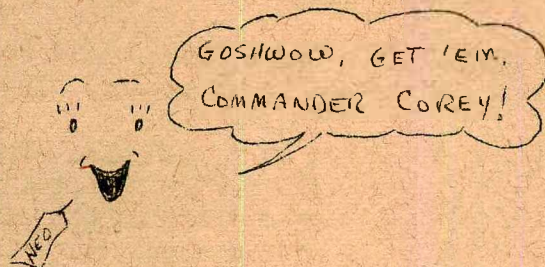
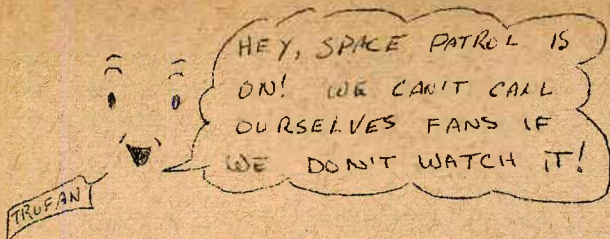
DEVIANT -- Carol McKinney, Station 1, Box 514, Provo, Utah. Quarterly, 30 pages, mimeographed. 20¢, 3/50¢. #4, December 1954.

DEVIANT began as a neat and tasteful publication, which immediately gave it a long lead over many of its contemporaries, and editor McKinney has maintained her high standard of production. Issue 4 is every bit as attractive as its predecessors, and for the first time the material in this mag measures up to its appearance.

The item of interest to most active fans is Richard Geis' amusing account of Psychotic's early days--demonstrating once again that most good fanzines begin as derivatives of the top contemporary mags. Harlan Ellison reworks the mutant-theme into a fine short vignette of considerable power. The rest of the material, by Bill Venable, Des Emery, and others, is readable and reasonably interesting. DEVIANT is a very fine fanzine indeed, heading for the top rung.

-- Bob Silverberg ...

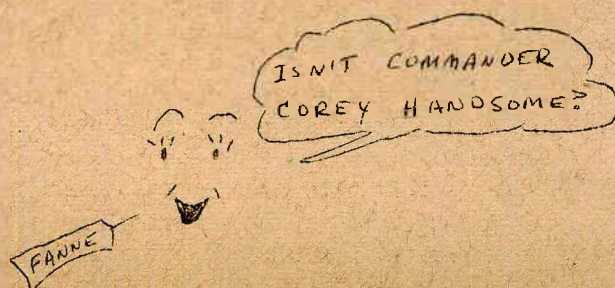
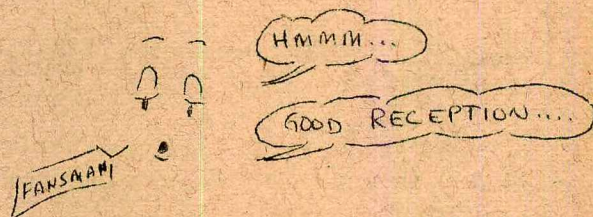
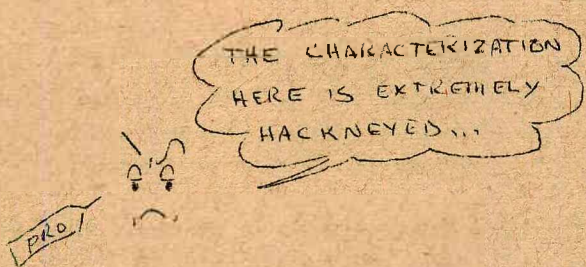
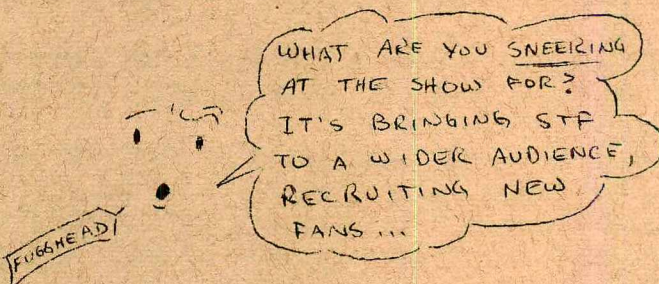


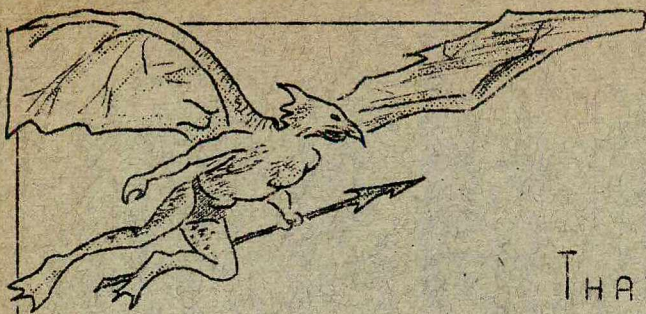


TERRY CARR'S

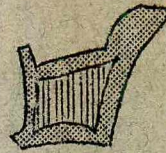
FACE CRITTURS

WATCHING "SPACE PATROL"





THE



ARP

THAT ONCE OR TWICE

MORAL CODES AND ETHICS
AS PREACHED IN IRELAND

The credit for that snappy little title doesn't belong to me but to Peter Vorzimer. It was the

title of an article I was supposed to have written for a fanzine called Proton, which was born in Vorzimer's brain and eked out its brief existence in those cramped surroundings. Apparently Vorzimer had the not entirely original idea of creating an imaginary fanzine, supposed to circulate only among BNFs, and reviewing it regularly in Abstract. The hoax was successful enough, in the sense that a firework is successful if it goes off, even if it takes part of your hand with it. All Abstract's readers were annoyed that they weren't getting Proton, I was annoyed because I didn't like people thinking I was writing for a snob fanzine, and some other kindhearted fans were annoyed at the boorish tone of poor Vorzimer's fake reviews. Bob Tucker even went so far as to quote one of them in Le Zombie as an awful example of fan's inhumanity to fan. However I wasn't fooled, partly because I'm smart and partly because I knew I hadn't written an article about moral codes and ethics as preached in Ireland. I'd never even thought of trying. However, it is a sort of challenge though...like that imaginary issue of ASF reviewed in Hoen's letter some years ago and which Campbell went to immense trouble to make come true. Anything Campbell can do I can do not nearly so well. Besides I wanted to say something about Abstract's Conish anyway. And now I come to think of it it gives me an opportunity to tell you something about the problem of how to throw away old shoes in Ireland, and this might be very useful if any of you are thinking of coming over here this summer. You might very well bring some old shoes with you, especially if you belong to the upper set, and want to throw them away. The guide-

books will tell you all sorts of things, like what to do if your postillion is struck by lightning, but on a serious practical problem like how to throw away old shoes they preserve a cowardly silence. How fortunate you are to have the advice of an expert on this subject, a person like me of high standing in the old-shoe-throwing-away world.

It was during the war, when clothes were strictly rationed in Northern Ireland. They were supposed to be rationed in Southern Ireland, too, but for some reason rationing never seemed to catch on in that happy-go-lucky country. It was just too

BY WALT WILLIS...

The Harp That Once Or Twice II

rational for them, I suppose. Anyhow, it was the Custom for us Northerners to cross the border wearing old clothes, buy new ones in Eire, and throw the old ones away before we crossed the border again. Generally you could trust the Customs officials to have the inherent decency not to undress you; though on some occasions people have been seen emerging from the Great Northern Station in Belfast with bare feet, an overcoat and a disillusioned expression. This time Madeleine had bought a pair of new shoes in Westport, County Mayo. The old ones were still quite serviceable but we decided to throw them away here, though we were a long way from the border. For one thing we were on a cycling tour and were having enough trouble carrying things...I had a record of part of a Tchaikovsky piano concerto suspended in the frame of my bicycle and had already lost the first four bars near Ballinrobe ...and for another Mayo is a poor county and we thought someone might be glad of them. So as soon as we got into the wilds...that doesn't take long there...we left the shoes on a stone bridge. It was at the bottom of a very long and very steep hill and when we'd finally dragged the bicycles to the top we stopped to take in the view and a few litres of oxygen. From far below we began to hear faint cries. We looked down the road we had come and toiling up it there was a small boy, holding something in his hand. When he got nearer we could see it was a pair of shoes. "You...forgot...your...shoes," he gasped. There was such a glow of satisfaction on his face at having caught us that all we could do was thank him enthusiastically and offer him sixpence. He accepted it after some hesitation and we watched him run happily back down the hill. We tied the shoes onto the bike again and cycled on a few miles until we came to a really lonely stretch of road. Making quite sure there was no house or human being in sight we left the shoes guiltily in the middle of the road and hurriedly cycled on. We'd got perhaps 15 miles and were struggling into the head wind blowing across the moors when I heard a motor horn behind us. It was a turf lorry, one of a vast fleet of trucks the Government used to bring peat to Dublin during the coal famine. We thought it was hooting to get past and pulled onto the grass verge. But no, the driver was leaning out of his cabin waving a pair of shoes. We admitted they were ours and thanked him too, and he let in his clutch and tore off happily in the direction of Dublin. We waited until he was well out of sight. Then we cycled on to the next stone wall and left the shoes again. This time though we left a note tied to them: "PLEASE TAKE THESE SHOES--WE DON'T WANT THEM ANY MORE." We should have thought of that in the first place. We'd still have those shoes if we hadn't realized that our actions needed an explanatory footnote.

I'd forgotten all about this until I was reminded of it by something Madeleine said after she's finished reading the Abstract Convention issue. She put the magazine down and said reflectively: "America must be a horrible place to live in,

mustn't it?" I couldn't agree, but I knew what she meant. To the mental impression of the American Way Of Life created by press reports of hurricanes, lynchings, dope addiction, McCarthyism, the Hays Office, gangsterism and graft, recent fanzines had added little mental pictures of people getting beat up for reading science fiction, teenagers getting stupidly drunk at Conventions and bullying younger ones to drink haircream, morons jeering at movies because they didn't understand them, and worst of all one John Fletcher reporting with quiet pride how he stole a manuscript at the Fanvetcon auction, lied when taxed with it, and refused to give it to a crying neofan because he was



DE A.

The Harp That Once Or Twice III

offered only three dollars instead of five. We've had recently a more prominent fan confessing to having stolen, but that was in penitent sincerity and made no one think the less of him. What's alarming about the Fletcher case is not just that he is, according to his own statement, a despicable little sneak-thief, but that he doesn't seem to see anything wrong with it.

You are tempted to make all sorts of generalisations about things like this, such as that fandom isn't what it was, or that Americans are morally inferior to Europeans, or that the peasants of rural Ireland are more honest than the natives of Belfast, but I doubt if any of them are true. I think it was wrong, for instance, for Madeleine and me to be even mildly surprised at the difficulty we had in getting rid of a pair of shoes. Most people are honest and where there's only one thief in a thousand the odds are against him turning up in a remote spot in the wilds of Ireland, whereas there's quite likely to be one around in a big city. The same applies even more in the States, where in addition you haven't got the same segregation of social classes. As for fandom, we've had a lot of young newcomers lately and it's not surprising if some of them are boorish and stupid, or even that we get an occasional Fletcher.



What does worry me a bit though is what outsiders are going to think if they happen to read a copy of a mag like the Abstract Conish. Even I got the impression that the average modern US Convention was infested by gangs of extremely obnoxious teenagers. The outsider or newcomer is going to assume that this is what fandom is like and resolve to have nothing to do with it. It's all very well to report honestly what happens at Conventions but it seems to me there should be some sort of moral judgement shown by the editor or reporter, that he shouldn't present these happenings as normal and acceptable to his readers. I don't mind being thought a bit mad but I should dislike intensely being associated in anyone's mind with Fletcher-type creatures. Irresponsible reporting such as in this issue of Abstract can do all of us a lot of harm.

THE HARP STATESIDE (Continued)
featuring Rog Phillips, Mari
Wolf, Forry Ackerman and
Wendayne Ackerman

So round about ten o'clock on the morning of Sunday, September 7th, 1952, having filled up with breakfast and oil, we at last continued along US 89. Forry was driving, Rog having lapsed gratefully into unconsciousness in the back seat once he'd made certain that the engine believed what the gas station attendant had said about the new oil.

The road led almost due South through Provo, Spanish Fork, Gunnison, Axtell, Salina, Aurora, Sigurd, Central, Elsinore (just a hamlet), Cove and Sevier. There were mountains on our left, great grey rounded things like sleeping elephants. To me they were startlingly like the Derryveagh Mountains near the Poisoned Glen in County Donegal, though these were more awesome than quaint in their complete lack of vegetation. Those Donegal mountains are exceptional in that they're one of the few areas in Ireland where vegetation is sparse, but here was enough land to make another Ireland and all desolate and barren. Another thing which surprised me was that the distant mountains were deep blue, just as they are in Donegal and Antrim. I'd thought in Ireland that was due to the heather, but evidently not. I doubt if there's much heather in Utah.

The Harp That Once Or Twice IV

On the right of the road was the desert and beyond it more mountains. As we got further south the valley narrowed until we had hills on that side of the road too. One of them was the Big Rock Candy Mountain, a hill of yellow striated rock fully fitted out as a tourist attraction. I calculated that at the present rate of exploitation it would easily last another 500 years. Although we were not getting into wooded country it was still very warm and a mountain stream we crossed affected us like Martians. Forry stopped the car a few yards past the bridge and we all trooped through the trees to the stream. We sat on the bank, took off our shoes and dipped our feet in the swift-flowing water. I took mine out again immediately, full of indignation. With all this heat about I thought I'd been entitled to assume that even a mountain torrent would be no more than pleasantly cool, if not tepid. It was freezing. I might just as well have stayed in Ireland. I counted my toes to make sure they were all still there and put my shoes on again. I was startled to see that Mari and Wendayne didn't think it was too cold at all; in fact they were so determined to bathe in it that they were prepared to dispense with bathing suits. They held up newspapers and started to undress behind them.

I notice in a review of a previous OOPS, in Fandora's Box in Imagination, that Mari hasn't forgotten this episode. "Gad," she says, "the way Willis remembers all, and tells it...what will he say, if anything, about that river in Utah?" She need have no fear. As a gentleman of the old school I shall not reveal what I saw. I shall only remark that seldom have I seen a newspaper give more inadequate coverage to such an interesting event.

After a while I thought it would be more tactful to retire from the scene and explore the woods. I felt quite daring venturing into the wilds like this without weapons, because they undoubtedly contained all sorts of alien perils like snakes and poison ivy, unknown to Ireland, if not grizzly bears, pumas and Red Indians. However as it turned out the most dangerous thing I encountered was a piece of barbed wire. I had, accidentally (that's my story, whatever Freud says) wandered back to the river again and got an eyeful of some attractive scenery that wasn't in the guidebooks; I was hastily retreating into the primeval forest when I saw just ahead of me something even more startling--a wild piano!

My gaze fixed on this extraordinary natural phenomenon, and no doubt still a bit glazed, I hurried forward and ran into a piece of barbed wire stretched between two trees at eye level. Well my eye level anyway, because I got a barb in my eyeball. After I'd reassured myself that I'd still be able to read 3D comics I continued to stalk the wild piano. I ran it to earth on a large patch of concrete, at the other side of which was a sort of fireplace which was presumably for some strange native rite called a barbecue. All was now disappointingly clear: this was a place for picnics and open-air dancing; the piano had been put there by a human agency and was not a mutant plant formation like Jack Williamson's spaceship trees. It was still astonishing though, that pianos could be left out in the open like this without any protection against the weather. If they'd done it in Ireland, it would after a couple of days been only fit for growing mushrooms in. But this one was working, because I tried it with my complete repertoire of pianoforte solos. I venture to say that there are few fans who have played the theme from the second movement of Dvorak's New World Symphony on one finger with one eye on a piano in a forest in the wilds of Utah. Gad, how I've lived.

Eventually we all got back into the car and set off again through Marysville, Junction, Circleville and Panguitch. (Don't let this make you feel inferior about your powers of memory--I'm reading these names off the map and I don't remember a thing about any of them.) A few miles after Panguitch we turned off to see Bryce Canyon. (Also of course Red Canyon which is on the way and is quite interesting too, but you don't have to pay to see it so it can't be up to much.) There's a road right to the end of Bryce, terminating on a promontory called Rainbow Point. Forry was still driving and for the first time I was able to admire his technique

The Harp That Once Or Twice V

for conveying parties through National Parks with the minimum of delay. He would drive very fast straight for the far end of the thing, whizzing past noticeboards marked PANORAMIC VIEW, INSPIRATION POINT, NATURAL BRIDGE, SUNSET POINT and so on. Whenever Wendayne caught a glimpse of one of these she would cry out for the car to be stopped, but by the time Forry had pointed out that we could take in all these on the way back, the notice board was far behind. And of course the view from the far end was the most comprehensive of all--in this case 9105 feet, which was the highest I had ever been, not counting the last night of the Convention--and as we whizzed past the notice boards on the way back Forry would point out that we'd already seen all this.

Even so, it was three hours before we got back onto the main road. It had been very impressive, I had seen some chipmunks, and my eye had stopped bleeding. We went on through Hatch, Long Valley Junction and Alton to spend the night in a little place called Kanab, two miles from the Arizona border. We had arrived here comparatively early, about 9 pm I suppose, and for the first time I'd an opportunity to walk around one of these small American towns which I'd found so attractive. Kanab wasn't as nice as some I'd seen, being a bit straggly and short on trees, but it still had some of the things I still think of as being characteristic of America--warm evenings sussurating with neon signs and crickets, and precious pieces of grass being perpetually sprinkled.

One thing that distinguished Kanab was dogs. They outnumbered the people. The next morning Mari and Wendayne and I were sitting round the car waiting to set off again when a stray dog came along and began to make up to us, nuzzling our knees and wagging its tail. Mari and I stroked its head, but Wendayne spoke crossly to it. "Go away, dog," she said. She added explanatorily to us, "I don't like stray dogs." The animal shrank away, crestfallen, but after a few minutes it sidled around the car again tentatively. "Hello, dog," I said, "you like stray people?" Mari looked at me and we both looked sideways at Wendayne. She reverted to her normal self and in fact when Forry and Rog came along a few minutes later ready to start she was such friends with the dog that she wanted to take it with us. But Forry affected to believe she was joking and we drove off for the Grand Canyon. (To be continued)

DEPARTMENT OF
BRUTAL FRANKNESS

From the second editorial in Universe, January 1955 (Ray Palmer)

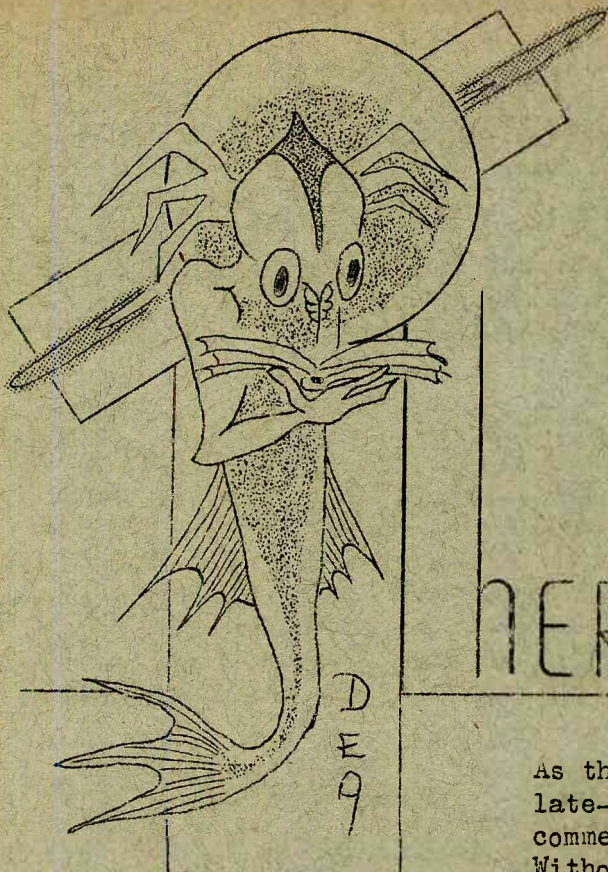
"...authors can't reach us to ask when we are going to pay for their manuscripts published back in 1952. The correct answer, or course (sic), is sometime in 1956."

Can't you just see all those big name authors falling over themselves to write for Universe?

-- Walt Willis...

Ooooo

(Editor's note: The impression you received of the 1954 Convention at San Francisco was by no means unique, Walt. You have been to as many US Conventions as I have, the total being one, and I am probably right in assuming you had as much fun as I did in Chicago in 1952, which was a great deal. However, reports of the San Francisco Convention sound extremely negative, even to me. It is interesting to note that, for that matter, there have been no real reports of the convention as yet, which should throw some light on the number of capable writers (and therefore BNF) attending. I, for one, am extremely discouraged and highly pessimistic concerning the future of the so-called World Convention. New Orleans seemed to be the peak, with the level dropping off rapidly. I don't pretend to be well enough informed or even intelligent enough to say 'this is so' and let it go at that; but I do know that San Francisco has convinced me to stay at home until the cycle starts an upward swing again. I hope it will. --wgc)



"Really, now you ask me," said Alice, very much confused, "I don't think--"

"Then you shouldn't talk," said the Hatter.

-- ALICES ADVENTURES IN
WONDERLAND by Lewis Carroll

NERBLIGS

As this issue goes to press--characteristically late--I find quite a number of letters, quotes, comments, announcements and whatnot on hand. Without further ado, then, we plunge right in...

FROM "SCIENCE BRIEFS" IN IF, FEB 1955: "Venus is (the planet) much more likely to be 'life-bearing.' The thick cloud layer...is probably condensed water vapor. If this is so, there should be water over the whole surface of the planet... This new (sic!) picture of an ocean covered planet makes life on Venus more plausible than ever before." ...and just when I was beginning to get used to the idea of dust storms and formaldehyde crystals, too.

(Dean A Grennell) Boggs, with his characteristic aptitude for reworking book-titles, made recent mention in a letter of a Tucker book called "The Long Lewd Silence." ... Donnell's letter: If Boggs wrote a pocsarced on STARLIGHT, he gave that much more comment than I've ever felt was necessary. I have enough trouble commenting on the mags that I like without using up postage on a dreary crock like that. ... Bloch's comments on Tucker are superbly written, thought provoking and quite valid as to theme. Before I ever contacted fandom, per se, I had Tucker pegged in my select little coterie of detective story writers whose works I bought on the strength of their name. And it was a small coterie. (I read almost anything, Dean--does that make me a man without a coterie? wgc) Willis was matchless, unique...(do you suppose I could have this printed on my stationery?) Particularly enjoyed the SMCon background stuff. Wonder if I'll be in fandom long enough to finally read the installment of his Odyssey that takes him back to his beloved little island again. Willis reminds me of Ulysses in so many ways...Joyce's Ulysses, that is. McCain also good. Did you see the November IF with his story in it? Very nice item, that. And he got paid for it, too, the lucky stiff. Wonder if Palmer's payment is going to beat out my first Social Security check? (402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin)

In regards to recent rumors that F&SF was folding in the near future and/or that editor Anthony Boucher would be giving up his editorial post for a political job, here is a letter, recently received, that might clear up things a little.

(Anthony Boucher) I've no notion how the rumor started about my "retirement from editing in favor of some political action." Let me just say flatly that there isn't an iota of truth in it. I used to be quite active politically

Therbligs II

(Democratic State Central Committee 1946/50); but work-pressure and health now leave me no time for such an absorbing pursuit. And I plan to go right on editing F&SF throughout as much of the future as is foreseeable from here. Cordially. (2643 Dana Street, Berkeley 4, California)

Is "WHO SAWED COURTNEY'S BOAT?" a form of capital punishment?

Those of you who read LE ZOMBIE

combined with LIFE MAGAZINE will be happy to know that OOPSLA! has been offered--and accepted--the distinctive title of 'the upper low-brow of science fiction magazines.'

LOOK, MA, NO EDITOR: "Gog I hope will leave some lasting impression on fandom... bad or good... I hope not bad. This rather depends on you, the subscriber...(and) ...the contributor." Walt Bowart in GOG #1

BIG WORDS DEPARTMENT: "You mean you really use a dictionary?" Randy Brown in HARK

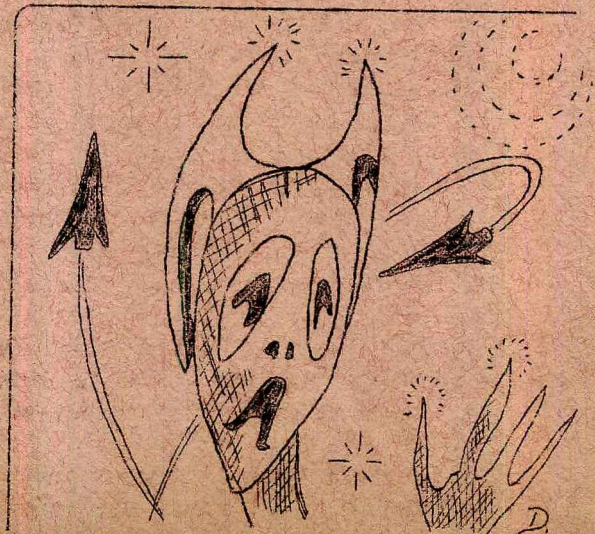
(Walt Willis) ...you would enjoy the newstyle British Convention. They are far more uninhibited than the US ones. It's amazing. I think it's partly because British fans have assumed that a convention should be like the ones American ones look like in reports. (And you know how us reporters emphasise the fun as if it was better than it was and went on all the time.) With the result that they have put on a sort of dream convention. Well, frinstance, can you imagine a US Convention where one pro-editor goes round squirting people with a zapaun filled with sherry and two others stage a race on hands and knees along an hotel corridor on the way to borrow aspirins? Timed by a pro author? (170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland)

NOTE: The Atlanta Science Fiction Organization announces the AGACON to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, over the 2d and 3rd of April, 1955. The dollar registration fee should be mailed to the 1st Annual Southeastern S-F Conference, % Ian T. Macauley, 57 East Park Lane, Atlanta 5, Georgia.

This same sort of get-away-from-the-world-convention effect is also to be noted in Torquay, where British fans plan to gather for a week or two of fundom and fandom. Sparked by Eric Bentscliffe, the TORQVACATION will be held over the last two weeks of July 1955. Contact Nigel Lindsay, 311 Babbacombe Rd, Torquay, Devon, England.

(Ray Capella) Maybe I should hold this letter until a few days later and introduce Dick Stroud to you. He's new to stf, tho that's about the only thing he's new to. Boxer, airplane mechanic, dabbles in ceramics, draws like nobody's business, and--point--has a definite style. Dick is an Esper. After reading the "Demolished Man" he and some equally intelligent and unusual people (friends in a somewhat Bohemian society) have cooked up a fan association who write letters to each other in the manner which appeared in said story when the Espers telepathed. Weird? But def--and extremely interesting! (Fort Devens, Massachusetts)

TRENDS: Worthy of note is the new shift of the sources of good science fiction on the newsstand. While top-quality magazines seem to be definitely on the down-grade, more and more excellent science fiction is to be found in the pocket-book racks. Previously almost a total loss, it is now a very good idea to look over the pb's when you pick up your current magazines. Best choices seem to be Ballantyne, Perma, Ace, and Gold Medal.



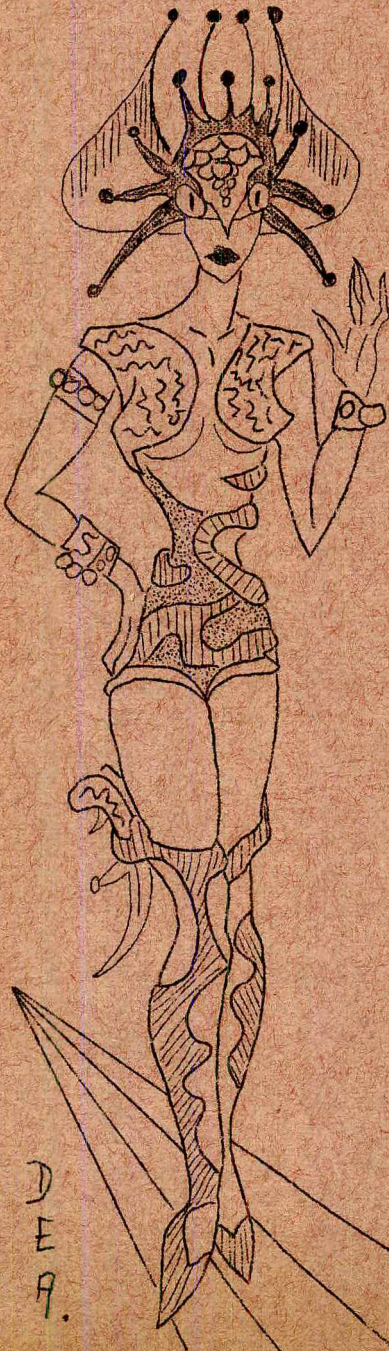
Therbligs III

(Dick Geis) ...I can appreciate your attitude, Gregg, concerning the immature fuggheads like Vorz, but you've got to realize that there will always be a certain number of them in a con...they never change. They grow up and join the American Legion and have fun doing the same damn things in Florida or where-ever... I think, tho, after reading a few reports of the con, that Cleveland would do well to institute a sort of fannish police force...there is utterly no reason for most of the stunts and vandalism that occurs. ... Re OOPS #15... Got a bang out of the cover, though it strikes me that a good many of your readers may not immediately understand it. I can just hear the stone mouth opening and the thundrous words roll out, "WILLIS HAS IMPECCABLE TASTE!" The Word of Ghod. ... I note that good old Harlan is still thrashing around. His article is of course shot through with illogic and false premise, but it doesn't seem to bother him; his style is so pyrotechnic it has the ability to virtually overwhelm the reader unless he's innured to it. ...Ellison himself is but little above these same creatures he so maligns and curses; he hates too, he is fearful too, he is crazed too, he is hunting (and has

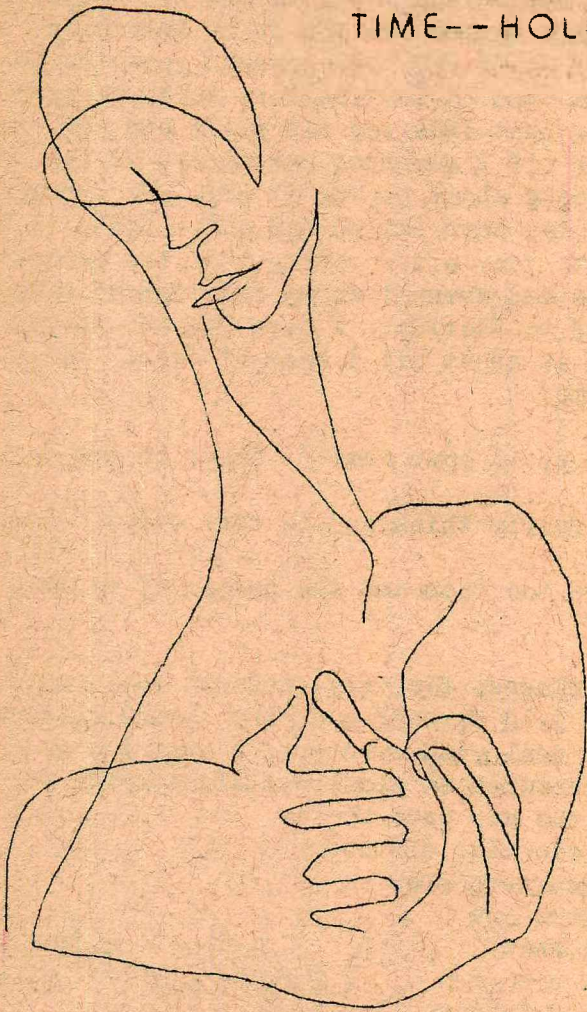
found) something to rip and tear. I hate to think what Ellison would do if he were in control of this country. I suspect that everyone who didn't have an IQ over 100 would be shot forthwith. Non stf readers first. ... I have to smile at the way Harlan identifies himself with the superior (mentally) people by loudly taking their side and defending them against an Enemy. We are supposed to conclude that Ellison is one of the superior ones. ... Tucker I could read all day. His recounting of the trip was absorbing and interesting; humorous and mature. Which way do you twist his arm? I'd like to get some of these stories of his for PSY. Is it a refined hammerlock you use? ... THE HARP STATESIDE left me wanting to know whether you are going to ever print the whole story in one big zine. I'd gladly pay and pay and pay. By the time I get to read one chapter I've pretty well forgotten the previous one. Dammit, Gregg, the story MUST be collected when finished and printed up as a whole. (2631 N Mississippi, Apt 106, Portland 12, Oregon)

...a very good idea, that, and one I shall give some thought, Dick. If you'll remember back, I did that sort of thing once before in WAWish, published around July, 1952, containing THE HARP IN ENGLAND from Quandry. The adventures of THE HARP STATESIDE deserve no less.

(Charles Lee Riddle) ...Am waiting for sea-duty orders these days. Have done my normal tour of shore duty and am hoping to get a carrier out of Quonset Point so I can stay close to Norwich. If so, PEON will continue to be published quarterly; if not, it will depend upon whom I can get to do the mimeographing for me close to here. ... I was left with a disgusted feeling in my stomach after reading Harlan's outburst. Pretty trashy if you ask me--rabble rousing to say the least. Perhaps he had a good reason for writing it, but it certainly doesn't add to his credit. ... Rest of the magazine was very worthwhile, especially your own comments. They always seem to be best in your fanzines. (108 Dunham Street, Norwich, Connecticut)



TIME--HOLDING A ROYAL FLUSH--PASSES



Today, I reluctantly admit, is the twenty-sixth day of February. The 26th is two days before the 28th. It is also two days after the 24th. I do not mind these little feats of arithmetic except, like all things, they begin to get out of hand if carried too far. Two months too far, say. It has taken an uncommon amount of time to finish this issue of OOPS so, if you please, I won't waste any more time talking about it but will get right on with the issue at hand. The following excerpt is from NEWS-WEEK for December 13, 1954, under the heading of 'Science.'

"...Last week Andrew G. Haley, lawyer-astronaut head of the American Rocket Society, dashed icy water on one of their (rocket men) fanciest dreams--earth circling space islands complete with space taxis, PX's, and shuttle service to earth. Relentlessly, in speaking to government bigwigs and ladies' clubs, Dr Wernher von Braun has promoted the idea that the complete space station could be built in ten or fifteen years for \$4 billion. This is four times the cost of the entire American guided-missile development program to date. Dr von Braun, wartime technical director of

the German V-2 program and now leading US Army missile expert, envisions such a station as a commanding spot from which to lob H-bombs, etc., on unfriendly fellow earthlings. To Andrew Haley, von Braun's talk is so much nonsense. The superplatform, Haley said at the society's annual meeting in New York last week, is "a thousand years away." Even then the assembling of it in its orbit (as space-suited construction workers hovered about) would be an extra-terrestrial "mess." If it became a way to watch enemy troops via futuristic TV-telescopes, he said, it would at the same time be a ridiculously simple target for low-cost, earth-launched rockets."

Item: whoever heard of a low-cost earth-launched rocket? Item: futuristic TV-telescopes, did you say? Item: a thousand year's away? (That is really what I call foresightedness!) Item: a lawyer-astronaut disputing a guided missile expert? These youngsters have no respect for their class anymore...one would almost expect to find a chemist using torts instead of retorts, if Mr Haley is any criterion.

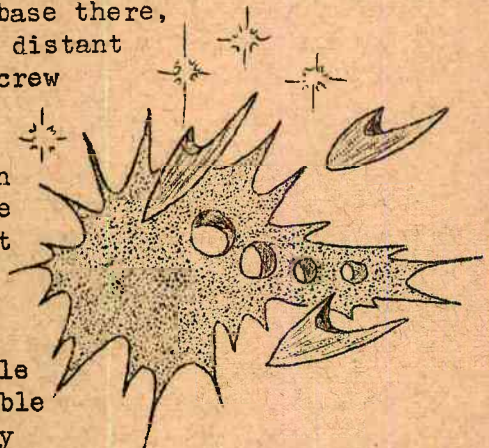
(Bob Tucker) I'm afraid I don't know enough about Joel Nydahl to do an article. My knowledge runs along these lines. ... He sent me a sample copy of about the second or third issue and made the usual request for material. Following habit, I declined or simply remained silent until the magazine had progressed a bit...until it got to a point where I felt my stuff could at least be read and appreciated. Then I sent him something...I don't remember now what the first offering was. Meanwhile, we had struck up a desultory correspondence and I learned he was about 14 years old, the apple of his parents' eye, and had ambitions to produce the finest fanzine ever. In due time his sheer perfection of reproduction caught my admiration and I continued sending him material because I liked the way he displayed it. Too, I liked the tone of the magazine, although others have complained it was somewhat cold and lifeless. I didn't think

Therblies V

so. ... He impressed me as having intelligence and taste beyond his years; we spoke freely in our letters, but he asked me to use caution in my submitted material because his mother proof-read the stuff and both parents read the magazine. Somewhere along in there he sold a yarn to Imagination, which further impressed me, considering his age. I know that VEGA was his pride and joy, to the extent that he ran up about a \$90 bill (if I remember correctly) at the supply store, and of course worried for weeks about paying it off. He never explained how he did, although his father may have bailed him out. Finally, he sent back the Cold Turkey article I sent to you, after saying that the Annish was too much for him--he was quitting. He had even given up the idea of a Fapa magazine. And shortly after that he moved to Florida. I have had one letter since, and then deep silence. ... Which is about all I know of Joel. But I liked him. (Box 702, Bloomington, Illinois)

TIMELY QUESTION: "...could you tell me how to spell your name?" Found on the back cover of Epitome #3.
DESCRIPTION OF A WISE MAN: "He's about 5'6", fairly thick and is very quiet." Larry Billings in Gung Ho #2.
VITAL STATISTICS DEPARTMENT: "My shoulders are too thin and the bottom of my legs." Irene Gore in Brennschluss.

(Redd Boggs) ...Tucker and Willis are geniuses, for only geniuses could make these personal accounts, "Hot Romance and Cold Turkey" and "The Harp Stateside" so interesting despite the fact that they deal with events of a year ago and two years ago respectively. Tucker's adventures at Alamo(not Alama)gordo were fascinating to me. I spent 19 months at the air base there, but I saw the white sands only once (not counting distant views as from airplanes.) The base headquarters crew of WACs and GIs had a sandy picnic out there one night, and though among those dunes as in snow the night doesn't get very dark, I didn't see much of that "famous place." That was of course in the days before the A-bomb and Lee Correy, and my most vivid recollection is of a redheaded WAC from Chicago named Doris something. She later gained fame and lost her sergeant's stripes by bonking her first sergeant over the head with a beer bottle at the NCO Club, so you can see she was an admirable predecessor to the Bomb and the Rocket. ... Very pleased to see Silverberg returning to the fan field to the extent of writing a fanzine review column, and there are some excellent observations in "Fanfaron," especially those about Noah McLeod. ... I'd like to balance off your plug for the Incomplete Pogo with one for another book of newspaper comic strips that came out about the same time: More Peanuts, by Charles M. Schulz. "Peanuts" is my favorite comic strip just now, and I was glad to meet Schulz at an autograph party when More Peanuts came out--Schulz lives in Minneapolis. Like Walt Kelly he is undeniably a Nice Guy. ... Most fascinating statement in the issue: "All anonymous poetry by the editor." (2215 Benjamin St NE, Minneapolis 18)



It was with extreme regret that I learned of the death of Dick Clarkson, a Maryland fan, late last year. It was my pleasure to meet Dick at Chicago in 1952 and I had kept up correspondence with him since slightly before that date. He was a good friend and a wonderful fan to know. I shall miss him very much.

(Rick Sneary) /from a postcard/ Was going to send letter and sub to OOPS as soon as I received it, but xems and now on 7th day in bed. After Bold Promises I feared you would think me an 8th Fandomer or something... /from a letter/ I was glad to read Harlan Ellison's article. It is the first thing of his I have read. I'm beginning to understand now. ... Tucker is as usual. It is

Therbligs VI

well said that a good writer could write about growing clams and make it sound interesting to some one living in the desert. I must say though, that it is surprising to find the Old Guard still making jokes about not seeing fans when they travel. ... Willis is, I believe, the best writer fandom has produced in the last 8 years. His style is easy to read, highly descriptive, as warm and friendly as he is himself. Burbee might be a better editor/writer at times, but he has a more limited field. He also bitterly attacks people whereas Walt would rather say nothing, or at least very mildly. Tucker, Bloch and a few others might be funny at times but they lack a staying quality. Walt is always good. I am glad to find The Harp again after this long, dry spell. ... Reviews of fanzines used to bore me, but after not reading any zines or reviews for a couple of years, Silverberg was very interesting. ... I agree with you about Boucher. The more I read outside of the field of science-fiction, the more I realize the high writing standards of F&SF. If I had a friend who's magazine reading held towards the New Yorker and Harpers, I wouldn't have any qualms about offering him F&SF. No so Astounding or Galaxy. Boucher is, besides a swell guy, a heck of a lot of fun to be with. I never met Campbell or Gold, but have heard they were fine fellows. But until I find out, I'll take Tony. (2962 Santa Ana St, South Gate, California)

THE ANGLOFAN'S ALMANAC

With the recent increase of the overseas readership of OOPS, especially in Britain and the Isles, OOPS has decided to add a little corner devoted strictly to their letters. Any fan living in a country that has a restriction on mailing money out of the country can have OOPS for a letter of comment per issue. British Representative for OOPS is Walt Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, N Ireland. If you feel like paying for OOPS, subscribe through Walt or, if you prefer, make a small donation to the TAFF, % Walt Willis, in my name.

Letters received this time were from: Stuart Mackenzie, Alan Mackie, Julian Parr, Don Allen, Douglas Millar, Fred L. Smith, Tom White, Michael Kelly, Matt A. Elder, Harry Turner, Ethel Lindsay, Mike Wallace, Dennis Tucker, and Stan Thomas. Donations to the TAFF were made by Ethel Lindsay (5/) and Alan Mackie (5/). Don Allen also enclosed a page of small illo's for OOPS.

(Mike Wallace) I was pleased to read...about the ASFO edition of "The Immortal Storm," and have written to Sam Moskowitz to see if there is any way I can get a copy. This currency business is a nuisance... /I suggest you contact Ken Slater and Operation Fantast, Mike/

(Dennis Tucker) Harlan Ellison has written a powerful article. Sincerity positively oozes out of it and I need hardly say I agree with the sentiments expressed. (Is there a fan who doesn't?) Just now we have something similar to these 'soda fountain cowboys,'--the so-called 'Teddy boys' (because they dress in clothes of the Edwardian period--stove-pipe trousers, long jackets and string ties) some of whom pack razors and knuckledusters whilst others are reputed to be harmless. /I've a feeling you shouldn't have written that third sentence, Dennis. And I believe the term is 'drugstore cowboy' but you'd probably call him a 'chemist cattle-chaser.' I would like to take you up on your offer to send me some British motoring journals, and I'd be especially interested on those including bikes and their costs, etc. I plan on cycling around England in the near future and I would like to have some info on prices and related subjects. Can you help me out?/

(Douglas Millar) Ellison...a little warped but readable--if he would drop some of the worse Americanisms ('Dig the brave new world, willya') he'd be a good writer. ...Willis...is quite a good writer but he keeps that fact well hidden in HYPHEN. ... It's about time that someone put in a word of praise for F&SF. It's the only really adult magazine in the field--bar none--not even GALAXY, it's too inconsistent. I'm fed up with semi-illiterate fanzine columnists

Therbligs VII

rhapsodizing over second rate publications like ASTOUNDING and delivering panegyrics on second-rate authors like van Vogt, Asimov, E. E. Smith (the only decent writer of space melodramas is Edmund Hamilton) while a truly brilliant author like Bradbury is ignored and ridiculed. /You have your opinions and I have mine, Millar, but what do you mean Bradbury is ignored? What has he done recently for which we should praise him?/

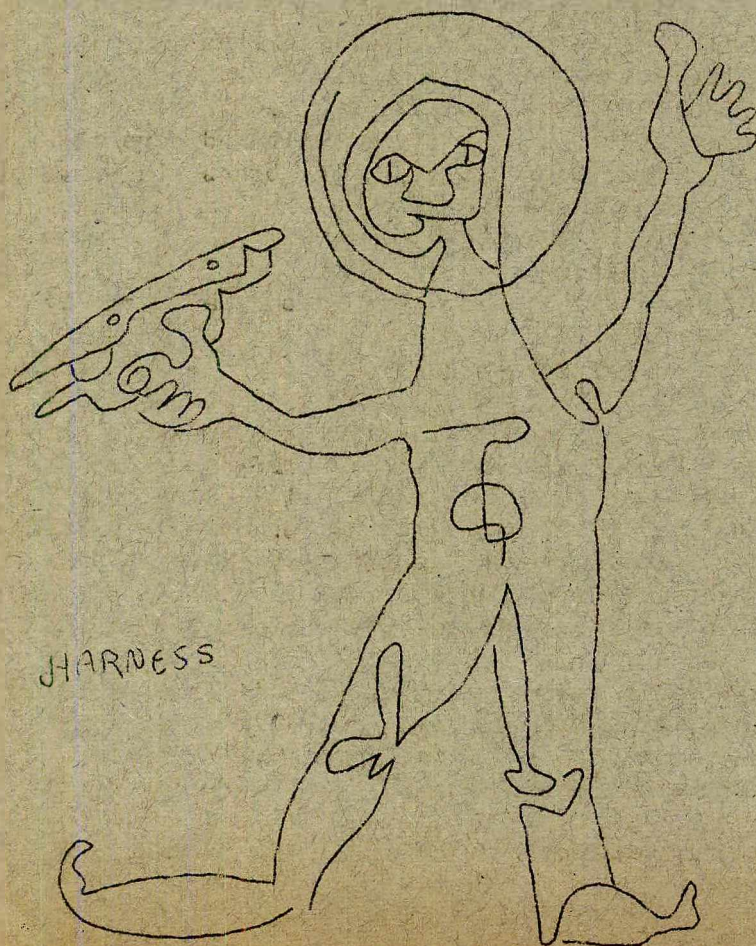
(Tom White) As for The Harp Stateside, I have a tale to tell. I was reading OOPS at my mother-in-laws. When I reached the part where Walt had to sleep in the same bed as Webbert and he was describing the possible aftermath of a half-asleep amorous advance, I burst into shrieks of hideous laughter. My mother in law immediately demanded to know what was so funny. Well, I couldn't very well tell her, could I? So I pretended I hadn't heard her and read furiously down the page in the hopes of finding some innocuous joke which would appeal to her rigid sense of humor. I couldn't find one! My wife joined in, yelling at the top of her voice, then my father in law. I stuck grimly to OOPS, keeping it before my face and trying to invent something innocently funny...I finally plumped for the line about 'Cheyenne's fiction,' which, I must admit, was met with stony silence and glares of disbelief. I don't think Walt ever wrote anything before with only one joke on a page.

And that's all the comments I have this issue. Keep writing those letters of comment and I'll try and make this a good-sized department. I can't find time to answer each letter of comment on OOPS personally, but I hope to make a stab at them collectively through this section of OOPS.

HOW WAS THAT AGAIN?: Taken from EYE #3

"He was an old fan, and tired." Charles Grey in Requiem.

"I met a man the other day, old he was and tired..." Anonymous in The Author's Relief Fund.



"He was an old fan, and tired."

Ken Bulmer in The History of a Fate too Hideous to Contemplate.

"...I too had ambition, had I not been an o-o-old fan, and tired." Sid Birchby in The Ballad of Hob-nailed Sue.

"He was an old fan. Tired and old." Don Allen in Death of A Fan.

ERRATA: Describing Elizabeth Gore in an editorial in HYPHEN "a humorist of a Burbee stature." I only hope Miss Gore has the stature arranged a little differently than Burbee does.

FUTURE LOST RACE DEPT: From a Checklist of 'Lost Race' stories in some misplaced fanzine, possibly EYE: Brown, F. "What Mad Universe."

Huxley, A. "Brave New World."

RECOMMENDED READING: "The Altered Ego" by Jerry Sohl and "Utopia 14" ("Player Piano") by Kurt Vonnegut Jr. # Not recommended is COUP, a fanzine of dubious character and little or no interest. # Also of doubtful interest is "Messiah" by Gore Vidal, but Tucker liked it.

Therbligs VIII

Here I am on the last page of the issue and with a number of things still to be squeezed in or mentioned somehow. # G. P. Putnam's Sons is mailing out announcements of the publication of "Earthman, Come Home" by James Blish. It's an oldie in the sense that it continues Blish's famous Okie series, but I don't think it rates hard-cover publication, especially when there is so much more good stuff that deserves a more lasting form of reproduction.

The Quinn Publishing Company mailed me an advance copy of the April IF for review in OOPS. I don't know if other faneds have received similar copies or not, or just what the idea is; but if they can afford to mail me review copies, the least I can do is review the issue. I suspect editor Quinn will be rather disappointed with my review, however, as all I plan on doing is saying that IF is on my recommended reading list. "One Love Have I" in this issue was unreservedly outstanding and capably supported by "Captive Market" and "Shill." The rest of the issue was readable, but the magazine is definitely marked 'buy' in my book. And thank you for the review copy, Mr Quinn.

How about a survey to find out how many fans have been reading stf since before 1954?

Recently received was ABSTRACT which editor Vorzimer declined to number, so I can't tell you which issue it is. However, Vorzimer takes this chance to emulate Geis and brings out Ab in a digest-sized, photo-offset format. Very nice as far as looks are concerned, and there's every indication that Vorzimer is growing up in his outlook as well. Although I think his production of 1000 copies is extremely foolish for a subscribing circulation of 45, he just might weather the storm and turn up as an excellent faneditor. It's certainly worth watching.

UN-INTERLINED INTERLINEATIONS DEPARTMENT: "I wonder how the proportion of fat slobes in fandom compares with the proportion of fat slobes amongst the general public?"
"Fans are a peripatetic lot."

MOTS AND NOTES: William McDougale (Box 364, Washington 4, DC) informs me that his new book, "The Female Demon", Poems of Fantasy, will be published in April 1955. # I also find a letter from the Cleveland Con Committee that has been sitting in the bottom of the drawer...they want me to advertise in their booklet and give the deadline for advertising as December 8th, 1954. Guess I missed the brass ring that time but maybe the merry-go-round will go around again.

(Ray Capella) I recommend Pogo to Ellison:

Angleworm: I wrote something called the Ruby-yat, but some Ayraab stole it.

Churchy: By Nab! Is nuthin' sacred?

Owl: NUTHIN'! (Fort Devens, Massachusetts)

And after all that squeeze-play to get everything in, I still have a few lines of space with which to tell you that I have one battered copy of OOPS #15 which goes to the first person sending 15¢ for it, and one copy of OOPS #11 for the same price. Two copies of THE RAMBLING FAP #2 are available, and three copies of #3...they are yours for a 3¢ stamp, if you feel you'd be interested in them. There are no other back issues available of either magazine from this address and this issue has already been sold out, so please don't ask for back issues when subscribing.

Aside from minor observations that MAD will become a 25¢ magazine in the near future and that I am now Sergeant Calkins of the U. S. Marine Corps, life is much the same as usual and this issue is ready to be mailed. As Robert Penn Warren put it, "...the mail lurks in the box at the house where you live."

And I lurk here, waiting for letters of comment.



X - HIS MARK

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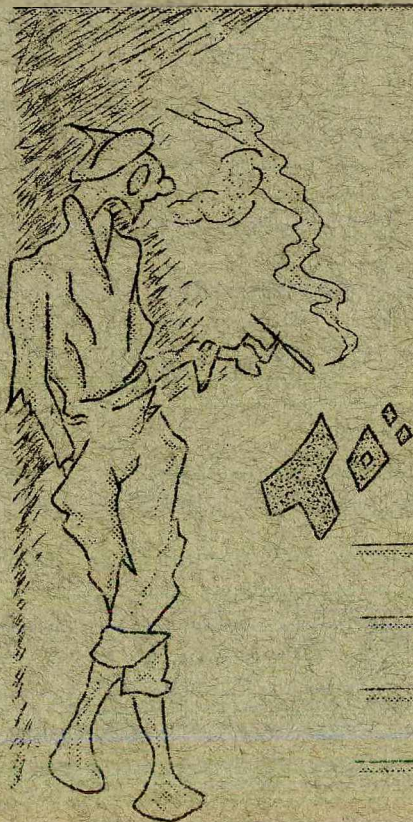
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