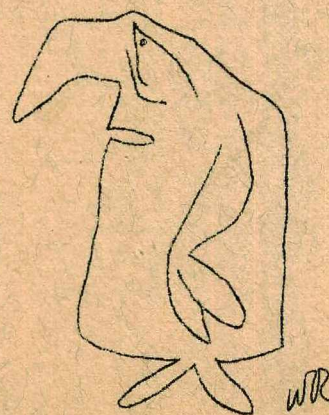
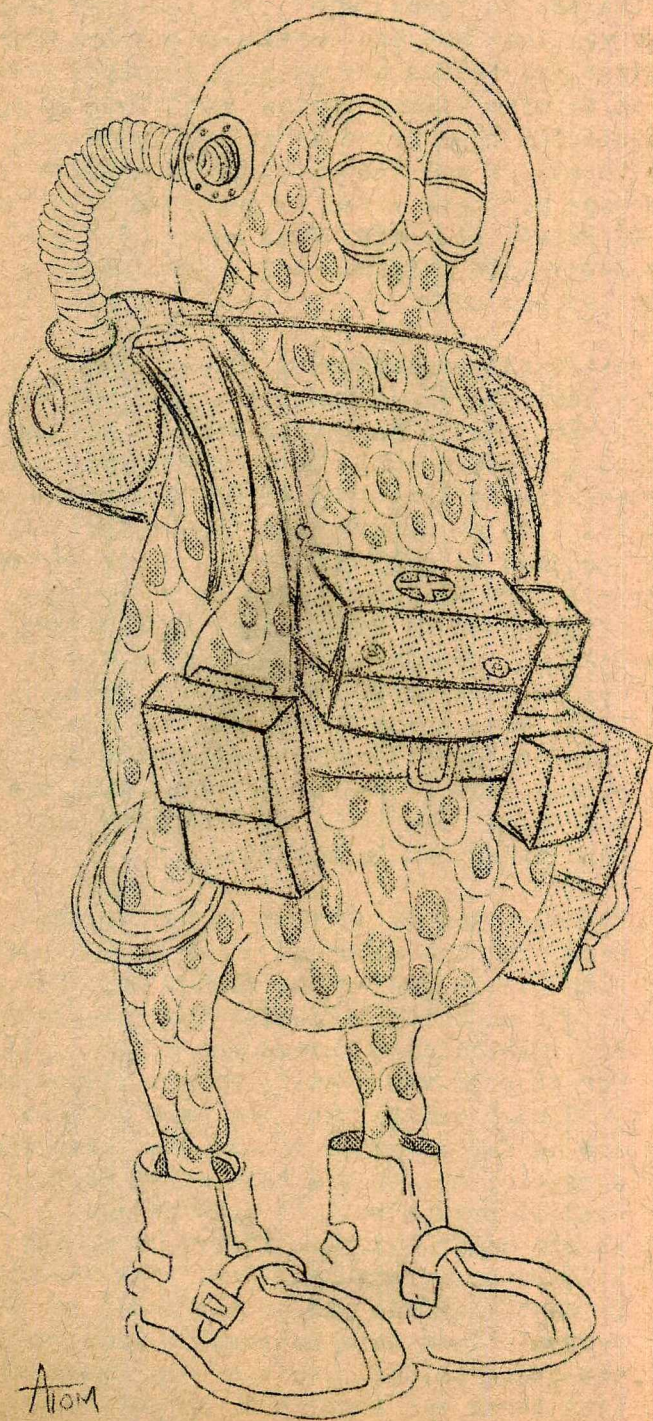


Richard Bergeron

OPS LA 24

THE FAKE FAN'S ALMANAC



This is the twenty-fourth issue of OOPSLA, the fake fan's almanac, dated January 1958 and Happy New Year while we're on the subject, edited and published, loved and hated by Gregg Calkins, sixth fandomite, who has moved again (address keepers please note)

OLD ADDRESS

1068 Third Avenue
Salt Lake City 3, Utah

NEW ADDRESS

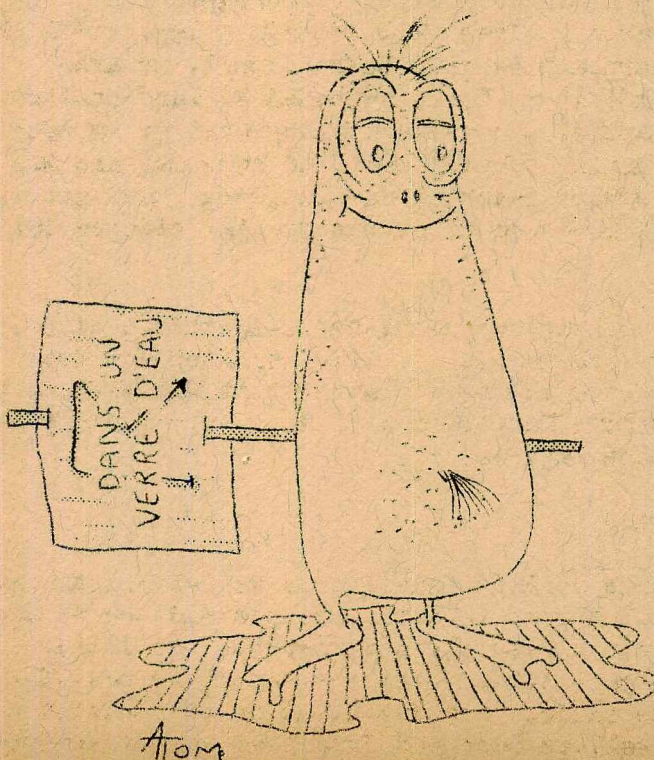
1039 Third Avenue
Salt Lake City 3, Utah

which, while it isn't much of a move is nevertheless enough to get everything fouled up and keep my postman working overtime forwarding fanzines. This fanzine, by the way, sells for the price of 15¢ per single copy (cheap) with longer rates for optimists at 2/25¢ and 4/50¢. If you send \$1 I'll put you down for eight issues, but even the editor is not that optimistic, no matter if this is the ***SIXTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE*** in as many years.

Any more vital statistics before we get off the beaten track here? Oh, yes, you fans who move without telling me...with prices the way they are and envelopes costing what they do and me being as broke as I am (the first two things are nothing compared with the third one) it's going to start costing you to move without either notifying me or guaranteeing forwarding postage for OOPS. Since the copy price is only 12½¢ on your subscriptions, and almost 6¢ of that goes up in stamps and the envelope, and since whenever a copy of OOPS is returned to me because you have moved it costs me 3¢ to get it back and another 3¢ and another envelope to remail it again, from now on I'm going to knock a copy off of your subscription for every time this happens. Now, have we all got this straight? Okay...just wanted to let you know.

Some more on mailing envelopes: perhaps I'm just fondly remembering those Duggie Fisher used to use for ODD, but it seems to me that they're a heck of a good way to use some of the larger illustrations I have on hand that I no longer wish to use as covers...although some of my critics claim that my covers could be no worse, anyhow, and there is currently a voice in the wilderness proclaiming that covers are unnecessary on subscription magazines...except that I like my covers, and that's that. But I did want to apologize for the doubtful one used to mail OOPS #22. Harry Warner brought it to my attention and mentioned that although he didn't find it objectionable himself and even if the Post Office hadn't objected it still might have caused an unfortunate reaction by the parents of some of the younger fans. I agree and in the future I'll be more careful of illustrations of this type. To tell the truth, when I cut the stencil for the envelope it did not once occur to me that the drawing

could be considered objectionable to anyone, but I realize now that this was not true. The right sort of mind can find objection to anything.



The question of whether or not to use more than one color of paper in OOPS met with little preference either way, but a slight majority indicated they preferred the multicolored issues and since I prefer it that way myself, future issues of OOPS will remain much the same as this one as far as paper colors go...with one exception and that's this green paper. When it prints well it does as good a job as any color but when it prints poorly it does an outstanding job. The trouble is mostly offset and on the green it is several times more noticeable than on the other colors...some of the green in last issue was about the poorest mimeography I have ever done, the first issue excepted. When present stocks are exhausted the green will be gone for good.

By the time you read this spring will be almost upon the land, but at the time I wrote it (the 5th of December) it was the morning after the first good snow of the season and the roads were delightfully slick in their winter clothes. No mishaps so far but I spent a few dozen precarious seconds that first morning while I learned how to walk on icy surfaces all over again. The best way seems to be to take short steps and keep your eyes on the ground, walking somewhat like a man with a multiple hernia climbing a steep hill.



I told you about the time last winter when I went swimming, didn't I? I didn't? Well... It had been snowing away for several days and on the afternoon of this particular day all the snow was busily melting itself away into slush and water. Now the campus has many sidewalks heading in all sorts of directions from all sorts of places (but not enough in the right directions, even so, as the worn pathways in the lawns will attest) and it happens to be a characteristic of all of the sidewalks that they are several inches below ground level and therefore in an excellent position to act as drainage courses for the runoff. This means that most of the sidewalks are covered with anywhere from one to two inches of murky, muddy water which completely conceals the surface of the walk. You sort of wade along with your socks rolled up and hope the depth doesn't exceed a couple of inches.

Anyhow, I was walking along with JoAnn at the end of my last class and we were preparing to go home for the day. On our way to the parking lot I turned off of the dirt walk and stepped onto what appeared to be a cement walk covered with an inch or two of water.

As you've no doubt guessed by now, it wasn't.

It was a hole about three feet deep and two feet square and filled smack up to the brim with ice-cold melted snow water.

Have you ever been walking along, minding your own business, and suddenly step off into a hole? The sensation is impossible to describe adequately but let me assure you that it's not worth doing just for the purpose of acquiring the experience. As one leg plunged towards the center of the earth in free fall the other leg, still on relatively solid earth, was doubling up underneath me. My books...well, my arms flew out instinctively and it was sheer luck that my books happened to land on the continental shelf. My brain became, temporarily, a non-functioning unit of my body. So there I stood like a crippled crane, wondering blankly what had happened and why my leg was going numb and why all the people were pointing and laughing. Oh, yes... laughing like it was the funniest thing they had seen since the special effects for ROCKETSHIP X-M.

When I had collected my wits, my leg and my books, not necessarily in that order, I hurried to the car as fast as I could and we drove home. I tried to keep the dry leg from becoming contaminated through contact with the wet one but it was difficult --the numb one wasn't very agile and had trouble keeping out of the way. Luckily I managed to thaw it out before permanent damage was done.

I don't trust sidewalks much anymore, though.

POCKET-BOOKS, ANYONE? From a casual glance at Salt Lake City's well-stocked magazine shop it would appear that the science fiction pb was the mainstay of the field and that the magazines were the newcomers to the field, not the other way around. I've noticed the pocket-book boom for some time now--for that matter, I buy a large percentage of the titles I find--but at no time was it brought home to me with such conviction as well as fact and detail as when I read my

copy of Sam Moskowitz' SCIENCE FICTION MARKET SURVEY 1956, recently published by Fandom House, Inc., publishers of the old FANTASY (now SCIENCE FICTION) TIMES. Moskowitz states herein that a total of 40% of all science fiction readers buy more than 24 pocket-books per year and this was in 1956...from the looks of my newsstand the number has gone up this year. But this is just one of the many interesting facets of the science fiction field covered in the booklet and reading the whole thing is a "must" for any science fiction fan who wishes to consider himself well-informed. It comes as part of THE SCIENCE FICTION YEARBOOK and the whole thing will cost you 50¢ from Fandom House, PO Box 2331, Paterson 23, New Jersey.

G. CALKINS, VILE PRO A letter from Larry Shaw the other day informed me that he had enjoyed some of my OOPS poetry which I recently collected and reprinted for my FAPazine, THE RAMBLING FAP, and that he would appreciate being able to print it in the "Fanfare" department of a forthcoming INFINITY. Payment would be a purely nominal sum, he said, but that I should think of the egoboo. Naturally it didn't take much thinking on my part to tell him that I was pleased as punch with the whole idea, and that while the egoboo was, of course, the important thing to consider still I would not hold any malice towards the purely nominal sum merely because it was purely nominal and that he could send it along any time.

So now, in one accidental stroke, I've ruined my amateur standing. I am following in the foot-tracks of Bradbury and Silverberg and all of the other fans who went from fandom to prodom and the vile huckster's badge. I can no longer be happy with mere amateur journalism. Now I must start writing seriously.

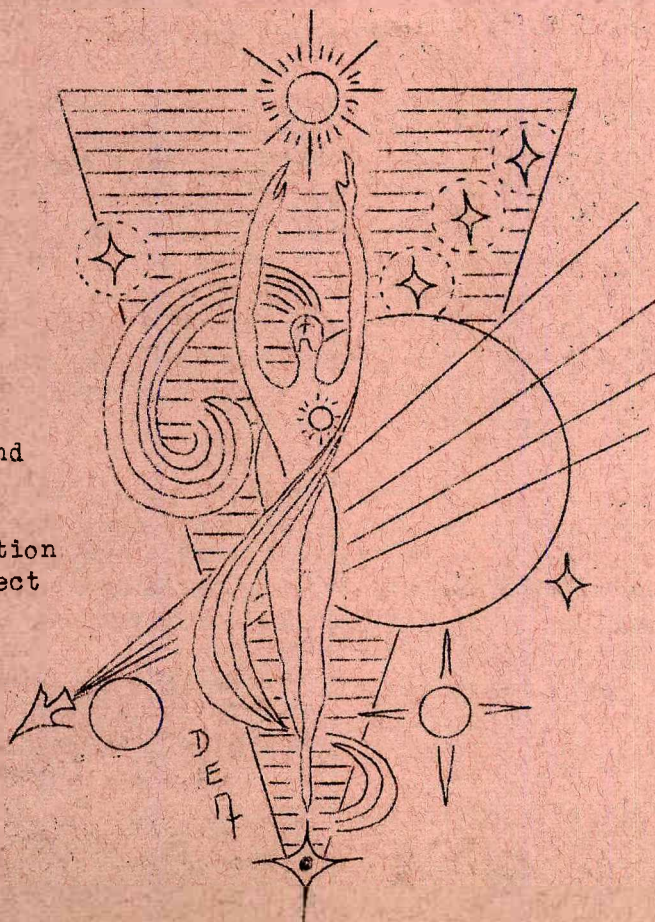
My first novel is tentatively titled: MASTER OF LIFE AND DEATH AND KEEPER OF THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES. It will be 100% original.

Well, this has been a longish editorial for me this time, but I plan to do this more in the future unless your comments indicate that you prefer I'd shut up and leave the space to Willis and Berry and McGain and the other OOPS columnists. New to these pages this issue is Bill Morse, but I trust this will not be his last appearance in OOPS; another face, not new but long missing from this fanzine, is that of Bob Tucker's who is not dead after all.

OLD BUSINESS I need the addresses of Richard Elsberry and John Quagliano, if anybody happens to have them. Their copies of last issue were returned "moved left no address" and I'd like to find them again. ## Correction to last issues art credits: included among the interior artists should be Sanders for his illustration for Willis' column. For more on this subject see "Therbligs" this issue.

And that's all I have to say for now.

Gregg Carr



I DIDN'T GO TO THE OKLAHOMA



...but I read about it,
which was just as good.

"This past Labor Day weekend, a most successful regional conference was staged at Enid, in upstate Oklahoma. I estimate a near-100 fans were in attendance at the Hotel Youngblood."

-- Dan McPhail, in POOKA

"Over 75 science fiction fans attended the fifth 'Oklacon' this past Labor Day weekend at the Hotel Youngblood in Enid. Those in attendance termed it the most successful convention that the Sooners have yet staged."

-- Dan McPhail, in FANTASY TIMES

"Today is Sunday evening up in room 501. Yesterday over 75 fans listened while Professor Cougherty told about the new worlds in science while later the Sooner

Rocket Society told about how a person could build a rocket for 35¢."

-- Kent Corey, in CONBOY

"This year's Oklacon was probably the best publicized conference ever held in this country, for its size. Only about fifty people attended, which is pretty small..."

-- Ron Ellik, in THE INNISH

"This Oklacon has been one fine convention. Although the attendance is not high the crowd is friendly and almost everyone here has an active interest in fandom."

-- Randy Brown, in COMBOY

(sic:) "Ah now this little con is small in no. but high in quality. Some of the best members are: Hickman, Randy Brown, Ron Parker, Joe Cristof, Walt Bowart, Kent Cory and the other 42 members steal the bleer ... Bowart and Corry were, with the other 48 members, very enthestest ..."

-- Richard Koogler, in CONBOY

"About 30 fannish type fans were there, but several others, such as eight or ten people from a rocket society, came in for one day. I had a good time."

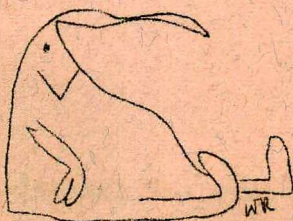
-- Lynn Hickman, in an oral report

(Aw, c'mon now fellas, how many were there?)

-- Bob Tucker ...

[illegible]

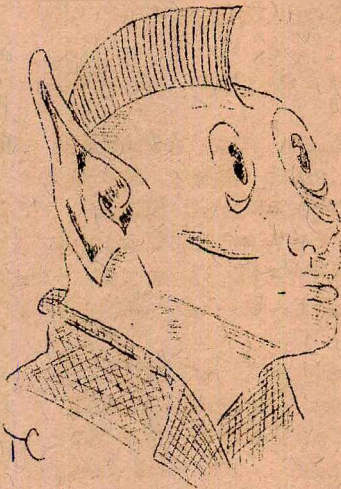
EDITOR'S NOTE:



We are proud to present here, as a service to our readers, an excerpt from Mr Tucker's next novel. It was found typed in carbon on the back of the above printed manuscript and headed as page 257. Though fragmentary, it is nevertheless revealing.

"...sat her upright on the seat, marveling at the deceptively light weight. Morgan liked the feel of her, those few moments she was in his arms..." (to be titled THE LONG LEWD SILENCE?)

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 OOPS' log...and 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 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 was 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.

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

OOPSLA:
 THOUGHTS
 AFTER SIX
 YEARS...



inbetweennumbersixandnumber
 sevenIwenttotheconventionin
 ChicagoandmetForryAckerman
 andWaltWillisandLeeHoffman
 andBeaMahaffeyandthenIwent
 toAtlantawithHenryBurwell
 andthentoLynnHavenwith
 ShelbyVickandthenback
 homeagainallsofastit
 stillmakesmyheadswim
 justtothinkaboutit.

The reason for my circumvention
 of my mailing date was the tension
 brought on by the convention
 where much went on but 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 condescension
 by the neofans who are very jealous and very neo indeed!

8, 9, 10, 11, what more is there to say?
Oh, yes...I joined the service and spent three years in their pay.
USMC,
that's me.

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? MIMEO ink!)
and mud tastes just like stencils and the stencils taste like mud.

Try one some time.

1955: I published gaily like a fan
who hasn't better things to do
1956: Until one day my service ended
and back to SLC I flew.

I went back to college
Where I hoped to gain knowledge.

Instead, I tarried
And...yes...got married.

But still publishing.

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:

"Please, sir, I want some more."

- Charles Dickens

"The worst is yet to come."

- Alfred, Lord Tennyson

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

- Omar Khayyam

"The frivolous work of polished idleness."

- Sir James Mackintosh

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

- John Clare

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

- Thomas Edmund Dewey

"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."

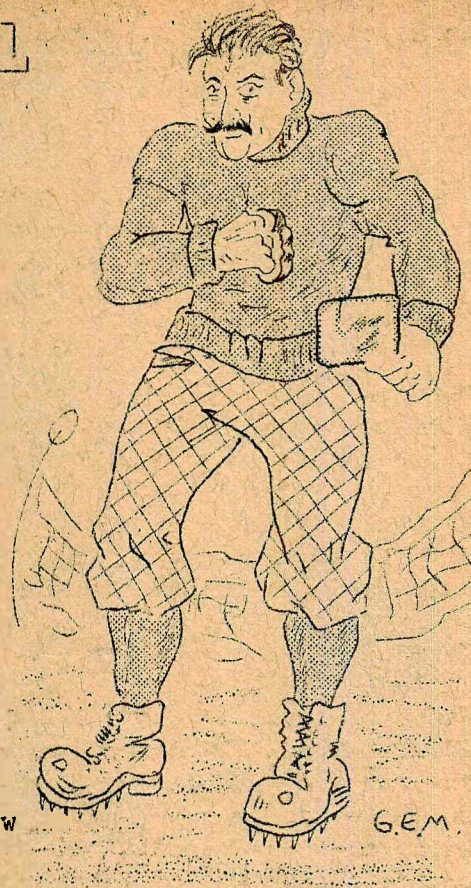
- Alexander Woollcott



EGGBOO BRUMMELL

(title by Walt Willis)

The advent of wealth into Irish Fandom was a gradual affair. I sometimes consider I was rather slack in not noticing it earlier on, but what with trying to work out puns and endeavoring to keep up with the conversation my mind was too occupied to notice the mounting details. But when I scraped the mudwing of James White's Rolls Royce automobile with a rusted spoke of my pedal cycle I did begin to notice things. A gold watch hanging from Peggy's heavily bracletted wrist...Walt lighting a Balkan Sobrani with a dirty ten-shilling note...Madeleine sporting a tiara...thick plush carpets...hanging tapestries...servants...gardeners. It became embarrassing to arrive at 170 Upper Newtownards Road, what with a Rolls Royce (James), a chauffeur-driven Bentley (George Charters) and a Chrysler (Walt Willis) parked at the kerb. I eventually arrived at the clever subterfuge of leaving my bike outside the dentist's house next door, although one day, by force of habit, I went up the nearest pathway. I needed a new upper set anyway.



But I made a few astute observations and arrived at a series of startling facts. For some time James White had been writing film scripts and had had five book-length novels published. He had also recently been promoted to Sartorial Consultant in Excelsis for the North Western branch of a well-known firm of outfitters.

by



JOHN
BERRY

Walt Willis had been promoted chief secretary to the Ministry of Finance at a salary of over E2000 per annum. Finally, George Charters, what with his old age pension, his Crimea, Boer, World War I and World War II Post-War Credits, plus the interest of many score years of investment, became one of the richest men in Bangor--a locality noted for the wealth of its inhabitants. The three of them and their dependants oozed money and they showed only too well that they knew how to spend it. Their very clothing portrayed the move from middle to upper class...morning suits, spats, polished shoes, evening dresses, jewelry.

Sad to say, I alone of the members of IF had not been smit by the boodle-bug and continued to eke out my existence and maintain my family on a barely sufficient wage. All the same, I did not really envy them their wealth and was content that they should remain friends with me.

But one day I pointed out to Walt the discrepancy in our appearances.

"Mr Willis," I said, "this isn't Irish Fandom any more. I alone am maintaining the traditions that you so nobly prepared in the early fifties. Look at me...doesn't it make you feel nostalgic?" I pointed to my duplicating-ink stained trousers, torn shirt, odd socks, untidy hair, dirty fingernails and two-day growth of stubble. "This was you, sir," I pleaded, "until this filthy lucre affected you. We can't have this gulf between us." I turned beseechingly to each of them in turn. "Walt... James...George, can't you hear my plea?"

George signalled to his chauffeur to cross his legs for him.

Walt spoke. "Berry has a point," he observed, fondling the solid gold switch on his tape recorder. "I vote that we arrange a new ritual to take us back to Berry's level ...for old time's sake. Yeeeee. This is what we'll do..."

...

The genius of Walt Willis triumphed and once more Irish Fandom reverted back to the good old days. His ploy to affect this change was brilliant in the extreme; it altered their radical appearance without allowing their prestige amongst the local population outside to wane because they changed to a new outfit before...hold on, let me go into detail.

Walt's new strategem was the construction of a FANAC REVERSION ROOM on the second floor. As before, the automobiles were parked outside the house and the resplendent fen strolled up to the portals of 170. But instead of turning right into the drawing room (out of bounds to me) they stepped onto the escalator and were borne to the second floor, to the FANAC REVERSION ROOM, soon termed the F. R. Room. Here they took it in turns to enter the door marked IN. Imagine for a moment that James White was the first client for reversion. He would stand pompously outside IN. He would be dressed in silk top hat, morning suit, cravat, spats, umbrella and gilt typer. He would knock and enter. Inside, the DUPLICATING INK PROCESSOR, a fully trained employee of the Gestetner firm, would expertly spew judicious dribblets of ink over James' apparel. With a polite bow the inker would indicate the next operator, the UNTIDY HAIR MANIPULATOR, who would whisk off the top hat and turn on three hair driers, shoving the hot-air-ejecting nozzles onto the White scalp. Shortly, James' hair would be hanging over his face. Satisfied with his craftsmanship, the drier would push James to the final of the trio, the MISCELLANEOUS REVISOR. This chap sported a comprehensive kit of instruments. He would look at James professional and, noting flaws in the apparition, do his level best to adjust them. He might, for example, slash a few jagged tears in the clothing, maybe pry open a shoe to expose the toes, or even append an "I'VE NO CHANGE" badge on the remains of a coat lapel, a reminder of the days when Willis used to try and flog us prozines.

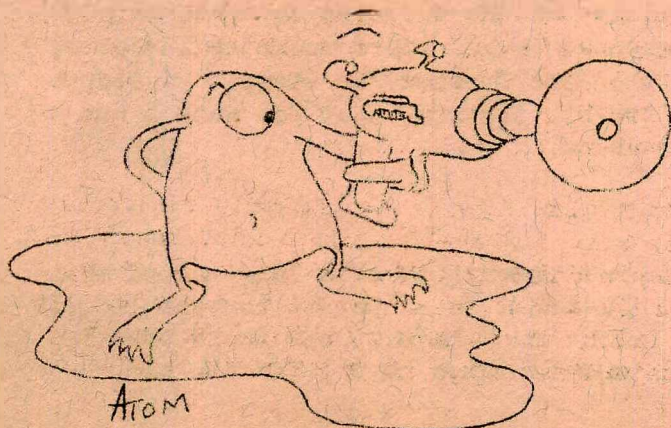
The OUT door would open and James White would stagger out, the James White of yore, the sartorial horror, fully equipped for another IF session.

The others (excluding myself) went through more or less the same ritual and we really felt happy again, playing with our plonker guns or having enthusiastic games of Ghoddminton, maybe even running off an odd issue of HYPHEN on the old duper as a change from Walt's new fanzine, BOODLE, published by Temple Press Ltd.

One would maybe consider it a trifle extravagant for the others to waste a complete rigout of clothing per fannish session, but with the money they had it would have appeared bourgeois to have in their possession a special suit of old clothes. So they were fixed up every time, James White making sure that when the meeting concluded a new change of clothing would be ready, which was part of his contract.

...

Naturally, the fame of IF's wealth spread all over the fannish world. At conventions the other members of IF hired a complete hotel for themselves and their servants, whilst I kipped down at the local doss house. It came as no surprise, therefore, that in the numerous polls appearing in fanzines, a new category was



Egoboo Brummell III

added: "The Best Dressed Fan Group."

...

We were seated in the attic, the rest of them disgustedly sipping tea, when Walt brushed the hair from his eyes and addressed the group. "Ladies and gentlemen and, oh, er, well, he can't help it. As you know, for the third year in succession we have been unanimously voted the best dressed fan group, and so the Willis Trophy becomes our own property. Glad I ordered a gold one. Mr Edward Carnell, of London, is coming over to Belfast to present the prize next Sunday so let's all be here to see him."

...

It was obvious that Ted Carnell was wealthy, too, but he wasn't in the same financial class as the others. Just the same, I could see why he had been chosen to present us with the trophy. He was ostentatiously dapper. His glasses were jewel-tinted, his small moustache clipped just so, his morning suit fitted him like a Marilyn Monroe dress (though not so seductively) and a pink carnation leered from his buttonhole. After cocktails he suggested we move to the fan room for the presentation.

By now the F. R. Room was purely instinctive to the rest of them and as I didn't have to go through it I waited, as usual, in the fan room, for them to assemble after the treatment. Ted Carnell seemed to be rather perplexed when he eventually staggered amongst us. His Reversion had been complete, even down to the shredded carnation. His eyes, wide with bewilderment, scrutinized us from beneath his frizzy hair. He gulped.

"I...I've been asked to present the Willis Trophy to you because, for the third year in succession, fandom has voted you the Best Dressed Fan Group. If I may say so, I find it rather, er, well, it was a unanimous vote and it's too late now to protest. Therefore it gives me much chagrin to present to Walt, on behalf of you all, the Willis Trophy. He sank to his knees and we congratulated each other. I was the only one who spoke.

Then Ted continued in a horribly strained voice. "For some reason that I do not now fully comprehend, a grant has been made from the TAFF Fund and this other cup, henceforth known as the TAFF TROPHY, made of solid pewter, is hereby presented to...to..." He looked at us, one by one; at the great blobs of ink generously splattered over us, at the ripped clothes, at the untidy hair, gaping shoes... "To...to...no, no. I can't go on."

Ted broke into pitiful sobs of remorse. I have never seen a man in such a neurotic condition. Finally we slapped him back to reality and he surveyed us again through bloodshot eyes. "And this TAFF TROPHY is presented to..." (more uncontrolled sobs) "...to John Berry as the Best Dressed Fan of the Best Dressed Fan Group." I stepped over their prostrate bodies and picked up my trophy, thankful that for once I had combed my hair. It must have been a close decision.

...

I look a bit stupid in a top hat and I feel like a penguin in this long-tailed morning suit, but if I want to remain a member of IF--and I do--I've got to wear it. It makes me feel more at ease amongst them, you know, and I have my new found prestige to think of. And in five year's time I shall have finished paying for it, too.

James White is very considerate.

-- John Berry ...

It is Christmas morning and Ireland is covered with a soft mantle of mud as I sit here in the Oblique House attic, shivering over an inadequate electric fire. The quiet morning air is filled with the sound of distant church bells and the smell of singeing trousers. What cruel fate has exiled me to this Siberia, you may well ask. Since you do, I'll tell you.

Naturally, I had intended to pass this holy morning in fasting and meditation--to be specific, working up an appetite for my Christmas dinner and wondering if the turkey would be tender--but yesterday a big envelope arrived, covered with so many FIRST CLASS MAIL labels and three-cent stamps that for a while I thought it was a patchwork quilt from my old aunt. But when I broke into it I found it was the latest OOPSLA from Salt Lake City with a salty laconic note from our es-Marine Sergeant Calkins. "I'd appreciate your column by Christmas," it said. Just like that. Polite, but firm.

Well, of course, as far as this loyal member of the Oopsla staff was concerned this command was engraved on tablets of stone, even if it might have looked to you to be scrawled on mimeo paper with a ball-point pen. But it looks as if I'm going to have some difficulty in complying with it, on account of 3000 word cables being so expensive these days. So are phone calls, and besides I don't know Gregg's number. Of course I could always phone Kindly Ol' Walt Bowart and ask him; I don't know Good Ol' Walt but it must be about 5am over there in Oklahoma and I'm sure he'd be delighted to hear from anyone so far away at that time. But then he might ask me Tucker's address, I thought. I considered asking the BBC to broadcast my column in their North American Service instead of the Queen's speech, but I think they've had a down on fandom ever since the affair of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships last summer. That was Arthur Thomson's fault, of course. Imagine, parading up and down the Centre Court in front of the television cameras with a big placard reading BACK TO YOUR FANAC, WILLIS.

So unless I can borrow one of John Berry's fleet of long-playing intercontinental ballistic budgerigars to dictate this column to Gregg, I'm afraid it's going to be late. However, it gives me time to sort through this little heap of fanzines that have been accumulating in the corner there, all marked "Colm" or some other inscription that must have made sense at the time. You see, it occurred to me a while ago that one of the things that's wrong with fandom nowadays is that nobody pays enough attention to what other people are doing. It's a bit like one of those parties where everyone is either talking or, as Thurber put it once, not so much listening as waiting for an opening. Strange and wonderful things are happening all over the place, but sometimes you would think there's nobody watching. There are some good fanzine review columns, of course, but that's not quite what I mean. In those columns the fanzines go in at one end and come out quietly at the other all wrapped up in uniform packages like sausages. What we want are some columnists who will Point With Amazement, View With Alarm, Regard As Significant, meanwhile leaping up and down with excitement every now and then and jumping to conclusions. So here I come, tottering into the breach.



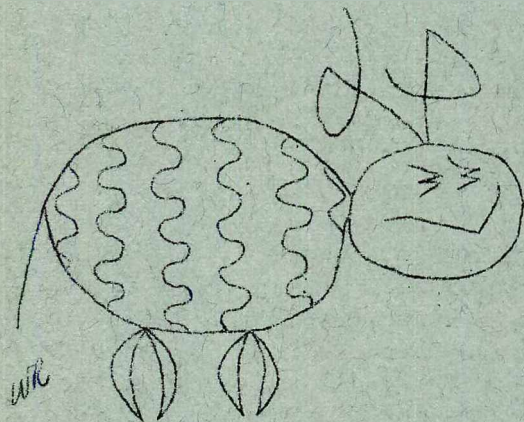
THE HARP

THAT ONCE OR TWICE

— WALT WILLIS —

The Harp That Once Or Twice II

For instance, here's a copy of YANDRO in which Marion Bradley, who seems to take everything very seriously, including herself, threatens to discontinue her column because "a certain type of fan...considers himself personally insulted by it." She goes on to bemoan the fact that modern fandom isn't interested in science fiction. Far be it from me to suggest anything so indelicate, but I can't help feeling that someone, somewhere, somehow has been pulling Marion's leg. In ten years in fandom I've come across only one fan--Max Keasler--who wasn't interested in science fiction...and even he was beginning to like it. I suppose I'm one of the anti-seriousconstructive fans Marion has in mind, but I read every science fiction magazine I can get and if I could get more I would read more. No doubt it's a bit different in the States where you can look through the field at the newsstand, and probably many fans don't buy so many promags as they used to do. But that's not because they're not interested in good



science fiction, it's because the promags aren't printing it. And if some of us don't run much about sf in our fanzines it's because we can find things that are more fun to write about than exactly how one hack differs from another. And even this might be different if the professionals took more interest in fanzines. Unfortunately many of them seem to regard fanzines as a natural phenomenon, like rain, which should continue to arrive at regular intervals without any effort on their part. When I was running *damon knight's* column in *Hyphen* I sent copies of the issues to about twenty professionals who weren't on my sub list: I didn't get so much as an acknowledgement from any of them. (Nor, in-

cidentally, from Marion Bradley.) Now I print other material and sell those 20 copies. No doubt Marion would say this proves I've no interest in sf. To me it proves I can't afford to show it.

I admit there was a period when a certain section of fandom jeered at as 'sercon' anything in a fanzine that dealt with sf, and I suppose I must take a certain amount of responsibility for that. But it still seems to me that this was just a healthy swing of the pendulum away from years of turgid and pretentious rubbish, and at the moment it looks to me to have swung back to normality. We have two monthly fanzines at the moment, *CRY OF THE NAMELESS* and *YANDRO*, and both of them deal primarily with sf. It's true that neither of them is yet the 'focal point' of fandom which every monthly fanzine used automatically to become, but both of them are still evolving from club fanzines and may go a long way yet. Not *YANDRO*, perhaps, which though a pleasant and unpretentious fanzine with occasional flashes of brilliance like *Stratton's* film reviews, has a certain static inbred quality which gives it all the disadvantages of esotericism without any of the rewards, but *CRY* is definitely going places. Now that Wally Weber has been to the London Worldcon it may continue its advance into fandom even further; what with him and the Busby's and the others on the staff, real and imaginary, there's enough talent in Seattle to liven up fandom and maybe even live down GM Carr.

With South Gate coming up, it's nice to see the sun rising all along the West Coast. With the recent issues of *INNUEENDO*, the younger San Francisco fandom seems at last to be realizing its potentialities. The recent *INNISH* (Terry Carr) seems to me the best fanzine of its kind to come out since the *QUANNISH* of 1951...maybe even since the *Insurgent SPACEWARP*. Carl Brandon's fannish version of *THE CATCHER IN THE RYE* is one of the all-time masterpieces of fannish writing.

The ideal fanzine, of course, would be one with the reliability and solid sfal backbone of *CRY* plus the fannish genius of *INNUEENDO*. Something like that is needed to arrest the drift of the pros away from fanzines which has been taking place these last years. I'm thinking of people like Asimov, Sturgeon, Boucher, etc, who are

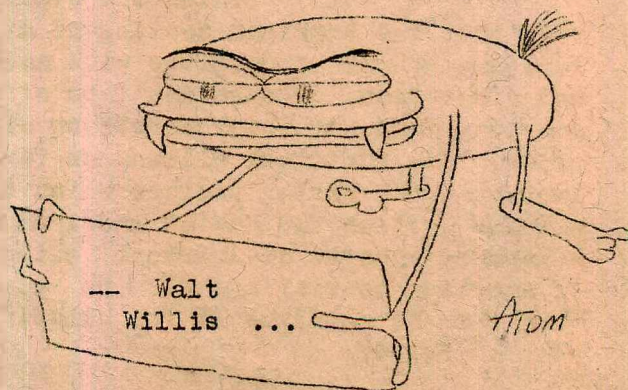
The Harp That Once Or Twice IV

thought that the average US fan was more sensitive and perceptive than the average man in the American street and now, having seen how they compare with ordinary tourists, I'm sure of it. It was for all the world as if they had carefully studied every characteristic of the American tourist that had ever been criticised and then taken immense pains to guard against them. For instance, not one of them could be induced to make uncomplimentary comparisons about anything they saw in Britain. Even what criticism was made of the amenities of the Convention Hotel--and there was a lot to criticise, especially from the American point of view--was made, as it were, from our side, as fellow fans. There was no implication that US fandom could have done better, or would even have wanted to choose another type of place. They all seemed quite determined to 'do as the Romans do' and take inconveniences as part of the interest of living in a foreign country...like the wet streets in Venice.

The one thing that really surprised me about them, seeing them side by side with British fandom, was how well they were dressed. We were a shabby-looking lot, I must say. Even James White's sartorial perfection (and he's a professional in the new clothes racket) was dimmed beside the magnificence of Steve Schultheis in his more-than-immaculate blue suit made of a cloth I haven't seen the like of outside the lining of expensive chocolate boxes. I remember Arthur Thomson telling me in awed tones of Steve sorting through his file of trousers. He would take out a pair which looked to Arthur to be practically still in their cellophane, run a finger along the crease and then, it being but the work of a moment to wipe the blood from his hand, drop it on the floor saying "Better have those cleaned and pressed." And then there was Beau Raeburn with his spectrum of sports clothes... I don't know, maybe it's something to do with the fact that I was an adolescent in the Thirties, when the correct dress for the young intellectual was what we thought of as casual, which usually meant baggy flannels and a sportscoat with pockets bulging with books. We would have thought any concern with clothes sissy, if not actually pansy. Obviously, times have changed; but of all the habits of modern teenagers, dressing up as Edwardian dandies is the only one I find incomprehensible. Why, when I was that age there were so many things I wanted to buy--books, records, radio parts, a motor bike (never did get that)--that I regarded spending money on clothes as just throwing it away. I still do, I suppose, but Boyd Raeburn's clothes shook me. I'd like to wear things like that if I could. Usually good clothes, when I have to wear them, make me feel constrained, but his looked comfortable and casual.

Which reminds me of another thing I noticed about the Americans, how careful they were with money. I don't mean they were mean, just that they seemed to be careful to avoid throwing it around ostentatiously the way some Americans abroad have been criticised for. They positioned themselves on our standard of living, as it were, with the result that going about with them was just like going about with British fans...sort of comfortable. They fitted in.

There were, of course, a lot of individual impressions--Silverberg's dry sense of humor, so exactly like Bob Shaw's and a perfect foil for James White; Boyd Raeburn's impeccable manners; Wally Weber's unobtrusive wit and likeability; Sam Moskowitz's geniality; Steve Schultheis' flair for fantastic fannish humour; and so on--but that was the main one. They fitted in. It was as if for all those years there had been gaps in British fandom which we'd never noticed, just the size and shape of each one of them, and at the Worldcon, suddenly...CLICK! There they were in place. We're going to miss them. Roll on, Gay Paris in '63.



The Harp That Once Or Twice III

fannish types but only seem to show it at conventions. The rest of the year they seem to have no time for fandom and I suppose they regard it as fugged.

So it is, part of it; but then so is part of prodom. One example was spotlighted by Jim Broschart in the first issue of his BALLAST, with a couple of brutal burlesques of SF Bookclub advertisements--YOU TRAVELLED THROUGH TIME TO TASTE FORBIDDEN LOVE and WIN A ONE WAY RESERVATION TO THE SUN. One of Broschart's final notes seemed specially appropriate: "A passing grade on this solar quiz will bring you--absolutely free--a practising psychiatrist who certifies that you are among the very FIRST to apply for passage to the Sun. This commits you." Yes, this is the sort of thing that has replaced: "RUPTURED? THROW AWAY THAT TRUSS." I don't see any improvement--quite the reverse, in fact. The old ads assumed merely that you were suffering from athlete's foot, rupture or sex ignorance, misfortunes which could happen to a bishop: these new ones assume that you are mentally deficient.

What sort of fuggheads are these who are convinced, to the point of spending hundreds of dollars of our money, that the average reader of Astounding and Galaxy wants a handy hardback wallet-size certificate that he is among the first to apply for passage to the Moon? Even accompanied by a "Moon Weight Chart and a complete Rocket-Ship Flight Schedule for the Moon, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn"? Presumably the Secret Handgrip and Unbreakable Space Patrol Code comes later. Their view is that these documents will be "evidence of your adventurous spirit...your imagination...your interest in the world of tomorrow." To me they're evidence that the SF Bookclub people and the editors which allow these advertisements to disgrace their magazines and the intelligence of the sf field are just not very bright. After years of prodding from fandom they finally put front covers on sf magazines which you weren't ashamed to be seen with in public. Now we have to hide the back covers.

And yet no doubt these professionals regard themselves as the mature intellectual leaders of the sf field, and fans as unbalanced crackpots. The sane balanced professionals deplore fandom's "private jokes and curious excesses"...or so it was explained to me once by a professional author as he reeled from the bar to his psychiatrist.

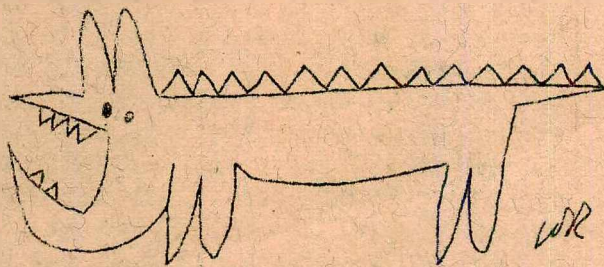
There is one element of truth in the contempt some pros have for fandom, and that is that fandom tends by its very nature to have more young and inexperienced people in it. But taking the established fans as a fair basis of comparison, I'd stack people like Boggs, Burbee, Harris, Clarke, Eney, Grennell and Calkins against any group of professionals by any criterion you care to name. And that's leaving out of account professionals like Bloch and Tucker. The real reason fandom has such a bad name in some quarters is that we wash all our dirty linen in public. No wonder people think we're round the Bendix.

SNUG IN THE FUG
(continued)

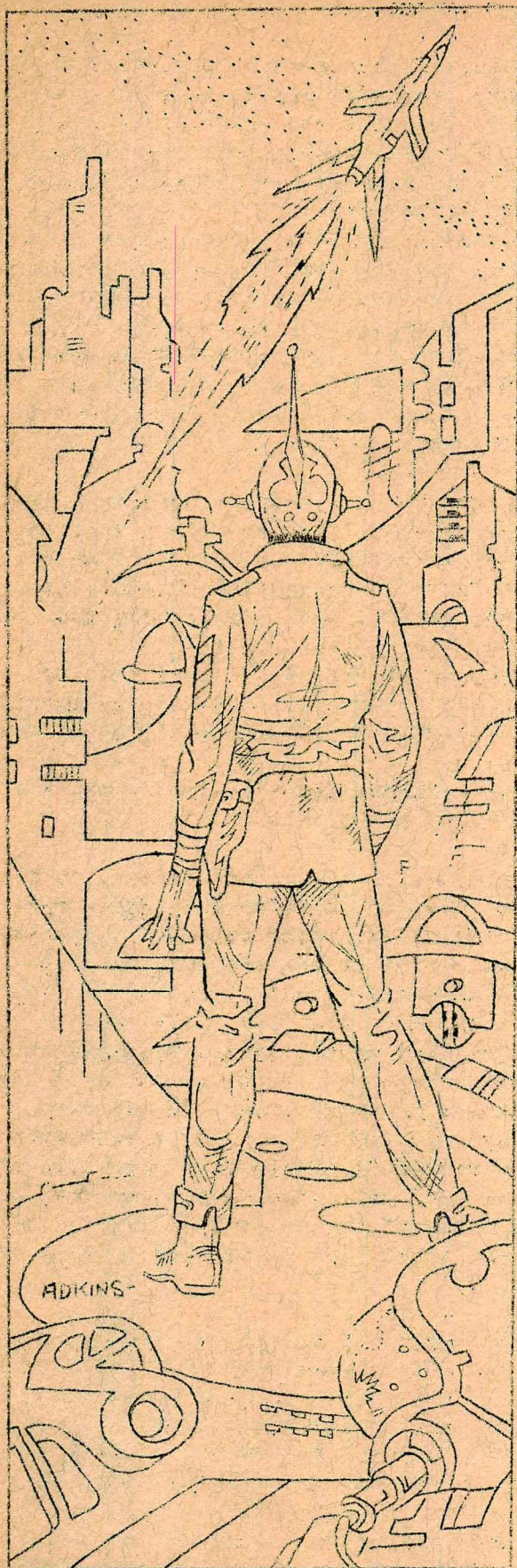
By now several British
Worldcon reporters have
broken the startling

news that the American contingent at the Worldcon behaved themselves with modesty and discretion. Please don't be offended, American fans, by their undertone of surprise. You must make allowances for the fact that the mental picture which the

average British fan has of American fandom is coloured by the fulminations of Laney, newspaper reports of American delinquency and personal experience of a certain class of American tourist and GI. He really knows Americans are nice people: it's just that when he confirms it for himself his subconscious can't help giving out a little sigh of relief.



America could be proud of the people it sent to the Worldcon. Since 1952 I've



A few comments are in order before we plunge into the letters: first, the amount of space I've taken up myself this issue...the two pages in more-or-less rhyme are more-or-less a reprint from OOPS #16, although revised and expanded slightly. I printed them as part of my FAPA contribution last mailing and decided to run them in OOPS again this issue while I was at it. Since the deciding had been done several months ago, naturally I forgot all about it by the time I started cutting stencils for this issue and as a result I now have two "first editorials." Bear with me.

Secondly, the advent of two artists new to these pages although well-known to fandom... Arthur Thomson, or ATOM, and Dan Adkins. I'm sure I don't have to say much about these two fans to convince you they're the best in the business...Art shows his stuff on the cover, sharing the spotlight with Bill Rotsler, as well as a couple places inside the magazine and Dan Adkins is as well represented on the other half of this page as my palsied hands are capable of reproducing. I trust that you will see a great deal more of both artists in these pages in future issues.

Speaking of artwork, let's see if I can't get the art credits for this issue right the first time for a change. Cover by Arthur Thomson and Bill Rotsler; interior illustrations by Thomson, Rotsler, DEA, Dan Adkins, George E Metzger and Terry Carr. Mailing envelope by DEA.

And now for some letters. First off the bat we hear from that old zombie himself

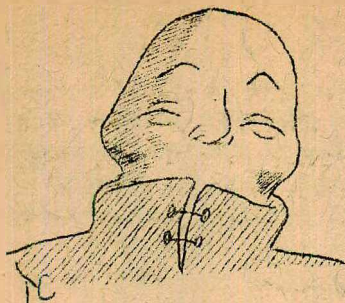
 Bob Tucker, PO Box 702, Bloomington, Illinois

The fatal asterisks on the mailing label alarm me and cause me to suspect that you are doing something with the subscription monies other than pouring same into paper and ink. I am quite positive I mailed you a dollar no more than five years ago (at about the time you published your frequency schedule, announcing fifty issues in about that many months.) What did you do with my dollar? How come my sub has expired so suddenly? Well, anyway, here's another one...bill me again in 1962.

((Now I'll just do that! --wgc...))

LETTERS AND
 EDITORIAL NOTES

THE R3LIGS



Ger Steward, 219 McRoberts Avenue, Toronto 10, Ontario

Opsla---I mean like wow---man if you and Raeburn were to publish more often I'd be hard pressed to decide which of your respective mags was the #1. (Remember the days when every fanned and his brother took "top ten" polls and got his zine on top?) (Oh, dig that, makes us sound like oooold fans, almost as old as Tucker, or Bloch even.)

Gregg Calkins goes to the moon. The idea intrigues me. You being a staunch supporter of the "Bigger Better" school might arrange to have Detroit finance the trip; you of course would handle their wares when you get there. Could call yourself "Lunatic Motors Ltd." (((I could, of course, point out that this is the third bimonthly issue in a row, now...what do you want, Ger, a monthly fanzine in this day and age? ## And just what makes you think Detroit isn't financing the moon rocket of today's world? You have to admit that those big rockets are no sports cars. --wgc...)))

Clay Kimball, 106 W. Del. Avenue, Draper, North Carolina

I don't know much about McCain but I have formed

a very harsh opinion of him on the basis of his little tribute to Silverberg in #23. I have never read anything by Silverberg that was better than competent hack writing. (And this includes "Master.") He has, on occasion, come up with good ideas, but has so far managed to conceal them in poor stories.

How anyone could say he's as good as Dick and Sheckley is beyond me. And almost as good as Heinlein! Why, to even put both their names in the same sentence borders on sacrilege. Nobody is as good as Heinlein except Sturgeon and Vance, and they in entirely different ways.

I see where a new mag called VANGUARD is due out. I wonder if it'll get off of the ground?

((Well, some do and some don't. --wgc...)))

Joe Sanders, RR #1, Roachdale, Indiana

I see that the illustrations did reach you, after all. Glad you could use them

but I wish you'd used the one as it was. Originally, I intended the drawing to represent a "Rocket Exploding." The version in OOPSLA shows a "Rocket Taking Off From Or Landing On A Planet, Narrowly Missing A Stray Vanguard Satellite." It doesn't look bad that way, but I wish that if that's the way you wanted it you had sent it back to me with the suggestion.

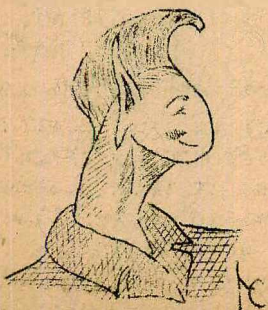
((Aside from my addition of the satellite to the drawing--and I admit I may have been at fault in taking that liberty--your drawing was reproduced in exactness down to the last detail...if it no longer looks like a rocket "exploding" to you I cannot see where that is my fault. My schedule is such that I did not have time to return the drawing to you to be redrawn to fit the timeliness of the event...I chose to add the satellite to the drawing rather than not to use it at all. It was not a Vanguard, by the way, for rather obvious reasons. --wgc...)))

Martin Helgesen, 11 Lawrence Avenue, Malverne, New York

I thought of telling you what parts of OOPS 22 and

23 I particularly enjoyed, but then I realized that that would include their entire contents. However, if I had to pick my favorites, I would choose the articles by Bloch, Willis and Berry. Speaking of Berry, thanks for repeating "Bob and the Typewriter" as it made "Aversion to Type" much more enjoyable.

In the envelope with OOPS 23 there were two full-page DEA illos which look like they might be cover originals. If this is your way of disposing of old originals, my thanks. If, however, they were included by accident and you want them back just let me know. (((Nossir, they're yours to keep. The blue one was a new one by DEA and the grey one was a reissue from OOPS 16 as I happened to have just enough copies left over to run it a second time. wgc)))



Therbligs III

John Hitchcock, 300 E University Parkway, Baltimore 18, Md

I got Oops 22 a respectable 3-4 weeks

ago and, after showing it around with high praise to the individuals I'm trying to recruit into fandom here in Balto., reading it myself twice, and doing through it a third time to make up a new address list for Fleatooth and Fang, I got so used to it that the idea finally struck me that I might tell you about it. Dim memories of the egoboo wafting aloft from ancient letters of comment on Umbra (what's that?) diffused themselves through my passive mind and I remembered... "Letters. Letters... yes, there were letters... in those days gone by. Fans wrote letters to each other. What a quaint old custom."

So, purely for antiquarian interest I'm indulging in the old-fashioned custom of writing a letter to you. I hope you aren't offended that I didn't buzz out to SLC overnight: that's the modern way to do on the East Coast, you know. If you get something in the mail you just take a day off and go ask whoever sent it why he did not come down and deliver it in person.

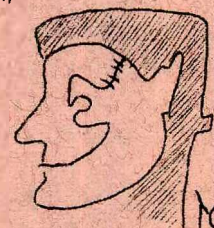
Seriously, there does seem to be a change in normal fan communications here on the East Coast. Magnus and I go down to WSFA in DC every two weeks; the Shaws in NYC and the Young's in Boston visit rather often; and both groups come down to DC every quarter for the FAPacon. Last time Eney announced there wouldn't be any FAPacon so we all went up to Phila. and had our con there, with the New York and Boston contingent fully represented, as well as the Detroiters (most of whom I met for the first time). As a result of all this interurbanism, it seems that fewer letters get written. I don't know how long it's been since I last wrote the Youngs, and still longer since the Shaws. As a matter of fact, I've seen the Youngs twice--Sept in Boston and Nov in Philly--without writing once. And vice versa! Strange, isn't it, that from the point of view of fandom I've been thoroughly gaffiated, but actually I've been right in the middle of the heaviest activity in fandom? I don't blame GMCarr for saying we Eastern Seaboarders are getting more and more cliquish... we're just damn handy, that's all.

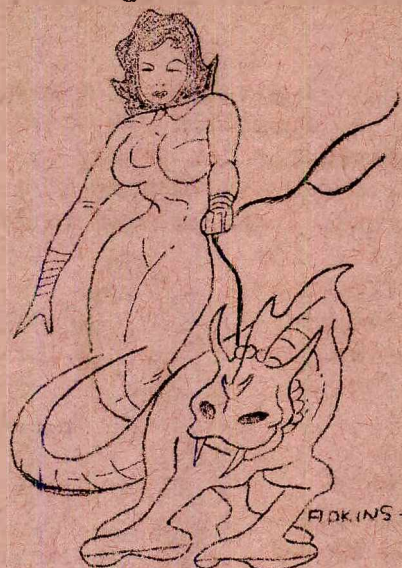
Bob Shaw's last fugghead-example (the fellow who emigrated to Canada so he could call his boss by his Christian name) doesn't sound too fuggheaded to me. Some people take social distance awfully hard, I've found; the breezy American form of social contact, with its informalities, is perfectly OK as a major objective by me. Think of fandom, where age makes little difference in social contact--and that feature is one of the most prominent to neofans and non-fans. I miss the informality of fandom. Consider then the person stuck in a social stratum by himself where you just can't break down the barriers between yourself and other people. It's worth it, I think, to go somewhere (all other things being equal) where people don't have to be distant. I can see the man's viewpoint and I sympathize with it.

((I don't know how it is where you work, but I call my boss "Mister." To which country would you suggest I pack my bags and go? --wgc.)))

H P Sanderson, 7, Inchmery Road, Catford, London SE 6, England

I did not manage to follow McCain very well on the business about dislike of God/hero stories. I am surprised that he should consider this dislike to be a typical British attitude as different from an American attitude. Personally I've always considered it to be a mature attitude as different from a childish one. When I first became a real collector of sf I considered Van Vogt to be one of the best authors. All his main characters are God/heroes. However one tends to develop a maturity of outlook after a while and it soon becomes obvious that God/heroes are only an easy way out. A God/hero can solve any problem and the majority of such stories have to be devoted to keeping the main character unaware of his powers. Adult persons naturally tend to dislike stories in which the hero has Godlike powers because they dislike the basic idea of leaving all problems to be solved by 'magic'--with or without scientific blessing. However, I wouldn't





dream of saying that only England contained adult persons, as McCain would appear to indicate. Of course we do have a higher proportion...

Harry Warner, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland

Your editorial thoughts on the sputniks jibe quite closely with mine; in fact, I probably would have changed my article on the subject in the coming HORIZONS if I'd known in time that you would say much the same thing in print a couple of months before that Horizons will be distributed. Right now I'm plodding my way through a little Russian book on the first flights into space which is about half-way between popularized science and science fiction. It's supposedly a history of the first flight to the moon, written in 1975 or thereabouts, but much of it is a series of fact articles on the history of rocketry and conditions in space by various Russian experts. I'm not far enough along to

determine yet whether the first two sputniks are specifically included in the future history; the book appeared in 1955, so it probably won't give any valuable clues about what the Russians will send up next.

The reason that the first sales to the prozines by most fans are such terribly bad stories is probably the psychological factor. The average fan when he starts to aim for the paying markets tries to write a real epic of classical worth in the style of his favorite author and he isn't equipped with the writing skill to do it properly. After he's had a few rejections from this type of writing, he undergoes a creative revolution in which he shifts from a determination to create great science fiction to a wild ambition to sell something, anything, just to prove to himself that he can do it if he tries. At this point, he realizes consciously or subconsciously that there's a greater mass of lousy stories getting published than good ones; he starts to imitate the common level of science fiction and usually he succeeds much better because the average poor stf story is much easier to imitate, with all its writing tricks on the obvious side and easier to reproduce. This is what happened in my own case, at least. The fellows like Bob Silverberg and Ray Bradbury, who then proceed to write voluminously, eventually swing back into the effort to produce salable fiction that is also good fiction; those of us who content ourselves with selling two or three stories a year generally remain on the hack level.

I suppose that Willy Ley will go with the times and change his opinions again, now that the Russians are definitely aiming for the moon. He's been wrong very often. The first edition of his first book about space travel, for instance, stated quite dogmatically that rockets had no military value.

((((The following received recently from Bob Tucker clipped from the Chicago Daily News, January 11, 1958, and titled (by Bob) Words of the Wise Dept: "The X-15 Is A Steppingstone To The Stars" As I see it, the conquest of space is a question of proceeding from one steppingstone to the next. Artificial satellites have been launched successfully, and the next logical step forward--man's entry into space--is dramatically described in this article.

When Captain Crossfield rockets the X-15 into the ionosphere, he will learn the answers to many questions. The scientific data he collects will be used for the first manned flight around the earth. Orbital flight will become a steppingstone for the creation of a manned space station which permanently circles the earth. The space station will be the steppingstone to the Moon, the Moon to the planets. The planets, in their turn, might be the steppingstones to the stars. Willy Ley

--You tell 'em, Willy...but don't forget to use that word "might"...always play it safe, you know--you get a better reputation that way. --wgc...)))

Ron Ellik, rm 305, 2315 Dwight Way, Berkeley 4, California

Concerning this
"Convention Note" of
yours: as I understand the set-up, Sneary has deliberately delegated almost all powers of chairmanship, secretaryship, etc., to other Outlanders and George Fields because

he, himself, the one and only Sneary, who has planned this thing almost since he came into fandom, wants to enjoy it.

This, I think, is a proud and memorable thought.

This business of Public Relations surprised me when I first heard about it, but it is typical of LASFS. Not of the Outlanders, but of LASFS, which has permeated the OS these days. You see, it would be impossible for a set of LASFSian personas such as are aggregated in this con committee to form an amorphous group and work together. They will get much less done, but will be much happier, with special and separate titles, which they announce proudly to allfandom.

It strikes me as unholy that people should demand their egoboo BEFORE a convention. It seems (to me, Ellik) that certain of this group has/have the attitude that this con is gone be a wowser and they want their cut of the egoboo assured. This, however, descends to personalities, to which we shall not descend.

*** We have made a pilgrimage to see Burbee, anyway. Carr and Rike have been faunching to meet the Great Man for so long that I wrote him mentioning the fact. "Bring 'em along!" said jolly old Chuck Burbee, so when I went home just after Hallowe'en I took those two with me. For a solid weekend we plagued Burbee with demands for more stories--we heard the Watermelon Story, which I'd never heard before--and we plagued Isabel for food. --well, not exactly. Let's say she plied us with food. We intended to spend only part of Saturday afternoon over there. She started feeding us and Burbee kept talking and pouring and it was after midnight when they let us go home. We dropped by again Sunday afternoon, after visiting Champion and Rich Brown, and tried to just pick up my brother's jacket and leave--but Burbee started talking and pouring and before we knew it it was time for dinner and Isabel had these steaks, see, and this spaghetti and these magnificent chili beans, you understand, and it was midnight again, and...

Oh, for another such weekend!

((Me, too! The great ambition of my life now is to Visit Burbee and hear the great Watermelon Joke...let you be hereby warned, Jolly Old Chuck. You are reading this, aren't you? I also faunch to see the charming Rotsler family again, too, including Bill...I curse myself and tear at my hair to think I spent three years in Southern California without ever taking in any of the fannish scenery --wgc...)))

Rog Ebert, 410 E Washington, Urbana, Illinois

OOPSLA is an exceptionally well produced and directed fanzine. The

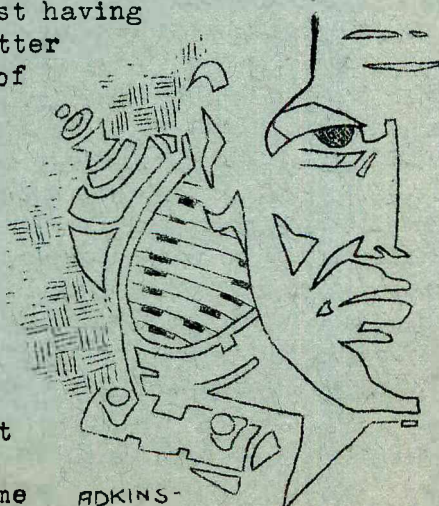
reproduction is excellent and the artwork appropriate. The features are among the very best I've ever read.

But why consider taking up half of the next issue with letters? I imagine your policy is all set up along this line and that you have a very good reason for doing this, but how can you comment on an issue that is half comments on the last issue?

((I've been waiting for an excuse to take up some space discussing the whys and the wherefores of the letter section, so thanks for the opportunity.

In the first place, I maintain a letter column in OOPS largely because more readers ask for more letters in OOPS than vote against having them...in fact, it is somewhat of a problem making the letter column long enough to suit some people. This is because of the manner in which I use the editorial blue pencil...and that is the answer to your second question.

If you'll read the letter section again carefully with this thought in mind you'll find that most of the letters are not merely printed comments on the last issue. The letters of the "liked Bloch and McCain, etc" variety are very much appreciated by my contributors as well as myself and OOPS couldn't exist without them, but they are not the letters that get printed...they get chopped up into their component parts and shipped to the various contributors. The letters that get printed are those that have something to say. Obviously everybody cannot be an OOPSLA columnist; moreover, most people don't have the time



or the things to say necessary to comprise a full-fledged article. Are these people to remain stifled, their ideas and comments unread and unheard, merely because they have only a few lines instead of a few pages? These are the people whose letters get printed. In editing the letter column I try to print only those letters which contain things that I feel will be of interest to a majority of the readership; this automatically eliminates a great many of the letters I get in comment on OOPS, even though --as I remarked before--the letters are very interesting to my own self and the individual contributors to whom they refer.

So, for those of you who have commented upon and/or complained about the small size of OOPSLA's letter column at times, this is the reason why. --wgc...)))

Kent Moomaw, 6705 Bramble Avenue, Cincinnati 27, Ohio

Some time ago I made it a practice to pick up every

science fiction mag I came across containing a story by either Silverberg or Ellison

but what with the fantastic output of them both, their myriad pseudonyms, and my general lack of interest in science fiction, I no longer make the effort. In fact, I've read very little of either Bob's or Harlan's work this year. From what I have seen, tho, I would agree that potentially Bob is a fine writer. His voluminous sales contain no classics but the level of his writing is far above that of the old Ziff Davis hacks who wrote whole magazines under Ray Palmer in the mid-forties. Even in his most superficial effort he seems concerned enough to insert some degree of true depth in the society he depicts and his characters, while they lack the living qualities of Sturgeon's or Beaumont's, are at least more than pure cardboard. Ted White and others discuss this subject (i.e., Bob's place in

modern stf and modern stf generally) in Abby 3, and the consensus of opinion seems to be that unless Bob allows himself to succumb to the lulling, undemanding effects of turning out hackwork for Hamling and Fairman, he can go on to Lofty Things. I'm inclined to agree.

But as to what McCain has to say about the British...well, now, I dunno. I think that the impression Vern is voicing here is more or less a result of the British government and the way in which they handle things...like the Russian people, I believe the British population as a whole is judged too often on the basis of the governmental heads. As individuals, I don't doubt that they're just as interested in progress as Americans...as a nation, however, the English do appear devoted to the status quo. This is all opinion, of course.

((How about you, Silverberg...what do you say about all this? --wgc...)))

Larry Shaw, 780 Greenwich St, New York 14, NY

I have been meaning to tell you for some time the true story of "The

Executioner" as mentioned in Grenadean Etchings OOPS 21. What happened was that Algis Budrys and Kelly Freas, who are good friends, were being clever. I don't know which came first, but they collaborated and delivered Kelly's 'Executioner' cover and AJ's 'Executioner' story to Quinn as a potential package. Quinn fouled them up by taking the cover and not the story, then getting Riley to write a story around the cover. So AJ sold the story to Campbell for twice as much as he would have gotten from Quinn. Clear?

((Perfectly. And thanks for the information...right, DAG? --wgc...)))

Denis Moreen, Box 23, Evanston, Illinois

I got into an intellectual discussion of Oopsla 22 the other day with an

English major friend of mine... Having shown an interest in my explaining a little about fandom and its offshoots to him, I tried to think of a few intelligent things to say about fanzines. First I emphasized the point that science fiction fan magazines, oddly enough, do not emphasize science fiction nearly so much as they do fan, a note on which several articles have undoubtedly already been written in the past

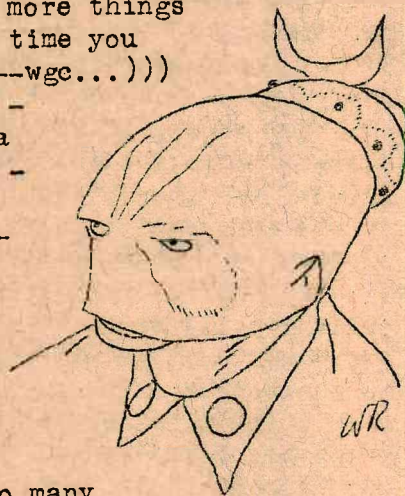
twenty five years or so. (True English major that he is, he made sure he understood what I said by offering that, therefore, 'science fiction' in 'science fiction fan magazine' really acts as an adverb rather than an adjective--to which I agreed after rapidly scanning the little grammatical training I retained from high school.) To illustrate what I was talking about, I grabbed Oops 22 and had him read it. It is really rather interesting to watch a non-initiate trying to make his way through a fanzine and I heartily recommend it to any fan interested in human nature at work. He certainly got the point, however; two articles talking about, of all things, a fan and a typewriter and one discussing old army friends. The letter section delved a little into science fiction but mainly talked about fans, past, present and future. This is the thing that makes fandom really hard to understand to those outside it--that we expend so much energy to begin with on science fiction fan magazines; and then, having done so, that we spend so little effort on science fiction itself. It often bothered me in my youthful days that so many fans read so little science fiction, as I did quite a bit at the time. But I wonder really if the fanzines do not give the whole picture...it might just be that all of us read a lot more than we let on that we do. In this we have something in common--perhaps so much in common that we do not feel the need to communicate so much about it. Therefore we communicate about things which we don't have so much in common; and, as a result, the fan magazines. We accept this hobby so much that we must search for other factors in addition to it to satisfy our social needs with others who also "accept this hobby so much."
(((People are gregarious animals...they just plain naturally like to get together and gab about anything which comes to mind and that takes in a lot of territory. Unfortunately for this particular social habit, people also have funny customs and ideas and one of them just happens to be that you don't talk much to strangers but only to people whom you know. This puts a damper on conversation because ordinarily people are born into this world knowing damn few other people very well. Science fiction fandom serves as an ice-breaker or melting-pot (pick whichever simile suits you best) and serves to make friends out of people who would otherwise be strangers. And that just plain naturally starts a conversation. Sure they talk about other things than science fiction; doesn't everyone? And it follows that the more things you have to talk about and divide your time among, the less time you can spend on any one subject. Like science fiction, say. --wgc...)))

Boyd Raeburn, 9 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 9, Ontario, Canada

I am wondering if you will stick to your schedule. This issue which you dated September didn't reach here until November so I guess that right at the start you were held up. I may have read "Bob and the Typewriter" in its original appearance but I don't recall it. I have been privileged to view The Typer Itself, and a fearsome machine it is. The carriage really is operated by a can of beans and a hammer head. (It used to be two cans of beans but they had to eat one of them.)

In reply to Bentcliffe, I can think of another reason why so many Niordian yarns in aSF. Campbell likes them.

In reply to Bob Shaw: I had a feeling for Canada and thought I could be happy here. (I am.) However, I could give all sorts of trivial reasons for coming here and any particular one, while not the only reason I came to Canada, is one of the many things, large and small, which all added up to the general feeling. Perhaps this is the case with the people with whom Bob spoke and he has taken one of the reasons--or the condition of which the reason is an example--and looked on it as the only reason. Let me put it this way. One man gives as his reason for emigrating to Canada the fact that he can run a new car. Bob thinks this is trivial. But the fact that here this immigrant can run a new car and where he came from he couldn't could be an indication that the standard of living here is higher, and I don't think that emigrating to a country because it has a higher standard of living is a trivial reason. Although having had only a brief experience of the English cold, I think that's a



damn good reason in itself for emigrating. Two weeks of it was plenty and that was in September.

((About OOPS' bimonthly publishing schedule, now...I publish every other month beginning with January and date my issues accordingly. However, my dates are not like those on professional magazines in that they are two months ahead of time; my dates are just the opposite in that they are more likely to be in the past than the future. The January issue---this one, that is---is published sometime during the month of January. If, as happened this time, I can't get it finished until the end of the month, it might not reach you until some time in February...the date in February will depend on the quality of your mail service and whether or not it took me several days into February to get it in the mail. This particular page is being cut on the 3rd of February and I don't imagine I'll get it in the mail much before the 10th so it is quite possibly true that you won't receive this until, possibly, early March. But it is still the January issue and there will be another issue, the March OOPS, published and distributed sometime during the month of March. Perhaps I should change my dating system and publish the January issue in December, hmm? --wgc...)))

SHORT NOTES Because I am already two pages over my scheduled twenty pages and still have several letters to go, the following will be in the nature of very brief excerpts from those letters. My thanks to all who wrote and I trust you find this all very readable. Remember that it takes interesting letters to make up a letter column, won't you, you fans out there in the audience?

Ron Bennett comments... A top-line Bob Bloch piece in OOPS 23. Far more entertaining than his couple of pieces which have seen print in the BRE Ellery Queens. Bob's suggestion that the Southgate affair be held in the maze of LA's sewers fascinates me no end. A perfect solution. There's be no spilt beer or cigarette burns on the hotel carpets and thus no drain on the committee's resources, and...er...but...er...wouldn't we all have to talk to one another in guttural tones?

Greg Benford doubts...My but I hadn't expected to hear from you for a long time. I had visions of the fan world forgetting about Calkins before another ish of OOPS arrived. Don't exactly know why---it just seems to be a Calkins trait to drop out for half a year or so after putting out an issue forecasting regular issues. Hope you can keep it up... PS Why do you spell your name "Gregg"? It's not a strictly correct abbreviation for Gregory, you know.

((Just for the record, with this issue I've published a total of twenty-four issues in six consecutive years, an average of four issues a year. The first eight saw the light of day at approximately six week intervals but there was a break in 1953 when I went into the Marine Corps...that was to be expected, I think. In 1954 and 1955 I published ten issues including the one that came out in early January 1956 and then there was another gap while I got out of the service, readjusted to civilian life, made straight A grades in college and got married, in that order--and this gap was also quite naturally to be expected. Since my 'revival' in June of last year I have published four issues, counting this one, the last three on a bimonthly schedule. Now howcome it is "a Calkins trait to drop out for a half a year or so after putting out an issue forecasting regular issues" in your eyes, hmmm? Oh, yes, before I forget...the reason I spell my name "Gregg" is because that is my name, not Gregory. --wgc...)))

Randy Brown mutters...the whole issue gave me sort of a below par feeling...your layout seemed monotonous...McCain's article struck me the most sour...Berry is getting into a rut...Robert Bloch sounds to me like an old fan growing sour... PS Pay no attention to my ravings...maybe I'm the old fan growing tired? ((Well, now, that just could be it. --wgc...)))

00PSLA

GREGG CALKINS, EDITOR

761 OAKLEY STREET,
SALT LAKE CITY 16, UTAH.

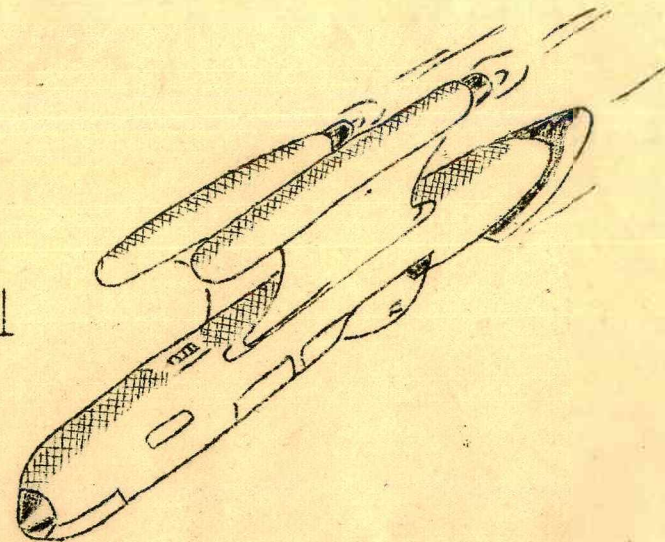
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GREGG CALKINS, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

761 OAKLEY STREET
SALT LAKE CITY 16, UTAH.