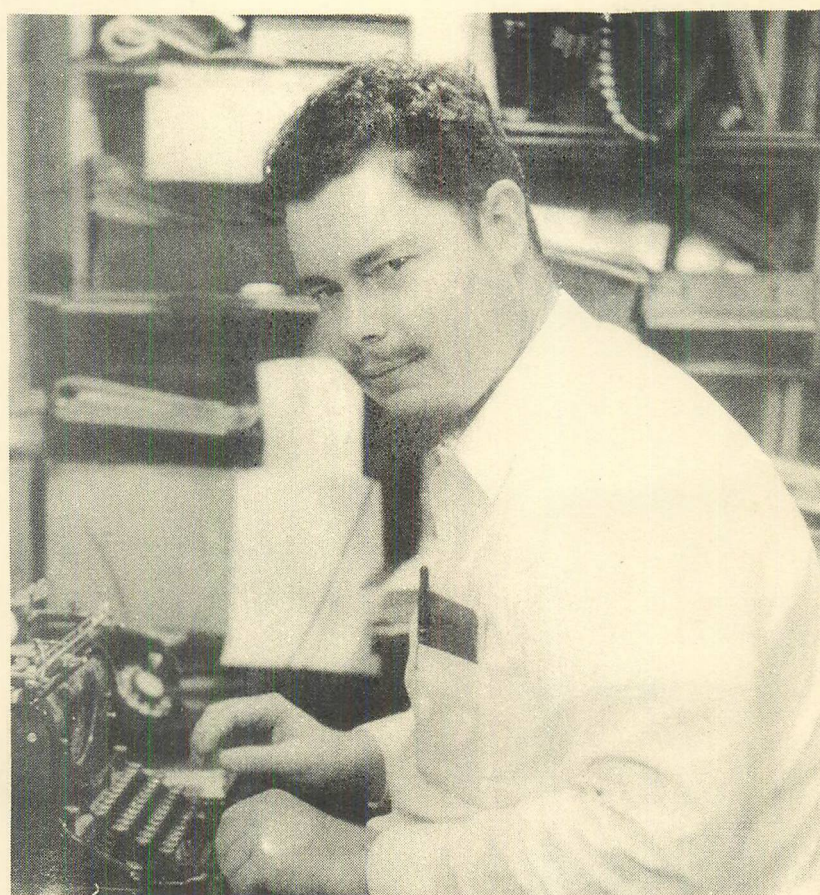


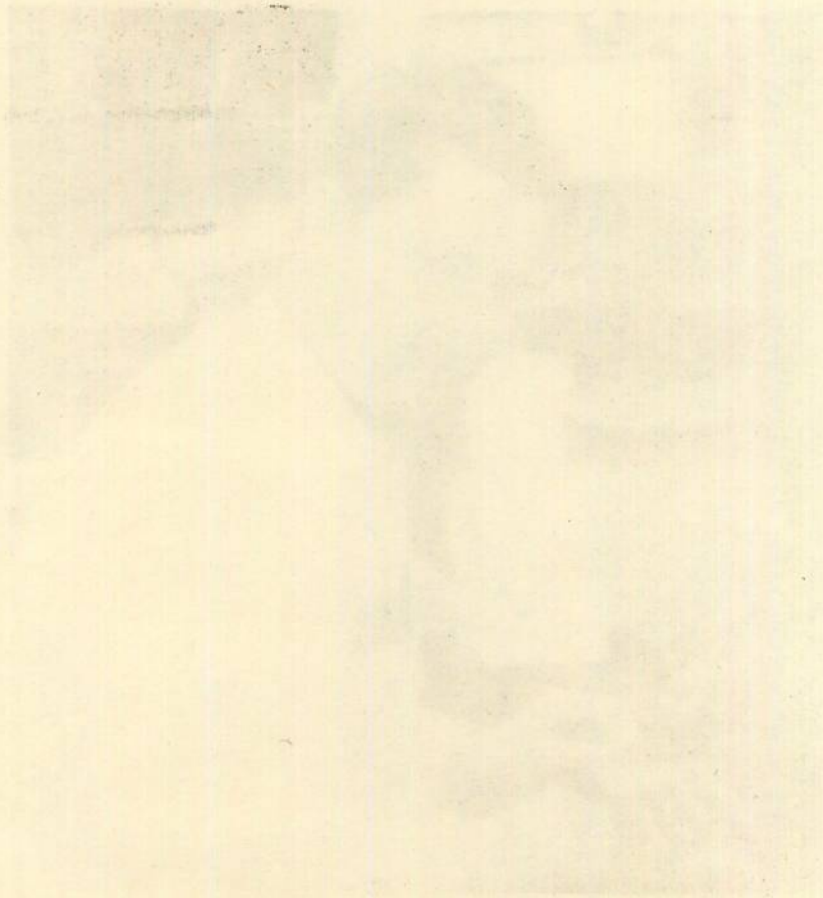
POT POURRI SEVENTEEN



ENEY FOR TAFF

REVUE DE LA

REVUE DE LA



REVUE DE LA

CONTENTS

This is a special issue of POT POURRI with a wide circulation., published specifically to boost Richard ENEY FOR TAFF. My only hope is that it is directly responsible for getting ENEY many votes. Here are the contents of this issue, and I'm afraid I've hogged most of the pages :-

THE TWO FOR TAFF.

A few words about Messrs Eney and Ellik by Berry.

THE DAY.

A psychological western, dedicated to Wrai Ballard, by Berry.

THE 'PLANE FAX

A comparison of the U.S.A.F. and the R.A.F....by Berry.

BERRY AT THE PANTOMIME

The humour spot of the issue...by Berry.

THE BIG BLUFF

Don't read it if you don't play Canasta ... by Berry.

FARTHEST NORTH

Chapter 2 of George Locke's account of a visit to Irish Fandom.

SCHOOL AND BOMBS AND WORK AND THINGS

Another griping episode of a teenage idiot, by Berry.

AND A BABY CRIED

A sercon story about snow...by Berry

HOW THEY GOT AWAY FROM IT ALL

Two book reviews...by Berry

AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING

An astounding discovery about the origin of the Universe, by Berry
(with a little help by Professor Martin Ryle, of Cambridge.)

THE SCALPEL.

Mailing comments...obviously by Berry.

There are a few MEMO's scattered about at the bottoms of pages where I've had small spaces to fill up, but these deal almost exclusively with vile hucksterism, so if you are of a shy disposition, don't read them.

You are holding in your lily-white hands the seventeenth issue of POT POURRI. It is destined for the 55th S.A.P.S. mailing, so if you get it via that august organization, you'll know I paid my dues. This emanates from John Berry, 31, Campbell Park Avenue, Belmont, Belfast 4, Northern Ireland. Another fifty copies are being flung round the fannish world regardless of expense, and I would ask these recipients that if they intend to sue, to divert the monies to TAFF, and scribbled ENEY on the relevant form. I thank you.

THE TWO FOR TAFF

I always make a yearly entry into the TAFF situation, but this year of 1961, because one of the two candidates is in SAPS and is in fact our OE, I'm going to have my say in POT POURRI instead of in RETRIBUTION, as in the past. I've therefore boosted the circulation of this issue to over one hundred so that my opinions have a circulation outside SAPS....

The two applicants are Ron Ellik and Richard Eney. I am backing Eney. Before telling you all about him, I must say something about Ellik. I met him in Detroit, and I like him very much. He has a snazzy personality, is tall, broad and handsome, and is a true fan to the core. Fans in England will like him. I say this without reservation, because I note a trend in some fanzines not to be polite to the candidate they are not supporting. I was in

fact surprised to see a recent FANAC (number #68) become affiliated to this unhappy aspect...just another facet of this TAFF business of which everyone seems to have different ideas ! FANAC, beside having the utter temerity to tell its many readers that Eney hadn't got the ' elan and verve' (O.K... O.K....it was the other way round ' verve and elan') of Ellik, gave the opinion that Eney ' might be O.K.'. It is a complete mystery to me, and I'm sure to you, what elan and verve have got to do with the attributes of a TAFF candidate. Now if this was a selection board for an officer to be elected for the Hussars, I would say that if Ellik has indeed got more elan and verve than Eney, he should be the man. I think Ellik would make a superb Hussar. He could, I'm sure, wield a sabre with more verve and elan than anyone else in fandom, moreover, even, than Harlan Ellison.

But this is TAFF we are dealing with...an organisation dedicated to selecting a suitable fan to cross the Atlantic to see how the other half lives (fannishly speaking.)

Eney and Ellik are both good men.

Both are (in my humble opinion) worthy of the TAFF Trip, and, more important, both would be well liked by fans in the British Isles. This is an outstanding factor regarding these two candidates, and so it might be that quite a percentage of fans who vote, and who do not personally know the two applicants, will toss a coin, or just put a capital 'E ' and let fate decide what the next letter shall be.

It's reasonable, to be sure, if my theory that both are good types for TAFF is correct. But it's not quite as easy as that. The human element appears. It isn't that I like Eney more than Ellik...I don't. It isn't that Eney is more worthy than Ellik..he isn't..It isn't that British fans would prefer one more than the other...they wouldn't. But it IS a fact that only one of them can come to England (and, I hope, later, to Northern Ireland) and I would like to tell you why that man should be Eney.

Dick's publishing during his years in fandom has been prolific. That is the only word for it. It was a couple or more years ago that he celebrated the issue of his hundredth fanzine. This is in itself noteworthy, but in 1959 he presented to an awed fandom the massive 180 page FANCY II...and has since printed an extensive addendum to it. His publishing has not been confined to general fandom...he has been a bulwark of the apa's...both physically and publishing-wise !!!

In this respect, Ellik does not hold a candle to him. True, Ron was associated with FANAC for some considerable time, and I noted with pride and satisfaction the confident way he accepted the HUGO for FANAC at Detroit. I wouldn't say the acceptance was with elan or verve, though...

As fannish personalities, the comparison becomes difficult. I would rate them even...they both have attributes I admire, although their individual personalities are entirely different.

Ellik is over-confident to a degree...he oozes personality like a tap which someone has forgotten to turn off ! Eney, on the other hand, is more inclined to be serious, pensive, solid, more mature, but with a profound sense of humour just the same.

I mean, I lived with Eney for a week. I travelled hundreds of miles in his car all over Eastern America. You get to know a chap in these circumstances. For instance, I had the good fortune to stay at his house in Alexandria overnight. Eney has a fannish den which still bewilders me when I think about it. He has files for everyone he has ever written to. All his fanzines are filed and indexed. He has a library almost as big as the Reference Library here in Belfast. He has half a dozen typers and a couple of duperes and stacks of duper paper and tubes of ink by the boxfull. THIS IS A TRUE FAN. Take my word for it...

Eney is a fan who can become an active part of any gathering...no matter what is being discussed...fanwise or mundane. He has the ability to assess the crux of the matter under discussion and give it without preamble and complication. He is kind and considerate and understanding...whilst I was with him for that glorious week in August 1959, I made quite a few miscalculations for which I had no excuse...like losing an important address, but never a word of anger...and he driving over 400 miles a day. His stature as a man was severely under scrutiny when the brakes of his car failed to the north of Hagerstown...and his reaction was so supremely masterful that I even yawned as we swerved from side to side, and even when we approached a red light at a crossroads, I knew Eney would get us out of it, as he did.

My platform is not that you should vote for ENEY because he can control a brake-less car...

You should vote for ENEY because he is a fan who will do America proud... British fans will go crazy over him, for it will be a rare chance for them to meet an American fan whose main concern is fandom, and all aspects of it (no disrespect to previous American TAFF Reps...)...who is a collector and a convention goer, and whose career in fandom is worthy of this climax. Like I keep saying :-

*E*N*E*Y**F*O*R**T*A*F**F*

(Berry's first Western.)

THE DAY

Clem Taylor eased the chair back so that it just tempted gravity. He looked at his feet crossed on the desk. His two big toes arched from unwashed socks. For a fleeting second he thought of Mary...she'd never have allowed him to wear them. But that was long ago...well, two years, but it seemed long ago.

He flexed his fingers on his right hand. Physically, he felt as he had done when he was eighteen. He felt ...that was the operative word..he felt young, but he was nearing forty...those spatulate fingers had earned him a reputation, and it had kept him in a job for years. He was as fast as ever...wasn't he? He hadn't drawn in a fight in all of five years. There was no need. His reputation.....

Only last week, way over by the butte, he'd spotted a jack rabbit. Forty feet away, it was, and leaping...

His third shot tumbled it over...five years ago he'd hit one half as far again with his first shot...in the head. The rabbit was still kicking when he rode across to it. Four shots to kill a jack rabbit. But he had his rep.....

And was this the day?

He looked across the office at the WANTED posters on the wall. The one hanging slightly to the right....the middle one...that was Jed Sumner...wanted in three states for anything you'd like to mention.

And Sumner was in town.

Sure, he had a small ginger moustache, and the picture on the poster was taken when Sumner was in jail last...a few years ago. But Jed was ten years younger...and he'd had his last fight a month ago...and it took him one shot....

Jed's score was eighteen, excluding Mexicans and indians.

Taylor took off his kerchief. He wiped the front of his chest, and under his arms. He took a deep breath, and another one...the day?

The door opened.

An old man looked in.

"He's in Shank's saloon, Clem."

"Thanks."

Taylor pulled on his boots. He crossed the room, pulled down his belt and holster from the hook. He strapped it on...eased the butt of the Colt...tried to get reassurance from a caress of the cold woodwork.

Funny, that. It was hot outside, he was sweating...the butt was cold... inanimate...he gripped the butt...eased it half out of the holster once... twice...he rasped his tongue over his lips.

Back at his desk, he opened the bottom drawer, pulled out the silver spurs. It was his gimmick...he'd won the spurs at a shooting contest in Montana way back...and since he'd been sheriff he'd worn them when parading the town. Looked good, it did...and folks all over knew about it...gunfighters knew of his reputation, and the silver spurs sort of backed him up. Leastways, he'd worn them in the three towns he'd been in. Never even been hit whilst wearing them....of course, that was some time back...he hadn't needed to fight. But he knew how the gunfighters talked. True, no one had tried him, but he was getting old...at least, old for a fast gun....and no fight in five years.....

He walked down slowly...very slowly...to the saloon. Word had gotten round...in fact, he'd heard that Sumner had hinted he was waiting. Sumner had said he liked the town, and was going to stay...and if the sheriff wanted to try and cancel the warrant, well, there he was...waiting...

Taylor liked the clink of the spurs. It was music to him...a sort of confident background music...he kicked up the dust...it was quiet...folks were watching, but he thought that kick of the sand made a casual appearance of it all...as if he wasn't worried...

He pushed through the doors. It was as though time stopped. He stood and looked round him, from left to right. Men backed away...slowly...and just one man stood his ground in the middle of the bar. He didn't even look round.

Taylor studied him. It was always wise to study them. No rush. The back was narrow, and the shoulders but slightly hunched. The ginger hair hung over the back of a faded blue shirt. But the gun...that was the thing... it wasn't low, and a stiff length of leather from the belt to the holster forced the holster out at an angle. Not much of an angle...just right. Some gunfighters, especially the younger ones who tried to get a rep the hard way thought it was the thing to have the holster low...this was rough..on them. Once or twice he'd felt pity as he'd took his time and aimed for the centre of the forehead whilst the pseudo fast guns groped. He'd bagged three who'd never even cleared leather...and they wore their guns low...but Sumner didn't. Sumner's right hip sort of leaned out a little, and he lifted his head, sank the drink, and slowly turned. The grin on his face seemed to give the impression that the lips were fighting mighty hard to contain a guffaw. Sumner had his hands on the edge of the bar. Hell, he was confident...

"I've an upstate warrant, Jed," said Taylor. Hmm..not bad, he managed a quite pleasant intonation in his voice. Not bad at all. He wanted like hell to flex his right fingers...but Jed was watching for that.

"Now that's too bad, Sheriff. I like it here."

He turned to the white-faced barkeep and nodded down to his glass. The bottle chinked against the glass as the barkeep poured. Taylor grinned, and shifted his feet a mite, just to get his own chink in.

"Well, Jed (It was good psychology to call 'em by their christian names...it put them at their ease, then made them wonder...this man wasn't worrying ?) I'll allow you the drink, then I'll take your gun, and we'll go."

Mac, in the corner, spit. He was the town champ. Could hit the spittoon from ten yards. Missed it by a foot.

Sumner moved his right hand just a fraction downward...this was an old ploy, Taylor was surprised he'd tried it. The idea was to make him start ...to move his hand too..he wanted to , but Jed wanted him to, also, and that wouldn't do...

"The drink, Jed ?"

This was the thing. This was what counted. This was where Sumner would make his play...but if he was very good, he'd take the drink...first. It was double psychology. You told the man to take the drink, and he'd rebel ...why the hell should I ? ...but the good man said to himself, why not ?... let the Sheriff get all worked up whilst I fortify myself and make him wait ...and waiting wasn't good.

Sumner took his time. He licked his lips...obstensibly to retain the last drop of the liquid...

Then the tenseness again. Mac had a mouthful of juice, but he kept his cheeks distended.

Sumner crouched.

"You ain't getting my gun, Sheriff...of course, if you want it, come"

God, Sumner was fast.

He fired three times before Taylor's slug got him in the neck. Sumner's third got him in the leg. That was the thing..it's no good drawing fast and spitting lead indiscriminately. Better one accurate than three wild, even though the three came in the same split second as the one...

"Take him down the street, boys...no no, I'm alright."

Taylor replaced his Colt. He walked out. The leg was stiff and unfeeling, but he thumped it down and walked back to his office.

The slug had gone right through the flesh, although it was little more than a touch...another inch or so and it probably would have just about drawn blood...well, doc was just across the way.

He took off his belt, replaced the bullet in the Colt. Never know....

But he was slowing...the neck, it looked good to the boys, but it should have been between the eyes, that was his trademark. He bent to take off his silver spurs...one missing, up there somewhere...in the dust...that was bad, too.

He crossed to the wall with difficulty, ripped down the poster. He dropped it to the floorboards.

So.....

Word would get round....

Not between the eyes this time, and hit, too.....

There was no doubt...it would come...

The Day.....

John Berry
1961.



Whilst sorting out some old fanzines the other day I found ten copies of my THE COMPLETE FAAN. This was published during January 1959, and contains fifty pages, featuring ten of my stories, some of them reprints...and an eight page sort of fannish autobiography from which the publication gets its name. Interior illos are by ATOM and Eddie Jones, and a stiff cover is fitted (done by myself with much ingenuity). This publication is essential to a fan who has a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch space left on his bookshelf and will go to any extremes to fill the vacant space. Price (including postage).....35 cents.

THE 'PLANE FAX

I just want to spend a few pages dealing with the strategic capabilities of the Royal Air Force and the United States Air Force, as I promised to do, an issue or two ago. Actually, today I learned a most significant factor, which, if true, makes Polaris and Titan and Atlas obsolete. I'll shake you later, though!

I'll deal with the R.A.F. 'V' Force, first.

This is the British equivalent of the Strategic Air Command, which I've always greatly admired, ever since I saw the film with James Stewart in it!

The 'V' Force consists of three types, two of which are aeronautically unique...the Vickers Valiant, the Avro Vulcan and the Handley Page Victor...these three are illustrated on another page.

The Valiant is the only one to be used operationally, so far. It was used in the miserable Suez Campaign of 1956 to bomb Egyptian aerodromes. One hundred and four Valiants were built, the final one in 1957. It is the least effective of the three.

The Vulcan is the only Delta-wing type of bomber in service in the world. I've seen several, and wonderful aeroplanes they are, too.

Finally, the Victor...it has a crescent wing, and is a beautiful aeroplane...graceful and potent at the same time. It also has the honour of being the heaviest aeroplane to fly faster than sound. The American Hustler flies twice as fast, but it weighs less! It is an expensive craft, and there was a shock in August 1960 when the British Government curtailed the production of it because it 'couldn't carry the Douglas Skybolt.' The manufacturers, Messrs. Handley Page (who've been building bombers for the R.A.F. for years) promptly exhibited a Victor at the annual Farnborough Air Show last autumn with four Skybolt models, two under each wing.

Actually, these aeroplanes are frantically waiting for the Skybolt, but it will be a couple of years at least before it is operationally perfected in America.

The idea, as you probably know, is that the 'V' bombers fly towards their target (dare I say Russia?) and launch the Skybolt at it's target and turn away for home without crossing Russian territory. Of course, if my new information is true, there is no need for the Skybolt either. (I'm making you bewildered, aren't I?)

On the next page is a chart giving the most important details of the 'V' bombers.

	<u>Valiant</u>	<u>Vulcan</u>	<u>Victor</u>
<u>Power Plant.</u>	4 Rolls Royce Avon 204's.	4 B.S.Olympus 201	4 Rolls Royce Conway R.Co.II
<u>Loaded Weight.</u>	175,000 lb.	200,000 lbs.	200,000 lb.
<u>Maximum Speed.</u>	567 m.p.h.	620 m.p.h.	630 m.p.h.
<u>Service Ceiling.</u>	54,000 ft.	60,000 ft.	55,000 ft.
<u>Span</u>	114 ft. 4 in.	111 ft.	120 ft.
<u>Length</u>	108 ft. 3 in.	99 ft. 11 in.	114 ft. 11 in.
<u>Height</u>	32 ft. 2 in.	27 ft. 2 in.	30 ft. 1½ in.
<u>Wing Area.</u>	2,362 sq. ft.	3,964 sq. ft.	2,597 sq. ft.

Now for a few well chosen words about the aircraft of the U.S.A.F, particularly in the Strategic Air Command.

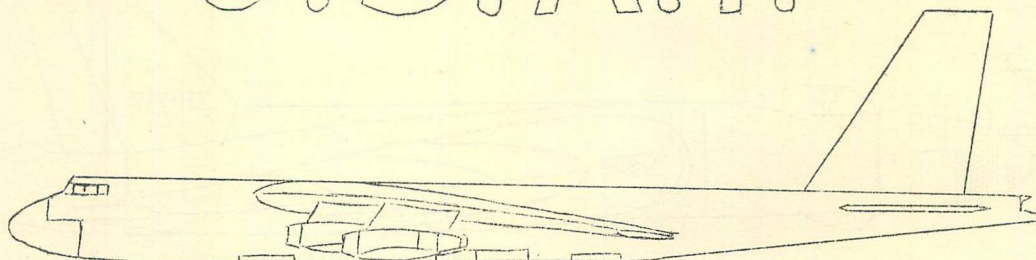
For several years, the brunt of S.A.C. work was carried by the exciting Boeing B-47 Stratojet. Three thousand of these were built until production ceased in 1957. Such is progress in design that as two Boeing Stratojet wings are withdrawn from S.A.C, only one of the Hustler or Strato-fortress wings takes its place ! I haven't illustrated the Stratojet, because it is being rapidly deactivated, and is likely to be out of service altogether at the beginning of next year. I recall I was tremendously thrilled with its pleasing lines when it first appeared way back when Jimmy Stewart hadn't got grey hair !

The Boeing B-52 G Stratofortress is a superb machine. It is vast in size, pleasing in design. Its main function is as an air platform for the Hound Dog air-to-surface missile, although possibly it will be used to carry the Skybolt when it is ready for duty. A further development of the Stratofortress, the B-52 H, is due to fly this summer. A total of 712 Stratofortresses of all types have been ordered to date.

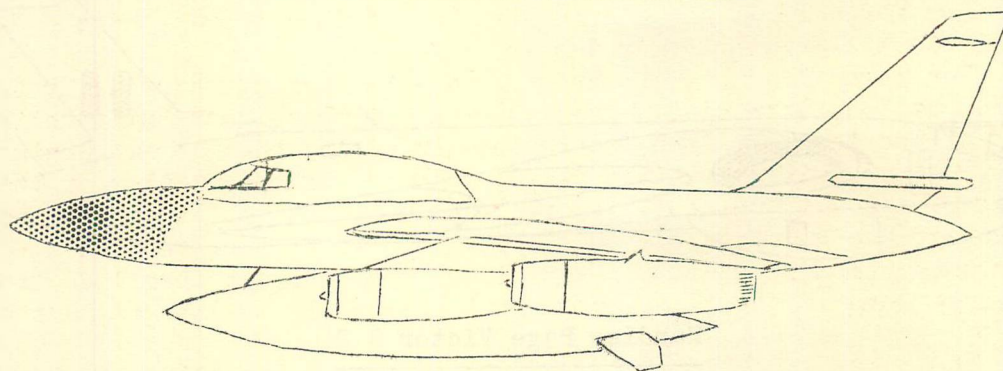
The Convair B-58 A Hustler shook me when I first saw photographs and silhouettes of it. An aeroplane of revolutionary appearance with a maximum speed much the same as Britain's latest standard fighter, the Lightning. It first flew in 1956, and has been developed to such an extent that it is now in service with the U.S.A.F's 43rd Bombardment Wing...as a medium bomber or missile platform.

As most of you know, I have been an aviation enthusiast for more than twenty years. As design and performance have increased, many wonderful and original designs have appeared, giving me, over the years, pleasure and bewilderment beyond description. When I sought out secret British military types when I was young, during World War II, I flipped. But I've never flipped as much as I did a few months ago, when I first read details of the magnificent American project, the North American B-70, Valkyrie. It's as sleek as an aeronautical greyhound...as striking in design as any aeroplane ever conceived. The U.S.A.F. wants at least 200 of these, but the programme suffered a cutback at the end of last year, and it will be years before it comes into service. It is planned to fly at over 80,000 ft at over 2,200 m.p.h...with a range of over 8,000 miles. This should make it immune to any known defensive weapon. Don't worry, the U-2 came down in Russia because of flame-out...the Russians haven't anything to touch it.

U.S.A.F.



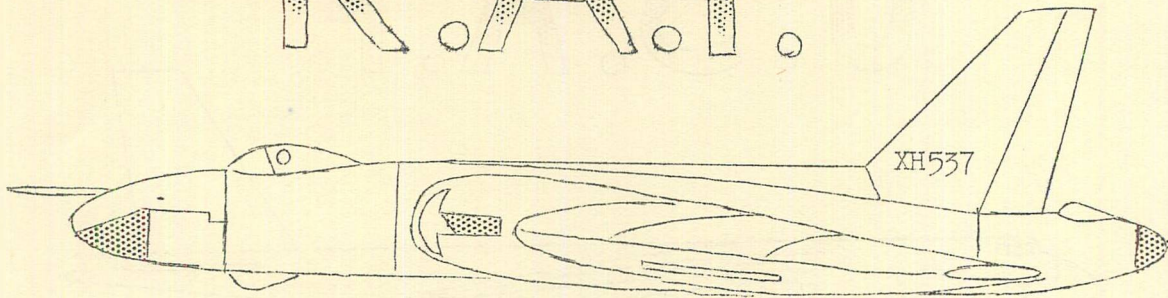
Boeing B - 52 G Stratofortress.



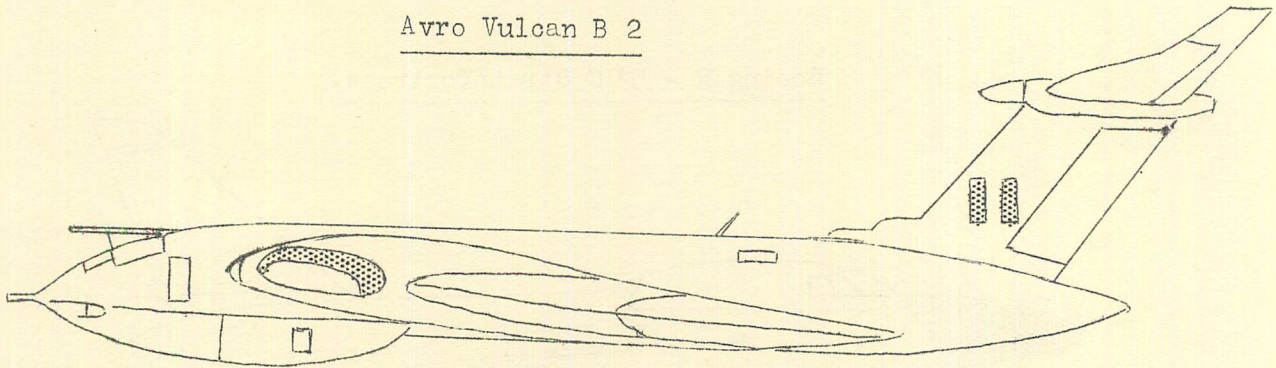
Convair B - 58 A Hustler.

	<u>Stratofortress</u>	<u>Hustler.</u>
<u>Power Plant.</u>	Eight Pratt & Whitney J57-p-43-W	Four G.E. J-79-GE-5
<u>Loaded Weight.</u>	488,000 lbs.	160,000 lbs.
<u>Maximum Speed.</u>	665 m.p.h.	1,385 m.p.h.
<u>Service Ceiling.</u>	55,000 ft.	50,000 ft.
<u>Span</u>	185 ft.	56 ft. 10 in.
<u>Length</u>	157 ft. 6½ in.	96 ft. 9 in.
<u>Height</u>	40 ft. 8 in.	31 ft. 5 in.
<u>Gross Wing Area.</u>	4,000 sq. ft.	1,542 sq. ft.

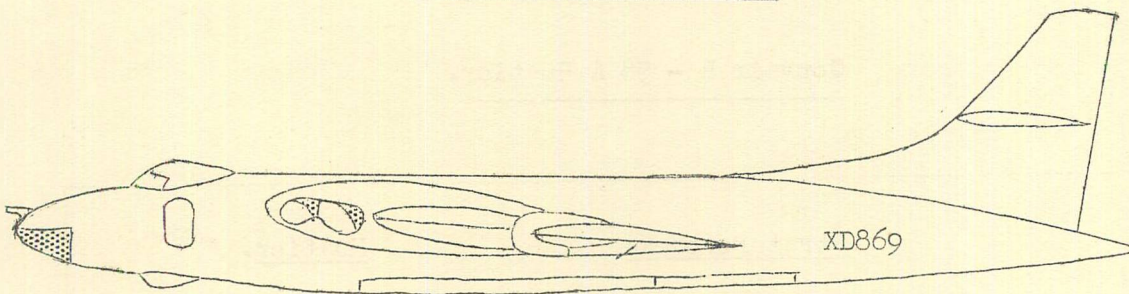
R.A.F.



Avro Vulcan B 2



Handley Page Victor B 2



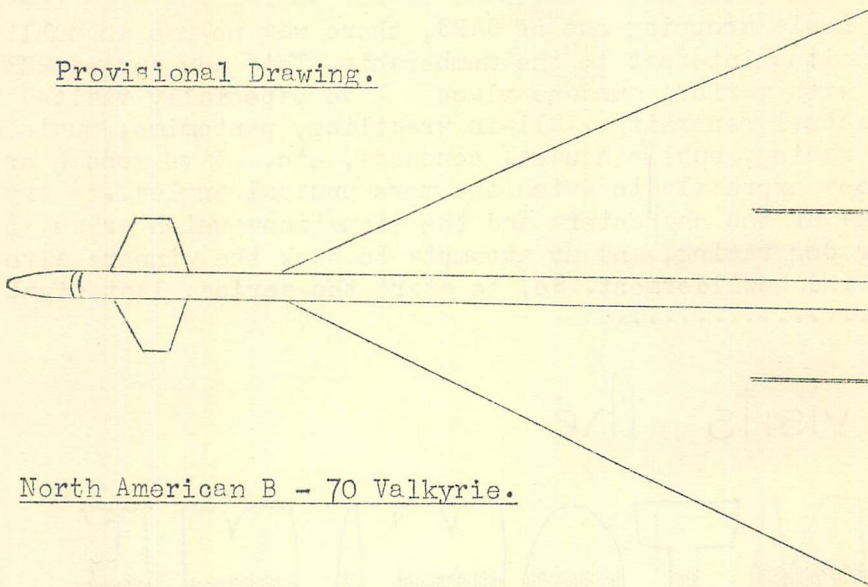
Vickers Valiant Bk 1

On the next page I've sketched a provisional plan view of the Valkyrie... doesn't it look GOOD***

If full development funds are forthcoming immediately, the first S.A.C. wing could be ready for operational service in, say 1966 or 1967. But will procrastination set in? The German's did the same sort of thing., back in WW II. Some magnificent designs were mucked about with, folks who controlled things dithered and dallied...and aeroplanes such as the Messerschmitt Me 262, which could have stopped the daylight bombing of Germany by the Americans, did not appear until it was too late.

Let's hope the Valkyrie programme goes ahead as fast as possible.

Provisional Drawing.



North American B - 70 Valkyrie.

Now for my big news. This is red hot at the time of writing, but most of you won't read this until April 1961, and today is the 27th of January.

It's elementary when you think of it. The British invented radar...well, it looks as though we've come up with the greatest invention of the decade, and such a simple thing, too.

I got my information from a publication which is backed by the British Air Ministry. I cannot vouch for the authenticity of it, but I'll tell you the facts.

The Americans were warned by the R.A.F. that 'V' bombers would fly over the American mainland on operational training.

The bombers went, flew over America, and the American authorities didn't know. In other words, it is possible to fly over America IN IMUNITY. (I was carried away there, and botched the spelling.)

The reason, British ANTI-RADAR equipment fitted to the 'V' bombers.

If this is true (and I assume it to be, other facts in this periodical -the U-2 affair, months before we were supposed to know what it was doing) like I said at the beginning, the ultra-expensive I.C.B.M. are out of date- to be able to fly undetected over enemy territory has always been the dream, and here it is.

Let's fit this equipment to the U-2, and have another try !!!

John Berry
1961.

I've decided to write a new series of articles in POT POURRI, now that the CANASTA series and AVIATION ODDITIES have come to an end. I was fond of AVIATION ODDITIES, and could have continued it for years, but with the only true aerophile Al Lewis dropping out of SAPS, there was no use in publishing material with a limited interest to the membership. This new series BERRY VISITS...it deals with various mundane places I've especially visited to try my hand at more factual reporting...all-in wrestling, pantomime, music hall, dog racing, horse racing, public houses, concerts, etc. I've gone (or shall go) to these places expressly to watch the more unusual angles..to try and paint word pictures of the characters and the situations which arise. I do not patronize horse or dog racing, and my attempts to back the winners already fills me with awe and bewilderment. So, to start the series, last night I went to the pantomime.....

Berry visits the

PANTOMIME

I took with me my family, and Terry and Norma, whom you've read about in previous POT POURRI's. I managed to book six seats in the circle. I stress managed, because my bookings were made over the 'phone, and from the resultant conversation I was led to believe that I was damn lucky to get these seats. Business was just GREAT !

The locale was the EMPIRE THEATRE, Belfast, about which rumour has it that the theatre is to be turned into a block of shops, a fate which has also similarly dealt with many fine theatres (and cinemas) in Britain.

The pantomime was CINDERELLA, but with a modern slant ' A FANTASTIC FABLE OF MODERN BELFAST '

The two stars were Denis Lotis and Edna Savage. Lotis, a South African, domiciled in England for some years, is well known on TV, and has made a lot of records. I don't know how well known he is in America. He is handsome and has a nice catchy voice, oozing with romance. Edna Savage had a swift rise to fame. She was a telephonist, and made the break to the big time with a sweet singing voice and an innocent expression. She had a mite of press publicity about a year ago with her marriage to a rock 'n roll singer, Terry Done, who was also well known on TV. They married in a blaze of publicity, and then Terry was called up for his National Service with the army. With trumpets blazing he went to his training centre. The army made great publicity of this. In two days, Terry did a sick, and was invalided out in less than three weeks for psychological reasons. Miss Savage let her feelings about this be known. "Only two days..." she is quoted as saying in the press. She dropped out of the entertainment world for some time, and her appearance in Belfast was the first I'd heard of her since the resultant marriage break-up.

The pantomime was due to start at 7.30, so I got my family there early so as we wouldn't get trampled underfoot in the rush...I'd also asked Terry and Norma to be there early, too.

So there we were, half an hour before the show was to start, and the place

was deserted. I asked Diane to check the tickets, to see if it was next week, or last week, but no, everything was O.K. Tonight was the night. At 7.20 pm, one or two more people, equally as bewildered as I was, came to the entrance. One man, prepared for the crush of his life, had a crash helmet on. No crush though. We handed our tickets over to the attendant, who tried to hide a sneer, and we climbed the stairs to the circle. I had most especially asked for the seats to be in the centre of the circle, so as to give me a good clear view of the stage, to be able to make some accurate reporting.

Actually, except for the girl who showed us to our seats, we were alone, although I'm pleased to report that before the curtain went up, a few more people arrived. The circle was about one fifth full, but a quick peek at the stalls lifted my heart somewhat...it was well packed. But we sat in our seats and I had intimated definitely that I wanted to be in the exact middle seat. You're not going to believe this, but it's true, honest.

The Empire Theatre is old. And when it was built, they didn't know so much about structural stresses and strains as they do now. The circle was therefore supported by three huge pillars, two close to where the circle joined the wall, and one, an even bigger one, in the front middle of the circle. In the exact middle. I sat down, handed round sweets, lit a cigarette, looked round me at the empty seats and the huddled appearances of the others who had taken circle seats, and I looked stagewards and all I saw was this wide pillar. I could have put my arms round it. In fact, I did...for support. The rest of them laughed, and it was so laughable...the circle was deserted for all intents and purposes, and I had managed to get the one seat in the circle from which the stage was hidden. Naturally, with so much virgin territory around, we moved to a more advantageous row of seats, but the Berry Luck was there, O.K.

The orchestra entered one by one...they plucked a few strings here and there, and then struck up the National Anthem. We all stood up, and whilst the conductor flashed his baton, I could see his eyes anxiously doing a circuit of the stalls, the circle and the gallery...a search which his eyes showed to be more apprehensive as the anthem continued...a look which made me certain that he wasn't working to contract but had plumbed for a share of the night's takings.....

The curtains opened to reveal a tramp sitting on a tin box in the centre of the stage, which was otherwise bare. He spoke in a Belfast accent, as broad as he could make it, and said that, about to be unfolded, was a Belfast story. This bold psychological move identified the audience with the scene of the pantomime, and with a quip or two, he left the stage for the plot to unfold.

Buttons then pranced on. Buttons is a character on which British pantomime almost revolves...one of the evergreen characters which means so much to an audience. He was attired in a black tight-fitting jacket, and black trousers, the required attire for his part as a general factotum in Alderman Fitzroy's residence. He at once prepared a clever ploy. He held up a lump of rock and said proudly it was a magic stone given to him by the Good Fairy. If he rubbed it, she would come arunning. Buttons (played by a local Belfast actor with some talent) then put the magic stone at the corner of the stage, and pleaded that if anyone should attempt to lay hands on it, the audience should scream "Buttons" at the top of their voices. He held a dozen auditions until the scream was as he wanted it, and then the stage went dark, was immediately relit, and two 'comedians' made their appearance. Being dead cunning, they sauntered craftily to the corner of the stage, as if to smile at the people in the boxes, which overlooked the stage. Being highly intelligent, I noticed that this was but a subterfuge to lull the audience into a false sense of security whilst one of them made a pounce on the magic stone, and just as this was to happen, I shouted "BUTTONS" at the top of my voice. Quite carried away, I was. Actually, he only bent down to tie up his shoelace, and

and my warning was wasted, but at least it showed I was closely if a little too enthusiastically following the plot. My family and friends, as one, moved away to show that they weren't with me, because a spot-light lit up my seat. I bent down to tie my shoelace, and pleaded with them to surround me again.

Satisfied that they had hooked a sucker, the two comedians gave with some patter which I'd heard since my parents first took me to the pantomime in Birmingham when I was three years old....then the scene changed to outside the City Hall, Belfast, where a crowd jostled around a big plywood Christmas tree. Buttons stood on a box and made a speech. He also asked a bystander what was the difference between a man who'd seen the Niagara Falls, a man who hadn't seen the Niagara Falls, and the orchestra. The man said he didn't know, and Buttons said, with clear diction so as no one would miss the subtle implications that the man who had seen Niagara Falls had 'Seen the Mist'. The man who hadn't seen Niagara Falls had 'Missed the scene'. The man then asked where did the orchestra come in. Buttons pointed to the wings and said 'That door over there'. Colin, my ten year old son, had hysterics at this superb wit, and two other children of tender years were carried out. The scene moved back to Alderman Fitzroy's kitchen, where Edna Savage, attired in a purple dress which was very ragged, was doing a kitchen chore. Someone in the orchestra put a lighted match to a tin box, and after a burst of magnesium had subsided, the Good Fairy was in attendance. She said that she would transport Cinderella to the City Hall (for reasons I couldn't gather) and back there again the orchestra struck up a waltz, and the crowd danced with each other. At this juncture, Denis Lotis entered the scene, and had a muffled conversation with Cinderella, kissed her, and thus ended the first act.

The lights went up ,and Colin was sent with a ten shilling note to buy ice cream, but the attendant couldn't change it...this demonstrated all too clearly that the financial situation was rough. Colin had to go to the bar to get the note changed, and he reported that it was deserted too.

The start of the second act revealed Denis Lotis with another man in his suite, and it transpired that Denis was Prince Charming, and he wanted to get hep with a nice chick, but his father, who was King, demanded all sorts of protocol, with the result that Denis only saw the cream of society, and the gals in that lot were too boring. Dandy, his adviser, suggested a jaunt to a clip joint in town, incognito. Denis said this was a good idea, the scene changed, and the chorus entertained us with a few dances. The chorus of dancers were six girls, of all shapes and sizes. Their dress was merely tights and some sort of tunic which started where their tights ended, if you know what I mean. I must confess that I didn't notice the skill of their dancing, I was more interested in them as females stripped down to the essentials. The pretty one had a smashin' figure, and pouted a little like Bardot in a tantrum. One blond was big...big thighs and things, and everytime she bent over or kicked up a leg her tights strained. No one knows how the orchestra controlled themselves. The other four were presentable, and danced with abandon, really giving of their all. Their stocking were darned here and there, and their navels assumed hypnotic winks, but if you're the sort of dirty beast who likes to see scantily clad gals nipping about revealing their nether regions in technicolour, weeeell, welcome to the club. A good act.

The clip joint scene.....Denis came in in casual wear, and Dandy was in a smart suit. The girls rushed Dandy, but Denis sang 'Mack the Knife ' with spirit, and the scene ended with the six chorus girls leaping on him.

Later, in Prince Charmings room, Lotis talked with Dandy about a dream he'd had where he'd seen a beautiful girl outside the City Hall, and Denis sang a song rather nicely which was applauded by an audience rather sparse with egoboo.

So the pantomime went on, building up to the climax where Cinderella

sped to the ball in a spaceship (a novel touch which pleased me) danced with Prince Charming, and then ran like hell when the clock chimed like mad at twelve o'clock.

The second act closed, giving the audience a chance to work out how the plot was to develop. Being in a devilish mood, I sent Colin for more ice cream, but gave him a pound note to change. The attendant sent him to the bar, who in turn suggested he should try the cashier downstairs. Yep, I guess trade was bad.

When the curtain went up again, Buttons came on the stage with one of the comedians, and said he had a wonderful song which he wanted us to all join in with him and sing several choruses of. The lyric was so enchanting and poignant that I wrote the words down, so that you will be able to share with me the vital spark of show business which was so ably demonstrated by Buttons, and us of the audience, who, hypnotised, joined in :-

Why does a brown cow give white milk when he always eats green grass ?

That's the burning question.

WHAT is your suggestion ?

You don't know....

I don't know...

Don't we feel an ass,

BUT.....

Why does a brown cow give white milk when he always eats green grass ?

With a muttered remark that it was in the Top Ten in Ghana, Buttons led us to the wood where the shoe Cinderella had left behind at the ball was being tried on the local belles, who included the Two Ugly Sisters, wonderfully cast, if I may say so.

The crystal slipper fitted Cinderella, and with a nice lovey-dovey song by Messrs Lotis and Savage, the pantomime came to a close. It took over three hours, and, looking at it as a whole, it was entertaining. Denis Lotis was competent in all he did, and was most suited to the part of Prince Charming.

However, when they all paraded separately for their final egoboo, it was Buttons and the comedian who got most...Lotis and Miss Savage cleverly making a late entrance when the audience was applauding the whole cast, so as they could say the loud clapping was primarily for them.

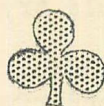
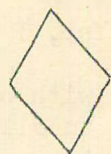
It was a pity that so many seats were empty. Quite obviously, TV has been the death blow to the live stage. Denis Lotis in particular is a firm TV favourite, and the fact that the crowds were not thronging to see him can be attributed to the fact that they didn't want to miss WAGON TRAIN.

Insofar as I can see, and in conjunction with what I have read, the theatre and music hall is all but dead...in Belfast at least. The potted sophisticated brutality of TV epics such as '77 SUNSET STRIP'...the sheer physical appeal of 'CHEYANNE'...the pathos of 'M SQUAD' and the utter nonsense of 'MARTIN KANE' and 'DIAL 999', etc, is much more preferable than going along to see a chap giving his all on the bare stage. At least, on the music hall there was chance to show you didn't think much of the act. Now, a hypnotised public sit mutely every night of the week in front of the TV, watching and enjoying crap they'd never stand for a moment if it were on the stage, and they had a tomato in their right hand.

I hope, I sincerely hope, that there will be a pantomime in Belfast next year.

But I fear I may have seen the last.....

I must admit that THE SLYCHOLOGY OF CANASTA, in POT POURRI #16, was scheduled to be the last of my lectures on Canasta...but since making that decision, I've played quite a few games, and a couple of incidents happened which have made me decide to give you keen students of the game the benefit of my enthralling experiences.....

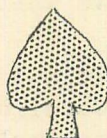


THE

BIG



BLUFF



The first incident didn't please the people I was playing with. But what I say is, if you're going to waste fanatic time in playing Canasta, you've got to play to win. And any gamesmanship play is permissible. On this occasion, an opponent made a miscalculation. I saw it, but he didn't. Was it my duty to tell him, and lose the game? My opinion is that a player is personally responsible for the layout of his cards on the table. I play to win...I play hard, and I use subterfuge so long as it doesn't mislead the rules. I got blamed for bad sportsmanship... and I have only myself to blame, because, when the game finished, not satisfied with victory, I had to go and explain what the other chap had done wrong. It was like this.....

Three of us were playing, Diane (my wife) her brother Terry, and myself. During this monumental game, I discovered THE BIG BLUFF, which this lecture mainly deals with. After this episode, Terry had 2,840, I had 3,800 and Diane was just under 2,000. Terry had good cards, and by a couple of pack-sealings, cleverly done, he had a handful of cards. The whole table in front of him was covered with melds and near melds, including a clean one. I hadn't put any cards down, I'd not picked up the pack, but I had one concealed canasta, and I wanted one card, a King or a wild one, to make the other and go out. I had got my hand in this ripe condition by pure luck, and knowing what cards to throw away. The pack was big, I didn't pick up what I wanted, and had to give Terry an eight, which gave him the reject pile, because he had a Joker and two eights already on the table. Flushed with delight, he duly picked the pack up, but laid down two more eights before doing so. He had not noticed he'd already got an eight meld. There was another eight in the pile he'd picked up, which meant that on the table, in two piles, he had a canasta of eights. I got a wild card next time, and went out with two concealed canastas. I didn't win that hand, but got just under 5,000. Terry was just about the same, and like I intimated a paragraph or two ago, I won the game next hand. But if Terry had known about his eight canasta, he would have won. As I was dealing the next hand (the winning hand for me) I told him of his error, and he didn't like it at all. I simply said that he should look after his own cards, but he said a true sport would have told him.....personally, I don't think so. I'll leave the opinion to you avid canasta players.....

THE BIG BLUFF...it pleased me. This was the situation. My score was well over 3,000. Terry and Diane were both round about 900, which meant that I had a 120 meld, and the other two had 50. I had horrible cards. For some considerable time I couldn't even put a 15 meld down. It was shocking. Even with such a bad

hand I managed to retain a certain control over the game. You've got to control the game if you want to be a big time canasta player. You've got to get control and keep control...and in this particular instance it was rough. Diane and Terry had both melded, and I hadn't the faintest chance of doing so. Soon, Terry had quite a few potential melds. I controlled the game to allow Diane to make one canasta, and almost complete another. From then on, I gave Terry the pack as soon as it had built up. In order to do this, I had to forget about melding. Fate was against me, anyway, because I just couldn't pick up what I wanted. Eventually, I did get four sixes and two wild cards, but wild cards were at a premium, the others seemed to have them all, and all the sixes were accounted for, and anyway, my plan precluded the eventuality of melding. Terry was pleased at picking up the pack so often, and soon had four canastas. Then I played my ploy, as Terry handed round cigarettes, I purposely dropped half my cards face up ...and by design the ones I dropped were the four sixes and the two wild cards. Naturally, I was aghast. I made some remark 'Hell, you all know I've got two concealed canastas now.' This was a double bluff. I had cleverly got Terry befuddled with my playing, and I had dropped the six cards so cleverly that Terry had presumed, as I had wanted him to, that I had dropped the cards on purpose, as I had in fact done. But I knew what his reasoning would be. He'd have to think 'John wants me to think he has almost two concealed canastas...that's why he dropped his cards on purpose for me to see. But what was his motive? It must be that the six cards he dropped was all he had, he had nothing like two concealed ones. Therefore, he realises that if I don't go out, I'll win, because he has no chance of getting any canastas. QED...he wants me to go out, and me with a handful of cards...I'm going on to win.' In any case, he knew from my score that I couldn't win with two concealed canastas at that stage, and his policy was to build up his score whilst he could. If he went out, he wouldn't be near my score...and a little mental arithmetic would show him that I couldn't have much more than 100 against me even if he did go out.

You see, my gambit was all too obviously designed as a ploy against Terry but in fact I was working against Diane.

She was in a position to go out....I was giving Terry the reject pile all the time, and wouldn't it be great to catch me with almost two concealed canastas in my hand. She'd dreamed about being able to do that. So I gave Terry the pile again, and I saw her mouth stiffen. She knew I was giving Terry the pack on purpose, because I wanted to get him on 120 meld, and she knew that I didn't care what her meld was, because she wasn't such a good player as Terry, and therefore I could control her...as soon as she'd meld at 90 I'd seal the pack...Terry wouldn't give it her, and I wouldn't give it to Terry. She'd be the sucker. But, from her eyes...this was the current situation. I had presumably two concealed canastas almost ready to put down. My dropped cards had revealed at least one. I was giving the pack to Terry on purpose to build up his meld, because I wanted him to be 120 too. (There's nothing worse than having a 120 meld, and your two opponents are at 50.) Therefore, if she went out, she would get the extra hundred points, she would catch me with two concealed ones (oh, bliss) and Terry would have a handful of cards against him.

So she went out.

This is what I had done.

a) I had got Terry's meld to just over 3000, so that he would have as much difficulty as me in initially melding.

b) I had made Diane go out exactly when I wanted her to...she would be 90 meld, but I could probably control her.

c) I had merely 80 off my score.

d) Terry, had he but known it, had the game in the palm of his hand, but I had stopped him from melding with abandon.

e) From a disastrous beginning, with both my opponents melding at 50 and building up big scores, and me with exceptionally bad hand (120 meld,) I had stopped the game at the exact second I wanted it stopped, both my opponents having the scores I wanted them to have.

This control was derived, as I've stressed, from a terrible opening hand. It shows just what can be done by bluffing...more particularly, by giving the impression you are bluffing one person when you are actually bluffing another ! This is the subtle part of this fascinating game. There is oh so much more to it than just melding and sealing the pack. You've got to get a firm grip of the game. You've got to make things go the way you want them to. You've got to take chances sometimes, but an elemental skill will eliminate the chances, and make them near certainties. If your hand is such that you cannot help giving the pack away all the time to the player on your left, you've got to give the impression that you don't have to do it, you are doing it for a reason. The player then starts to ponder what that reason is. The obvious thought which will strike him or her is that you are trying to make a concealed canasta, that you are saving particular suits. The obvious ploy to this is for your opponent to go out and catch you with a big hand against you. You must never appear worried...the only time you should show worry is when you are on top of the world, and ready to lay out two concealed canastas. You've got to strive to get the opposition putting different motives on your strange actions. If you are known as a good player, and do something unusual, such as giving a healthy reject pile away, they'll wonder why...and if you've got them trained to expect a concealed canasta at the drop of a hat, they'll begin to get worried.

I may have given the impression that I think I'm a wonderful player. I think I am a good player. I've played very much....sometimes as late as 2 am in bed with my wife, and that's enthusiasm. I've tried to develop the technique of trying to discover what my opponents are saving, and of counting every card, so as to know what to throw out when the pack is sealed. Actually, I used to be a prolific pack-sealer, but experience has taught me that there are easier ways of getting the same result. Just recently, I've played all night without sealing the pack, I make other people seal it and waste their wild cards. I think the most single important factor in canasta is knowing what to throw away...and making allowances for bad players. My clever ruses only fail with bad players, who haven't got the skill to know what I'm not trying to do.

Some of my opponents say the same thing about me.

That's the way I want it.

MEMO.

You'll recall in a previous issue of POT POURRI I mentioned that I had a considerable number of fanzines to dispose of. Thank you all for your enquiries for specific issues...but glad to say I've sold a large part of my collection to a certain American fan. The deal is for one thousand, and as a matter of interest, I'm sending about twenty per day. My wife is pleased, the fanzines took up a hell of a part of our front room which is large, and, fortunately, unfurnished. Only trouble with the whole thing is that Diane now says that I've got to decorate and furnish the room. Now it's too late, I think I prefer the fanzine decor....

FARTHEST

NORTH

by

GEORGE

LOCKE

Chapter 2

They say a writer's personality often comes out in his written work. I wouldn't be exaggerating when I say that John is every bit as enthusiastic as he sounds from the quantity and style of his work. Enthusiasm is as much a part of him as an umbrella and bowler is of a gentleman of the city, a beanie of fannish mythology and sticky fingers of John W. Campbell Jr. Enthusiasm for old castles - as recounted in a recent issue of this SAPSzine, enthusiasm for Canasta, enthusiasm for dactylocopy- and above all, enthusiasm for fandom.

Yet, almost as though it were due to a subconscious desire to submit to the whims of a free-wheeling, aimless world, there is his love for television. Lying in a chair, practically horizontal, and with his hands clasped behind his head, you can see the mirror-image of the true John. But it is really a tenuous image - ready to be shattered at the drop of a hat. Like that afternoon, when John's brother-in-law, Terry, came round in his father's car.

The weather was still beautiful. It was an ideal opportunity to go for a drive in the country. John had been talking about a 5,000 year old ancient relic, and how he'd searched on numerous occasions for it. How he'd pin-pointed it's position on the map and then gone across country by way of some hundreds of fields in search of it. How, starving in the wilderness beyond Dundonald, he'd nearly lost his life before being picked up by a sheep-dog...how, eventually, he'd found it.

"We'll go there," John the Archaeologist cried. "We will take the family. We will take Colin. The fresh air will do him cold the world of good. We will take little Kathleen. We will take Diane. And we will take George."

George looked suitably enthusiastic.

The only one who wasn't exuberant was poor Terry, who was thinking of the effect of stony Irish paths upon the springs of what would be a heavily loaded car.

"But it will test them to the limit - and you'll know that you have the best springs in the world."

"Or the worst," muttered Terry.

And we did go- to this ancient wreck. The route John suggested ran through some private grounds, and Terry was somewhat dubious at our reception in the game. I could see his point to a certain extent - it

was not polite for a large cream and beige car to barge like a maddened elephant through a beautiful bed of roses or to shatter a picnic party by the side of an ornamental pond on a Sunday.

"There'll be nothing like that," we persuaded Terry, "Only a couple of farms."

Terry drove carefully along the farm track until we came to a gate. It was open, but as it lay on a corner, we could see nothing round the bend in the track. For all we knew, there was a machine gun post awaiting us. Terry's hands were sweating on the steering wheel, and his knees were trembling.

"Forward," cried John, the dauntless explorer.

"Nooooo," stuttered poor Terry, who would be first in the line of fire. "We will be shot to pieces. We will be arrested."

Diane and the children trembled also. There was only John and myself who made no objection to carrying on - and I'd fainted.

"Onward ~~the wagon~~" exulted ~~Major Adams~~ the Goon.

The car jerked into motion, and edged nervously round the corner. Terry half opened the door in case he had to make a break for it and escape across country on foot. After a minute, the rear wheels hadreluctantly followed the front wheels, and we found ourselves confronted by a scruffy looking countryman of about eighty, complete with whiskers, a sickle, and a plate of Kellogg's Cornflakes.

He rose creakingly to his feet, spilling the Sunshine Breakfast, the sickle raised and his features became knotted by a paroxysm of hate and dissolution.

"Run him down," ordered John.

The car stopped, abruptly.

"What the flicking hell have you stopped -sorry Diane - for ?"

Terry tried to force the car into motion again. There was a tremendous jerk and the engine stalled. Frantically, he tried to start it again, while the old man tottered forward, muttering strange Irish phrases and swinging the sickle. At last, the engine coughed into motion again, and the car shot forward. It missed the sickly patriarch by inches, and slapped into a series of bricks strewn about the track. Eventually, Terry balanced the loss of sizeable chunks of the paternal car by gaining control, and we returned to a semblance of normal travel.

It wasn't far to the relic."Pull up here" ordered John. We stopped in the middle of nowhere, between a couple of fields, where we were regarded with contented lassitude by half a dozen cows. At least, we hoped they were cows.

"Where are the fabulous stones ?" grunted Terry, feeling the abrasions on his backside tenderly.

The Goon pointed grandly to the north."THERE".

From the parked car ran a low hedge of brambles, at the end of which were five or six fairly large chunks of granite, surmounted by an enormous flat stone. "Five thousand years old," John went on, guide book fashion.

We went up to them. Beneath the flat stone was an empty space.

"Once was buried here the body of an old Irish nobleman," intoned John reverently."These stones marked his final resting place."

"What are they called ?" we asked.

"The Kemp Stones," supplied the Goon, hair flying wildly in the strong breeze. He climbed the stones. He stood on their summit, hands lifted to the might of the gale, and proclaimed to the Celtic Lords waiting in its teeth, in particular to Cuchulain the Mighty : "The Kemp Stones, named after an Irish

Earl."

And stood there, unkempt man on the Kemp Stones, while we waited for lightening or whatever agency was nearest to strike him down.

After savouring the historic atmosphere of the hallowed spot for a few moments, John pointed out a hill in the distance, on the summit of which soared a tower.

"The original Tower of Trufandom," John said, "It was this tower that inspired Walt and Bob to write The Enchanted Duplicator. The mundane amongst us call it Scrabo Tower."

We piled into the car, and set off towards the hill. It was about half a mile from the town of Newtownards, upon which most of the blame for Walt's cumbersome address should be laid...about eight or ten miles from Belfast. We weren't sure whether a car could reach the summit, but we decided to try anyway. We eventually found a track which led in the right direction, and decided to chance it, particularly as a notice said we could go that way.

The car protested some, but by now Terry had become infused with some of the extra gallons of John's enthusiasm, and, ignoring the rough surface, gave her the gas. It was a narrow path, with just enough room for a car of reasonably moderate proportions to pass. Obviously a ploy designed to prevent the ingress of American tourists - but I fancy they'll have to dream up another ploy, now that America has gone into the baby car racket...

It would have been interesting if another car had met us going in the opposite direction.

However, we reached the summit. It was a howling gale at this height, and the view was a brilliantly fresh panorama of County Down. It must have been at least five hundred feet high, what a site for gliding, I imagined. Indeed, we saw several gulls poised motionless at the crest of the hill, making no effort, yet neither sinking nor rising.

I must have spoken my thoughts, for John's voice sounded soft by my side.

"There are no gliders in Northern Ireland, as far as I know. In fact, the only flying club at all is that belonging to Short and Harlands, the aircraft people. They use Newtownards airfield, just down there."

Several hundred feet below, by the edge of a lough....I could see a small field intersected by two or three tarmac runways. A small monoplane, which John informed me was an Auster, was just bumbling busily along the grass, finally managing a take-off with the agility of an over-loaded pigeon. Another aircraft - a Tiger Moth - was parked near what appeared to be the club house, and a third 'plane was buzzing merrily around the clouds a few miles to the north, towards Bangor.

And fitfully at first, but gathering strength rapidly, the idea came to us that we might, just might, be able to get a couple of joy flights. We gave Scrabo, a tower meaning, when translated into civilised tongue, Hill Keep, the once over, before rallying off to try our luck....

George Locke.

I really meant to give George more space here, but being ignorant, I've hogged the issue. Sorry about this, but it's not so bad, really, because it means you have the good luck to look forward to much more of this joyous Locke-type descriptive writing...which I think is pretty wonderful.....

SCHOOL

AND

BOMBS

AND

WORK

AND THINGS

In the last gripping installment of my teenage life, you remember, I returned to Birmingham from evacuation. So I'll use up the next fifty or sixty pages describing my experiences during my working years before I joined the army...I really could let myself go with long descriptive paragraphs, but I'll and keep to the maximum given above.....

Back in Birmingham...the first enquiry I made elicited the delightful news that Yardley Grammar School had been bombed.

In impact, this was tantamount to hearing that CRY had won the HUGO at the PittCon.

In great glee, I cycled the several miles into the murkycentre of Birmingham to view the remains and gloat. It was somewhat

distressing to find that the German bombers were not so accurate as I would have imagined. Mustn't have got my postcard. They'd only hit one wing, and even as I watched, a gang of workmen were busily engaged in putting up a wooden hut. Foiled again.

In a couple of weeks, a letter came ordering me back to school. I only had a short time to do, and I would have thought that my lamentable scholastic record would have made the extra schooling unnecessary. But I had to go back.

The headmaster called me in, and said he was rather baffled. If he put me in a class which was commensurate with my knowledge, I'd be back to short trousers. On the other hand, if he put me in a class with the rest of my age group, I wouldn't be able to understand what the teacher was talking about. I said school was daft, and I wanted to go to work. He winced, I remember. He said as I would be leaving soon, he'd put me in the top class, as an experiment.

It was smashin'. French was in the curriculum. It was all Greek to me. It was no use trying to learn it, so I sat and dreamed all the time..mostly about aeroplanes. I used to copy my pals homework. Stan Griffiths, he was called, and up till then he was a student of high promise. He sat next to me, and I held impromptu lessons on aircraft recognition during French. One of my best converts. He was clever though, and swotted up his daily lessons at night. I persuaded him to come in early every morning, and let me copy his French homework, and I did it so thoroughly one day that I even copied his name at the head of the paper instead of mine. The French Mistress banished me from the class..and this made me quite happy, because it opened new ground...it appeared that, with examinations pending, scholars who didn't stand a pupa chance of passing in particular subjects were allowed to drop those subjects and go

to the school library to study up on other subjects they were taking. As a result of this order, I found myself full time in the library studying nothing. Another conference with the headmaster, and he drew up the following subjects I had to take in the exams. It was the minimum one could take. Most everyone else had several others :-

English Grammar

History

Geography

Mathematics

Art

Scripture.....

I considered my chances.

I was excellent at Art.....mediocre in English...moderate in Geography and absolutely clueless about Maths, Scripture and History.

I knew I wouldn't pass the exam...School Certificate as it was called. I knew beyond a shadow of doubt I wouldn't pass...it was as obvious as the fact that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Therefore, why study?

Most of the others in school (and we had girls too) were nervous wrecks as the exams came nearer. They marvelled at me. I swaggered about as carefree as a gypsy. I drew aeroplanes in plain view of the teachers. I became cheeky. A teacher would note my inattention and shout "What are you doing, Berry?" "Drawing a Hawker Hurricane, Miss" I replied. The teachers, I feel on looking back, were sorry for me. They muttered under their breaths, but didn't take any drastic action.

Came the exams.....

On the History paper I executed a superb three-dimensional illustration of the Westland Lysander, showing many of the main structural details...I would have loved to have kept it for myself, but I had to hand it in. On the Maths paper I just signed my name and left it at that, on principal. I felt it meet to do the same on the Scripture paper, too. Art, well, I did a superb painting of a tulip...I knew it was near genius. English Grammar, I skated through it.....Geography...I seemed to do rather well in that.

Results..... I got no marks at all for History, Scripture and Maths. For art I got a DISTINCTION...the only one in the class to do so. I got a CREDIT in Geography and a PASS in English Grammar. I didn't get my school certificate and I didn't worry about it either...I'd prepared myself for it over the years.

The next problem was work. What sort of job would I get...me being sort of semi-educated. The headmaster sent for me and gave me a card. It said that 'Boys' were required in the offices at the Rover Company, Solihull, just outside Birmingham. My heart beat a little faster. My father worked in the factory, as a Tool Setter...and it was less than three miles from my home....

I arrived for the interview in my best suit. My mother wanted to come, but I mean.....

Several 'boys' were sitting, waiting for interview. My call came. I walked in, tripped on a rug, managed by a skilful double somersault to regain my feet, and confronted the boss. He liked the look of me, I could tell.

"The vacancy is in the Costing Department," he said. "Working out the costs of aeroplane engines, that's what we make here."

"Ah, Bristol Hercules engines," I said. My father had told me. "They power the Bristol Beaufighter and the Short Stirling, and they develop 1,250 horse power at....."

It shook him. The Short Stirling heavy bomber was on the Secret List then.

"What a profound knowledge," he breathed. "You're the sort of chap we want here. You've got the job." He didn't ask for my final school report, rather

reportingly complied by the headmaster. I have it before me now. He didn't mention my lamentable scholastic work. He contented himself with saying that 'Though not successful in gaining his School Certificate, he was placed in the highest grade in Art. A friendly and popular boy.'

I've always thought it was very nice of him....

I cycled to the office...my first day at work.

The Boss took me to the office.

It was vast...there must have been 200 people slaving away at green-topped desks. I was introduced to the Chief Accountant, the Boss had a whispered conversation with the C.A., who smiled at me approvingly. I was given a desk, and was told what my job was. The Rover Company made aeroplane engines (They make cars now.) If, during the manufacture of the engines, the workers required special equipment which did not come under the contract specifications, they had to apply for a Shop Order. I was in charge of Shop Orders. The theory was that, at the end of one particular batch of engines, the accrued sum of the Shop Orders was appended to the final contract total. Some of the Shop Orders ran into many thousands of pounds. The man I was taking over from had retired, and he'd spent his life in Costing. It was a plum job...many of the experienced male members of the office staff had expected to have the Shop Order monopoly. I'd got it, and in my school exams I'd got nought percent for Maths...and from a look at the ledgers and books I'd got to deal with, a DISTINCTION in Maths wouldn't have done me much good.

I had to walk round the factory, and men came to me, cap in hand, and pleaded for Shop Orders. It was a unique experience. I made it priority to go and see my father. He worked in the department making cylinder heads. He was, as I said, a Tool Setter...and I told him what my job was, and he was incredulous...a young chap like me having a job like that. "By the way," he said, "er, I want a Shop Order for so and so...."

When I got into the job, it was simple. In one book was a series of numbers. Whenever a Shop Order was required, I allocated it the next unused number, got a ledger sheet made for that number, and when Work Slips came in, I sorted out the numbers, passed the ledger sheets to the comptometer operators who worked out things and passed the ledger sheets to a machine operated by a girl who accordingly completed the ledger sheets. Then, when a Shop Order was finished with, I got out the ledger sheet or sheets, and gave the total sum of money it had merited...and sometimes, the total was many thousands of pounds, in one case over fifty thousand pounds.

It was dead simple, but, because of the sums of money involved, and the prestige which had previously been accorded the job, folks said I was destined for big things in the Costing world...and my weekly pay was just over thirty shillings per week (about \$6 a week before the pound was devalued.)

Was I LUCKY ?????

My father was on a fire-watchers rota...whenever there was an air raid on Birmingham, if it was his night on the rota, he had to wander about looking for incendiary bombs and fires and things and ring the fire services.

I always went with him. And I always went out at night when the bombers came over. Sometimes they came over every night. Sometimes singly...other times in droves. Birmingham, of course, was a natural target for enemy bombers. More factories to the square inch than anywhere else in Britain.

First of all the sirens went. We had an air raid shelter at the bottom of the garden, but no one ever went to it. My younger sister was in bed, my elder sister was knitting, and my mother sowing or cooking or suchlike. "Here they are again," my mother said, and my sister went on knitting, and I put on my

father's steel helmet, a scarf, and rushed outside. There was the old familiar 'thrum..thrum..thrum' of the German bombers, and searchlights fingering the sky...and a vast bursting of anti-aircraft guns...and then the high-pitched whine of bombs coming down. I usually called for my pal...a boy with ginger hair round the corner called Frank Adderly. I had been evacuated during the earlier raids, but Frank was a veteran. The first time I heard a bomb coming down, and it was near, I dived to the ground. But Frank stood up, trying to locate where it was going to land. "Gosh, I'm sorry I dropped to the ground, Frank," I said...I'd lost a lot of prestige, but I didn't know the ropes...."You'll soon get used to it..." he said. "NOWS the time to drop," and he landed on me with speed and purpose.

If you listened carefully, you could hear the shrapnel from the anti-aircraft shells dropping all round like raindrops. The closest we ever got to a hit was an incendiary bomb which dropped in the garden next door. I wasn't there at the time, but the woman next door rushed out and put a couple of sandbags on it, and dusted her hands up and down. I had the metal fins off that bomb for years...wonder where they are.....?

One night, the moon was bright. I saw a Heinkel He 111 pass through the moonlight...and for a fleeting second blot out the moon. It seemed so low. I felt a sense of achievement, being able to recognise it...although, by a study of the silhouettes, I knew every line of it. The moon was so bright I had time to run into the house and tell my mother she would be able to see a German 'plane if she rushed out....and she was game, too, and was in time to see it pass from the circle of light round the moon.

Often, around the centre of Birmingham, the sky was red with flames, and the earth shook as bombs and land mines exploded. I was excited beyond comprehension. I was never frightened, but when I got in at the middle of the night (sometimes the raids went on for almost twelve hours...with of course hours long gaps in between) I was wet with sweat, and as hot as anything. My mother and sisters were in bed, and sometimes my father hadn't come back from his firewatching round the streets. I had to go to the office in the morning, so if a raid was on for hours, I went to bed around two or three am, and went to sleep with the bursting bombs and shells and 'thrum..thrum..thrum' all mixed up into a symphony of noise and confusion.

Girls were a bit of a mystery to me. I never bothered with 'em. I couldn't for the life of me understand what the other chaps in the office chased 'em for. They spent their working hours trying to get girls to go out with them at nights and at the weekend. This seemed the height of nonsense to me. Why bother to go out with girls when you could cycle to an R.A.F. aerodrome a few miles outside Birmingham and see new and secret types of aeroplanes? Just what was the incentive? I mean, why were girls so interesting? I was baffled. My pal, Frank, seemed happy to share his interests between girls and aeroplanes. Come Sunday, and I'd call for him, and say that there was an aerodrome near Stratford-upon-Avon where Flying Fortresses were temporarily stationed. His eyes would light up, and he'd ponder, and he'd say he'd arranged to go out with his current girl friend, but she had a cycle, we'd all three of us go. Seemed stupid to me. We'd cycle to Stratford, and Frank would say he'd wait on the river bank with his girl, and I could go and watch the Flying Fortresses, and they'd wait for me to get back. When I did return, after a couple of hours of sheer aeronautical bliss, they'd be in a huddle on the grassy bank. Funny? Was I missing something after all?

I'll spare you the other fifty four pages until next issue...I want to get a lot of George Locke pubbed in thish.....JB.

AND A BABY CRIED...

First Lieutenant Douglas Quincy LeRoy, U.S.A.F, froze where he stood. Actually, strange to say, he did so literally and metaphorically ! It's rough inside the Arctic Circle...yeah, Siberia is just about as opposite as you can get from the climate around Peak Falls, Montana, in the summer. And three weeks ago, that's where he'd been.

Gradually, he lowered himself into the knee-deep crisp snow. Three days at Outpost 257, and he was hearing things already.....

Right enough...he'd had a couple of hallucinations before.... although he'd never told the doctors. He'd been eight, no nine months at Outpost 188, three hundred miles to the east....nine months in one room..if you could call it a room, seven feet square. And twice he'd woke up in the night (or it could have been day...damn it, it was always day...but after all his watch did read 3.25.am....Montana time) and his wife had been in bed with him. Of course, no one had more right to be in bed with him, but she was many thousands of miles away. Yet she'd been in the bunk with him and he'd switched on the light and she'd smiled and asked for coffee and he'd closed his eyes and counted ten and looked again and she was still there...and he'd taken the coffee before she'd gone. True, the doctors had asked him if anything like that had happened, and he'd grinned in surprise and said no... most certainly not. Like...in three years not one of the Outposts had been found....the Security people in America were quite sure that the Russians didn't know that there were over 300 little outposts of America on their vast continent. It was a superb idea....no risk...and the pay...whoosh..his wife got \$1,000 per month whilst he was in an outpost. And it was so simple. Nothing to do....plenty of books and escapist games...anything to pass the time....nine months. Sticking out of the ground in the forest was a thin antenna painted white.....and all the expense and travail was concerned with just that small but highly sensitive detector...and, of course, the other 299. All he did was sleep, read, write, listen to the record player....EXCEPT WHEN THE BUZZER...WEEEEELL...BUZZED. That meant that the antenna had located a rocket so many miles above, just starting on its twenty minute flight to America. The test rockets were aimed to fire over the Pacific.....so if a rocket passed within range of his antenna, or the other 299, it was going America-wards.....and it had the H-Bomb. Well, it was simple....when the buzzer sounded, he depressed the green switch. THAT WAS ALL. He didn't know what happened...he realised that it transmitted a message..but that's all he had to do...and if

atom bombs were going to be slung about, HE WAS SAFE...food for two years and his common sense told him the Russians wouldn't aim for Peak Falls....

BUT WHAT THE HELL WAS A BABY CRYING FOR IN THE SEMI-DARKNESS WITH NO HUMAN BEING WITHIN FIFTY MILES ???

LeRoy didn't move. Once more he closed his eyes tightly and counted to ten. It had to be an hallucination. When he'd had the hallucination about his wife..well, he'd felt funny in a way....but he was fresh and happy and keen and disobeying orders.

Yeah, that was the rub. "NO OFFICER ON OUTPOST DUTY SHALL LEAVE THE ROOM UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, UNLESS TO BOARD THE RELIEF CRAFT."

That was in the first schedule of his contract..in fact, it was the first item on the first schedule. But, hell, this was his third tour of duty. The briefing officer had told him, no human being within fifty miles. Never, it was dead country...nothing except trees and snow...and it snowed all the time....it was snowing now...and still that baby cried.

Right. Think. It's no hallucination. He knew sound carried for miles in the still air....the crying came due south...he looked at his chronometer...due south O.K.

Now then...what to do ?

Like...why shouldn't he be allowed out of the 'room'? It was under ground...the task force had sited it in three hours...it was a prefabricated unit...the sub. carried twelve....he'd been on an early Outpost sitting. Dead simple. Sub up through the ice....Polar Cat...a small snug tractor drove inland...half a dozen marines....a mechanical shovel...prefabricated unit set up...soil packed round...snowing all the blasted time....antenna fixed...Polar Cat away...Outpost Officer left...dead simple...AND NOT ONE HAD BEEN FOUND BY THE RUSSKIES....and why should they know ?

Still crying.

He'd read once that wolves and other arctic animals sometimes made noises like babies crying.

BUT THIS WAS DEFINITELY A BABY.

And he shouldn't be out.

But he had to.....he couldn't stand it...he had to have fresh air. And, Christ, it was fresh O.K.

Suppose the buzzer sounded ?

Hell, some of the other 299 Outposts would spot the rockets, too...

First of all he'd burrowed out and looked at the stars and felt the snow on his face when he couldn't see the stars...or the dull sun. Then he'd gone about a hundred yards...now he knew he was almost a mile from his OUTPOST.

He knew the strain was telling...but \$1,000 A WEEK ??????

Still crying.

LeRoy stood up, hugged a tree and lurched towards the baby. The crying got louder...sometimes it stopped, and when it restarted it was even more pitiful...sort of hungry.....

The forest started to slope...he fell forward headfirst..his face crushing against the hard snow. He swore...the cursed baby....and he wiped the snow from his face with the white-gloved hand, and saw the little brown bundle. He thought he knew what had happened. Maybe a sledge had gone past, with the baby tied on the back, asleep. A strap had broken, and the baby had fallen off. Soon, it would be covered in snow.....it wasn't snowing just at that moment, but it was an interlude.

LeRoy lay on the snow and watched, and pondered.

It was possible that the parents would soon be back.

Suppose they didn't.....

Suppose...well what was there to suppose ?

A baby in the snow in Siberia where no humans lived. Obviously,

someone had passed by.....

It was strange....and the crying had stopped.....

He waited for half an hour...no more crying....the bundle was just visible...a little white hump amongst the virgin snow.....

What could he do with a baby ?

He didn't know how old it was...how to feed it.....

And the relief came..."Look, fellahs, a baby".....he'd probably get shot.....

Another stifled cry....faint...heart-rending.....

LeRoy gritted his teeth...he lay there and let the baby die. It got him...it really got him....he'd sat there and let a baby die...sure, it would have grown up to be a Red...but it was a baby....mebbe his wife was expecting one now....would he ever be able to look at his own baby and not think.....

He crawled back up the slope, and to his Outpost...he knew he'd never leave it again...until his relief came.....

A quarter of a mile away from the baby, Private Boris Ilushkin smoked behind cupped gloves. He patted the dog at his side. He looked at his watch...he decided to play the tape just once again..he pressed a button.

A baby, crying lustily , reached his ears over the stillness.

"Ready...ready..." he murmured, and the dog wagged its tail.

He lit another cigarette.....

He had been told an American was nearby...within a couple of miles.....had they no humanity ????

John Berry
1961.

PASSING THOUGHT

Suppose, just suppose about ten years ago a science fiction writer had made the following proposition in the course of a plot...that within one week the Russians would fire a space-craft at Venus, that the Americans would launch a satellite, that a total eclipse of the sun would be seen on television, and

that the riddle of the origin of the Universe would have been solved...I bet that if such a proposition had been put forward to happen in a decade hence, the author would have been labelled an idiot. Yet in seven days in the middle of February this year of grace 1961 thus has it been.

I've written a page or two about the confirmation of the Exploding Universe Theory...and I'd like to write to the end of this page about the total eclipse of the sun, as I saw it on TV. True, I had to get up at 7 am, but a couple of aspirins ensured that I'd survive the shock. Took me five minutes to find which room the TV set was in, and then it was just plain sailing. The eclipse was followed from France, via Italy to Yugoslavia, and the pictures from France were by far the best...and as the corona flashed so magnificently, it suddenly struck me how peculiar it is that as viewed from the earth during a total eclipse, the sun and the moon are exactly the same size, I'd never thought about this before. I looked up in astronomy books, and saw that this is "just coincidence", but it made me think. No wonder the Ancients were baffled. Things are moving fast, aren't they ??????????????????????????????

HOW THEY GOT AWAY FROM IT ALL

It is most interesting, from many points of view, to read two accounts of the same incident by the people who actually took part. I have just done this, and I'd like to tell you about the two versions...

In 1943, the most fascinating prisoner of war escape took place. There was a touch of the symbolic about it, too. The place, Stalag Luft III, in Germany...the participants...three British prisoners of the Germans, Oliver Philpot, Michale Codner and Eric Williams.

This is what happened. Codner and Williams built a wooden vaulting horse. It was carried to the same place in the compound every day. For the first week, it was used innocently, and after the German guards had been given a good look at it, each time it was taken out, one of them was hidden inside it. It was placed on the sandy ground, and whilst the rest of the

prisoners were vaulting over it, the prisoner inside dug a shaft. It was clever. Twelve small home made sand bags hung on hooks inside the vaulting horse, and the digger filled these. He had to be careful, too, because the sand underground was a different colour to that on the surface, and each time before digging, the prisoner concerned had to collect the top sand and keep it to one side, to sprinkle on the surface once again when he'd finished digging.

Codner and Williams decided it was too much for them, and they asked Philpot to join them. The months dragged on. Many times discovery seemed certain. One considerable difficulty concerned the disposal of the sand. At one time it was strewn over the cookhouse ceiling, until it started to sag. Also, and this was quite understandable, the other prisoners got tired of this persistent vaulting...and time dragged on. When they thought they were under the fence, one of them pushed a rod up through to the surface, and they discovered they had been going in the wrong direction. The rod, in fact, appeared out of the ground in front of a sentry. Still they dug...and, finally, they were ready to escape. Codner and Williams went together...that is, their escape through Germany was to be together. Philpot went alone. And although no one had previously escaped from Stalag Luft III and reached England, these three did.

The first version I mentioned is :-

THE WOODEN HORSE...by Eric Williams.

For some mysterious reason, Williams wrote this in the third person, and gave the three of them different names. I think this gave the story a false atmosphere from the beginning. True, the story is well told, but I get the feeling he tried to make the narrative far too poetic. How does this strike you? Williams, well away from Stalag Luft III, is wet and miserable. He has left Codner in an hotel, and he is having a walk round. It is raining, he is frightened of being captured, and yet, back of it all, he feels maybe it would be a relief to be caught... He felt like an exotic bird escaped from a gilded

cage, prey to the hardier natives. My heart is like a singing bird. He pulled himself together, grinned. A turtle dove, a turtle dove in a turtle-neck sweater.' Frankly, that grated as I read it.

Williams' narrative reaches a suitable climax. He and Codner are on the Baltic Coast, and they want to get on a Swedish ship and so to Sweden. They try and contact Frenchmen, to whom they readily reveal their identities as escaped British prisoners. They have all sort of clandestine meetings and frustrations. They run out of money and food. They take risks. Eventually, they board a ship to Denmark...and after many more adventures, including having to deal with a drunken Danish associate who persists in shouting to them and everyone around in English...they do get to Sweden, where they meet Philpot, who got there a few days before them.

An exciting story, but spoiled because it is written in the third person, and one gets mixed up with the fictitious names...and it spoils the reality of the narrative when Williams details the thoughts of Codner (under his fictitious name 'John'.) One thinks, well, obviously he is making up 'John's' thoughts, is he being truly authentic ?

The other version is much more meaty :-

STOLEN JOURNEY...by Oliver Philpot.

(The version I have is a paper backed edition with 440 pages.)

Philpot gives the whole story, right from the time he is shot down over the North Sea when bombing German Coastal Shipping. He manages a twinge of humour (if you'll pardon the expression) although this only asserts itself at infrequent intervals. He is entirely frank with descriptions of his feelings and his opinions of others. He gives a detailed picture of life as a prisoner of war.

The story really becomes thrilling when he works on the tunnel. The first time he goes down to the face, he doesn't like it one bit :- 'On the way back the sand which I was dragging seemed to jam against the tunnel all round my chest and almost to form a seal. It fell, too, amongst my neck and ears; my head seemed to be left up the shaft which my body sealed. I moved my head, everywhere were the damp walls and roof, and this loose sand. I had to get out of here, out of this grave-like blackness, and quickly, too. I wanted to shout, to beat the sides- above all, to become an enormous Hercules and to stand up through the roof, shaking from my body every trace of the clinging sand and to trample to nothingness my earthly prison. I had to do something; I panicked badly. I would tell Bill it was all a mistake. I should not be on this job. All a mistake. '

He gets used to it, glad to say. And, presuming the escape would be successful, Philpot spends a considerable amount of time moulding himself into a Norwegian...he cannot speak the language, but he reasons the Germans will not be able to, either. He was, before the war, a traveller for a margarine firm, he had actually journeyed through Germany, and he knew where the margarine factories were. His false papers were made out to show that he was Norwegian, and he reasoned that, if questioned, he would be able to say he was a Norwegian visiting Germany for the margarine firm, and he would be able to give factual data.

After he escaped (and my heart was in my mouth as I read his account) he reached Danzig, and after harrowing adventures, climbed on a Swedish ship, and reached the haven of a neutral country, whence he was flown to England. What is amazing about his escape is that it took less than a week...and during that time he travelled hundreds of miles across Germany by train. A fabulous story. The blurb does not lie. It is in fact ' a breath-taking epic of escape'.

Five star recommendation....get it.

John Berry 1961.

AS IT WAS AT THE BEGINNING

I have never at any time asserted that my knowledge of astronomy is more than average amongst fans. True, I have a considerable interest in the subject, and have read many books, and once had the good fortune to take part in an astronomical discussion between Andy Young, James White, Ian McAulay, Walt Willis and Bob Shaw. I must admit I was little more than an avid listener. The high spot of the intellectual conversation was when Andy Young said that it was quite possible that if you were stranded on

the surface of Jupiter, and wanted to get to the top of the gas clouds (therefore through the fantastic pressure) you could do so with a balloon made of CEMENT.

But, to get to the meat of this article, it isn't usual to actually see a well-accepted theory reduced to just another disproven one...especially when the shattered theory is by such a learned man as Fred Hoyle, and when that theory regards the formation of the Universe.

You all know that via his books 'THE NEW COSMOLOGY' and 'FRONTIERS OF ASTRONOMY', Hoyle advocates the STEADY STATE theory. This theory is summed up in a few words in 'FRONTIERS OF ASTRONOMY'. (And I must take space here to thank Les Gerber for sending me the publication.) I quote from page 284.

'The Steady State theory suggests that although expansion leads to the distances between the centres of clusters of galaxies increasing, new clusters of galaxies condense at such a rate that the average number within a fairly large region of space remain effectively unaltered within time.'

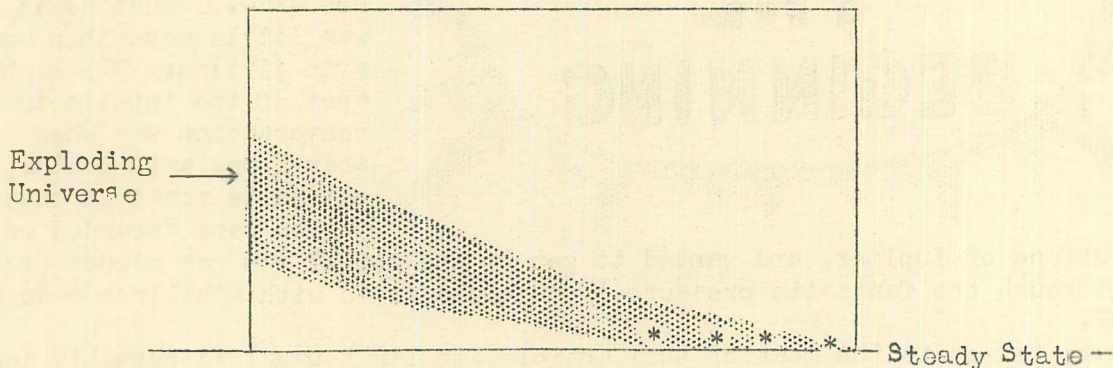
Now, in the summer of 1960, the B.B.C. TV showed a half hour programme dealing with the world's largest Radio Telescope at Cambridge, where Professor Martin Ryle is in charge. I don't want to go into the technicalities of the programme, save to say that the telescope is in two parts.

One section consists of a quarter of a mile of wires and girders and things, like an ostentatious tank trap on the Maginot Line. Working in conjunction with this is another smaller aerial which is moved a certain distance every day. Thus, in twenty five days one long strip of sky is examined. The Cambridge Radio Telescope cannot be moved, like the basin type at Jodrell Bank, and it depends upon the earth's rotation for its aim (if you'll pardon the expression.)

This is how it works. The radio waves received from space are fed into a machine. These tapes are fed into a calculating machine, and come out once again in tapes. These are again fed into a teleprinter. From the teleprinter come sheets of numbers. Astronomers study the numbers, and where the numbers are higher than the rest, they mark them. Then in conjunction with a one hundred year old star map, they plot the locality of the unusual strengths

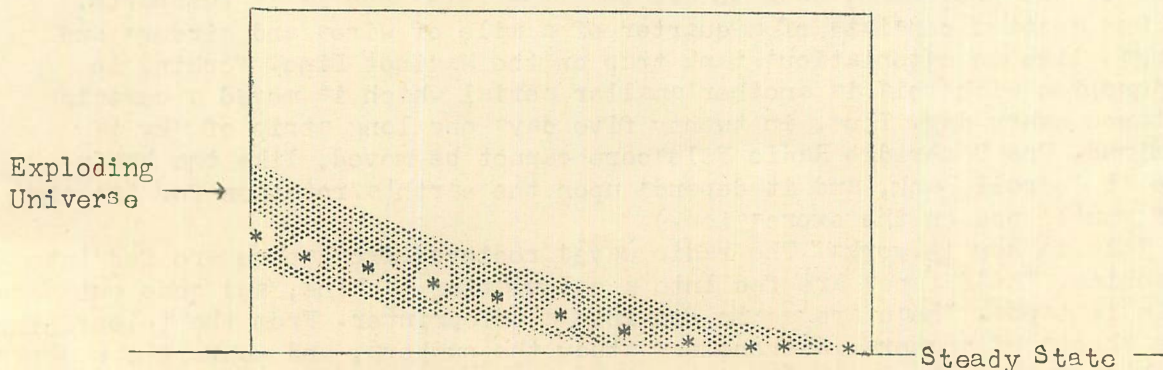
of radio waves (as exemplified by the unusually high numbers) and then go to their files of negatives of sky areas, which were supplied by the American 200 inch Hale telescope. Thus, it is possible to accurately spot where the strongest source of radio waves is.

In discussing the relative features of the Steady State and Exploding Universe theories (the Exploding Theory being that originally, matter was in a highly condensed form, and a huge cosmological explosion scattered the matter which is still so scattering) Martin Ryle showed us a diagram, which I've roughly sketched below. Now remember that this was nine months ago... this is the whole import of the wonderful and staggering news last night (10th February 1961)....



In this graph is shown a line representing the Steady State theory (at the base) and the dotted area which is the Expanding Universe section. I do not admit knowing the why's and wherefores as to the placing of the two theories so, but Ryle does, and I've merely copied what he demonstrated. Now on this chart he placed four '*' signs which was indicative of the readings his radio telescope had given relative to the two theories. On this programme, Ryle said he was impatient to see which direction the '*' signs would take...whether they would follow the Steady State line, or arch upwards along the Expanding Universe area.

And last night, he was on TV with his magnificent news. Below is the chart he showed on TV last night, with the '*' signs added, as I've demonstrated herewith :-



So, in other words, the fact that the readings in the last nine months have, as shown on the graph, climbed upwards on the area of the graph which indicates the sphere of the Exploding Universe; proves, according to Ryle, that the Expanding Universe is a fact.

On the 9th of February 1961, a Press Conference was held in London and Professor Ryle detailed his discoveries. He said that observations had been carried out more than 8,000,000,000 light years into space by his team at the Mallard Radio Observatory near Cambridge. It had been found that matter at such extreme distances is more concentrated than it is nearer to us. He explained that this was in 'contradiction' to the STEADY STATE theory, and that in fact it 'disproves it'.

Professor Fred Hoyle, Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge, was present at the conference. As is well known, he formulated his theory, about twelve years ago, which deemed to prove that the creation of the Universe 'avoided the necessity for a single moment of creation'. This, of course, did not suit philosophers....

Hoyle's theory (which he had worked out with Messrs Bondi and Gold) showed that the Universe had no beginning and no end. Matter was created all the time, and that the Universe millions of years ago was the same as it was now, insofar as the dispersal of the matter was concerned.

"I'm going to draw the Universe".....Colin Berry.

It was fun reading Hoyle's FRONTIERS OF ASTRONOMY, but I recall at the time it was cluttered up all the time with 'it seems'...of course, this was a theory he was trying to prove...but he even tried to disprove other theories to prove his own point...a point which now appears to be wrong.... "So there is a measure of observational support for the present line of escape from Olber's Paradox."

I'm looking forward with much interest to the comments of you SAPSites on this matter, especially from a theological point of view, and I'd also like to know whether or not this news got much publicity in America?

Let me know.....

John Berry
1961.

WANTED

I'm gradually building up a fine library. I've over a hundred science fiction books (excluding IF, GALAXY, IMAGINATION, NEW WORLDS, etc) almost two hundred war books, probably fifty spy books, and a motley collection of books on music, travel, biographies, etc (and also about four hundred and thirty fanzines with my stuff in them.) One of my main interests these days in reading about the early West...I've books on Doc Halliday, Wyatt Earp, etc...and a couple that Les Gerber has sent me, but one book has been specially recommended to me, and I've found it impossible to obtain, either at bookshops, the library or the Research Library. The book is 'WINNING THE WEST', by Roosevelt. I'm really keen to obtain this, and would be interested to hear from anyone who will sell or trade it.

Uh ???

THE SCALPEL

Poddon me commencing my mailing comments with the three SAPSazines which included my stuff, but I want to file them away seperately with the rest of the fanzines which I've appeared in. It'll probably be a couple of weeks yet before I start on the rest of the contents of this mailing...

KEY FOR SAPS.

Glad that you finally made it, Klaus... and I'm very happy that you are with us. I'd forgotten all about FANEDS ANONYMOUS, although I do certainly remember now that you said you were going to keep it for your SAPSzine. Hope you're in SAPS for a long time.

THE L.N.F. Chee, wot a cover...would have loved to have used it as a cover for one of my G.D.A.zines. The stories were all yukkable, and it is a valuable contribution to our rather esoteric branch of organisational faaaan fiction. Thanks.

WARHOON.What a superbly impeccable work

this is, Richard. So NEAT, an opinion which was also expressed in a recent SKYRACK, in fact, everyone says so. It is a pleasure to appear in your pages ...WARHOON is the fannish equivalent of THE TIMES...all it requires in an unsolvable crossword.

Re this survival biz, it intruiged me to see that I am a possible survivalist. Rotsler, of course, I admire greatly, and not only for his ability to get girlies to undress at his slightest whim. If I've got to survive, I hope he's there too...with, of course, the girlies ! I think Walt was a mite rough on Calkins...the repeated interjections about the Marines such as ' ludicrous leathernecks ' tend, to my way of thinking, to show that Walt is inclined to be bitter about Calkins and not his premise.

PORE DICK'S NAC. Say, bho, you missed out Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland in your list of places where fans are scattered.

MEST (My 'S' is alipping) Er...yep, re your comment on page 26 about cops and search warrants and things. I work on the dark side...my work is mostly done in the background. I discover who committed a certain offense (usually by fingerprints left at a scene, but sometimes by a strange sixth sense I've developed...mostly sheer luck) and I telephone this news to the detective concerned who does all the search warrant biz. It has been obvious (mostly by Donaho's excellent fanzine) that 'cops' are very unpopular, trying to get graft all the time....I mean in America. Might write about this one day.

COLLODION Noted.

WATLING STREET Bob, I never did really like the title HERE THERE BE SAPS, it reminded me so much of NGW. Watling street, let me see, that runs up through England somewheres or other. Um, our OE sent Al Lewis the special copy. Like the Bergeron illo's...I've some lavish egoboo to bash out about them when I come to the SAPSazines with his full colour illo's incorporated. Yep, I've sold several stories to the mag which featured the judo stories... but for nothing really, just the whim of the editor to show that he only featured professionals. I forgot what the amount was, something like \$1.50I just forget (AND THAT WAS FOR FOUR.....)

SPECTATOR. Inspiring BERGERON cover, and well organised data. I didn't vote in the PILLAR POLL, as usual, but I cast my vote for the OEship. RETRO. So OK...we're BOTH confused over TAFF. (And we aren't the only ones.) Until the TAFF blurb came round, my utter ignorance led me to believe that ENEY (or ELLIK) wore (rather, was) coming over this year. And Inote it is stated that there will be enough in the kitty to bring an English fan to America the same year. Surely, with well over \$300 on hand before the current campaign starts, there would be sufficient to bring either ENEY or ELLIK over ? I cannot understand it. I'm bewildered. I'm amazed and not a little flabbergasted (to coin a phrase.) To sum up, there is over \$300 in the kitty before the current cash comes in ...no one can come over this year, and yet there will be two-way deal next year. Chee.....
WAFAGE NEAT, Vic.

TRESKA Liked this first issue, Mike, and I have a very high opinion of your ability as a writer. It is interesting to read fans descriptions of themselves...this should be a MUST in first APA issues, to give the rest of the outfit a rough idea of what the newcomer is like and what he thinks of himself. Yukked at NIXON FOR TAFF. Re your comments on TV programmes, I HATE CANNED LAUGHTER. I cannot understand the mentality of the producers. If the laughter was quietly indistinct in the background in the right places, well, OK...but the canned laughter I hear on programmes is reminiscent of a recording of a row of schoolgirls having their feet tickled by feathers whilst they are strapped down. The laughter is hysterical, and the whole effect is ludicrous because the situations usually chosen are the sercon ones.

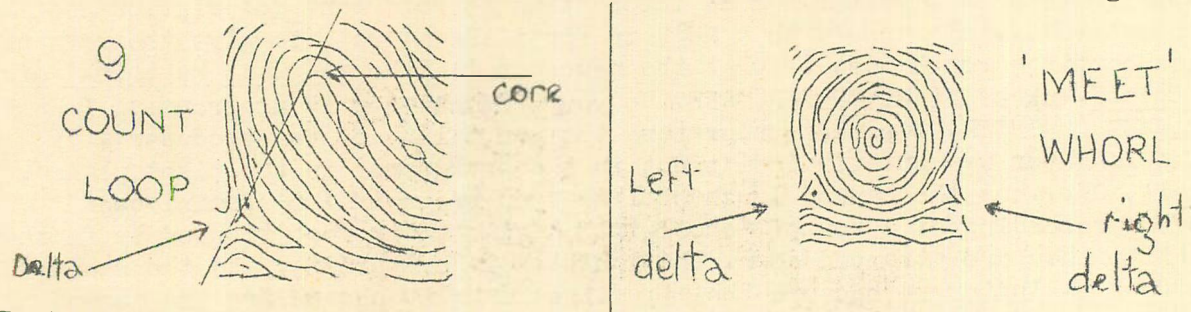
TALES OF THE FORGOTTEN PAST #1. Weeell, now....

SYLLABUS Neat and laffable. A pleasure to read.

OUTSIDERS. Re. the Chester Mime, Wrai. There is no doubt in my mind that Chester did in fact mime. I am an expert at miming. Both the BBC and Independant TV think they are pulling the wool over my eyes. Now, I spend all my time watchings girls mouths, and you've got to admit that's dedication. Miming is carried on to the extreme. Sometimes, there is an announcement made, but usually the TV producers try and bluff us. In the Chester biz, I've made a careful note since, and he obviously hasn't mimed, therefore my conclusion is that in the particular scene I saw where he was, quite probably he'd said the wrong thing, and rather than waste time and money re-shooting the scene, they decided to dub in what he should have said.

SPY RAY The palmar cover shook me, I thought first of all that I'd got a mundane item in the mailing by mistake...I thought the kids had done it for a joke. The palmar imprint isn't well taken, actually, but presumably you had to do about forty, and it's understandable. There seems to be some sort of scar on the right middle, ring and little fingers, as if you'd picked up a red hot knitting needle, or something similar. I cannot tell what the right fore is, because of too much ink, but I guess its a radial loop, i.e., a loop which does not follow the normal trend.(I.e., a right loop should sweep to the right, and a left finger loop should sweep to the left. If this is so, it is called an Ulnar loop. If it goes the wrong way, it is a radial.) The right middle finger is an ulnar loop. It has thirteen counts. (A loop is counted by the number of times ridges cross over an imaginary line between the core and the delta...see overleaf.) The ring finger is a whorl. The impression is not clear, because of too much ink, but I presume it to be a 'meet'...in other words, a line drawn from the left delta meets the right delta. The right little finger is one of those

frustrating types, it doesn't know whether it wants to be a loop or a whorl, and unfortunately, I don't either. This type of finger impression (a crazy mixed up one,) is most common in the ring fingers, but the odd one does crop up in the little finger. A dactyloscopist would classify it probably as a whorl but for the purposes of search in a fingerprint collection it would also have to be done as a loop. The first and second flexures of the digits aren't well produced on my cover, although there is sufficient to give evidence of identification, as of course it is possible to give evidence to prove identification on any part of the hand, or on the soles of the feet. Sorry I cannot tell what your future is (presuming it's your palmar) because astrology isn't in my line. The right thumb has me baffled, and this is usual in a palmar impression...it is necessary to roll the right thumb separately in order to see what type of fingerprint it is. This is how loops and whorls are classified, if you are interested in this utterly absorbing biz...



That is all Eney's Fault.

Unfortunately, folks, this IS going to be the last page of this issue of POT POURRI, so my notes on the rest of the mailing will be but breeeeef...

PSILO Agree, agree. The U.S. should most definitely recognise Red China, for the reasons you state. Must use up half a WARHOON on this topic.

UNSINN Very readable, Karen.

FLABBERGASTING. Your page count is slipping, Tosk.

WHIMPER Hi, Les.

MRAOC Yep, I guess SAPSites do like PILLAR POLL...I would if only the first three places were given. A chap who wasn't in the first three could always hope he was fourth, instead of perchance seeing himself as 30th. No likee.

PR QUE Most delightful cover. Cute illo's, like I've observed before.

BUMP Hi, Don.

THE ZED. Appreciate the aesthetic touch as evinced by the golden seal and the transparent sheet with golddots on it. Ostentatious, but I'm mad about it.

SPACEWARP Art, I really love to spend a couple of pages chatting to you re your remarks re the last three PP's, but I have to be ruthless, because I want this to get in the mailing. Looking forward to reading you in IPSO.....

Chee, lots of good fare left, but this is IT. It's three ayem now, and those last few stencils I've cut have got to be dupered (a chore I like). Terribly sorry, especially to the folks who I haven't scalpeled. I'll sort out the mailings first in the next issue, honest. All I've got room for now is to tell you that this is POT POURRI #17, dedicated to Richard Eney, and it staggers forth from John Berry, of number 31, Campbell Park Avenue, Belont, Belfast 4, Northern Ireland. Another cigarette, a page or two of the latest novel I'm reading (HANDBOOK FOR SPIES, by Alexander Foote..and Englishman who was a Red spy for ten years...I'll be writing about him in my WARHOON column.) Honest, I'm in full flow now, but I've only one line left, and this is it. See ya in July. Bestest.....John Berry.