

PARERGON PAPERS



King Canute and Earl Ulf quarrel over Chess

PARERGON PAPERS

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TO YOUR SCATTERED THINKING GO

I thought that would be a reasonable sort of title for what follows, mainly because I'm not sure what will follow. I've had lots of thoughts lately, some worth mentioning, most not, but anything could happen, and I'm as interested to see what turns up in this issue as you are. Maybe more interested. Probably, lets face it, very likely even, much more interested.

For a start, why did I write 'lets' there? Quite wrong. The newspapers are confusing me. It should be 'let's'. Jeeves!

— Sir?

Cancel my lifetime subscription to the Adelaide Advertiser!

— Very good, sir.

Petrol costs a fortune these days, but I was delighted to discover last weekend (when we spent almost two days in Picturesque Robe, down in the south-east of South Australia) that five dollars' worth of petrol costs no more in the country than it does in the city. This is probably true only in South Australia, where we have a *Socialist* government (the last one in captivity, West of the Wall). I'm a bit annoyed that Liberal-voting travellers from over the border get the advantage of our forward-looking, progressive, humanitarian policies when they buy petrol, but that's life.

Life! What's Life?

— An American magazine, sir.

Where can I get it?

— You can't, sir. It has ceased publication.

Ah well, that's life.

— Sir?

Rack off, Jeeves!

— Very good, sir.

I've spent three weeks now in the Unemployment Benefits section of the Department of Social Security. I've had nightmares, real ones, about filling in forms (no kidding). One Saturday afternoon Sally tried to wake me after I'd been sleeping for a couple of hours, and I wanted to wake up, but I couldn't. I explained later (bless her dear heart! she believed me — she's been through the same kind of thing herself) that I couldn't find the right forms to fill in for waking up.

No, I'm not knocking the Public Service. I'm just telling you what happened.

The people in my training course at Social Security were great. I liked them a lot. I felt awfully old at times, talking to them, but that happens to everyone eventually, so I didn't mind too much. The youngest person was a bloke who was born four years after I left school — and he's so famous that even Gary Mason has heard of him (or so Gary told me last night). I won't tell you his name, because he's decided to stop being famous and settle down as a career Public Servant. The oldest person on the course, including our two lovely lady instructors, is just fifteen years younger than me.

I enjoyed the course, I really did — I could cheerfully go on doing training courses for ever! —, but every now and then, stroking my increasingly grey beard or scratching my ever more obvious bald patch, I caught myself thinking 'What am I doing here? Is it true perhaps, as I have so often jested, that I have a great future behind me?'

At my advanced age — older than John Foyster and Phillip Adams, and almost as old as Lee Harding — one has these melancholy thoughts at times. (Then I remember how old Bob Silverberg and Malcolm Fraser are, and I cheer up. Then I remember how famous they are. Then, worse still, I remember how famous they were when they were my age. Then I think about Bob Tucker, and I'm okay again.)

This maudlin musing on encroaching old age wasn't set off by my experience on the Social Security training course so much as by Susan Wood's remarks in the latest issue of her little journal of literary philosophy and applied group dynamics, *Amor de Cosmos*, in which she makes quite uncalled-for noises about growing old. Great Scott! (I chortled, inwardly) Susan thinks she's old! Hee, hee (cackle)! Then I stopped chortling and thought: Good Grief! If Susan Wood is old, what does that make me! Then I thought about Bob Tucker again, and settled back into my wheel-chair and felt better.

What really gets me about working in Unemployment Benefits is the inequity (and, dare I say it? the iniquity) of the system. I won't go in to detail, because I need the job, but the whole dismal business appals me. We've heard a lot, these last three years or so, about dole-bludgers, and at last I am meeting them. That is, I've met one, so far. He was reasonably well dressed, and he's paying off a house in one of Adelaide's better suburbs, and I didn't believe a word he told me (but he was entitled to the dole, no doubt about that, so I had to stifle my impulse to invite him to change his material possessions and dole for my material possessions and job). Most of the unemployed people I've had to do with in the last few weeks are young, pretty intelligent and close enough to being utterly desperate. Work? Of course they want to work! The hell with the politicians and the newspapers! — I'm talking about real people who turn up in this heart-breaking office I work in, and most of them are as intelligent and decent as you and me, and they really would prefer a job to the dole.

In all kinds of ways that I can't begin to describe, mine is a pretty depressing job. I've had worse, I think. I've certainly had better. Because I'm a coward, I'm trying to get out, to find a job that pays better and doesn't demand so much of me emotionally. Because I'm there, and hate it, I'm inclined to believe that every politician and

senior public servant and company manager and newspaper editor in the land should be obliged to spend a few weeks working in the Unemployment Benefits section of the Department of Social Security.

The training group had an easy day last Friday, the last working day before Xmas. We messed about with some files (*People, not paper!* we were told in a training film, but that way lies insanity), then went over to head office and had a long morning tea, then strolled down Rundle Mall and bought bouquets for our lovely lady instructors, then wandered back to head office, and eventually went back to Industry House for the Xmas party (staff only, clients not invited).

Industry House is one of my favourite places in Adelaide (or was, until I started working there), mainly because the Australian Government Publishing Service bookshop is on the ground floor, and I'm a sucker for bookshops, especially when they have bargains like — oh, never mind. Anyway, we were standing there last Friday waiting for a lift, and some people came down in the lift and didn't get out because, they said, they were going to the basement. Richard (I think it was Richard) said 'I didn't realize there was a basement in this building.' I said 'Oh, there is. There is.'

Richard didn't appreciate my sad pun, and neither did the others. I didn't really expect them to. They're so young, I would have been rather upset if they'd understood. And rather embarrassed, I realized later, because I wasn't only thinking of the clients.

2 January 1978 Another bloody new year! Not that it means much: once you've seen thirty-seven of them you've probably seen the lot, and this is my thirty-eighth. I think that's right: I start my personal fortieth year in April. No! I'm wrong again! (Bloody hell.) This is my thirty-ninth new year. And if you think my arithmetic is crook, believe me, it's nowhere near as crook as thinking about entering your fortieth year.

Last night I couldn't sleep. I was tired, but I just couldn't sleep. I somehow got thinking about the Labor Ministries between 2 December 1972 and 11 November 1975 and — well, what do you think about when you want to sleep and can't? I remembered Labor's two Speakers of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate (I think there was only one); and I remembered thirty-one ministers, and I tried to recall what had happened to each of them since 1972. I think I did reasonably well. Today I suddenly thought of Les Johnson, one of my favourite politicians (how could I overlook him?), and realized that there were thirty-two ministers during those years. I hope I don't remember any more.

I accidentally watched a quiz program on TV recently where a bloke won thousands of dollars for knowing everything about horse-racing from Pegasus to the present, and I'm wondering whether they'd be interested in a contestant whose speciality is Ministerial Appointments, 2.12.72–11.11.75.

You scoff! Don't deny it — I heard you! Well, you tell me who were the four Labor Treasurers in that time, okay?

Terry Hughes wrote to me on 20 December and mentioned (in somewhat dismal tones, I thought) Malcolm Fraser's 'landslide victory at the polls' on 10 December. Terry's interest in Australian politics never ceases to amaze me: I mean, he's just a kid, more or less, way over there in Arlington, Virginia, and he knows more about what's going on in Australia than most of my friends and acquaintances do. Perhaps he's training to be a CIA operative or something. Whatever he's doing, I can't help being impressed by his interest and his rough-but-close-enough grasp of Australian politics.

While I've been on holiday these last few days I've been working on a modest little history of Australia for Rigby's, and the first thing I did was collate the dates of Australian monarchs, governors and prime ministers. It dismayed me (I'd known before, but forgotten) that Labor has governed Australia for not quite twenty years since Federation; the non-Labor parties have governed for fifty-seven years, and are set for at least another two or three.

But I'm not so sure about that 'landslide victory'.

In Australian elections — if you'll bear with me — we use what is called the preferential system of voting. In the UK and other civilized countries you just vote for the person you want, and that's your vote; but here we have second preferences, and third preferences, and fourth preferences — and so on, all the way down to eightieth preferences, if necessary (that happened, as I recall, in the NSW Senate ballot in 1974). Labor tried to introduce a system of optional-preferential voting, but the Senate threw that out smartly (mainly because people who can't mark a ballot paper properly are more likely to be Labor voters than non-Labor).

At this point I pause to make my annual plea to World SF Convention organizers not to describe the Hugo Awards ballot as an 'Australian ballot'. The Australian Ballot is a secret ballot (which the Hugo ballot is not: you must sign your name to your vote). The system adopted in recent years for the Hugo ballot is properly described as a preferential ballot.

Quite often in an Australian election the person who gets more votes than anyone else doesn't win. This is because the preferences are distributed. Well, you may say, that's fair enough! But is it? I say it isn't, because the preferences of the people who vote for the two candidates who get most of the votes are not counted. The only preferences that matter are those of the people who voted for the least popular candidates. (Are you with me?)

Example: Smith, Black and Jones. Smith gets 47% of the vote, Black gets 32%, Jones gets 17%; 4% of ballots cast are informal. Jones's supporters give their second preference to Black. Black now has 49%, and wins.

But what if Smith's supporters had given their second preference to Jones? Jones would then have 64%, and would be clear winner. And what if one-eighth of Black's supporters had given their preference to Smith? Smith would then have 51%, and would win. But Smith's and Black's preferences are not counted.

Year after year, in election after election, the Australian Labor Party gets more votes than any other party — and loses, because of preferential voting.

You could be forgiven for thinking, after reading the newspapers and watching TV and listening to the radio, that Labor is a spent force in Australia. You could be forgiven for thinking that Mr Fraser had a landslide victory on 10 December 1977, especially since Mr Fraser's Liberal Party has more seats in the House of Representatives than all the other parties put together. You could be forgiven for thinking that the Australian Democrats (a new middle-of-the-road party formed six months ago by a disenchanted Liberal named Don Chipp) are a dynamic new force in Australian politics.

The Australian Democrats got 9% of the vote. That's not bad for a new party. The National Country Party got 9% of the vote. That's not bad for a party that is primarily based in Australia's rural areas. The Australian Labor Party got 40%. That's not bad for a party that's in decline. The Liberal Party got 38%.

Wrong
again!
See p.70

There are 127 seats in the House of Representatives. From memory (I can't lay my hands on the exact figures, but these are pretty close), the Liberals won 67 seats, the National Country Party 19, the Labor Party 41, the Australian Democrats none.

And there's your landslide, Terry — a bit more convincing than the kind of landslide vote some third-world dictators get, but still just a little bit odd. I mean, 62% of Australians did not vote Liberal on 10 December, but the Liberals have enough seats to govern by themselves. (They continue to govern as a Liberal-NCP coalition because next time round they may need the NCP, as they often have in the past.)

Terry says 'I assume this spells the end of Gough Whitlam's leadership of the Labor Party.' Right again, cobber. Gough announced on election night that he would not seek re-election as leader (*Whitlam Quits!* said the Adelaide Sunday paper, typically), and on 22 December Bill Hayden became the leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party.

As I've more or less said before, some are born great, and some have greatness thrust upon them, but most Australians won't tolerate greatness, however it occurs, because it means admitting that they're not as good as the next bloke.

On the other hand, we have a lot of time for clever rogues — our national mythology is full of 'em, from Bold Jack Donahoe to Bob Menzies —, so Malcolm Fraser probably has quite a future yet, as long as he can go on appearing to be clever.

As for Australia's future — well, the prospect is so depressing I'm tempted to stop caring and go back to reading science fiction. You get a better class of future in science fiction.



11 January Final figures were announced today for the election held on 10 December. The state of the parties in the Senate from July 1978 will be: Liberal 29, National Country Party 6, Labor 26, Australian Democrats 2, Independent 1. Nine per cent of votes cast in the Senate election were informal. In the House of Representatives the Liberals have 67 seats, NCP 19, Labor 38. There are 124 seats in the House of Representatives, not 127. And remember -- you saw it last in *Parergon Papers - the accurate fanzine!*

KEATS AND CHAPMAN wish to advise that they will have no part in a proposed story about the faking of statistics by a prominent evangelist who recently visited Prague and other middle-European cities, on the ground that it would involve them in the fraudulent conversion of Czechs. I reckon that's only fair.

OLIVER ST JOHN GOGARTY -- no, this is not a Keats and Chapman story -- is an author I haven't spoken of at any great length in fanzines, and I'm not sure why, since my enthusiasm for his writing pre-dates by some years my enthusiasm for science fiction (the subject to which this journal is whole-heartedly and simple-mindedly devoted when there's nothing more interesting to talk about). Today I... I beg yours? Yes, of course I meant whole-hearted and simple-minded! Anyone who approaches science fiction in any other way in fanzines is short on total commitment and devoid entirely of the appropriate attitudinal profile! Or something. Ask John Foyster. People who write about sf in fanzines should be committed, he says. I've heard him say it often. Ask him. He's the man who defined gross ignorance as 144 science fiction fans. Where was I?

Going down Sackville Street, that's where I was.

Keith Curtis, globe-trotting ex-Baptist bookfinder extraordinary, knows I am interested in Gogarty, and every few years he sends me books I've never heard of by the man. A few weeks ago he sent me two novels, *Tumbling in the Hay* (which I'd heard of) and *Going Native* (which isn't even mentioned in Ulick O'Connor's biography). I'm not greatly impressed by Gogarty's novels, so I didn't rush to read these. But today, having nothing else to do but write a book for Rigby's, I started reading *Tumbling in the Hay*, and it didn't take me too long to realize that the book is in fact autobiography, in the same delicious, inimitable style as *It isn't this time of year at all!* and *As I was going down Sackville Street*.

Gogarty (1878-1957) was one of those incredible men who seem to know everyone and do everything. A glorious poet, champion cyclist, leading surgeon, pioneer aviator, Senator, implacable opponent of de Valera and the IRA (once captured by a murder squad, he escaped by swimming the Liffey), friend of the great and famous (he shared a tower with Joyce, and became Buck Mulligan in *Ulysses*, harboured the fugitive Michael Collins in his surgery, entertained Gene Tunney, Clarence Darrow, Charles Kingsford Smith, Harold Macmillan, Anna May Wong and countless others), he packed at least a dozen ordinary lifetimes in to his 79 years, and somehow found time to share them all with us in his poetry and his autobiographies.

Here is a poem by Oliver St John Gogarty. It's copyright, so try not to let anyone see you reading it.

Ringsend

(After reading Tolstoi)

I will live in Ringsend
With a red-headed whore,
And the fan-light gone in
Where it lights the hall-door;
And listen each night
For her querulous shout,
As at last she streels in
And the pubs empty out.
To soothe that wild breast
With my old-fangled songs,
Till she feels it redressed
From inordinate wrongs,
Imagined, outrageous,
Preposterous wrongs,
Till peace at last comes,
Shall be all I will do,
Where the little lamp blooms
Like a rose in the stew;
And up the back-garden
The sound comes to me
Of the lapsing, unsoilable,
Whispering sea.

Actually that's the only poem of Gogarty's I have (Please find me some more, Keith!), apart from those in the autobiographies. It's in *The Penguin Book of Irish Verse*, a gorgeous book, but even if it wasn't the only poem of Gogarty's I have, I would like to think I would have chosen it anyway. I think it's marvellous. There is just so much there, and it's all brilliantly packed in to just 101 words. When I really try, I can say a fair bit in 101 words – but just look at those words there! Eighty-five of them have just one syllable; the whole poem has just 127 syllables. (I hope it's catching: I note that in the sentence before last eighteen of my twenty words were of one syllable. Now, if I were to delete 'really' and change '101' to 'five score and one' – I'd be missing the point, as you are if you think I think it's a good poem because it uses short words.)

One of Gogarty's good friends was Arthur Griffith, who was a kind of Irish Gough Whitlam. I'd better qualify that before I'm clobbered from all sides! In the passage that follows, Arthur Griffith, as seen by Gogarty, reminds me a lot of Gough Whitlam, as seen by me.

If there were nothing but Michael Cusacks in Ireland one might get a little bored; and if there were nothing but brains in Ireland there would be very little sport. Which things go to prove that it takes all the vertebrae to make a man with a backbone.

That is how I came to be a patriot from a mixture of admirations

for Cusack's calves and Griffith's character; from the heroic tradition of the invincible athletic Gael, and for the actual existence of one incorruptible modern statesman.

The "pre-requisites," as the Citizen, the Revolutionary, would call them, for a movement in a nation are self-sacrifice, a newspaper and a public meeting.

I wasn't much good at self-sacrifice. There was no need to be. So many people were sacrificing me at the moment that it would have seemed superfluous to try it on myself. But if you couldn't find anything in yourself that was in need of being sacrificed, at least you should take the whole thing seriously and not turn it into a laughing matter. That is why there was so little talk in the Stad, for fear anyone might laugh while the nation was being re-born. And yet midwives are cheery people. Besides, I wondered if we were not metamorphosing into English yokels. For I remembered Mahaffy telling McGurk that the English boor seldom laughs, and then only at very coarse fun: *"Is it not remarkable, my friend, that the savage and the ignorant laugh less and understand less of this great fund of enjoyment than civilised people?"* And I was very fond of laughter. In fact, I disliked and suspected anyone who could not join in a laugh. There is something wanting in anyone who is too serious. He is uncivilised, and therefore a potential menace to society. A good laugh at the right moment might have killed Calvin. That is why I love Barney and Weary and the Citizen, because they are always laughing or leading up to a laugh. That is why I spent so much time trying to amuse Arthur.

But the last and the first thing a patriot should do was to believe in the Irish people. Now the "Irish People" were not supposed to be in Trinity College; they were somewhere in the country, especially in the parts where Teigue came from. And I was in Trinity College where Robert Emmet came from, and yet I was supposed not to be of the "Irish People." Therefore, to believe in them was to disbelieve in myself. It's too much of a self-sacrifice to disbelieve in oneself. And being incapable of such sacrifice, I preferred belief in myself to belief in the "Irish People." I found that a lot of the Irish people do the same. It keeps them off the rates.

As Golly says: "If each before his own door swept
The village would be clean."

Now Arthur Griffith believed in the "Irish People," which would have been all right if the "Irish People" believed in themselves or consisted of three million Arthur Griffiths; for then all the Irish People would believe in the same thing and themselves at the same time. But the Irish people believe only in that which they know to be untrue. There was only one Arthur Griffith, and he also believed in self-sacrifice, which, in view of Irish history, seemed to me to be superfluous, for you have only to become their Leader when the Irish People will start sacrificing you. Human sacrifice has never quite died out in Ireland. It is merely reserved for "Leaders."

— From *Tumbling in the Hay*, ch. 8

And that's Gogarty in his gravest mood. He was 60, and Griffith had been dead 16 years. If you have come this far you may be wondering

why I rate Gogarty with Flann O'Brien as a humourist. I can only suggest that you read him. *As I was going down Sackville Street* has been in paperback (most recently, I think, in Sphere) and the other two I've mentioned may be lurking somewhere. But I should mention that if you find difficulty in following O'Brien you'll have a bit of trouble with Gogarty.

And if you wonder why I am so fascinated and delighted by Irish writers (as I do at times), perhaps it's something in my ancestry after all:

But I did not know enough Gaelic, so I had to depend on Teigue's reputation, and to be more frustrated than ever because I could not commune with him in his own tongue — my tongue, too, though it wasn't literally my mother tongue. It was nobody's mother tongue in Dublin, nor had it ever been but for a month or two when the town was taken and the Danes driven out by the Gael.

Something in that passage struck me as spiritually profound, or allegorically apt or something, when I read it first, but I've just lost it for the moment, so don't worry if it seems obscure.

12 January A month ago I started writing a list of my favourite books of 1977. Before long it developed into a list of books I read during 1977, and then became a list of books I'd read or at least dipped in to (and look forward to finishing) during 1977. Before it becomes a list of books I wish I'd had time to look at, here it is. There was a time when Bruce Gillespie envied my reading lists, but that seems long ago. The list doesn't include books read or dipped in to in the line of duty.

Frederic Raphael: Lindmann
Ken Mitchell: Wandering Rafferty
Honor Tracy: The straight and narrow path
" The first day of Friday
Brian Aldiss: The Malacia tapestry
Ursula LeGuin: Orsinian tales
John James: The lords of Loone
Len Deighton: Close-up
A. Alvarez: Beyond all this fiddle
Baudin: Journal, 1800-1803
Donald Horne: Money made us
The Oxford book of literary anecdotes
Geoffrey Dutton: Founder of a city
A. D. Hope: A late picking
Phillip Adams: The unspeakable Adams

Clune & Stephensen: The viking of Van Diemen's Land
Sidney Baker: My own destroyer
Robertson Davies: Voices from the attic
Margaret Atwood: Lady oracle
T. H. White: Mistress Masham's repose
Sylvia Townsend Warner: T. H. White
Brian Moore: The luck of Ginger Coffey
Jean Farnfield: Frontiersman
Clyde Company papers, vol.1
Judith Wright: Five senses
Barry Oakley: A wild ass of a man

And I do believe that's all, apart from old favourites that I dip in to every year (Lower, Myles na Gopaleen, Peacock, Hazlitt, Sydney Smith and various unfashionable poets, mainly). The discoveries of the year were Atwood, Mitchell and Raphael (thank you, Susan, Mike and Jim).

I hardly read any science fiction during the year, but that could happen to anybody. I watched an awful lot of television, mainly because we rented a colour set in July and the novelty hasn't worn off yet.

ANDREW BROWN
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16.12.77

John Berry's letter (PP3) inspires my fevered brain to conjure up all manner of conspiracy theory. Every time you mention some obscure author in your pages I shortly thereafter notice his works in the local library. It happened with Robertson Davies: I enjoyed *Fifth Business* very much, and read it at a

single sitting, although I did not think very much of *The Manticore*, and regret to say that I didn't finish it.

More recently I noticed a fair amount of Flann O'Brien, so I borrowed *The Third Policeman*. I don't know, John: perhaps the humour was a bit too subtle for me, but things seemed to move rather slowly in the first couple of chapters, so it suffered a like fate to that of *The Manticore*. And finally, a few days back I noticed John James gracing the shelves of the Mount Waverley library, but I resisted the temptation, as I don't really care much for historical fiction, with the exception of the Flashman series, which is really a good-humoured send-up of our conceptions of military heroism.

But I still don't understand how Australia's Secret Master of Fandom has such an influence on the purchases of the Camberwell-Waverley library network.

That's okay, Andrew. I don't even know who Australia's SMOF is. I used to think it was John Foyster, but he told me he wasn't, and John's a bloke a bloke can trust. So is

DICK BERGERON
11 East 68th Street
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29.11.77

Unfortunately, as always, I don't have much time for correspondence but I do want to point to the reply to John Berry in PP as the ultimate example (or something) of what makes everyone find so much promise in the fanwork of one John Bangsund and say that it is probably the perfect example for analysis

(literary) of the Bangsund style and what it is actually saying. I trust that confuses you sufficiently...

Sure does, Dick, but it sounds friendly, and that's the thing. Speaking of fannish promise, I am delighted to hear that you are reviving your little fanzine. I always thought Warhoon could go a long way if you published it regularly, and I look forward to reading this chap Willis you sound so enthusiastic about. (Is it true he's a kind of second Mike Glicksokn?) Golly, here's another young fan who shows a lot of promise:

ETHEL LINDSAY
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England
3.12.77

I was much taken by Jack Speer's letter on how he feels about fandom today. I found myself echoing some of his thoughts - not about beards though, I hasten to say. The large number of fans nowadays is off-putting for a fan like myself who has never lost an original shyness. I think I am old enough to cover it

up pretty well - but it's there! I dislike the expression 'mundane' just as I dislike anti-establishment sentiment; but then, I dislike establishments too. Frankly, the concept of a fannish establishment makes me double up and make hooting noises! My best-of-fandom feelings

come from my correspondents. Glad to know I haven't lost you completely.

I enjoyed your con report very much. On this thing about selling fanzines: it can be very tricky. I once had a clear-out because of lack of space and gave them to an auction. During the auction I found myself sitting behind Archie Mercer. As one after another of his zines came up for auction, he turned and said - 'I wonder who doesn't like me!' I felt awful.

While typing the above, Ethel, I've been listening to a rather dreary ballet by Elgar called 'The Sanguine Fan'. Maybe we should all aim at that condition to avoid these terrible guilt feelings - like those I have about losing touch with you in recent years.

BOB PAVLAT
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7.12.77

In the May FAPA mailing (and I was very happy to see you in that mailing) you mentioned 'The ANZAPA Book'. 'Interested FAPAns', you wrote, 'should write to me.' I'm an interested FAPAN. I'm writing to you.this comment in Stunned Mullet is the first that I've ever realized that you're the publisher and that it really exists as a volume or series or whatever it is and not as a future project. I'm interested. How can I obtain a copy?

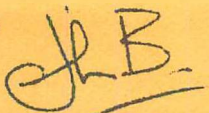
Bob, I don't know quite how to break this to you, but you are the only person who has asked me about The ANZAPA Book. In the February and April 1977 mailings of ANZAPA I published the first two instalments of what I fully intended to be a 'book', covering the first seven mailings. In June I became Official Bloody Editor of ANZAPA, and what with one thing and another I didn't find time to do the third instalment. No-one commented on this in August (no-one has commented since), so I decided to get on with something more useful, like Paragon Papers. ANZAPA's tenth anniversary is coming up in October this year, and I'd hoped to get something of our history together in time for that, but I haven't the time or inclination to do any more just now.

This has been a much shorter letter column (and issue) than I had in mind, but I'm running out of January (Come back, 1977! -- all is forgiven!) and I have an awful lot to do this month. Getting a job has complicated my life no end, and I'm not sure I can afford it.

Next issue I hope to publish a review by Terry Hughes of John W. Campbell: an Australian tribute, an obscure 1974 publication of which I still have a few copies (A\$5.00, cheap). I had thought also of publishing 600 pages of the Best Of Paul Stevens (for DUFF!), but he hasn't written them yet.

I leave you with this thought: G. K. Chesterton on roller skates.

Cheers,





Murtough on his Journey with the King of Munster in Fetters