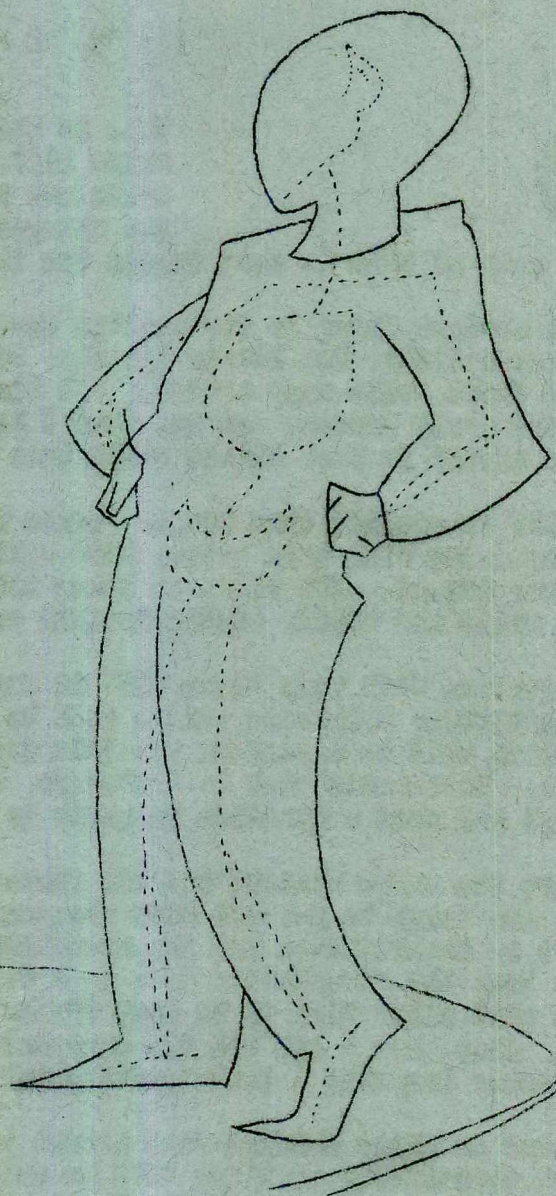
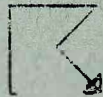
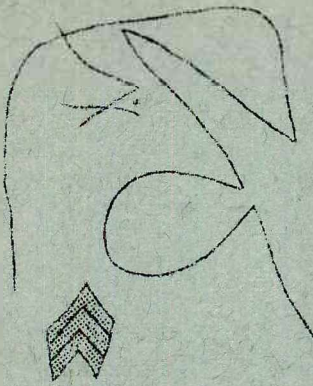


Harness



DOPSLA 22

THE FAKE FAN'S ALMANAC



DANS UN VERRE D'EAU

This is the twenty-second issue of OOPSLA dated September 1957. As many of you may have noted already there are several changes in OOPS this issue, and as the changes will be more-or-less permanent, I'll just mention most of them in some detail for the record.

The most obvious thing is the mailing envelope. They're an expense I had hoped to avoid indefinitely, but lately too many people have been complaining about the poor shape in which their copy arrived. It has been blamed on the small staples, but this is not the whole reason. At any rate I hope the use of envelopes will cause the issue to arrive in much better shape than usual. Please let me know.

Next, OOPS is smaller than usual. Since OOPS 15, issues have been thirty pages in size; beginning with this issue, OOPS will be only twenty pages in size. This brings in another change...the price is being lowered from 25¢ per copy to 15¢ per single copy or 2/25¢ and 4/50¢. Subscriptions will be adjusted accordingly.

Also beginning with this issue OOPS is now a bi-monthly magazine. This issue is dated September; following issues will be dated November, January, March, May and July. This will be a regular schedule and OOPS will stick to it as closely as is possible. This means that contributors, subscribers and letter-writers will have to be prompt and meet a deadline in order to appear in the next issue.

These are the major changes and the reason for them is simple: a thirty-page fanzine is just too large to put out more frequently than quarterly under my circumstances; the cost is prohibitive; and the assembling and other time-consuming jobs of mailing tend to keep the circulation down to a relatively small figure. I hope that these changes will allow OOPS to be more timely for the readers and less work at less cost for me. Also, now I can let the circulation climb to a somewhat larger figure without assembly becoming a back-breaking job.

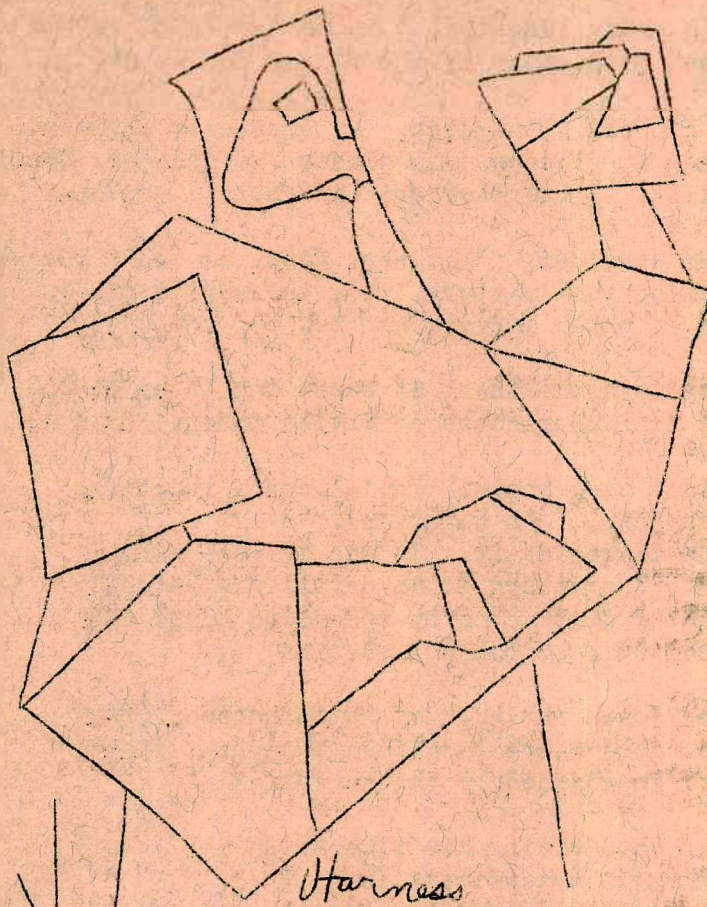
Your views on these changes--and others you may have in mind--will be appreciated. I'm also considering printing OOPS on only one color of paper. It will still be the same type of paper found in this issue, but only one color will be used instead of the four colors now in use. I haven't decided which color to use if I do change, by the way. Any suggestions?

And there you have it, kiddies. Although the issue is being cut down nine pages in size (I can use the back page now that I'm mailing in envelopes) the letter column will stay approximately the same size so keep those letters coming. And remember that now that OOPS is bi-monthly, issues will be coming out more frequently than they have been for several years.

WHAT do you think of THAT?

Wge





BOB AND THE TYPEWRITER

Please do not think I am getting any ideas of grandeur about my literary capabilities but for some time past I have had the desire to own a typewriter.

I broached the question one afternoon at Oblique House whilst we were all savouring Madeleine's delicious culinary achievements.

"I would like to get a typewriter, folks, any ideas?" I said.

There was a deathly silence, then they all looked guiltily at Bob who was busily popping Madeleine's masterpieces into his mouth, blissfully ignorant of my question.

Walt moved the tray away.

"Here's a client for your typewriter, Bob," he explained.

Bob stopped chewing and looked at each face in turn in utter incredulous bewilderment until he came to my innocent visage. Then his eyes softened with realization.

"Oh, yes, yes," he said silkily, "I do have a typewriter for sale. Would you like to see it?"

Presuming my answer would be in the affirmative he grabbed me by the coat collar and in a thrice I found myself outside the door of his room. He patted me on the shoulder warmly as he opened the door and ushered me through.

The story you are about to read is true...only the magazine has been changed to protect the editor... This is being reprinted from HYPHEN #12 with the permission of Walt Willis and John Berry and is presented here as a preface to John's newest article, AVERSION TO TYPE, which follows immediately, for those readers who either missed it the first time in HYPHEN or have forgotten the circumstances involved.

--- wgc ...

"Of course you need a typewriter, John," he confided, stepping towards a large wardrobe, "and I have the very thing you want. Cheap, too." You must realize that my heart was thumping with excitement. What a glorious opportunity, I thought. Me, getting a pro-author's typewriter. Ghod.

Bob opened the wardrobe door, knelt momentarily as if in prayer, and then reached inside, staggered to his feet and stumbled across to the table, his back to me all the time. I saw the table sag in the middle as Bob deposited his machine on it. He did one or two strange things with his hands; then he turned, eyebrows raised in triumph and waving a hand with professional assurance.

"Here it is. Remarkable condition, if I may say so. And dirt cheap."

Bob and the Typewriter II

I looked at it closely. Now, I want you to understand that I am no novice as far as typewriters are concerned. I have seen--and used--many of the finest models available.

I looked at Bob's machine again, stifling a groan of anguish. My immediate impression was a rusted hulk of machinery suffering in silence. On closer examination, however, it began to look more like a typewriter. It sort of grew on one, if you know what I mean.

Bob put his hand on my shoulder. "You see, John, it isn't the appearance of the machine that matters, it's the way it types. Let me put in a piece of paper and you can try for yourself."

So saying, Bob produced a clean sheet of paper and began to insert it. After three or four minutes of futile manipulation he turned to me.

"Have a look on the wall over there. You'll see a beautiful picture of a lunar landscape," he suggested.

I crossed the room and looked at it. It was an interesting picture, right enough. I examined it in detail for several minutes, being frequently distracted by spasmodic bangs and muttered expletives coming from Bob's direction.

Finally I heard a long drawn out sigh of satisfaction. Bob guided me back to the table where I noticed a ragged, dirty looking chunk of paper imprisoned by the roller.

"Type something," said Bob, biting his lips slightly.

My pet word for breaking in typewriters is:

terminological inexactitude.

I've typed it so often I can do it blindfold so there was no need for me to remove the layer of scum off the keys.

So I typed termino-- etc.

The keys made a series of staccato noises like someone trying to start a car on a frosty morning.

I peered at the paper and saw something like this:

the

I must impress on you that I don't type very fast. Compared with Walt you would think my hands were crippled with arthritis. So Bob's next remark, savouring as they did of flattery, came as rather a pleasant surprise.

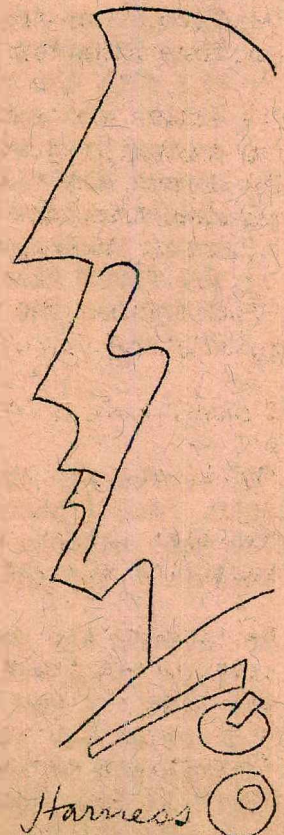
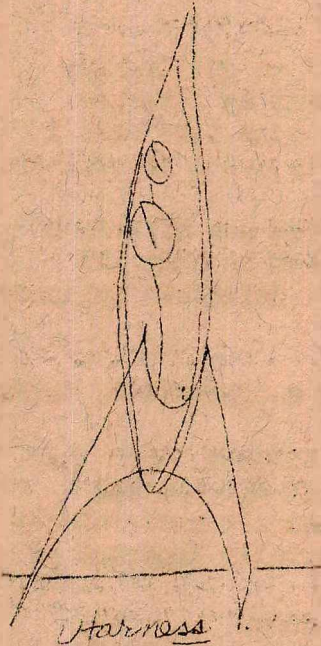
"No no John," he explained, "you are typing much too fast. I can see that you are an accomplished typist and I can assure you that this is the machine for you. But you must get used to it. Try typing "the" again but a little slower.

So with a much slower movement, I typed termino-- etc. I looked with apprehension at the result, something like this:

term olog inexactid e.

"Mmm," mused Bob. "There must be something wrong with the gribble draw back lever. It's probably being gouled by the trumbilkel snatch wire. I think I can fix it. By the way, let me describe the functions of these controls."

He pointed to the left of the machine. I looked, completely awed. All I could see was a large ball of fluff with bits of wire, string and metal peering selfconsciously out at me. Bob, with lack of foresight, attempted to blow it away. We both



Bob and the Typewriter III

began to have fits of violent coughing and it was some time before I was able to get my bearings. We both reached the table again.

"You would think," remarked Bob indignantly, "that science could do something to combat these sudden attacks of smog, wouldn't you?"

With a knotted fist staring me in the face, I had to agree.

"Well, back to business," commented Bob. "This lever here controls the roller movement. Turn the roller handle to the right there and note the smooth mechanical action."

I gripped the handle and turned. Nothing happened. I gripped it with both hands and wrenched both forearm muscles but still nothing happened.

"Ah," pondered Bob, "probably the snitch tag needs oiling. Let me try."

Bob is stronger than I and he knows his machine. He gripped the handle and, just as the sweat began to bead on his forehead, there was a sudden 'click' and the roller spun round and round for several seconds, while simultaneously a salvo of ball bearings was ejected with some force from different parts of the machine. They struck the walls and ceiling, leaving dirty black marks.

"I saw Carol playing with this machine the other day," muttered Bob darkly, stopping the flow of blood from his torn fingers with a handkerchief.

There was a painful silence for some minutes and as I felt rather embarrassed I got on my hands and knees, collected a couple of handfuls of ball bearings and heaped them on the table.

Meanwhile, Bob had collected his scattered wits and with remarkable aplomb said: "as I said, you can have this magnificent machine dirt cheap. What would you suggest?"

Rather a difficult situation to be in, don't you agree? I haven't much mechanical knowledge myself but at a rough guess I would say a skilled mechanic would take about three weeks, at 4/6 an hour, to fix the machine--assuming that one could be found to attempt the task. I didn't want to hurt Bob's feelings and say something reasonable, like 2/6. On the other hand, I didn't want to throw my money away recklessly and say something fantastic like 5/-.

The situation required great tact. Whilst I was trying to formulate a non-committal reply Bob leaned over the machine and patted the remains affectionately. I sweat tears welled up in his eyes.

"What about...three pounds?" he asked quietly, a distinct sob in his voice.

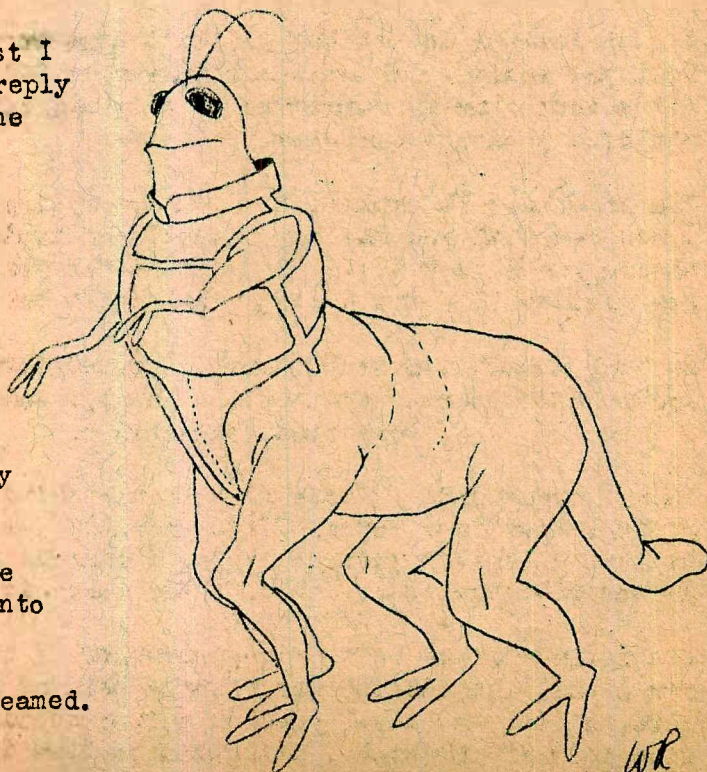
I mean, I am a fan, and Bob is a fan, and---

"Well, er...that is...I--" I stuttered.

"Settled then," announced Bob, shaking my hand firmly, "three pounds it is."

He took out his wallet, counted out three crisp one-pound notes, and thrust them into my hand.

"Now take the bloody thing away," he screamed.



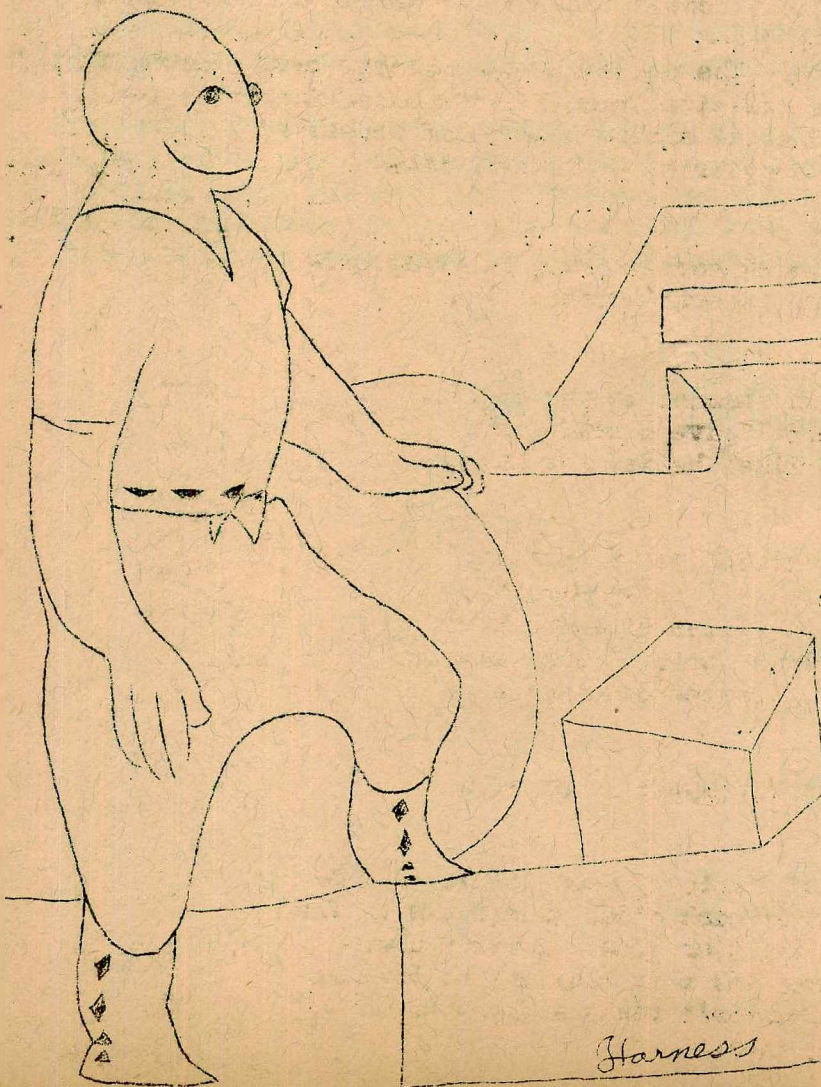
And now for the latest
Berry Factual Article,

AVERSION TO TYPE

BY JOHN BERRY

It may come as rather an anti-climax to some of you to hear that I decided to have Bob's typewriter. I didn't really have the heart to accept it and the £3 so I gave him £2 back again. Then came the problem of transporting it from 170 to my house, a little matter of about three miles. My father-in-law promised he would call round and collect it in his car, but one day when I was out my wife gave him the article to read in HYPHEN and he never came back.

I telephoned the Ulster Transport Authority, which has the monopoly of freight transport in Northern Ireland, and they promised to collect and deliver it. I forgot to ask Madeleine since what actually transpired when they came, but I did receive a polite letter from the Authority. It stated in effect that although they were £1,750,000 in debt and they were very tahnkful for anything that came their way, there was a limit to what their professional pride would allow them to carry. Not only that, they stated, but the Transport Union asked for danger money, and the only way to avert a strike was to return my order with regrets.



By this time, quite a pile of work that needed typing had accumulated, so it became imperative that I should get the typer home as soon as possible by some means or other.

My wife suggested a taxi.

"After all, it won't cost so much," she explained, "in fact the £1 you got from Bob will clear it."

I called at the taxi office on my way to work. They were pleased to see me. Of course, they would collect a machine and deliver it. It would be a pleasure. If I would just tell them where to collect it.

"170, Upper Newtownards Road," I said.

All conversation and work ceased abruptly. Mechanics crawled from under cars, gripping spanners. The drivers themselves looked decidedly unpleasant. The boss drummed his fingers on the desk, biting his lip. He suddenly opened a drawer behind the desk and threw a pile of Vargo Statten mags at my feet.

Aversion to Type II

"That's what they gave to one of my drivers for taking a party to the airport terminal just after Christmas," he scowled. He rose to his feet and began to walk round the desk towards me.

A taxi would have been too expensive, anyway.

I recollected that Walt often drives about in a new car which he borrows from a near relative who has great faith in human nature.

I rang him up at the Ministry.

"I wonder if you would bring round Bob's typer in your new car?" I asked.

His roar of laughter shattered the ear-piece of my telephone.

"Thanks," he sobbed, "thanks a lot. Just what I wanted. What a smashing back cover quote. Brilliant." He rang off.

I was left no alternative but to bring the thing home myself. I wait for a couple of weeks but there was no sign of fog. I had to be content with driving snow.

I reached Oblique House, saw Bob, and told him my mission. He didn't stop to speak or compliment on my nerve; he just vanished in a flash and reappeared with the machine. He dumped it in my arms, led me to the door, ushered me out, and slammed the door behind me. I staggered down the path. I heard a lot of subdued laughter behind me. I reached the gate. I peered up and down the road. No one was in sight. I trudged across the road in knee deep snow. Still no one about. I began to feel better. If I could just reach the bus stop I would be okay.

Suddenly I heard a shout behind me. I looked round. An old woman was hobbling towards me. Through the driving snow I could see she was waving a short stick.

Realization flashed through my mind. The old soul had probably been looking through her window, maybe even feeding the tom-tits, when I had sneaked furtively past, bearing what she thought was an infernal machine. She had probably telephoned the military and was endeavouring to bash me into submission before they arrived.

I fled. I tripped over a snow covered kerb stone. I lay spread-eagled. I put my arms over my head in self-preservation.

"No, no," I screamed.

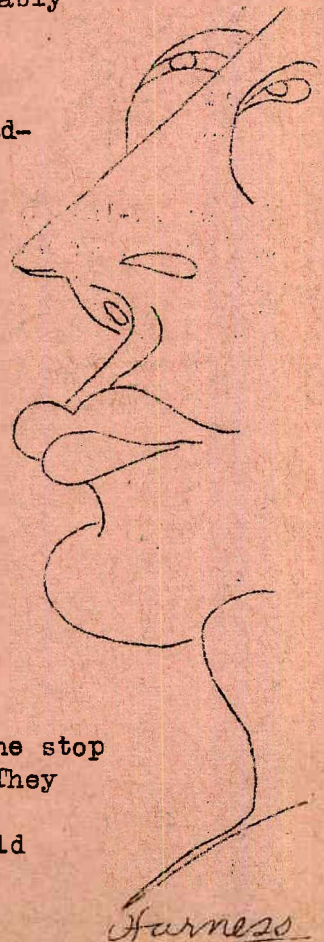
"You dropped this," she puffed. She handed me the roller. I hadn't noticed I had dropped it. I gave a weak grin.

"Thank you," I managed. I didn't like the way she backed away.

I found the typer in the snow. I picked it up, pushing the roller in my pocket. A bus drew up. I gripped the machine tightly. Haven at last. I smiled disarmingly at the conductor, whose mouth suddenly dropped. He pushed me away and pressed the bell. The bus roared down the road in fourth gear.

I picked up the typer, the roller, and myself. Somehow I began to feel a trifle frustrated.

A young couple, obviously very much in love, came to wait at the stop for the next bus. They whispered to each other endearingly. They were closely entwined. Suddenly I got an idea. I would creep close to them and when the bus came and when they got on I would follow quickly and the conductor wouldn't see the typer until it was too late. What a smashing idea.



Aversion to Type III

I saw a bush approaching in the distance. I crept close to them, ready for the spring. The girl looked round, saw me and screamed. The man turned round quickly.

"I've read about men like you in the Sunday papers," he roared. He was about 6'3" tall and was as broad as a garage door. He hit me in the eye.

Was it all worth it? I began to ask myself. This fandom business is okay but it has its disadvantages. I don't mind making a sacrifice or two for Willis. I don't mind typing him a few articles, but after all there is a limit to how much one can stand.

I picked up my hat, typer, roller and myself. I waited for the next bus. I honestly think, upon reflection, that the conductor or the young couple had said something about me because every time a bus approached me it would suddenly accelerate and whizz past at top speed with white, blurred faces looking out at me. The whole enterprise became a challenge.

I said to myself, what would Willis do if he were in the same predicament? That thought gave me new incentive. I had to approach the problem with logic. I had to apprise the situation. I must face facts. I had a typer, a roller, a black eye, it was snowing like hell, I was three miles from home, no bus would stop for me, I was cold, my feet were wet, I --

Suddenly I espied a telephone kiosk. As I trudged towards it the answer to the whole problem dawned on me. I held my head high because I had the answer. I entered the box and dialed my father-in-law. He would come and collect me immediately, he said.

The forty-five minute wait was worth it. He drew up. I staggered into his car with my machine. I was suffering from exhaustion and exposure. We soon arrived at my house. He lifted me out, propped me against the front door. He returned to his car and waved goodbye.

"I'll fix up that other little matter for you," he shouted. "I pass Shaw's Bridge on my way home."

My father-in-law called at my house last night.

He looked rather apologetic.

"You recall a couple of weeks ago I brought you home in my car from the Upper Newtownards Road?" he asked.

"Yes," I said, faintly suspicious.

"And you remember you were in rather an exhausted condition?"

"Yes," I agreed, feeling rather apprehensive.

"And there is no need to remind you that you pleaded with me earnestly to drop that strange mechanical contrivance in the River at Shaw's Bridge?"

"Yes," I admitted, remorseless pangs of pessimism shooting through me.

"Well, I thought that, maybe, in the condition you were in at the time, you weren't quite responsible for your actions."

He was quite blunt about it.

He disappeared.

I gripped the edge of the table.

He reappeared.

"So I've given you a chance to reconsider," he said. He looked as though he was doing me a great favour. He placed Shaw's typewriter in the middle of my wife's beautifully polished table. My father-in-law is a renowned practical joker. This time he surpassed himself. Oh, the irony of fate.



Aversion to Type IV

Skilfully he dodged the flower pot, which was the only missile near enough for me to reach before he skipped through the door. I heard his laughter above the roar of his car.

I felt--how shall I put it--I felt sort of baffled, sort of resigned to the inevitable. I could see now why BoSh had been so releived to only pay £3 to get rid of it. As I felt that moment I would cheerfully have sacrificed my autographed picture of Marilyn Monroe if only the typer would disintegrate or evaporate or do something equally effective.

My wife came into the room. She seemed rather interested, I might even say fascinated by the object reposing on the mirror-like surface of the table top.

She walked to the typer, touched it suspiciously.

"Just what I've always wanted," she cooed, "an electric toaster, although I would have preferred it in better condition. I didn't realize my father patronised mock auctions."

I tried to be patient. Fate had obviously decreed that the typer and myself were destined to be inseparable companions. No, not companions, just inseparable. I broke the news to my wife as softly as possible.

"I know your opinion of authors is very high," I said, "and I quite realize that you regard them all as being like Clark Gable in that picture, surrounded by glamorous shorthand typists and smooth, silent, sleek, streamlined typewriters.

She looked at me innocently, questioningly. This was going to be tough.

"Well, Diane," I said, "Bob Shaw is an author and this was his typewriter."

She paled. She gulped. She sat down.

"Not the BobShaw?"

I nodded.

"Not the Bob Shaw who writes for Nebula?"

I nodded again. It was pathetic seeing her lose her last vestige of faith.

"Did Sadie let him keep it?" she asked incredulously. "Well, she did," I explained, "but he wasn't strictly honest about it. He told her it was once touched by Chuck Harris and its value would increase tenfold as time went by."

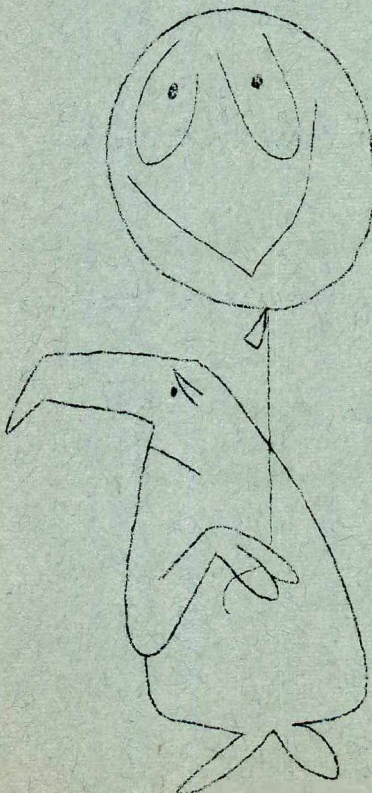
She looked down for a moment, then walked over to the machine again.

Now I must sidetrack for a moment. I must explain that before she was married my wife was a very efficient shorthand typist. I remember they used to tell me she typed so fast they had to leave her machine on the window sill every night to cool down. So as she approached the typer again, with the light of experiment in her eye, I sensed that a titanic duel was about to take place.

"Is it the right way up?" she asked.

"I...I think so," I confirmed.

She drew up a chair. She did a few preliminary finger exercises. It must have been over six years since she had last touched a machine. I could see that it was her intention to prove to me that she had lost none of her former dexterity.



Aversion to Type V

As I said before, her father had placed the typer in the middle of the superbly surfaced table. Diane calmly reached out and dragged it towards her. There was a noise like a heavy rasp being dragged over a rusty cheese grater. Four deep grooves were furrowed across the virgin table top.

For a good five minutes Diane paced up and down the room. Then she sat down again at the table. Her face was set.

"Round two," I said to myself.

She snapped her fingers.

"Paper," she said.

This was going to be good, I thought, remembering Bob's efforts. But I was disappointed. She had realized the machine's potentialities from the start. She removed the roller, wrapped the paper round it, replaced the roller, and sat poised over the machine like a great concert pianist awaiting the conductor's baton.

When she spoke her voice was icy calm.

"I think I will type the complete verse of 'The Charge of the Light Brigade,'" she announced.

I craned forward. She suddenly swept into action. Her fingers were a blur of smooth, rippling action. Bangs and rattles came from the machine. Twice I distinctly heard a chime--the mellow 'cuckoo' I attributed to our clock. She carried on for three minutes. I began to feel better. Perhaps...perhaps in the hands of a skilled typist the machine did fuction perfectly.

She stopped and gasped as if short of breath. I nodded sagely; the girl had gone to a great deal of effort. I went over to her.

The ribbon was wound tightly round her neck. I hastily removed it. We looked at her handiwork. There was a large hole about an inch in diameter in the paper. I ripped out the paper. There was a hole about half an inch in diameter in the roller.

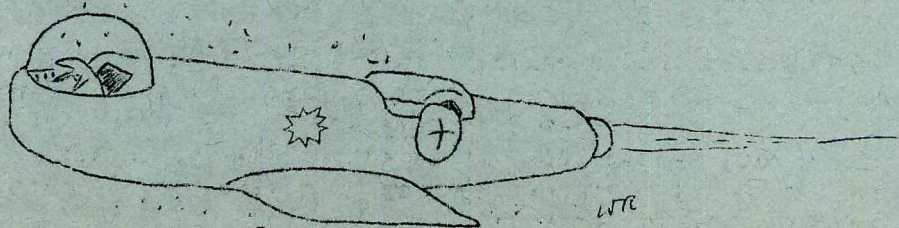
My wife was strangely silent. She removed two keys from her hair. One was lettered 'TABULAR KEY' and the other 'BACK SPACER.'

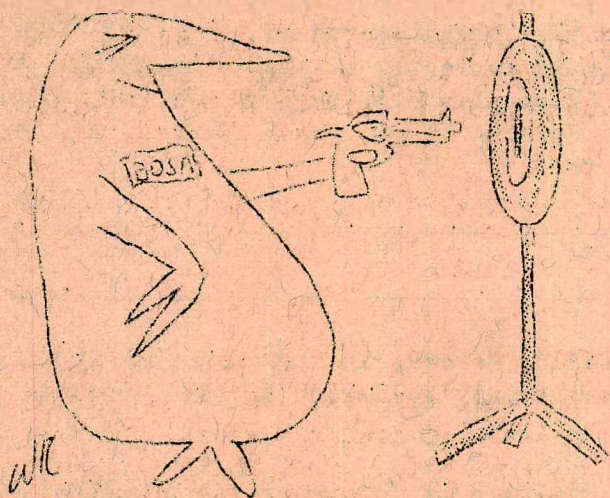
I have never really considered my wife to be vindictive.

Many people have jestingly said the BoSh typer resembled scrap metal.

Want to know a secret? ...

— John Berry ...





GRENADIAN ETCHINGS

You can't do a great deal of writing for fanzines without coming to a realization of the stark futility of ever saturating the fannish culture as a whole with any given bit of data. Tucker has bewailed the fact that a great deal of the information he included in his NEO-FAN'S GAZETTE would have answered the questions that others (who received and, presumably, read the NFG) have since asked.

It wasn't so very long ago--maybe two or three years--that I held forth in this column about the affairs and proceedings of the Brandon Dump-Shooting Association, and yet when Gregg chose to decorate the bosom of a Rotsler BEM with a small badge saying BDSA there were people who wrote in wistfully asking what it meant. Be that as it may, I'm not going to do a re-hash on the Life and Times of the BDSA. The saga of that lusty organization appears to be substantially static these days. It's been more than two years since Gerry Kincannon passed away and with him went the power and the glory that was the BDSA. He lived to see the day, and to bitterly protest it, when the Brandon City Fathers put Warfarin on the dump to poison rats...a deed which any staunch dump-shooter would view with as much sick horror as would a devoted fox-hunter deplore the shooting of a fox. (Etymological Note: "Warfarin" stems from the fact that it was developed on funds supplied by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, or WARF.) Without the occasional meaty SPLOCK! of a high-speed .357 wad-cutter converting rat-tissue into a coarse bloody fog the dump became a very mundane place and latterdays it is visited almost solely by people who want to dispose of broken furniture, old chickenfeathers, bottles, cans, and similar material of little value. Hail and farewell.

"Do you think newsreels are Pathé?"

I recently encountered the namesake of this column in a second-hand store and bought it for a quarter. It is a book by Robert C. Ruark called, of course, "Grenadine Etching." I saw the book reviewed in Life around 1949 when it first appeared, but I'd never seen a copy heretofore. It is quite humorous in spots, being a studied burlesque on a number of then-contemporary historical novels although it is best taken in a series of short doses.

Grenadean Etchings II

Another book you might not consider getting in the normal course of things is "The Girls From Goldfield" by Jacquin Sanders. This is currently available in paperback as Popular Library #807 although it was originally published by Appleton-Century-Crofts under the title "The Fortune Finders." If you enjoy OOPSLA! it's quite likely you might find this book amusing too.

"Thertinly not!"

The action takes place in Tonopah and in Goldfield, Nevada, in the span from 1900 to 1904 during what the author correctly calls the only gold-rush in the twentieth century.

It was of particular interest to me because I did time at Tonopah for a couple of years (1944-45) and came to regard the place with a certain revolted fascination.

I've often felt that much could be written about Tonopah during its second boom and that a certain amount of stuff should have been written about it and I am a little dismayed at the amount of data that has already slipped away from my memory.

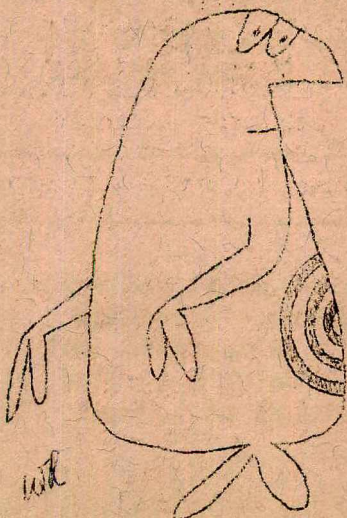
If you read McKinlay Kantor's monumental book, "Andersonville," you may have been struck as I was at the way he could pluck individual soldiers out of the crowd and bring them to life with a few deft paragraphs. Reading the book, I began to wonder how much success I'd have in re-creating certain of the soldiers I had known, somewhat after the technique used by Kantor.

And I found, not too surprisingly, that despite the fact that they had existed and that I had lived with them virtually 24 hours a day for two years or more, there was surprisingly little I could set down and say with an air of calm certainty, "Here: this is truth; these are facts."

True, I could chronicle a thousand incidents that happened to people. I could recount things like the happy time the range chief, one TSgt Armand R. Rinaldi, came in roaring swozzled in the small black hours and woke up the entire barracks, then finally stripped and flung himself onto his upper bunk, how we'd waited till he was soundly asleep and had carried the bunk (gently disengaged from its lower half) far, far out into the desert, out among the sage and cactus and horned toads with its sodden burden of unconscious, jaybird-nekkid humanity and how a marvelously chastened Rinaldi had turned up around nine o'clock next day, oddly attired in a mattress cover draped about his middle and had asked for someone to go help him carry his bunk back...after he'd dressed and put his shoes on.

Setting down things like that comes easy but the incident is not the man. It conveys to the reader nothing of what Rinaldi, the man, was like. I could describe the exterior of him, saying that he was mainly a cheerful Italian--second or third generation, probably, from Jersey or New York or somewhere--with a vague resemblance to Errol Flynn but of the inner man...of the being with hopes and fears and dreams...of him I can say nothing. I doubt that I ever knew.

If Kantor were to choose to plot a book in the midst of the Tonopah Army Air Field, circa 1944, and if Rinaldi were a character of his I've no doubt that he could glibly paint in an infinite wealth of detail about his early days,



Grenadean Etchings III

of a father with heroic moustachios who shoved a fruit-wagon around New York's lower east side, of great spaghetti feasts on Sunday with all the aunts and uncles and cousins chattering in liquid lilting Italian like so many blackbirds in a marsh...and Kantor would specify if it were a Genoese or Neapolitan accent. No detail too small.

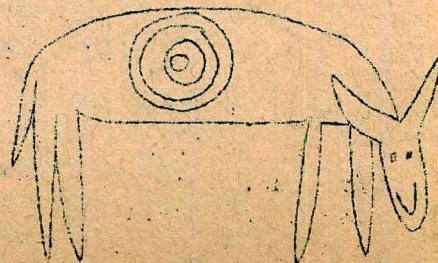
There were so many that now are but nameless faces. The tall thin kid who'd gone to Amherst and never let you forget it, sweating culture with every pore...who, one memorable evening came in potted, made a flying vault for his upper bunk, sailed gloriously over it and crashed ignominiously face-down to the floor on the other side. And how it would humiliate him to know that I recall him only for that single, ludicrous incident.

There was a sad-eyed man with a stiff, gray-shot military moustache--Regis H. Post, his name was, a buck sergeant although he'd not always been one. Once he had graduated from West Point and had worked his way to to captain in the Regulars, in the peace-time army where promotions came dreadfully slow. Rumor had it that his stretch had ended right after Pearl Harbor was bombed, he'd refused to sign up for another round and a vindictive government had arranged to draft him. Anyway, there he was, looking exactly like my visualization of F van Wyck Mason's Colonel Hugh North of G-2, only a little seedy and very, very sad. He always wore one of the old, wide-brimmed "campaign hats" and when he could get away with it he wore the gold acorns and braid of an officer on it and when officers protested (campaign hats were passe in the Air Force of 1944 and not many except old-timers knew what kind of braid was supposed to be on one) he would change to regulation blue-and-yellow Air Force braid and the air of a whipped borzoi. One sometimes saw him at the bars in town, sipping at a solitary whisky and sode, shunned alike by officers, warrants, EM's and civilians. A pathetic creature.

There was Dave Goughnour, with thousands and thousands of hours of flying-time in his logbooks, a veteran multi-engine pilot in civilian life. He had offered his services to the Air Force, hoping for a commission in the ATC but they hadn't an opening just then and a helpful recruiting clerk had suggested that he simply enlist in the AAF and then transfer to the ATC after he got in and he had done just that and had, somehow, wound up assigned to the ground-gunnery range at Tonopah as a PFC. He wrote interminable letters, made countless applications, but all in vain. He was a grain of sand that had somehow missed getting in the hour-glass, having to find a place for himself in the clockwork.

We had a long line of Colonels at Tonopah. Commonly a small field like that is commanded by a bird-colonel with lesser posts filled by lieutenant colonels. There were good ones and poor ones and at least one utter louse. I can't recall his name although it may have been Smith--we had at least one Smith. It was his delight to be driven about the base, slumped low in the back of his staff-car, hoping some luckless creature would fail to salute. If this happened he would swarm out, moustache quivering fiercely, and upbraid the flesh fairly off the miserable culprit's bones. Under his reign, morale--never high at best--sank to depths never dreamed of before. Mechanics on the line lost pride in their work, maintenance fell off, the aircraft fell off with horrible regularity until we were sometimes losing three or four in a week. He had them put loosely tarred earth at the end of one runway where the pilots usually made their final checklist before takeoff... in an effort to hold down the fine dust the props raised as the pilots ran up first one and then another engine. What happened was that the props scooped the oily dust into the air intakes and motor failure became more the rule than the exception. Oh, it was a mess.

One morning the MPs or someone discovered a small



But I think you can see my point. Actual people can seldom be made as credible as fictional ones. There were a dozen, a hundred incidents which could be as absorbing as chapters from Michener's "Tales of the South Pacific" if they were properly polished and pointed up (there was the grim, O Henry twist to the story of the woman who'd been living with her husband in the trailer camp on the base, who was forbidden ever to set foot in the boundaries of the field again by a special paragraph in the day's General Orders, on account of...well, sufficient reasons...and the day's General Orders were signed by none other than her husband, who happened to be the Base Adjutant...).

-- Dean A. Grennell ...

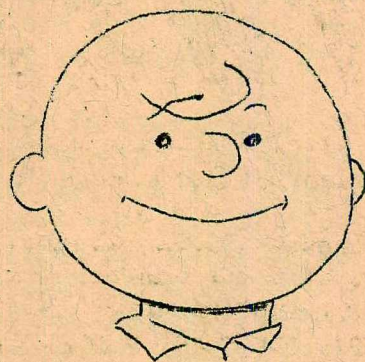
SPECIAL THANKS to

a very good man and true to whom we owe many hours of chuckles, gurgles and laughs, for obtaining us copies of...

MORE PEANUTS

GOOD-GRIEF, MORE PEANUTS

AND GOOD OL' CHARLIE BROWN

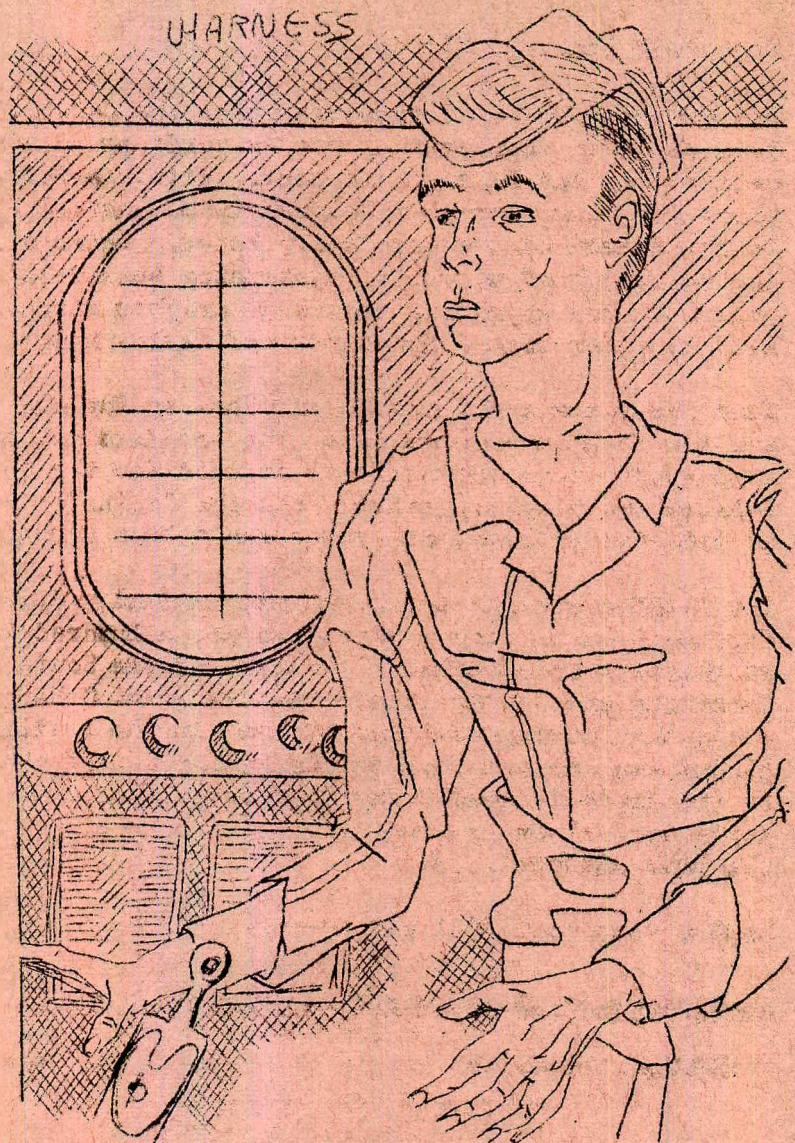


If you like POGO--as most fans seem to do--chances are excellent that you'll enjoy PEANUTS, the hilarious adventures of Good Ol' Charlie Brown and his friends, including that fabulous character among characters, Snoopy. And if you have already read and enjoyed PEANUTS in your daily newspaper, don't miss a chance to buy these four delightful books. One word of caution: if you have a weak heart, read with care and avoid overlaughing.

As I said before, this is the twenty-second issue of OOPSLA, dated September 1957, published bimonthly under the auspices of Star-flame Publications, NOT a subsidiary of QWERTYUIOPress, and selling at a current market rate of 15¢ per single copy, 2/25¢ or 4/50¢. All subscriptions cheerfully accepted. Next issue out in mid-November, material for which (including letters) to reach this headquarters at least by the first of the month. This headquarters, by the way, is 1068 Third Avenue, Salt Lake City 3, Utah. Anything left over thirty days will be sold to pay charges.

Cover by Rotsler. Interiors by Rotsler and Harness. Mailing envelope design by Capella.

Do not feed the animals.



THE R3LIGS -

William Rotsler, Route One, Box 638, Camarillo, California

By George, I mumbled to myself. Hully Gee.

Goodness. OOPSLA 21 fluttered in. As you know, there was a harbinger--just the last page with the address & a stamp. I broke a nail unstapling it, stuffed it in my shirt, buckled on my .38 Spl S&W Combat Masterpiece (the one with the notch in the grip), picked up a papercup full of apple juice and my .22 autoloader and went out to sit under a walnut tree near the creek and read.

Cover: that boy Jenrette is good. I wish fandom could pin him down to more artwork. He's one of the best--without the "personality" of ATOM or the polar bear whimsy of a Jean Young but damned interesting. ...I'd like to go on record as saying (GREN-ADEAN ETCHINGS) was the best article in the mag. Of course, now, I'm a Certified Gun Bug and this was raw meat for me. But he did a fine job of explaining to the layman (and me, too, 'cause I didn't know some of it) why maybe we won't be having anything but the present gun types for a while. I would like to see him do the BDSA thing as you suggested but also, as a possible followup, an article on why or why not a "needle" gun would or would not work. Stf writers are always having people fire "needle" guns to stun people.

In the middle of Archie Mercer's letter about comic strips I shot a squirrel. Oh, and that notch in the grip was from dropping the darn thing.

Kent Moomaw, 6705 Bramble Avenue, Cincinnati 27, Ohio

Nice idea for a column by Ellison, but I know that not everyone will receive it with the interest and expectations I do. Personally, I've always been fascinated by large cities...the people, the shadowy nooks and alleyways, the endless rows of windows with who-knows-what going on behind them, the proverbial hustle and bustle...all of these things repel a great many people but to me they're magnetic. I honestly believe I'd be extremely difficult to live with, even moreso than I am at present, if I were restricted to going about a daily life among folksy, homey people in a two- or three-street town.

Made the mistake of reading "The Harp That Once Or Twice" at the supper table and came shockingly close to choking with laughter. Aside from certain passages in "The Harp Stateside" I've never read anything with more concentrated humor under the WAW byline.

Fred Smith's comments on the British standard of living were received here with great interest. I just finished a column...the greater portion of which is built around a tv interview with students of England's Cambridge University. In a poll taken...one out of ten students there showed definite plans for moving out of the country upon graduation and nearly fifty percent indicated that they were seriously considering same. If this isn't an indication that something is definitely wrong with the British way of life, I don't know what is... Reasons given during the interview included the crushing taxation that Fred brings up, and also a smothering lack of incentive, particularly in the scientific and creative fields... The students made it sound worse than America's current conformity kick...I had almost forgotten such was possible. Few of these people are planning on taking up US citizenship, however; over half of the students in the one-out-of-ten group are heading for Canada... ((The Ellison column, sad to say, Kent, is temporarily defunct for reasons best known to Harlan but ostensibly lack of time. Last I heard from him he was busily serving time in the Army and getting material therefrom for many more professional sales outside the sf field. --wgc)))

Eric Bentcliffe, 47, Alldis St, Great Moor, Stockport, Cheshire

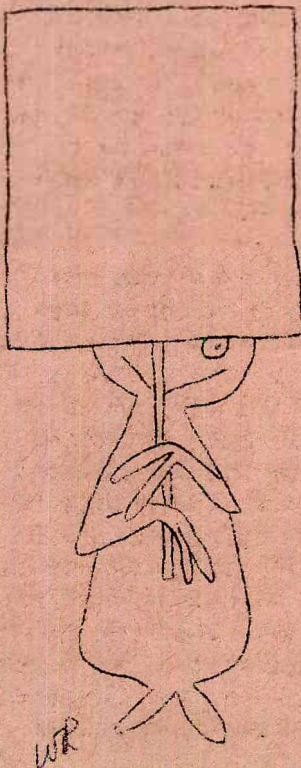
The Campbell-Gold symposium was interesting...I think we should now try and find out if Robert Randall (Silverberg et al) are in any way related to JWC; I can't think of any other reason for the far too many Nidorian yarns, can you? ...I think a lot of folk buy GALAXY because they like Horace Gold. I can't think of any other reason for buying it...certainly there isn't much good reading in its pages these days. The serials are (as you say) the only worthwhile thing, the shorts and novelettes are generally bloody awful. ...I don't know anyone who gets much pleasure from GALAXY these days.

Walt's bit on Belfast punning brought back memories to me of the time I visited 170 and its environs. It's rather a nerve wracking place to be though...someone will make a pun and for five or six minutes afterwards everyone sits around in deadly silence (broken only by the noise of Berry scratching his head) trying to think of one to top it.

Ralph J Watts, 2230 Big Run Road, Grove City, Ohio

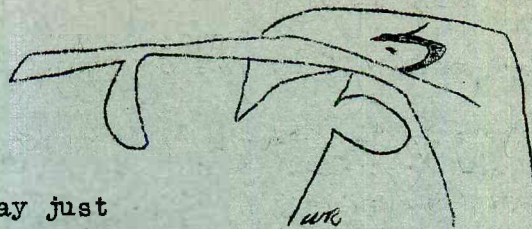
In my opinion, the best serial published by GALAXY wasn't even mentioned...it was Heinlein's "The Puppet Masters." Most of the serials that GALAXY presents are just so many words--when I finish, nothing happens. "The Demolished Man" was a very unusual story, written in a completely different style, but Bester seems to put more into the "sound effects" than into the plot.

ASTOUNDING has always had a more interesting group of serials; more straight adventure, stripped of the spectacular effects.



That just about does it for this time, Gregg.
I just can't get over that inadequate feeling
I have as a non-trader, non-contributor, non-
BNF and non-just-about-every-other-thing.

(((Before you feel too inadequate, Ralph, let me say just
a thing or two. Although I published only a fraction of
your long letter, I enjoyed all of it very much...letters of this kind from you are
more valuable than the fanzines from the traders, the material from the contributors
and recognition from the BNF's...they are, in fact, the real raison d'etre behind
OOPS and without them there would be few, if any, future issues. Think that over
well the next time you start feeling inadequate, will you? --wgc)))



Bob Shaw, 209, 27 Ave SE, Calgary, Alberta ...Fred Smith...informs us that Britons
----- live in slums and near-slums; and not
just ordinary slums either, but horribly overcrowded slums. Now, there are two
possible explanations for someone to have written this remark: (a) all that the
writer has seen of his own country is slums, or (b) he has an incredibly sloppy style
of writing in which the intention to say "A percentage of the population of Great
Britain lives in overcrowded, poor districts" could give birth to the thing which I
have just quoted.

From my own experience...I am prepared to rule out the first alternative. Let us be
kind and say that Fred was merely over excited by contemplation of life in Sweden and
that (a) does not apply. Passing on to (b) I feel that it is only fair to consider
what Fred intended to say rather than what he did say. The first, and perhaps the
only, comments that springs to mind is, "So what?" We all know that some people in
Britain live in poor districts--we also know that the same applies to Canada and
America and India and any other country that we can remember. Is this news?
Anyhow, having discovered the obvious, Fred does not mess around, he is going to do
something! He considers emigration. He admires Sweden very much so he decides that
he should emigrate to America. Perhaps he feels that Sweden is like an oil-painting
and that to appreciate it better he should move a bit further away? He admires
Sweden for staying out of the brawls of this century so he decides he would like
America which (luckily for the Western World) gets into every or nearly every brawl
going.

...Prolonged contact with all kinds of immigrants here has made me sensitive to the
peculiar reasons they give for travelling to the other side of the world. Nobody
ever comes out and says he had a feeling for Canada and thought he could be happy
here. It is always some trivial thing like being able to run a new car. One fellow
I met here and whom I had previously thought to be fairly intelligent told me it was
because he could not stand the cold bathrooms back there. Another one gave as a
principal reason the fact that back home he had to call his boss "mister" but here
he can call the boss by his Christian name

H Ken Bulmer, Tresco, 204, Wellmeadow Road, Catford, London To say, as Dean more or
----- less does, that guns
have got to their peak of perfection and we don't want them any better smacks of the
Victorians saying that the steam train doing thirty miles an hour is the ultimate.
Of course you can improve guns--any bloke who's carried a Lee Enfield .303 about on
his back up and down the country and then fired the damn thing will tell you that.
Smaller, lighter, less noise, more ammunition are only a few of the things that can
be improved upon... From a science-fictionist's point of view the whole article is
wrong. Sure, point up how wrong the Bogen was...that's good, very good, because it
debunks phoney science as it is so commonly used in sf. But...don't sit back and say,
in effect: "We know it all. There's very little that can be done to change the fire-
arms of the present to make them any better." And then list why not with each item
capable of obvious improvement in ways which, equally obviously, gunsmiths don't yet
know. ... Dean says the present design is adequate. It may well be, for those who
can fire a present day rifle with adequate results. For those who can't, a better

one will or could be developed. Maybe the zapgun will never replace the .357 magnum; but most certainly, if the demand is there, a better .357 magnum will replace that of today. One that doesn't shower brilliant lights when you fire at night, say... (((I think I might point out that the improvements you have suggested are in no way conflicting with the general statement of Dean's that the present design is adequate; your disagreement seems to be primarily in a choice of terms used and the chief word over which you differ is "basic." Dean said there would be no basic changes...and I, for one, cannot consider lighter weapons with smaller or larger ammunition using flash hiders (which are now very efficient) or silencers or slower or faster bullets as changes in the basic design. Certainly improvements are to be expected...and it should be kept in mind that some improvements are purely relative. For example, an automatic weapon may seem to you to be a great improvement over a single action, but to a person with a different viewpoint--say on the other end of the gun--or a bloody pacifist, say, it may seem more like a step in reverse. --wgc)))

 Richard E Geis, 1525 NE Ainsworth, Portland 11, Oregon His (Campbell's) equating
 ----- of the various sf magazines
 to different modes of transportation is a risky analogy at best and surprising from a man who supposedly prides himself on straight thinking. Are sf magazines really as different from one another as are boats and airplanes? And will the reading of SF STORIES instead of INFINITY cause you as much anguish and agony as driving a car off the end of a dock?

The Editor goes on to maintain that the different sf magazines serve different functions in the field. This may be true of about four of them, in a general way, but my last visit to a newsstand assured me that there were quite a few more than four sf magazines on sale. I would venture to ask how specialized can the magazines get? And just how does the occasional reader, or the new one, determine which he wants to read without an extensive and expensive process of reading them all and rejecting those he doesn't like? I don't see any brightly colored box on the cover of those magazines saying "This is a geared tales magazine." Or, "This is a feared tales magazine." Or "This is a blood and thunder magazine." Or "This is a sex magazine."



My point is that while the editors may know the different functions of the various magazines, and a relatively small group of fans and general readers may know it, the occasional reader probably doesn't know it. And these are the people who largely make or break the profit (and continued existence) of a magazine.

Campbell has never really had any competition in his "geared tales" segment of science fiction; "He jests at pain who never felt a wound." How do you leave them 'sweatin' and stealin'...a year and a half behind!' and yet hold a specific and narrow audience? And if there is no competition between sf magazines because they serve different

functions, why the wordage about moving faster than the other fellow?

Ah, and I do enjoy the way H L Gold brushes aside criticism with a twitch of his ad hominem mind. Critics are snakes in the grass with long fangs that strike at anything that moves. Reason is no good on them, must use forked stick. These critics strike with rage for rage's sake. They either mature or get out of the field.

"If you can't shake the argument, abuse the person who advances it, and so discredit it through the back door. Go from facing the issue, which jurists call ad rem, to the man, ad hominem." --Stuart Chase, GUIDES TO STRAIGHT THINKING

And Gold, too, says that there is no competition between sf magazines, that they each appeal to a special segment of the sf audience. And he doesn't know of any magazine that has profited by the collapse of another. Odd. Then what ever happened to all those TWS and SS readers?

 Steve Schultheis, 238 Trumbull Ave SE, Warren, Ohio Harlan Ellison's amusing--and
 ----- touching--anecdote would have
 been worth reading no matter where it appeared. Concerning the "private property" in the subway station, I suppose you noticed the newspaper coverage given recently to

Therbligs V

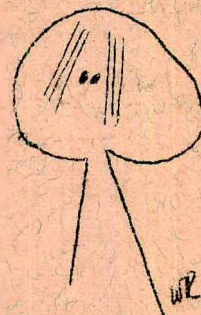
the fact that Rockefeller Plaza between 48th and 51st streets was completely barricaded one Sunday and closed to all pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Seems they have to do this once a year to preserve the street's status as privately owned property. Most of the property under Rockefeller Center is owned by Columbia University and they are not letting anyone forget it.

...enclosing a buck for subscription renewal. Bet there aren't many fans that have a complete set. A subscription running from #1.

Arthur Thompson, 17 Brockham House, Brockham Drive, London SW 2 "Cuffed at the
----- Fray" is too a
Berry Factual Article. Having survived several matches I can state that it is just as dangerous to have Berry playing on your side as having him as an opponent. With moustache tied behind his ears and stripped to the waist, Berry is an awesome sight in full Ghoddminton action...a sorta whirling blur of hobnailed boots and sunburnt epidermis. As Walt remarked, seeing Berry streak across the net, cannon off of the bookcase and execute a double somersault to land on George Charters' back..."a powerful man, Berry."

Denis Moreen, 214 Ninth Street, Wilmette, Illinois ...Every time I receive OOPS
----- it brings back a heck of a lot
of memories of fandom-as-I-knew-it, from the movie of the same name. My heyday was c.1954, after which time I dropped out by degrees, but for some two years now I have been totally detached with two exceptions--OOPS and WAW's Stateside booklet, and I suppose these two really aren't very detached from each other, either. What amazes me is that, from my observations, this business of the short-lived personalities of fandom has its flaws. Examining the bulk of the names bandied around in your current issue reveals pretty much the same personalities which were floating around 3 or 4 years ago: Calkins, Ellison, Willis, Grennell, McCain, Bloch, Farnham, ad infinitution. To top it all, Gold and Campbell are still fighting... As an additional addenda, the other day I received a dime with a request for a smaple copy of SPIRAL--which magazine has not seen the light of day for 3 years or so. Fandom doesn't really change overnight--the top dogs more or less hang on in their bnfish state...and it's only now that I'm beginning to realize why some of the long-time members of the group looked askance at all the "7th fandom" ramblings that took place some time ago: one may proclaim "a new era" but it isn't until you can look back quite retrospectively that any sort of definitive history of the phases of fannish interests can be made...e.g., what ever happened to Joel Nydahl? I had to resort to hunting up my old copies of VEGA to even remember his name. There are those who appear briefly on fandom's scene and cause a sensation that leads many to believe a "new era" has arrived; sometimes they themselves proclaim the era, such as Vorzimer and Ellison in their earliest moments. Whatever the basis of such "new fandom" rumors, they just don't hold up. (((Harlan's current address is: 150 West 82nd, Apt 4B, New York 24, NY. That may not be where his body actually is at the moment, but mail will reach him there eventually one way or another. At least, so he said. --wgc)))

Dean A Grennell, 402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin Slight updating on last
----- column...I sent you a
news clipping relating how a group of experimenters had used a mixture of compressed hydrogen and oxygen as a propellant, igniting it as it was released, and had boosted a projectile about the size of a golf-ball to around 10 to 12 thousand feet per second. I feel this should be noted but do not feel like retracting my comments on the apparent impracticality of gas-propelled handguns. Also there was at the least one improvement in the revolver since its invention, namely the incorporation of a "double-action" trigger around the turn of the century, enabling the gun to be fired a bit more quickly with a simple pull of the trigger instead of having to cock the



hammer and then pull the trigger as before.

Since writing the last installment a new gun has appeared which perhaps does qualify as somewhat radical departure in design from the conventional automatic. This is the so-called "Dardick Gun," (for its inventor, New York engineer David Dardick). This appears, to judge from the limited data available, to be no more than a glorified revolver which feeds cartridges having a triangular cross-section up twin columns in the stock and fires one with each pull of the trigger. It seems that the entire action is actuated by the pull of the trigger-finger, i.e., the recoil performs no function, nor does the gas pressure. This would seem to indicate little more than a revolver capable of being fired 20 times without reloading and as we all know, western movies have had those for years and years.

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING...

That just about winds up the issue.

Thanks to those people who wrote the

many letters I had not room to print, among whom were Raymond M Thompson, who is none other than Ray Thompson of ECLIPSE in Air Force disguise, Joe Sanders, Greg Benford, H P "Sandy" Sanderson, John Champion, Ethel Lindsay, Vernon McCain, Ron Smith, Denis Tucker and several others. Keep those letters coming...and remember that if you live overseas out of the dollar area, a letter every issue or so is all it takes to keep your subscription alive. British books or magazines (anything in the sf line is okay) are also of interest to me, and you can also subscribe to OOPS via Walt Willis with a donation to TAFF in my name. Another thing: when the letter column for each issue of OOPS has been cut, all letters received are carefully cut up into individual comments concerning each contributors work and the comments are then mailed directly to the author involved. This is an additional source of egoboo to the contributors and it also assures you letters writers that, even if your letter does not get printed, your comments will still go where they do the most good. It goes without saying that letters written on only one side of the page are easier to clip out legibly, so you might keep this fact in mind when writing. Your comments on this issue and the changes made are especially desired.

For those of you who have noted the absence of "The Harp That Once Or Twice" from this issue, rest assured that beginning next issue Walt will be back with a timely and interesting bi-monthly column which should harken old-time fans back to the good old days of QUANDRY. Also on hand for inclusion is an installment of "The Mark of McCain" by Vernon L McCain, an article by Robert Bloch, and several other items if room can be found.

Please make sure your address is correct and, if not, let me know by letter or postcard. Third class mail is slow enough without being returned and readdressed once or twice. Look at your address label...an "x" means that your subscription expires with the next issue; an "xxx" means that this is the last copy on your current subscription; an "*?*" means that I don't know whether you're still reviewing, trading, subscribing, or what-have-you and you're not likely to receive the next issue if you don't take some sort of appropriate action.

When is somebody going to put out another "who's where" in science fiction (cf Grennell) and a good up-to-date checklist of current fanzines (cf Russell Watkins)? Both are desperately needed.

This has been a STARFLAME PUBLICATION.

