

"Mama, why is that old man beating
his head against the post-office wall ?"

"Hush, dear. It's later than he thought."

ORION 19

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for the paucity of
which no-one is to blame
but myself.

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ORION is edited and published by Paul Enever, 97 Pole Hill Road, Hillingdon Middlesex and George Richards, 40 Arncliffe Road, Eastmoor, Wakefield, Yorks.

The former welcomes contributions and comments; the latter collects fanzines for exchange and review. Cash subscriptions are not invited.

ORION

&

IN WHICH A
HALF-
HEARTED
EXPLANATION
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June 3rd. 1957.

I put that dateline so that there would be no temptation for me to blame the Post Office or adverse winds for the lateness of this C. In fact this issue has been compiled at a slower rate, I dare to suggest, than any fanzine yet produced; one stencil per diem throughout most of May and rather less before then. Not a record to be proud of perhaps, nevertheless it is proof enough to me of my intense and steadfast regard for Fandom, or at least, the people in it. During the rest of that time I have eaten, drunk and lived gardens - my own and others' - to the extent of falling asleep over the typewriter when I did start editing. For at least the next five years or so I foresee the same circumstances and so I must shamefacedly admit that ORION will make no further claim to even semi-regularity. It will still appear four times a year, dates unspecified.

BY
Paul Newman

Early in my fanpubbing career I made a great to-do about this regularity business, going so far as to accuse some editors of breaking faith with their subbers by not producing as often as they ought. At that time I had leisure to spare and imagined that such was the common lot of publishing fans. It seemed to me that so long as one wasn't actually earning one's living one could utilize every spare moment in fannish business, as I was doing.

Yes, I was wrong. As most of you know, gardenage IS my living but it is also an absorbing hobby. Previously it didn't absorb overmuch of my fantime because what garden I had at the old house was so small I could cultivate it all before breakfast, but the present one, though still not exactly an ostate, is large enough to keep me happily pottering eight nights a week. Fanac comes out of my sleeping time. Profoundest regrets.

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This Orion, then, is a panic issue. If that fact isn't obvious from the appearance of every page miracles still occur.

Its two brightest stars, the Goon fellas, are missing because having delayed starting the thing until the last impossible moment, I didn't have the gall to demand immediate and enthusiastic response from either of them to my requests for material. Besides which to use Art and John as they should be used requires careful layout and dummyming, both of which are noticeably absent herein. Incidentally, should anyone believe that both Art and John have been denied space in my ~~August~~ ~~May~~ June pages in retaliation for the slanderous mis-statements (to put it mildly) they have published about me in CLOCHE BY NIGHT they could be right. But they ain't.

I suppose it is unseemly of me to boost CLOCHE, and this is B & S rather than Fanlights, but if you haven't read it you haven't died - o'laughing. Dreams of John standing up to his neck in fertiliser still wake me, chuckling, at night. Whereas Arthur's impression of what my greenhouse (in the singular, note, and his is a singular impression) looks like gives me nightmares, in case he should prove to have prophetic powers. But I wish I did have that automatic sprinkler system John invented. I wouldn't have to promise my family large sums of money to carry water cans for me. Such venal promises worry me.

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There's no point in this anecdote unless I mention that I've been to both halls a dozen times before - apparently approaching them from different angles on every occasion - and still cannot distinguish one building from another. I'm architecturally blind or something. Good job I don't have the same trouble distinguishing weeds from carrots.

That's all the garden fandom for this issue.

MARIE CELESTE

GEORGE RICHARDS

Like most of fandom - and a good half of non-fandom - I've always been intrigued by the mystery of the Marie Celeste ; I've read so many possible solutions that in the end I just sat back, baffled, and hadn't even any faith left to accept the one that suggested the crew had all been taken off by a Flying Saucer (using tractor beams, naturally.)

However, my interest in the Marie Celeste was re-awakened when I read a report, last year, that a fishing vessel, the Joyita, had been found off the Fiji Islands intact but with no crew ; and inevitably a comparison was drawn between this and the Marie Celeste. I never did discover the end of the Joyita story but I did delve into the catalogues of the local library in order to re-read what had been published about the other.

To my surprise I discovered that there existed a perfectly satisfying explanation backed by - of all things! - the testimony of one of the Marie Celeste's crew !

To recap for the benefit of the .01% who may not be conversant with the details : the Marie Celeste left New York in November 1872 with ten people and a cargo of alcohol. In December the ship was found off the Azores, intact and complete with lifeboats, but with no sign of a crew. The remains of a meal were set on a table and three mugs of tea thereon were still lukewarm. The ship's cat was asleep nearby.

That is the core of the story around which so many plausible and implausible explanations have been written. And now, what really were the events which led up to the ship being found abandoned ?

November 1872..... In New York the Marie Celeste is lying in her berth awaiting loading and the recruitment of

a new crew. On board are the cook, one John Pemberton who has done a number of trips with this vessel, the Captain (and owner) Briggs and the mate, Mr. Hullock.

Moored close by is a 'moocher' ship, a sort of tramp of the seas, The Dei Gratia under Captain Moorehouse. This gentleman eventually lends three seamen to Captain Briggs who with two legally-joined and one shanghaied men now has a full crew. The cargo is made up and the Marie Celeste made ready for sail. Captain Briggs comes aboard accompanied by his wife who insists on bringing with her -- a small piano! The presence of this anomaly did not help to clear away the bad feeling which apparently existed between the mate and the Captain over the presence of the latter's wife.

By all accounts the mate was something of a bully, none was there any great eagerness to co-operate on the part of the crew.

Once at sea the Marie Celeste soon ran into a patch of heavy weather and during this the piano broke loose and killed Mrs. Briggs who was buried at sea. Following this the Captain begins to drink heavily which intensifies the bad feeling between him and the mate. One night the Captain disappears. How we can only guess because this is one of the few points left open to question although the implication is that a far from ghostly hand helped him overboard.

Free fights aboard become a common occurrence and during one of them the shanghaied seaman joins his Captain over the side.

By now the ship has fetched the Azores and anchors off one of the islands from whence bumboats come out attempting to sell provisions. The mate, who appears to have a guilty conscience about something, decides to leave the ship. Two others of the crew decide similarly and the three of them depart on one of the bumboats, leaving the ship in the possession of the three seamen lent from the Dei Gratia and the cook, Pemberton.

That are competent seamen and they sail the ship away although they have no set destination but expect to meet up with the Dei Gratia hereabouts. They do. On the morning of December 4th. 1872 just as they are sitting down to breakfast the Dei Gratia is sighted. As Captain Moorehouse comes alongside they board him and he in turn sends a boarding party onto the Marie Celeste. Pemberton, the cook, is kept incommunicado, and Captain Moorehouse and his crew concoct the 'derelict' story. All the details they give are correct except that no mention is made of the men they take off.

The mystery becomes such for the very simple reason that Moorehouse wanted the salvage money and - for the record - he eventually got it.

It wasn't chance that caused the Dei Gratia to come upon the Marie Celeste in these waters. The evidence all tends to show that there had been collusion between the two Captains in New York and that a salvage fiddle had been planned to their mutual benefit. It was chance that events aboard the Marie Celeste should so fall out that only Moorehouse benefited.

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That is the story and now for the evidence :

In 1917 there died in this country a man by the name of Dossell who had claimed to be a member of the crew of the Marie Celeste although no one believed him at the time. In fact he was one of the seamen who had jumped ship with the mate and he died obsessed by the idea that he had killed a man whose name he gave as 'Carl Venholdt'. The name of the shanghaied seaman who was knocked overboard and drowned was Carl Venholdt, which rather seems to substantiate Dossell's story.

About the same time, just after a highly coloured account of the 'Mystery' had been published in New York, a man went to the police there saying that the account lied and that he, a survivor from the Dei Gratia, could give the true story. The police politely kicked him out, nevertheless he WAS one of the boarding-party who took over the Marie Celeste.

John Pemberton, the cook of the Marie Celeste, eventually returned to England, married and settled down in Liverpool. He eventually told his story which was essentially as I have given it above to a journalist, Laurence J. Keeting. This was published by Heath Cranton Ltd., London in 1929 as THE GREAT MARY CELESTE HOAX and the book is a well authenticated document which leaves little room for doubt. After its publication Pemberton was interviewed by the press and he confirmed the details of the narrative.

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An interesting sidelight to the above is the fact that there never was a MARIE Celeste. She was launched in Nova Scotia in 1861 as The Amazon but in 1867 Captain Briggs rechristened her Mary Sellers, that being the name of his fiancée. Later her name was again changed to MARY Celeste and she retained this until her end. Admiralty records and the Shipping Register confirm this. It was an American journalist, building a story around the mystery, who corrected the mongrel French and called her MARIE, and in that form the name stuck.

GEORGE RICHARDS

AN OPEN LETTER

by
James
Keeping

TO JOHN BERRY

Dear John,

Right up to the last few paragraphs of Bliss Kreig in the latest HYPHEN we were enjoying ourselves. The article blended humour, subtety, a little pathos and some delicately unconcealed pornography into the tasteful whole we have come to expect of a Borryarn.

Then, almost at the end, came the blow -- the sentence which sent us reeling back, gibbering. A line in which the baleful influence of Mr. Willis was so monstrously obvious that your acknowledgment of his 'assistance' was completely superfluous.

We refer, naturally, to that nerveracking 'venereal' pun.

Mr. Willis, in the guise of a friend, is digging the deepest imaginable pit beneath your very feet. For more years than it is politic to reveal here he has been making puns like that and only the sterling character of his unfortunate wife has saved him from the Fate He So Richly Deserves.

However, we are not concerned here with Mr. Willis's fate -- that being the business of another agency -- so much as with yours. We feel it our duty to warn you against his blandishments and his puns. The puns that Mr. Willis makes have been known to cause internal distress to generations of prozine reviewers and we esteem you too highly to contemplate similar suffering on your part with equanimity.

During the brief intervals when you are waiting for your typewriter to cool off have a look through the various fan-

directories which have been published since the late forties. You will find that countless names have disappeared each year with no apparent explanation. The truth is that, with the exception of the fortunate few who died or got married, the vast majority are fan-editors who have published puns by Mr. Willis. Many of them may be found, by anyone unfeeling enough to seek out their squalid hiding-places, collecting stamps or growing vegetable marrows; embittered ex-fans whose only fault was their indiscrimination; whose willingness to publish Willis puns has been publicly punished, and whose chief misfortune it was that no kindly elders came forward to warn them.

Over the years we have derived enormous pleasure from your works, John, and we earnestly hope to continue doing so. For our sakes, then, eschew Mr. Willis and all his works. When next he comes to you, smiling and waving a small piece of Belfast Bye-Laws on the back of which he has scribbled some fair-seeming but deeply evil words, raise your hand admonishingly. With a hammer in it. Should ever he outline a situation to you designed absolutely and entirely for the foul purpose of working in a pun the like of which drove Bob Shaw to Canada, halt him in his stride. Let him get the nub out first, of course. It will enable you to recognise the danger when next you confront it. But REFUSE TO PUBLISH IT.

Be firm about this. Even if he offers you an un-retouched MM calendar don't let your natural appreciation of its austere beauty tempt you. Rebuff him with some laughing remark like "My. How the months do come round!"

When he recovers show him the door.

We sincerely hope that nothing we have said heretofore leaves you with any impression that we are not whole-hearted admirers of Mr. Willis. It is not our purpose here to denigrate the man. We may some day wish to dispose of our complete file of '43 Astoundings. All we desire is that you should not become infected with the disease the unhappy man suffers - pun-addiction. It has ruined James White (Esq.), contributed to the senile breakdown of poor old George, and, as already noted, exiled Bob Shaw. Only their sturdy independence of character has so far saved such frequent visitors to Belfast as Messrs. Harris and Bulmer; that and the fact that they rely on their memories rather than copious note-taking.

No. Our sole concern is your continued fanpopularity, and we are prepared to go to any lengths to further this. Therefore we suggest that in the event of your being unable to stem the flood of Willis-puns at the source (and it must be borne in mind that Canute had very little success with the ocean) you divert it instead. This way.

I know a fanzine editor who doesn't care what he publishes.
After all, he's published this.

Sincerely yours,

James L. Keeping.

Where

Gentlest of readers, there shall be no preamble. This department is clearly and uncontestedly designated YOU SAID IT. Go ahead and get it said.

TERRY JEEVES, 58 Sharrard Grove, Sheffield 12.

.....The cover is a dilly and even though everyone overworks Atom this cover shows no sign of it.... I liked your editorial and agree with most of your sentiments. I don't know which fandom we're in, either; what's more, I never have done and I've been a fan (silent reader type) since 1932 and a semi-active (fanzine subber) since '38. I started actifanning around '46 and I still don't know why these upstart fans have to keep upping the number under us. As for your greenhouse fandom, however.... obviously you can't have really good feuds in such a fandom. Remember the thing about 'people in glass-houses' ? And I'm not referring to the army types.

I liked Greybeard & Specs though in parts it slowed down a trifle - in deference to the newly acquired senility, no doubt ? Atom's heading for YSI was, if anything, better executed than his cover. In any case this item would have rated high even with a bad heading as I always like letter sections. Apart from the egoboo to be gained by my starting the thing off, I didn't realise that I had ranted on for so long in my letter to you. It just shows how people can get carried away even when they are sober.

What is Alan Burns talking about when he says most typers have a measurement bar ? I've just searched all over mine and if it ever had a bar of any sort it lost the licence ages ago.....personally, if I want to justify direct onto stencil I start hunting for synonyms about three inches from the end of the line. In addition, you can do wondrous things

You Said
words of wit
Wise words
Soft words
Good words,
all of 'em
It
hard words

with commas, but don't tell Bentcliffe;

with commas, but don't tell Bentcliffe; he's oldfashioned and sticks to dots. I also notice that my elder partner is trying to give the impression that he is erudite, by referring to Manchester University. In actual fact the Rag he was reading contained some very smutty illustrations and don't you believe the bit about interlineations.

'Duck, Sergeant !' surprised me. I started in on it thinking "This is bound to be corny. Berry just can't keep it up and surpass or even equal 'Jam'. I was wrong..... I really loved the crafty way in which the motorists were persuaded to buy ducks.....

If you happen to have collected a copy of Mana No.2 from some one Stateside, I wonder if you feel the same way about the paragraph attributed to Gen. Patten ? To me it's sheer filth, and such a zine can only do harm to the fannish cause. I aim to pan it in the next issue of Triode.... Terry.

At the time you wrote I hadn't seen Mana 2 so naturally I was all agog to get a copy. It arrived a few days later and I could hardly wait to find the bit about Patten. Having read it, I feel that it is more likely to do harm to Patten than to fandom... but I cannot, for the life of me, see any point whatsoever in including such a quotation in a fanzine. It is very daring and extremely broadminded and completely inept. It is all part of the pattern of conscious non-conformity which several fans seem bent on making - a youthful impatience of taboos which does not take into account that taboos are like dams ; tear 'em down and you're likely to get drowned in the floods that are released. And, if I may pursue the analogy without danger of it turning on me, it takes a helluva lot more brains and courage to build a dam than it does to pull one down.

RON BENNETT, 7Southway, Arthurs Avenue, Harrogate, Yorks.

..... I note that you've mentioned that jazz keeps cropping up in PLOY for one zine. This isn't wholly true. Apart from a mention of my visiting the Louis Armstrong session in Liverpool last year and an extract from a Pete Daniels letter in the current PLOY, I can't honestly remember mentioning the idiom, which seems to be a thing about which one is either pro or con, with few in-betweens. Why should I inflict lengthy articles about jazz on people who don't like jazz - yourself for example ? BURP is different; I've mentioned jazz there often enough. If anyone doesn't like it they can easily leave it and go on to someone else's offering. I don't particularly care for the gardening fandom which you, Jack Wilson and my mother seem to be getting me into, but I don't moan about it. Or do I ? But at least, in PLOY jazz is not "a major focus of fandom." So there !

Despite the ORBIT-type page numbering and continuations in Terry's piece, I enjoyed this. Strange that this should be the first ORION to feature him. PLOY 8 was the first not to do so. Fits in, doesn't it?

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November 1872..... In New York the Marie Celeste is lying in her berth awaiting loading and the recruitment of

a new crew. On board are the cook, one John Pemberton who has done a number of trips with this vessel, the Captain (and owner) Briggs and the mate, Mr. Hullock.

Moored close by is a 'moocher' ship, a sort of tramp of the seas, The Dei Gratia under Captain Moorehouse. This gentleman eventually lends three seamen to Captain Briggs who with two legally-joined and one shanghaied men now has a full crew. The cargo is made up and the Marie Celeste made ready for sail. Captain Briggs comes aboard accompanied by his wife who insists on bringing with her -- a small piano! The presence of this anomaly did not help to clear away the bad feeling which apparently existed between the mate and the Captain over the presence of the latter's wife.

By all accounts the mate was something of a bully, more was there any great eagerness to co-operate on the part of the crew.

Once at sea the Marie Celeste soon ran into a patch of heavy weather and during this the piano broke loose and killed Mrs. Briggs who was buried at sea. Following this the Captain begins to drink heavily which intensifies the bad feeling between him and the mate. One night the Captain disappears. How we can only guess because this is one of the few points left open to question although the implication is that a far from ghostly hand helped him overboard.

Free fights aboard become a common occurrence and during one of them the shanghaied seaman joins his Captain over the side.

By now the ship has fetched the Azores and anchors off one of the islands from whence bumboats come out attempting to sell provisions. The mate, who appears to have a guilty conscience about something, decides to leave the ship. Two others of the crew decide similarly and the three of them depart on one of the bumboats, leaving the ship in the possession of the three seamen lent from the Dei Gratia and the cook, Pemberton.

They are competent seamen and they sail the ship away although they have no set destination but expect to meet up with the Dei Gratia hereabouts. They do. On the morning of December 4th. 1872 just as they are sitting down to breakfast the Dei Gratia is sighted. As Captain Moorehouse comes alongside they board him and he in turn sends a boarding party onto the Marie Celeste. Pemberton, the cook, is kept incommunicado, and Captain Moorehouse and his crew concoct the 'derelict' story. All the details they give are correct except that no mention is made of the men they take off.

The mystery becomes such for the very simple reason that Moorehouse wanted the salvage money and - for the record - he eventually got it.

It wasn't chance that caused the Dei Gratia to come upon the Marie Celeste in these waters. The evidence all tends to show that there had been collusion between the two Captains in New York and that a salvage fiddle had been planned to their mutual benefit. It was chance that events aboard the Marie Celeste should so fall out that only Moorehouse benefited.

: : : : : : : :

That is the story and now for the evidence :

In 1917 there died in this country a man by the name of Dossell who had claimed to be a member of the crew of the Marie Celeste although no one believed him at the time. In fact he was one of the seamen who had jumped ship with the mate and he died obsessed by the idea that he had killed a man whose name he gave as 'Carl Venholdt'. The name of the shanghaied seaman who was knocked overboard and drowned was Carl Venholdt, which rather seems to substantiate Dossell's story.

About the same time, just after a highly coloured account of the 'Mystery' had been published in New York, a man went to the police there saying that the account lied and that he, a survivor from the Dei Gratia, could give the true story. The police politely kicked him out, nevertheless he WAS one of the boarding-party who took over the Marie Celeste.

John Pemberton, the cook of the Marie Celeste, eventually returned to England, married and settled down in Liverpool. He eventually told his story which was essentially as I have given it above to a journalist, Laurence J. Keeting. This was published by Heath Cranton Ltd., London in 1929 as THE GREAT MARY CELESTE HOAX and the book is a well authenticated document which leaves little room for doubt. After its publication Pemberton was interviewed by the press and he confirmed the details of the narrative.

: : : : : : : :

An interesting sidelight to the above is the fact that there never was a MARIE Celeste. She was launched in Nova Scotia in 1861 as The Amazon but in 1867 Captain Briggs rechristened her Mary Sellers, that being the name of his fiancée. Later her name was again changed to MARY Celeste and she retained this until her end. Admiralty records and the Shipping Register confirm this. It was an American journalist, building a story around the mystery, who corrected the mongrel French and called her MARIE, and in that form the name stuck.

GEORGE RICHARDS

AN OPEN LETTER

by
James
Keeping

TO JOHN BERRY

Dear John,

Right up to the last few paragraphs of Bliss Kreig in the latest HYPHEN we were enjoying ourselves. The article blended humour, subtlety, a little pathos and some delicately unconcealed pornography into the tasteful whole we have come to expect of a Borryarn.

Then, almost at the end, came the blow -- the sentence which sent us reeling back, gibbering. A line in which the baleful influence of Mr. Willis was so monstrously obvious that your acknowledgment of his 'assistance' was completely superfluous.

We refer, naturally, to that nerveracking 'venereal' pun.

Mr. Willis, in the guise of a friend, is digging the deepest imaginable pit beneath your very feet. For more years than it is politic to reveal here he has been making puns like that and only the sterling character of his unfortunate wife has saved him from the Fate He So Richly Deserves.

However, we are not concerned here with Mr. Willis's fate -- that being the business of another agency -- so much as with yours. We feel it our duty to warn you against his blandishments and his puns. The puns that Mr. Willis makes have been known to cause internal distress to generations of prozine reviewers and we esteem you too highly to contemplate similar suffering on your part with equanimity.

During the brief intervals when you are waiting for your typewriter to cool off have a look through the various fan-

directories which have been published since the late forties. You will find that countless names have disappeared each year with no apparent explanation. The truth is that, with the exception of the fortunate few who died or got married, the vast majority are fan-editors who have published puns by Mr. Willis. Many of them may be found, by anyone unfeeling enough to seek out their squalid hiding-places, collecting stamps or growing vegetable marrows; embittered ex-fans whose only fault was their indiscrimination; whose willingness to publish Willis puns has been publicly punished, and whose chief misfortune it was that no kindly elders came forward to warn them.

Over the years we have derived enormous pleasure from your works, John, and we earnestly hope to continue doing so. For our sakes, then, eschew Mr. Willis and all his works. When next he comes to you, smiling and waving a small piece of Belfast Bye-Laws on the back of which he has scribbled some fair-seeming but deeply evil words, raise your hand admonishingly. With a hammer in it. Should ever he outline a situation to you designed absolutely and entirely for the foul purpose of working in a pun the like of which drove Bob Shaw to Canada, halt him in his stride. Let him get the nub out first, of course. It will enable you to recognise the danger when next you confront it. But REFUSE TO PUBLISH IT.

Be firm about this. Even if he offers you an un-retouched MM calendar don't let your natural appreciation of its austere beauty tempt you. Rebuff him with some laughing remark like "My. How the months do come round!"

When he recovers show him the door.

We sincerely hope that nothing we have said heretofore leaves you with any impression that we are not whole-hearted admirers of Mr. Willis. It is not our purpose here to denigrate the man. We may some day wish to dispose of our complete file of '43 Astoundings. All we desire is that you should not become infected with the disease the unhappy man suffers - pun-addiction. It has ruined James White (Esq.), contributed to the senile breakdown of poor old George, and, as already noted, exiled Bob Shaw. Only their sturdy independence of character has so far saved such frequent visitors to Belfast as Messrs. Harris and Bulmer; that and the fact that they rely on their memories rather than copious note-taking.

No. Our sole concern is your continued fanpopularity, and we are prepared to go to any lengths to further this. Therefore we suggest that in the event of your being unable to stem the flood of Willis-puns at the source (and it must be borne in mind that Canute had very little success with the ocean) you divert it instead. This way.

I know a fanzine editor who doesn't care what he publishes.
After all, he's published this.

Sincerely yours,

James I. Koeping.

Where

Gentlest of readers, there shall be no preamble. This department is clearly and uncontestably designated YOU SAID IT. Go ahead and get it said.

TERRY JEEVES, 58 Sharrard Grove, Sheffield 12.

.....The cover is a dilly and even though everyone overworks Atom this cover shows no sign of it.... I liked your editorial and agree with most of your sentiments. I don't know which fandom we're in, either; what's more, I never have done and I've been a fan (silent reader type) since 1932 and a semi-active (fanzine subber) since '38. I started actifanning around '46 and I still don't know why these upstart fans have to keep upping the number under us. As for your greenhouse fandom, however.... obviously you can't have really good feuds in such a fandom. Remember the thing about 'people in glass-houses' ? And I'm not referring to the army types.

I liked Greybeard & Specs though in parts it slowed down a trifle - in deference to the newly acquired senility, no doubt ? Atom's heading for YSI was, if anything, better executed than his cover. In any case this item would have rated high even with a bad heading as I always like letter sections. Apart from the egoboo to be gained by my starting the thing off, I didn't realise that I had ranted on for so long in my letter to you. It just shows how people can get carried away even when they are sober.

What is Alan Burns talking about when he says most typers have a measurement bar ? I've just searched all over mine and if it ever had a bar of any sort it lost the licence ages ago.....personally, if I want to justify direct onto stencil I start hunting for synonyms about three inches from the end of the line. In addition, you can do wondrous things

You Said
words of wit
Wise words
Soft words
Good words,
all of 'em
It
hard words

with commas, but don't tell Bentcliffe;

with commas, but don't tell Bentcliffe; he's oldfashioned and sticks to dots. I also notice that my elder partner is trying to give the impression that he is erudite, by referring to Manchester University. In actual fact the Rag he was reading contained some very smutty illustrations and don't you believe the bit about interlineations.

'Duck, Sergeant !' surprised me. I started in on it thinking "This is bound to be corny. Berry just can't keep it up and surpass or even equal 'Jam'. I was wrong..... I really loved the crafty way in which the motorists were persuaded to buy ducks.....

If you happen to have collected a copy of Mana No.2 from some one Stateside, I wonder if you feel the same way about the paragraph attributed to Gen. Patten ? To me it's sheer filth, and such a zine can only do harm to the fannish cause. I aim to pan it in the next issue of Triode....
Terry.

At the time you wrote I hadn't seen Mana 2 so naturally I was all agog to get a copy. It arrived a few days later and I could hardly wait to find the bit about Patten. Having read it, I feel that it is more likely to do harm to Patten than to fandom... but I cannot, for the life of me, see any point whatsoever in including such a quotation in a fanzine. It is very daring and extremely broadminded and completely inept. It is all part of the pattern of conscious non-conformity which several fans seem bent on making - a youthful impatience of taboos which does not take into account that taboos are like dams ; tear 'em down and you're likely to get drowned in the floods that are released. And, if I may pursue the analogy without danger of it turning on me, it takes a helluva lot more brains and courage to build a dam than it does to pull one down.

RON BENNETT, 7Southway, Arthurs Avenue, Harrogate, Yorks.

..... I note that you've mentioned that jazz keeps cropping up in PLOY for one zine. This isn't wholly true. Apart from a mention of my visiting the Louis Armstrong session in Liverpool last year and an extract from a Pete Daniels letter in the current PLOY, I can't honestly remember mentioning the idiom, which seems to be a thing about which one is either pro or con, with few in-betweens. Why should I inflict lengthy articles about jazz on people who don't like jazz - yourself for example ? BURP is different; I've mentioned jazz there often enough. If anyone doesn't like it they can easily leave it and go on to someone else's offering. I don't particularly care for the gardening fandom which you, Jack Wilson and my mother seem to be getting me into, but I don't moan about it. Or do I ? But at least, in PLOY jazz is not "a major focus of fandom." So there !

Despite the ORBIT-type page numbering and continuations in Terry's piece, I enjoyed this. Strange that this should be the first ORION to feature him. PLOY 8 was the first not to do so. Fits in, doesn't it?

Enjoyed even more so, though, your own piece about life running away with itself. Ah, the sands of time and all that. I can't really comment on this, though, for I'm at the other end of the scale - almost a neofan and a simple country lad who was born when the crystal set was already an unfunny joke, when Vic Oliver was up and coming and when skiffle was the name of the cat next door. Still, I must admit that time does run away with itself. Why, it's just two years ago since I..... wrote that I had ambitions of becoming a member of the Liverpool SFS and here I am, an ex-member, and I still haven't written that story that ARGOSY or was it NEBULA (Or was it ORION ?) asked me to do. Cecil I've had four years and I still haven't got on to television. I suppose I'm just a failure. (Hardly. But you'll have to wait till they have 14' screens before you can get on TV with Cecil.)...

As time goes on I'm more inclined to think that there may be too many fanzines, as Vince suggested.... The more fanzines the less letters incoming to the fanned... The field needs the new blood which isn't forthcoming in any mature sense and in any practicable quantity. When I started PLOY, only three years ago, the field had many writers who contributed regularly to fanzines... For example, Mal Ashworth and Vinç Clarke contributed to practically every issue of every fanzine and prior to that I understand that Walt Willis wasn't so lax either. Nowadays Mal and Vinç are building homes and the only writer who appears regularly - and who seems to be Tennyson's Brook gone fannish - is John Berry. Those fans who have appeared on the scene over the past year seem to be teenagers and/or immature. I've nothing against teenage fans but immaturity in fandom doesn't help anyone. I should know this if anyone should. I still cringe when I think of what I did with the material I had for PLOY 2...

.....Liked John Berry's DUCK SERGEANT. This was original and very funny too.... One of his best, I'd say.. RON.

Looks like I must borrow Jean Linard's technique here, and use this space to apologise to you, Ron, for not having yet replied to that letter. However, there's time yet ; I only got it in mid-March and Dean Grennell has been patiently inspecting his mail-box for a reply from me since about June 56. Leastways, my ego likes to believe that he's still hoping. My common sense sometimes doubts it.

DEAN A. GREENNELL, 402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, USA.
ORION V3N18 rec'd. Thanks. Nice ish. ATom good, as always. I know I was in fandom before he hove upon the scene but dashed if I can remember what fanzines used to look like with no ATomillos in them. (Like this one, Dean. Crummy.) My sympathies with you on your unpublished editorials. I always compose first-draft on stencil and I've got whole entire drawers full of unpublished stencils.... some of them, if published, would, as the old saying goes, plunge all fandom into war. Or at least so I feared when I suppressed them !

It is certainly your privilege to start a greenhouse fandom if you wish. But don't ever sneer if someone else essays to start a crocheting-lace-antimaccassers-cut-of-coloured-shoe-string-with-chopsticks-fandom or something equally unlikely. One should not lightly barter away his right to disapprove.

Enjoyed Jeeves' CONSUMING PASSION. Also the illos for't.

Also liked the typor at the head of YOU SAID IT with its weird other-wordly characters on keys and paper.

Us yankee-typo sprats never knew the ecstasy of aniseed sphores, and the term "gob-stopper" conveys no information at all. I can only prosume that these are analagous to our native "jaw-breaker", a confection now apparently all but extinct. It was a nominally sweet slightly soluble globule approximately one inch in diameter, mostly black on the outside and it was put together in an infinite number of concentric layers of different colours and flavours (rather like the layers of an onion, in fact). As one assailed this formidable sweetmeat with tooth and saliva, the layers dissolved here and there at varying rates and you could pull it out and admire its richly multi-coloured array of mottling - vaguely resembling Jupiter from one of its outer moons. I'm wondering if any of you over there ever used to make your own root-beer.... using the extract and yeast and sugar, where you bottle it up and let it work in a warm room for three to five days ?

Despite anything you may think, I do not subsidise Archie Mercer, nor does he owe me money that I know of. I can only regard his more-than-kind words as sheer, unsolicited Testimonial and all the more gratifying as a result. There is a governing force at work, though, somewhat beyond my control. My meagre amount of spare time and fanergy don't permit the publication of anything unless it arouses a very keen urge to see it published. In other words, at least in recent years, I don't rummage about for something to round out an issue. I publish an issue when I have such a quantity of stuff I must publish that I can no longer contain it. Time spent in justifying margins could, I feel, be more profitably spent in stencilling other material with jagged edges. I've often voiced my belief that justified margins are a necessity when printing with movable type but there is very little reason for them with mimeo where even edges aren't necessary to "lock-up" the type. For my part, I find the yawning gaps where several spaces are skipped for the sake of having a line "come out" and the all-too-frequent breaking of a word outside the sanctioned joints (e.g. "Ha-/sten" for hasten) and the other makeshifts to be far less sightly than uneven margins. But this is purely a matter of taste.

That piercing scream, as of an eagle suffering rape, that you may or may not have heard depending upon the winds across the Atlantic at the time (it shook the house here and nearly toppled the tv antenna) was Boyd Raeburn reading Greg Benford's letter and seeing A BAS listed as one of the US 'zines. How sharper than... etc. Hoog.

Only in one respect do "gob-stoppers" and "Jaw-breakers" differ, apparently, and that is that the former are far from extinct. True, they've been re-christened; some time last year George Richards reported their presence in the shops disguised - I believe - as "Spaceman's Rations" or maybe "Atom Bombs". But they were still the same china-hard tongue-tantalizers you've been describing.

Never tried root-beer, but remember as a child being fascinated by a neighbour's "bee-wine" in a large glass jar. This was a solution of sugar into which was introduced a few pieces of some variety of yeast, which moved around in the liquid as fermentation took place, giving the appearance of being "alive" in the animal sense. Hence the name. The resultant liquor was alcoholic but otherwise undistinguished.

Meself, I'm a wine man. Usually make three or four gallons of several types as the fruit becomes available - unfortunately, having no cellar I may have to curtail future output. Two Christmases ago half the staff got merry on my wheat wine which, they declared, was indistinguishable from whisky. Maybe the half bottle of brandy I'd laced it with helped.

About justified margins I give you this: uneven ones are helluva lot quicker to type. Can't agree, though, with your point about justifying being necessary to printed work. After all, you can lock up just as well with furniture and even margins were instituted solely as additional eye-appeal. That holds for mimeo, too. Anyway, you can blame it all on Redd Boggs. If I hadn't been so impressed with Skyhook I never would have bothered with margins at all, at all.

After all that I still owe you a letter, Dean.

BOB PAVLAT, 6001 43rd Ave., Hyattsville, Maryland.

.....HGGold, in a recent editorial, stated a dislike of these elderly fans who didn't realise that the "sense of wonder" was gone from them, not from the stories. Willis says it's the authors. Willis, I think is the more nearly correct. The last time I was strongly hit with that sense of wonder was in one of Hubbard's serials in ASF. I don't recall the story; it doesn't even particularly matter; the capability of experiencing said sense of wonder is still with me I'm sure; clap-trap like that being published in GALAXY isn't going to bring it out. I hold no beef against G, incidentally, and it still presents some good stories; it doesn't sweep me away to the stars the way I feel a science fiction magazine should however. None of the magazines do, but then, they never did. THE CITY AND THE STARS I found had some of this power on a recent re-reading, as did the WEAPON MAKERS when I

re-read it recently. Undoubtedly some of the glitter has been lost through the many years I've read stuff (only about 15 in my case, and without the "normal" back-tracking to complete my ASF collection etc), but a story like "Shamblau" can still cut deep - though in a slightly different phase of that sense of wonder we speak of.

Aniseed balls - I wonder if they are what we used to call jaw-breakers? They - the jaw-breakers - decidedly did change colour. Diameter was about 1 inch, taste unremembered, but decidedly hard and slow-dissolving. Maybe they were what you call gob-stoppers. (They were.) What's a gob, I wonder, and why should it be stopped.....

Bob

Well, now; a gob is something that is stopped by a gob-stopper. What clearer definition can you need? Methinks we've heard enough about SOW by now. Can't forbear to suggest, though, that the kind of emotional appeal possessed by, for example, Sturgeon at his best is nothing like this alleged Sense of Wonder but is, indeed, something far and away ahead of it.

BOYD RAE BURN, 9 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 9, Canada.

.....So why not start a greenhouse fandom if you feel so inclined?.....I think that these divers "fandoms" as you term them are not deliberately started, but just evolve. So - just start out subtly, throwing in sneaky little bits of greenhouse lore and increasing the dose at any signs of interest.

Jeeves' "Consuming Passion" very good, with a neat ending. I hope you can get some more material of this quality from him.

I do like a large letter section - as long as the editor shows some discrimination and either you have done that or your correspondents are concise - and the letter column this issue was most enjoyed. The Sense of Wonder subject has been taking quite a beating for some time but it is still interesting to read intelligent and well expressed opinions on it. I'll keep out of it myself, though.

I feel that the Berry item was not quite as good as some of the others he has done in this series but that is hardly panning it, for I consider this series is amongst his very best work. And I too think Berry should try Lilliput with these - in fact, I feel that when he has enough to make a full book he should stand a very good chance of conning some publisher into taking it. This is not the first time I have wondered at a writer in an English fanzine squandering his gem in such a manner when he should have a good chance of hawking it off for mundane money and becoming a filthy ol' mainstream pro.

I am wondering what you violently disagree with in A BAS. Even if you tell me I probably won't understand why (I have a suspicion we have non-meshing mentalities) but I would still like to

know...

....Regards.....

....Boyd.

During the last few weeks I've ate, drunk and practically slept in one greenhouse or another so anything I wrote just now apropos a greenhouse fandom probably wouldn't win many friends for it. Anyway the subject received its coup de grace from the GDA. After reading CLOCHE BY NIGHT nobody could read anything I had to say about greenhouses without bursting into malevolent smiggers.

Talking of Berry, I'm extremely gratified to see that you share my opinion of his 'Sergeant' series. I know a great many fans believe that only fannish fiction is worth its space in fanzines but right from the first 'Sergeant' story John showed me I felt that I'd got something special. I still feel it, and can only regret that - for reasons given elsewhere - there isn't one of the series in this issue.

Who says I violently disagree with anything in A BAS using the present tense? I made it quite clear that I didn't like the personalities angle in an earlier Derogation because of an uneasy feeling that I - like most other people - wasn't altogether sneer-proof either. That was all.

ALAN DODD, 77 Stanstead Road, Hoddesdon, Herts.
....I think I enjoyed Q18 far more than I did any of the previous half dozen issues. Possibly because of both Jeeves' and John Berry's items. Both seemed on top of their form in each piece. In DUCK SERGEANT John shows once again what terrible powers the police do wield. His description of the sergeant running through the countless minor offences one can be had up for is truly masterly. He should be writing scripts for Al Read one of these days. Or, in "Such Is Life" or "Life With Berry" - with his previous tv experience - he should surely be the natural choice to follow on the BBC now that "Dixon Of Dock Green" has temporarily ended....I often wondered what the gendarmerie in general must have thought of that programme.

And I never did guess beforehand Jeeves' punchline to his story. It came as a pleasantly amusing surprise.

Cover - Atom with just a touch of Rod Ruth, methinks. Ruth was always particularly adept at drawing crowds of mutant-type aliens in the late pulp Amazings and Fantastics. This group shop is greatly reminiscent of his style.

Greybeard & Specs - the subject you chose was rather sad. The thought of having 'missed' something and being too old to go back and start again must surely be the oldest theme in history. After all, if you had had that time again you'd probably have done exactly the same as you did the first time. Not especially because you chose to but because the various circumstances gradually dove-tailed you into it. Then again there's the theory that life is

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SEPTEMBER
SONG.

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mapped ahead for you and you couldn't have done what you would have liked even if you'd wanted to. And how about the people who do write the best-selling novel or invent the mousetrap. How do we know that in later years they don't look back and wish they could have done something they missed. We'll never know I guess - and it takes a lifetime to find out.

...I reckon, as you say in FANLIGHTS, that French staples must indeed be far longer than those produced in this country. Come to think of it, the staples we produce always seem to be the smallest and the pottiest puny little things that were ever fed into a respectable stapling machine. Perhaps that's why most overseas fen always insist they never get a British fanzine with a bacover still on it. The staples on Orion hold - but only just. I suppose there must be different thicknesses and depths in staples in Great Britain but I've only ever seen two kinds. Those that won't go in at all and those that unbend at the back. A flick of the wrist and a British fmz will fall to pieces - but have you ever tried to get the sealing staples out of some US zines? I've lost more knife blades.....

You think again there is too much US material in CAMBER ? As I said before - there just aren't many British fans writing material for other fanzines. Jeevs, Bennett, Berry ? I had those three - who else could I get ? Everyone else is either not writing or only writing for his own fanzine. And I did have one Swedish piece in it. Sorry I couldn't make it Anita Ekberg, but she's otherwise engaged..... Alan.

What zine does this Ekberg fan write for ? And it wasn't so much the specific articles in CAMBER that seemed to give it a USAflavour as the general tone. Your 'news' and opinions were mainly about USAfen. I'm not suggesting that this is wrong but it does give CAMBER a vaguely 'unEnglish' look.

Agreed that if one 'lived one's life over again' it would probably turn out to be exactly the same life. One assumes, though, that one would have foreknowledge in this second life and since that is a circumstance that didn't apply in the first one it is just possible that one might be able to avoid some of the previous pitfalls.

Confused, ain't I ?

DICK ELLINGTON, 98 Suffolk Street, Apt 3A, New York 2. USA
.....Between you and Berry I am in a slight tizzy. What the hell is an airing cupboard ????? Undoubtedly some frightfully foreign innovation we poor provincials haven't achieved yet. Canst explain ? (Certingly. Read 'linen closet' and you won't be far wrong. Don't know quite what the latter are like, but our airing cupboards are usually built around the hot-water storage tank and hence can be relied upon to keep the linen dry, or 'aired'.)

I haven't got a taper and honest, I don't feel at all obsolete. Of course I have Friends who are Rich and own these things

so I scrounge liberal use of them but.... Well, why don't you ? Greenhouses I mean. Would certainly be no more strange than the others you mentioned. On the other hand I don't think they're particularly strange at all. So fans discover they have other things in common sides stf. So what ? I would hate to see a fanzine devoted to nothing but stf. Wouldn't you ? That's what I thot. Hell, even INSIDE runs Foley and he certainly isn't stfish. Hates the stuff as a matter of fact.

By Ghod Enever, I have finally discovered your Secret ! You're pulling a reverse English on "When in Rome do as the Romans do." Damned if you aren't. In a society (can't we -- just for funsies - consider Fandom a miniature society for a while ?) where everyone takes pride in being a non-conformist you are non-conforming by advertising the fact that you are summat of a conformist. Only thing is, I don't know whether this makes you a hide-bound traditionalist or more of a non-conformist than everybody else.

.....See the why-for of the Jeeves thing. Ouch ! Is quite a good bit and I agree with you in faunching for more.

Your Greybeard & Specs also most enjoyable. Sometimes you confuse me but I enjoy so wot the hell. {Confuse YOU. What do you think I do to me ?}

I still think a campaign should be started to Get Atom Into Professional Cartooning -- after first getting him Blogged sufficiently to sign a contract agreeing to honor all requests for fanwork before mundac.

Hato to disagree with Ghod but dammit, I never had a sense of wonder to lose. I stopped reading stf for the simple reason that my reading time got limited all of a sudden.....I think someone invented a word and most of fandom sat around and tossed coins to figure out which side of the fence they would wump on then proceeded to create a controversy - one of the most pointless I've seen fandom engage in and buddy, that's going a long way out on the limb.....

.....Got all confused by this aniseed balls vs gobstopper thing. I have finally Gooned my way through to the deduction that "gobstoppers" are of a similar nature to American Jaw-breakers. But what the hell are aniseed balls ? Pity the poor provincials and enlighten us on this fascinating bit of English folk-lore.

Berry was his usual self which is a high compliment indeed. . Fmz reviews also quite good, especially the tongue-in-cheek one on VOID. Pardon me while I roatet quickly once on my short axis - or flip.... Best..... Dick

Aniseed Balls are similar to Gob Stoppers in shape and consistency, but smaller and flavoured with - guess ! - aniseed. The argument between Harry and myself arose because he asserted that pre-war aniseed balls changed colour as you sucked 'em, whereas I maintain that that was a prerogative of tother things. Could be wrong, of course. Haven't sucked either for too many years.

Here's a welcome voice.... not exactly from the past so much as from a parallel time-stream.....

DON ALLEN, o/o 26 Sidney Grove, Gateshead 8. Co. Durham.

.....After I left Uxbridge I bounced from three or four camps and finally ended up in a little border outpost in Ireland. Yes, Ghod's own country. But I was so far away, and duties were so heavy with the old IRA acting up that I didn't get to visit Irish Fandom until after about five weeks. When I did I was driven more round the well-known bend than I was before. I even got assigned to the duty of carrying George up the stairs to the Fan-attic.

The visits I paid to Oblique House were really wonderful and one of the most memorable incidents was the tea-drinking competition. Having been used to Naffi tea for the past year or so I found it delightful to get some real stuff and gratefully drank twentyfour cups; while John, being used to Police Station tea - which is slightly better than Naffi - only managed twenty-three. So I was champ. The brand we drunk was called, I believe, infinit-tea. As you can imagine, when I got back to camp feeling quite energetic I did nothing but PT all night long.....

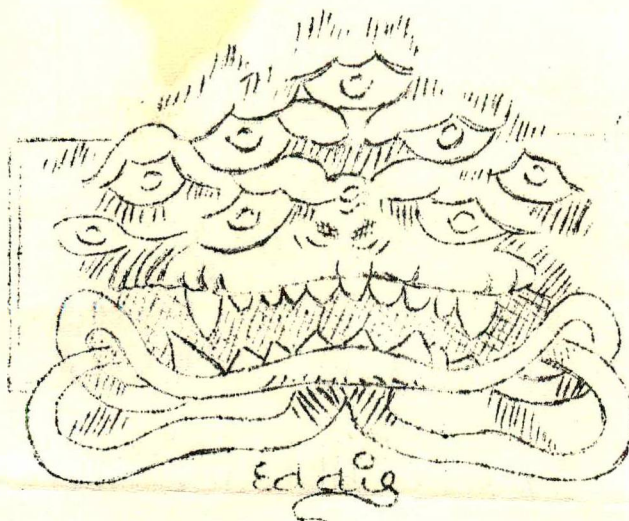
.....Life with Irish Fandom came to an end and I was sent back to Felixstowe ; but not before I learnt how to play Ghoodmin-ton. Now there's a game for you - keeps you in wonderful shape, all bruises and bones sticking out here and thither. I developed a sort of Rock 'n' Roll service.... Proved quite effective, too. John obviously copied Gipsy Rose Lee or some other strip-tease popsie. I wonder where George got his style from ?.....

..... And anyway, aniseed balls never changed colour - even I can remember that..... Don.

Ta, Don. Haven't asked your permission but I'm launching to reproduce the sketches you enlivened your letter with. They'll be in this issue iffen I get time and you can sue if you dare.

I think ten pages of letters in a shortened version of a fanzine never noteworthy for its length is enough. Don't you? Yet again I want to thank everyone who has written to me these past months - all too few of whom have had the courtesy of a reply - and all I can say is Please keep writing. Your letters mean a lot to me. This applies also to Mal Ashworth, Archie Mercer, Julian Parr, Witty Whitmarsh, Roar Ringdahl, Alvar Appeltofft, Bob Tucker and you.

[illegible]



THE BEAST WITH A MILLION EYES

A FILM REVIEW BY ALAN DODD

The Beast With A Million Eyes must surely be the slowest science fiction film on record. It moves with the cataclysmic speed of a turtle wading his ponderous way through a sea of molasses and is stripped of all but the barest essentials of excitement.

The action takes place on a lonely date farm in the Californian desert and in the interests of economy only half a dozen characters are used and nearly all the scenes are exteriors. Further economies appear to have been effected in the actual script since it was evidently composed as they went along.

A spaceship distinctly resembling a cross between a coffee pot, a helicopter and a row of vertical motor cycle exhausts lands in a crater some distance from the farm. Esconced therein it emits flashing lights and buzzings and a telepathic ray which governs the minds of the lower animals round about. With their eyes the occupant of the spaceship sees what is going on around it - hence the title... "With A Million Eyes".

Blackbirds dive-bomb the father, the dog goes savage and tries to kill the wife, the chickens try to peck her to death and a local farmer is gored to death by his old cow which latter seems to have a remarkably fine set of horns for a female.

The hired hand, a witless dumb brute, seizes the daughter and carries her away to the ship at the alien's command, but brings her back when the farmer pleads with him. The alien appears capable of controlling only one human at a time - the bond of love between the others being too strong an emotion for it to break.

The farmer strides to the ship which obligingly opens to reveal the Beast that has been terrifying the people for what seemed - to the audience anyway - a lifetime. Here the film-makers montage two shots, one of a huge dummy eye and one of a whiskery cat-like creature who stares at the farmer who stares back at the Beast who dissolves in

(Continued on Page 21)

DOUBLE OR NOTHING REVOO TWO by BILL HARRY

Every so often there comes to the cinema a film that stirs up the beast in man. Makes him want to spit, one could say. Such a film is the Japanese-made "Godzilla - King of the Monsters", which has received an "X" certificate because it is so horrible...er - horrific.

For sheer entertainment, good acting and scenic background I suggest you go see any other film ; this one is for the birds. The plot is hackneyed, the dialogue corny and naive, the acting hammy. The only decent part of the picture is the sequence in which "Godzilla" destroys Tokyo. The special effects are very good and the monster quite effective. Taken out of its context and screened as a short, the monster-attacking-Tokyo sequence would be well worth seeing. Unfortunately, padded as it is with amateur actors, jealous scientists, scientists' beautiful daughters etc., the thing stinks.

And why, oh why do monsters always have to be killed in the last reel ? Since it was an "X" the producers could have gone the whole hog and let the creature destroy the whole world. That slight originality might have made the story much more convincing - even credible.

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On the same bill was "The Search For Bridey Murphy" which also rated an "X", though I can't for the life of me think why. Although I hadn't read the book I'd heard a lot about it, and since it was serialised in our local paper I'd looked forward to seeing it. My first disappointment came when John Ashcroft told me that the affair had been revealed as a hoax ; my second was in the film itself.

It was better than "Godzilla" - more convincing, perhaps - but it went along at far too pedestrian a pace to suit my taste. Here again, a shorter version would have made a better film. The theme was interesting, though better interpreted in "I Have Lived Before", and it made a welcome change from the three main s--t crud-type plots - monster destroying and finally destroyed, spaceships threatened by flaming meteors and variations on Frankenstein.

Briefly the plot is as follows : Louis Hayward as Morey Bernstein is sceptical about hypnotism but intrigued by the subject.

He reads up all he can about it, successfully hypnotises his wife and helps at a local hospital by using hypnosis on some of the patients.

Sending the wife of a friend into a trance he tells her to remember as far back as she can, and to tell him what she feels like. She remembers a little boy she knew at school when she was six, she remembers crying for milk as a baby and then she remembers beyond.. to a time before her birth....

Only then she wasn't an ordinary American housewife but an Irishwoman called Bridey Murphy. I'll follow the plot no further just in case rain drives you in to see the double feature for yourselves, but if you take my advice you'll chance getting wet.

BILL HARRY

X:X
X:X

THE BEAST WITH A MILLION EYES (Continued from P.19)

flames in a scene that resembles Dante's Inferno.

Automatically-set controls take the ship up and the story ends with the family looking into the sky with a "Love has saved us" expression on their faces.

As a film this commits one of the greatest crimes a film - or book - can ever do; it bores its audience. There is little or no real action and the characters seldom become anything more than cardboard caricatures operated by a dull-witted and unimaginative puppeteer.

Without "life" a science fiction film such as this rapidly proves itself dead. And scarcely anyone will be interested enough to go to the funeral.

Alan Dodd.

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Fandom will undoubtedly heave a collective sigh of relief to learn that, after all, Orion is unlikely to begin a Greenhouse Fandom. This chore has been rendered unnecessary by the Surbiton & Tolworth Horticultural Society who, in giving official birth to a Greenhouse Club appear to have started what may well become, in gardening circles, a national affair. Those non-fans get into everything, don't they?



# ODDENDA

( Dedicated to the proposition that no important item should start on the left-hand side )

This was the ideal page on which to have reproduced those sketches by Don Allen of which I spoke earlier but since then I've cut the head for Alan Dodd's film review and become aware of my own deficiencies. Actually, I always was aware of 'em, but it's so long since I cut an illo that time has rather dimmed the memory. Thank god for Atom.

Now read on :

Dear Sir,

Last week I bought 7lbs of Lawn Sand for my front lawn and two tins of Sodium Chlorate to kill some weeds. Unfortunately my wife used the Chlorate on the lawn in error and as I now have no use for the Lawn Sand I am wondering whether you could allow me a refund on it...." (Extract from a customer's letter)

"My mate, Joe, is very short-sighted but he just won't wear glasses. He doesn't need 'em for work - fella could lay bricks in his sleep ; does, sometimes - but sometimes it makes things awkward for him.

Last month we were

working on a cremater in Leeds; rush job, all overtime, corpses piling up left and right. I was on top and Joe was inside, rendering the air vents,

"I like gardening but all these plants confuse me. Why are there so many ?"

Party of Japanese morticians were visiting the place ; wanted to find out how to burn 'em without depleting their wood supplies. Little Jap crawls inside cremator just as Joe crawls out of the other end, and starts peering and prying into all the details. Joe happens to look up just as the Jap was peeking out through the inspection window. Poor old Joe. Thought the Jap was a zombie. Run out into the garden hollering his head off and asked for a transfer to Industrial Furnaces. Wears his glasses now, though..." (tale told by my brother-in-law, almost

verbatim.)

"Tried to batter this rhinoceros to death with a newspaper, he did. No imagination, at all. Shoulda rolled it up first...."

Last week I visited the "hell-fire" caves at West Wycombe for the first time.

since the war. It used to cost 3d. to go in and you got a stump of candle thrown in for that. Now the caves are electrically lit (by dim green and red lighting, presumably to add 'atmosphere') and incense is burnt at frequent intervals for the benefit of the sensation-seekers. It costs 2/- to go in, all the strategic points are gated off from access and tea-rooms and some old-English architecture cluttering up the entrance makes the place look like something on Blackpool front. Progress !



GEORGE  
RICHARDS

OPENS UP THE

# FANLIGHTS

Recently a lot of hot air has been emitted on the subject of "sameness" in fanzines. You might think a good case for the prosecution could be made out of the "sameness" of every issue of PEON. I haven't been lucky enough to see all the issues of this zine, but those that I have during the past two and a half years show a remarkable likeness to one another. The format has remained the same, the layout always gives the same pleasure to the eye and every copy I've received has been perfectly and constantly legible. Every issue has had a quite striking front cover and the interior illos are usually illustrative to the text and well-executed. Contents cover fan-fiction, fanfact, Harmony's hodge-podge and the usual few lines of poetry.

The earliest copy of PEON I possess would fit that potted description just as well as the latest. Nevertheless anyone who seeks to use my words as evidence in prosecuting PEON's publisher is due for a severe setback. I emphasise this sameness, not to decry it, but to praise it. I suppose PEON has advanced from its earliest issues, but long ago it reached its peak and has never declined from there. I hope it never changes - unless to become more frequent and perhaps include a few readers' letters from time to time.....

So to PEON 38, Peon Notes is the usual chatty column from Charles Lee himself, and these days it seems he writes every editorial from a different address; not surprising, then, that he frequently loses bits of his personal property. The wonder is that he doesn't, too, lose the thread and fail to produce a PEON at all. Old Testament, by Bixby, is a well-written piece but I forgot my Bible so long ago that I don't know whether his parallel was drawn from Moses in the bulrushes or the Child in the Manger. Inghilterra presents Eric the Bent NOT writing about sex or sadism - a pleasant change and an interesting sidelight on the Liverpool Group. Robert Bloch's Confessions of a Fanzine Reviewer prove that a review is, after



all, only one man's personal opinion and so (we infer) what has anyone to get het up about? Bob is the first reviewer I've known to state this axiom in print. Theodore Sturgeon enlarges on an old, unsolvable problem - What is fantasy; what is sciencefiction? and proves conclusively that you can't prove a thing. The Fanpress - well, see previous notes. And Nostalgic Past natters about comic books. For the life of me I can't see how an adult can eulogise comics, but then I can't understand stamp-collecting or cheese-label gathering, either. No letter column. How about it, Lee?

TYPO No.1 is well covered by that world famous phrase - a very nice first issue. In this instance, trite but undeniably accurate. Of course, this isn't Mike Moorcock's first venture into the fanpublishing field so he does sort of have a head start, and he has threatened fandom with TYPO for so long that we expect it to be a little above the average. So it is. At first sight, in size, layout, repro and illos this reminds me strongly of some other fanzine. Maybe its covers are reminiscent of Retribution, and I did at first think TYPO was yet another Atomised product, but after reading the editorial I took another look at the illos and discovered that they were, in fact, done by a newcomer to the field - one, Alda. They still look like Atoms - which means that they are very good - but I hope Alda will soon develop a style of his own. At 14 he has plenty of time to do so. Artwise, too, Bill Rotsler - whom I haven't seen much of lately - makes an appearance, though without nudes.

I like the dual-coloured pages, the general layout and clear repro and if only It Was An Idea had remained an idea I'd have liked that more, too. The rest of the 'zine wasn't fanworld shaking, perhaps, but neither did it start any vicious feuds; I found it interesting and readable and passable fannish, with This Is You its brightest feature.

I hope Mike will put TYPO on a monthly basis and relegate Burroughsiana to a quarterly schedule.

ALPHA 15 makes a welcome appearance, yet it seems to me that with this issue ALPHA somehow changes its character. It was not quite so serious and constructive as of yore, being much more down to earth and readable. The question raised in a previous Ambrosia - whether to love or hate the Germans - continues to be debated with as little in the way of definite conclusions as any other fannish debate. I think that the subject is so much a matter of personal feelings and relationships that there never can be any general conclusion. And in any event, time is a great healer and eraser of memories.

I note, too, that the rights of non-publishing subscribers to fanzines are also being discussed. I believe it is time that those faneditors who have strong views on the subject - and that includes Orion's editor - should put forward their views and make



some definite ruling on the matter. For instance, I don't think that if one is paying for a fanzine one should be expected to write letters of comment as well, as a condition of sale - unless such is agreed upon prior to the first issue going out.

Arthur Hayes suggest that fanzines ought to devote a little more space to sf topics and at risk of being called a fuggheaded sercon I must agree with him. At least sf should get as much space as jazz and other unrelated topics, instead of - as is usually the case now - less.

Jean Linard's Column sounded EXACTLY like Jean Linard... Vinç Clarke was very, very funny and more is requested. Archie Mercer's Short Short Caravan was enjoyable enough to seem too short; and I was interested in Some Saturday Nights although I still don't know why. Last Page foxed me. Who is writing to who ?

RETRIBUTION 6. Dig that crazy front and bacover. Must admit I didn't, the first time. RET, like ALPHA seems to be changing for the better (If this is possible !). The appeal of the earlier issues was limited, but No.6 is much more general, and being completely devoid of any reference to sf it may well be termed a perfect fanzine. The best pieces in this issue were The Cedric Affair and the Happy Wanderers. Strangely enough they were both by John Berry. Walt Willis's Fendetta was good - naturally - but he'll have to look to his laurels after Madeleine's Jackall Of All Trades !

Altogether the best RET yet, unless it is just that I'm acquiring the taste. Just one small grouse. Gripes, due to frequent intrusions by John, reads more like a second editorial than a letter column.

Goon Library No.1 rates tops.

Here in Hillingdon I'm neck-deep in fanzines, some of which can hardly be said to have been deflowered yet. Have perused, with considerable interest, though, ff emending No.2, from Pierre Versins of Lausanne. He seeks to prove - with witnesses - that he isn't French fandom but unless my semantics are more than usually snarled up most of the witnesses give unimpeachable evidence that he is. Reprowiso ffm is a sort of pocketbook Gruo. Comes to that, it has a delightful Gruoy flavour.

INSIDE & SF ADVERTISER 17 (or if you like, 51) has an oyo-catching cover by Alan Hunter, an amusing but too-long-drawn-out quiz joke by Dave Foley, book-reviews by Gunn, Lin Carter, Ken Beale and Harlan Ellison - and there all resemblance to a fanzine ends. Because essentially INSIDE & SF AD. is a prozino. A little prozino, maybo, but a well-produced one, and judging from this one copy, well worth the 7/6 for 12 issues British readers may obtain from Alan Hunter, 92 Durrington Road, Boscombe East, Bournemouth.



