

SEASIDE SPECIMENS

Well, guess where I went for my annual vacation this year? Actually I took my family for a week to Castlerock, where we've been for the last three years.

Previously I've told you about the surrounding countryside, about the historic sites (Downhill and the Mussenden Temple) and about my archaeological expeditions, which, I might add for the benefit of Dian Pelz, were

designed to save the few remaining plaster relics for posterity, as Buz pointed out. I certainly did not destroy anything. I have been a student of archaeology for years, and pride myself on having a high regard for the preservation of ancient sites from the past. Maybe I was flippant when writing the account of my excavations in DOWNHILL REVISITED....that's said to be a failing of mine.

So having put you in the picture about the topography of Castlerock, County Londonderry, and the surrounding area, I'd like this year to write about some of the people who were holidaying at the same time.

There were about 50 caravans (trailers?) on this site, on very high ground overlooking the beach, and most of them were occupied. But I was genuinely surprised at the number which were occupied by pairs of women. And the pairs seemed to follow the same pattern...one girl short, severely out hair, slacks...the other ostentatiously feminine, with a flowery dress, large coloured bow in the hair, nylons, high heels, etc. No kidding.

One pair especially intrigued me. I called them The Edible Seaweed Searchers. I watched them go through the same routine every morning. The one wearing slacks was buxom, with short black hair, and youngish. Her friend was in the middle thirties, and had made more than liberal use of

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cosmetics. She twittered about like a fledgling sparrow. Both spent all their time on the beach searching in rock crevices, where the tide had recently gone out, and periodically I saw them stuffing seaweed in little bags. There actually is an edible seaweed on sale in shops in Northern Ireland, called 'dulse'...it tastes extremely salty. This couple spent the remainder of their time in their caravan, presumably making the seaweed edible.

The Solicitor was a phenomena, really. I spotted him on the beach surrounded by his children, and, possibly, grandchildren. I didn't know whether or not he was a solicitor but that's what I tabbed him. He wasn't quite as obese as King Farouk, and was grey-haired and always wore thick-rimmed spectacles. His beach-wear consisted solely of purple shorts, over which his stomach hung like a bay window.

I had organised a football game on the beach with Colin and a dozen more lads between 12 and 18 years old. The Solicitor hung about, looking as if he wanted to play and I nodded for him to join in. From his ball control (which was pretty good considering he couldn't see the ball when it was at his feet) I guessed that he'd never played football before, but had suddenly discovered it whilst watching the World Cup on TV. The boys treated him with respect, and didn't tackle him for the ball, concluding that because of his gut they wouldn't be able to get near it.

In soccer football there is a move called a 'cross ball'...in this, the player hefts the ball so that it rises in an arc just above the other defensive players, and comes down at a delicate angle on to the forehead of the centre-forward who nudges it into the net. The Solicitor had the ball on the wing, I was centre-forward, and I shouted "Cross the ball, sir."

A big grin split his face, as if pleased that I had suggested he was capable of this subtle movement. Actually, a cross ball is sent on its way by a controlled kick at the side, lifting it accurately. The Solicitor kicked the ball almost vertically upwards, and when it reached its apogee about a hundred feet above the sand, it hurled down towards me.

The boys stood back, aghast. A football, specially a wet one, is heavy. A cross ball, properly sent over for the centre-forward, requires only a nudge with the forehead. On this occasion, the ball came down like a bomb. I didn't want to appear chicken in front of the boys, especially with my son present, so I courageously attempted to head it. Honest, I saw not only stars but galaxies and a couple of throbbing quasars. My head had somehow become hunched between my shoulders, entirely eliminating my neck. Admittedly the sand was wet and loose, and normally if you stood on it for a few moments your feet sunk about an inch. I swear I had become submerged up to my ankles. A chain reaction struck each of my vertebrae in turn, as one shunted into its partner, leaving the bottom one to spring back up again. The specialist says I definitely haven't got a hernia, but he says the top of my head would interest a phrenologist.

Another mad notion of the Solicitor's was to have a barbeque on the beach. His family collected wood from everywhere, including the front steps of my caravan, and bunched it up in a little alcove. Their timing was wrong, because the tide was coming in, and an unannounced cloudburst also graced the occasion. From the shelter of my caravan I watched his little group huddled up in waterproofs, sipping hot tea from flasks and eating raw sausages with grimaces of distaste. They all drove away next morning.

Another character emerged from amongst the holiday-makers. I first

discovered him in the washroom in the mornings. Whilst I was shaving I noticed him standing outside a half-opened lavatory door, biting his nails. A little voice screeched 'Daddy', and he shot into the cubicle, and I heard a tearing of paper, and later a little boy about 3 years of age came out beaming, and the father followed after a hurried flush of water.

The same man, whom I nicknamed The Lightning Wiper, was also a keen table-tennis enthusiast. Normally he was a quiet inoffensive man when strolling along the beach with his wife and son, but when he joined us in the Recreation Hut at nights, where a table-tennis table was rampant, he became a sadistic madman.

My forte is the delicate spin, produced by gliding the bat in a scoop-like half circle, just caressing the ball and no more, causing it to float away. Normally, an offensive bat just misses the ball, and I gloat as the edge of the bat buries itself in the table. But the Lightning Wiper didn't know the meaning of defeat. If he missed my spin the first time, he followed the ball in its flight, beating at it mercilessly. He finished up by depressing his heel on the trembling celluloid. He then said it was my fault, and wouldn't play until I brought a new one. The Lightning Wiper didn't get playing very often, and when he found someone to play he always won.

My wife said she heard some people talking about another character at the site...a man always stripped to the waist, with an old pair of braces wrapped round his waist...playing football like mad and tripping over it all the time...wading into a pool for the football and hopping out like mad with a big crab hanging on his toe...by some strange coincidence these things had happened to me...its disgusting the way some people talk about you behind your back.....

John Berry
1966

EDITOR'S NOTE :- It wasn't entirely my fault that my POT POURRI #45 had to be sent out as a post-mailing. There was a shipping strike here at the time, although I was assured by my local postmaster that American shipping would look after American post, and therefore there would be no hold-up. Wrai very kindly post-mailed PP#45, for which many thanks, and I shall endeavour to catch the deadline without fail, as I successfully did the previous thirty times. My MR.SUBMARINE MAN is a favourite of mine which presented no difficulty when writing, and I hope you all like it. To Dave Van Arnam, I'm attempting to obtain for you some data re cricket, I'll send it along in due course. And that leaves me space enough to explain that this is POT POURRI # 46, due to appear in the 77th Mailing of the S.A.P.S. organisation. It is printed and published by John Berry, number 31, Campbell Park Avenue, Belmont, BELFAST 4, Northern Ireland.....September 1966.

A RAPP ON THE FINGERS

Art Rapp wrote at some length about fingerprints in SPACE-WARP #82...this is of course a fascinating subject, and as I am a finger print expert I can give authoritative comments on some of the points he raises. It must however be remembered that the Main Fingerprint Collection I work with contains only about 100,000 sets of 'prints. The F.B.I. Collection features well over 150,000,000 sets, therefore my observations may not be pertinent to a vast collection.

Art suggests that 'fingerprinting is inadequate to the vast population of today.'. Now this is not true. Dactyloscopy is the only infallible science. Providing there is sufficient staff sufficiently skilled to be able to compare fingerprints, there is no maximum number of fingerprints able to be filed. The F.B.I. have a total of filed 'prints which resembles three quarters of the population of the U.S.A. So with a moderate increase in staff, theoretically it would be a simple matter to 'print the whole population of the country and have an efficient filing system.

The F.B.I. uses a computer to 'work' its 'prints. But eventually it finally falls to the expert to confirm a decision the computer has already taken. The same basic HENRY system of classification is used throughout the world. I'll explain it, it is very easy to follow, and you will require to grasp it in order to follow my comments. All 'whorl' types have a value. The chart below gives these values. Note that the numerator consists of the total values of the right fore, ring, left thumb, left middle and left little fingers. The denominator contains the others, ie, the right thumb, middle and little, and the left fore and ring fingers.

16	16	8	8	4
Right Thumb	Right Fore	Right Middle	Right Ring	Right Little

4	2	2	1	1
Left Thumb	Left Fore	Left Middle	Left Ring	Left Little

It follows that if a set of fingerprints does not contain any whorls, it has no value....therefore you start off with a value of one each for the numerator and denominator. So if you have a set of 'prints with no whorls it is a $\frac{1}{1}$, if all fingers are whorls it is $\frac{32}{32}$. Therefore you can (and will) have any 'fraction' between those stated.

To continue the primary HENRY CLASSIFICATION, you next consider individual fingers. If there are no whorls, the right and left forefingers are considered. They will be loops, arches or tents. A loop is indicated by its 'slope', ie, as either / or \ ...an arch is A and a tent T. The categories of the both forefingers are placed next to the fraction, presuming they are orthodox loops, this will give $\frac{1}{1} \frac{U}{U}$...a few random examples of alternatives (depending upon type of forefinger) $\frac{1}{1} \frac{R}{A} \frac{1}{1} \frac{A}{T} \frac{1}{1} \frac{T}{U} \frac{1}{1} \frac{U}{T} \frac{1}{1} \frac{T}{R}$

Further examples, with whorls in various places, are still primary classifications... $\frac{1}{3} \frac{R}{12} \dots \frac{27}{17R} \dots \frac{5}{1} \frac{R}{2U} \dots \frac{17}{28} \dots \frac{9}{17} \frac{U}{A} \dots \frac{31}{32} \frac{T}{1} \dots \frac{1}{32} \frac{T}{M} \dots$ etc...etc...

There are further refinements, of course, and with the collection I work with, here are a few final classifications.. $\frac{31}{32} \frac{OI}{IO} \frac{16}{27} \dots \frac{9}{27} \frac{R}{M} \frac{0}{13} \dots$ etc.

Because the collection I work is so small (100,000),provided I know the name of the man and his classification, I get secure a set of his fingerprints in less than 10 seconds. If a man who is fingerprinted has given a wrong name, it means that every set of fingerprints of his classification have to be looked at, this scrutiny taking a fraction of a second. As the system is infallible, any error which occurs is a human one, for instance, turning to talk to someone whilst turning over sets of fingerprints during a search.

The primary classifications are further extended when huge collections are maintained. I do not know the technique of computer work, but as it is a common thing to have different people with identical classifications, presumably, as Art implies, the computer supplies various numbers of these, and it then depends on the expert to segregate the wanted one. Art is wrong when he says this is done 'point by point.' An expert should flip through a couple of hundred sets of prints in a very short time, maybe two or three sets in a second. One or two might require scrutiny, but at the most only a very few seconds.

Therefore I have no hesitation in stating that it would be feasible and workable to have a collection of fingerprints of the entire population of any country, with no proviso except the obvious, that is a skilled staff to manipulate the collection.

Again, Art is wrong in his assumption that badly taken sets cannot be identified. The desired set of 'prints should obviously be clear, but from my very extensive appearance, very few sets have to be returned. And as America is much more fingerprint-conscious than in Britain (I mean as regards being 'printed in the forces, driving licences, etc) it is a pretty certain conclusion that 'prints submitted to the F.B.I. will be well taken. The extensive physical descriptions Art says are taken to 'narrow the number of possible matches to a workable few' are required to complete the picture of the man. They most definitely do not narrow down a fingerprint search to a workable few...dates of birth and physical descriptions can and are easily changed, or falsely given, and are not relied on until definite identification by fingerprints.....

Art's major misconception regards his 'assertion' that it is 'practically impossible' to identify marks left at the scene of a crime. This is my particular field of fingerprint work...that is, not only do I visit scenes of crimes looking for fingerprints, but I also photograph them and then attempt to identify them. Often the local police will have an idea who has committed the crime, in which case that person's fingerprints are examined. But police suspects are only given in about a quarter of the cases. The fingerprint man is left in the other 75% of crimes to attempt to ferret out the culprit. With the collection I work with, this is an easy job. Hardly a day goes by without a member of the Fingerprint Staff with whom I work identifying at least one criminal. Without boasting, I have personally identified hundreds, if not thousands. The system is that the fingerprints of known house and shop-breakers are filed separately...this being a few thousand, certainly less than 10% of the total 'prints on file. A search is concentrated in this small collection. If only one 'print is left at the scene, the search is tedious....the more 'prints available, the easier the ultimate identification. On rare occasions, ten 'prints are sometimes found at a scene, and the search is quickly done in the Main Collection. A little thought shows that 90% of the collection is full of potential breakers, yet only a small percentage is being utilised. This is a worry. With five or more different fingers found at a scene, and unidentified in the 'breakers' collection, it is possible to do a protracted search in the main collection. I have seen many successes in this direction. The fact remains that usually only the 'breakers' collection is used to search for scenes of crime marks...although of course this is being added to every day as the outside police catch more breakers....and the older element, those who haven't been in trouble for years, are weeded out at regular intervals.

Of course, I cannot speak with any sort of authority about how the F.B.I. works. I would assume that almost certainly every city and major town maintains its own collection of fingerprints of local breakers. If a breaking occurs, and the fingerprints cannot be identified in the local collection, presumably they are circulated to neighbouring cities. If this proves unfruitful, and the fingerprints from the scene are good, I would expect them to be sent to the F.B.I. in Washington for search in their huge collection. I cannot quote any figures, but the F.B.I. has a reputation for efficiency, and I would be very disappointed not to hear that their Scenes of Crime Department is extremely successful. My answer to Art is that providing the 'prints found at the scene are clear, and providing of course that the culprit is fingerprinted, there is a very good chance that the F.B.I. will identify them if the local police already haven't.

I am not being critical of Art Rapp. His statements and assertions are shrewd and intelligently put, but dactyloscopy is a very much misunderstood science. Many people are convinced that identical twins have identical 'prints...Art at least shows that he has reasoned his theories sincerely, and is satisfied with the system as an infallible means of identification, even if he is not satisfied with its working.

If any SAPS-people would like to send me their fingerprints, I will classify them and give the individual personal classifications...and I welcome any further discussion about fingerprints, and questions as to the infallibility of dactyloscopy.....

John Berry
1966

MR. SUBMARINE MAN.

The man wore a vivid shirt, it looked as though his wife had made it from a landlady's front parlour curtains. He wore it for a special purpose...people would always remember the shirt, never the face.

He stopped outside the KINKY KANDYFLOSS STORE, put on his dark glasses, turned sharp right, down the smooth concrete steps and onto the beach. The transistor radio quietly gave a cricket commentary and the man appeared interested in the score. He sat down on the sand, placed a large white bag down as a pillow, stretched out, and looked intently to his right, about two miles away, to a ruined castle on the cliff edge. A moment or two later, casually, he looked to the left, at a white coast guard station overlooking the bay. His eyes creased in a smile beneath the dark lens. It was four miles 375 yards between the castle and the coast guard station in a straight line...he'd measured it carefully on a six inches to a mile ordnance survey map. Where he sat, 43 yards away and in front of the candyfloss store was exactly 2 miles 187 yards (give or take an inch or two) from either landmark.

At that particular moment in time he wasn't the only one concerned with those measurements.....

The man yawned and got to his feet. He walked along the sand...his eyes noting the girl's figures as they lay in the sun, or undressed. At last, he could pay attention to them.....

Where he'd been, 43 yards from the candyfloss store, remained the white bag. Underneath it, not quite out of sight, was the transistor radio.

Police Constable James Manwaring stood at the front door of Cobblesham Police Station. He wore a blue blazer, with an expensively embroidered Parachute Regiment crest on the breast pocket. A white shirt was open at the neck. He wore light grey DAK trousers and white tennis shoes. He had never been in the Parachute Regiment, but didn't commit any social sin by giving that impression. He hoped the false RAF-type moustache wouldn't fall off. In fact, he was in disguise...he wanted to look a bit rakish, affected almost. Just so long as he didn't look like a policeman.

His superiors didn't think much of him as a policeman, actually. After all, he was the village constable of Cobblesham, a place where nothing ever happened, and consequently the dullest constable was delegated to it. It was the Siberia of the County Force. Grown men quaked at the thought of being posted to Cobblesham.

But even if Manwaring was considered dim (a much lower

classification than he accorded himself) he had enough sense to realise that with 23 undetected cases of larceny reported to him in two weeks, a rapid arrest was required. So far, he had patiently sat in the cottage, but the culprit had refused to come and surrender. There was no alternative but to go out and try and effect an arrest himself.

Manwaring had reasoned that if he paraded up and down the promenade with his dark blue uniform and ostentatious helmet, giving likely suspects the beady eye, he would scare the criminal away. So he had resorted to subtlety.

He kissed his wife goodbye, and told her to answer the 'phone, and write up any unusual event in the Occurrence Book, a tome which had gathered dust at the bottom of a cupboard for some 30 years, until the advent a fortnight before of the big-time crook.

He strolled casually along the seafront, blushing profusely as the locals sneered a "mornin', constable". It didn't matter too much, though. The criminal definitely wasn't a Cobbleshamite.

Manwaring's eyes roved the beach. Most larcenies had happened when the victims were swimming in the sea, and had been foolish enough to leave valuables, such as watches, binoculars, radio's, etc amongst their bundles of clothes and towels. So he chose a tactical position in the middle of the beach, just in front of the candy store, hired a deckchair for sixpence (even the itinerant deckchair-boy recognised him), sat on it, pretended to be cat-napping, and allowed his eyeballs to click from pile to pile of bathing eccoutrements scattered over the beach.

He sneered in his reverie...some fool had even gone for a bathe and left his transistor radio showing under his pile of clothing...

Alfred George Carleton, aged 17 years and 6 months, had spent four years in various remand homes all over England. His offences had ranged from stealing bicycles, larcenies from cars to shopbreaking and driving away motor cars. He'd learned the hard way that if you didn't take precautions and left fingerprints, you'd be caught. He had been. So he wore gloves. Then some nasty twisted scientist had fitted a pressure alarm under the doormat of a shop he'd broken into. After serving one year for this offence, he'd been more careful about the jobs he'd done. He favoured a crafty entrance via a window too small to be booby-trapped. One horrible night he'd got stuck in one, and had spent the night in futile breast-stroke-like actions before being lifted by the constabulary. For the next year he'd brooded over his mistakes, and before leaving the remand home three weeks previously, he'd made a momentous decision. His future operations required a quiet place, miles away, where he wasn't known and where fools left articles lying on the beach whilst they went swimming, and where the constabulary was non-existent, or at least non-operative. One of his room-mates had mentioned Cobblesham, and here he was.

Carleton decided he'd leave on the morrow, Friday night. It had been a profitable fortnight, he'd two suitcases full of booty, he'd hit London and flog the stuff, and then look around for another Cobblesham. He staggered out of his room into the strong sunlight. He blinked, crossed to the promenade, leaned on the rail, scanned the crowded beach. Jesus, they never learned. Just one more safari, and he'd finish...he'd calculated he'd obtain about £95 on the stolen articles - he'd just make it up to the even £100.

Whistling, looking dead casual, he vaulted the rail, landed on the hard sand, commenced his reconnaissance of potential booty....

The midget submarine stopped, slowly leaned over sideways; one man, with gentle movements, vacated the rear saddle. He tapped the shoulder of the black-garbed man in front, who nodded.

Bubbles rose gently from them, curious fish circled them warily. The water was warm, and the man standing on the sea bottom quickly removed his protective black clothing, rose gracefully to the surface some twenty feet above.

Below, the clothing was lifted and clipped on to the side of the submarine. Several controlled movements, and the craft rose and swung around southwards towards its parent submarine, bubbles trailing after it.

On the surface, swimming slowly was James Cohen, of 142, St.Helen's Way, Bristol 17. At least, that was the name and address he kept repeating to himself. He was frightened...terribly frightened. The more he'd become terrified on the 18 month course he'd just taken, the more he'd concentrated on proving that he wasn't, with the result that his instructors had labelled him their best student.

Academically and technically he most surely was, but psychologically, he was the worst.

Gordon Lonsdale had lectured to them one afternoon. Now there was a point - he'd been introduced as Lonsdale, the name he'd used whilst spying in England - instead of his Russian name. He wasn't even given his military rank. Well, Lonsdale said that living in England, as a spy, was completely safe. The only trouble came through communications and contacts - keep these to a minimum and you'd never be caught. That was all very well, but Lonsdale had been captured.

No, he, James Cohen, was petrified with fear...being taken away (albeit voluntarily) from the bosom of his mother country...subjected to vigorous training, being taught a foreign language and most frustrating of all not being able to speak his own tongue. He thought in Russian, but spoke in English, it was a complex situation he'd been able to hide from his assessors purely through sheer concentration - a state of affairs which, superficially successful, had weakened his mental reserves.

He closed his eyes tightly for a moment, fighting back tears, opened them again, and sought the two prominent landmarks, the coastguard station on his right, the ruined castle to his left - he should be aiming dead in the centre of them, and he was, about a mile from the shore.

Although not a natural swimmer, he'd trained hard. He stroked tirelessly, noting the gradual way the red roof of the KINKY KANDYFLOSS STORE came into view - soon he would make out the lettering and then slide ashore, to find the white parcel of clothing, with the transistor radio underneath - with his name, James Cohen, in white lettering on the inside of the pseudo pig-skin flap, and underneath his name, the most vital thing of all - his first contact address....

Alfie Carleton, eyes swinging back and forth like a radar scanner, spotted the square brown shape of the transistor radio under a pile of clothing. With seeming nonchalance, but taking detailed observations, he noted that the only person who could possibly see him was a moustached

nit hanging limply over a deckchair, obviously dozing. Carleton, making the decision to steal the transistor radio, brought into action his Modus Operandi - twirling a pair of dark glasses round a finger, and letting them accidentally-on-purpose fall in the vicinity of his objective. He swooped to pick them up, did so ostentatiously, at the same time concealing the booty in a wide loose pocket inside his black leather jacket. Practice had perfected his movements, and he considered himself something of a craftsman. It was a mistake to look round apprehensively after committing a dishonest act. Should there have been any casual observer who thought something was amiss, a confident saunter, looking straight ahead, dispelled this apprehension.

Manwaring blinked. The skin on his forehead tightened, and his mouth became dry. The transistor radio he'd been watching had vanished. It must have been when he yawned. The yawn could only have lasted five seconds, and in that time it had been swiped. The only person moving in range before and after the disappearance was a teddy-boy type who strode fairly rapidly away across the sand, the black leather jacket giving the youth a rather broad appearance..

The policeman pondered. Could the youth have taken it? Was it possible? Should he chase after the youth, apprehend him and search him? A mystic voice, deep within him, confirmed that, yes, that was the course of action indicated.

Trembling with excitement, Manwaring rose from the deckchair. For a man supposedly lacking in I.Q. ratage, he did a clever thing. In a dignified way he mounted the concrete steps to the promenade, walked casually alongside the candy store, reaching the narrow shop-fronted passageway which served as the Cobbleshams Shopping Centre. He then broke into a rapid trot downhill for 150 yards, turned left, stopped abruptly, and peered round the gable wall of Lloyds Bank.

He was flabbergasted. The thief had had the utter audacity to tune the stolen transistor (if it was the stolen one) to a pirate radio pop record show, and had the latest Rolling Stones record blaring out for everyone on the beach to hear and savour.

Manwaring, who, with his tactical burst, had leapfrogged ahead of Carleton, moved towards him from an unexpected direction.

"Gotya", yelled Manwaring. Carleton, well used to lawful arrest, comported himself with dignity. He gave no hint of the sudden numbness which seemed to overpower every part of him. "Christ, here we go again," he thought. Aloud he said, "Kindly desist from creasing my leather jacket, twit," he sneered. He laughed out loud, as did some of the spectators. This was no ordinary policeman - the perspiration produced by his sudden surge of energy had made Manwaring's false moustache work loose from its gum arabic base, and, with his face as a sweaty dial, it gave the time as five past seven.

Some of the younger observers similarly attired to Carleton had concluded that this strange man was venting a personal criticism of the performance of the Rolling Stones, and moved menacingly towards them with obvious intent.

Manwaring was well-built and strong, and applying leverage to Carleton's left elbow behind his back to near braking point, and holding the vital evidence in his left hand, commenced a steady jog-trot to his police cottage, where his wife, hearing the noise of a yelling mob approaching, opened the door sufficiently wide to accept her husband and

his charge, and then closed it again with a slam. The unruly youths, noting the white word POLICE on a blue background over the front door, decided they had witnessed a lawful apprehension, and dispersed.

"Right, my lad, " said Manwaring roughly, facing the youth across the office table," we will now commence the interrogation."

The man whose alias was James Cohen joined the throng of swimmers carousing merrily in the brine near the beach. Little children a year or two old, shaking in mortal terror, were being dragged into the water by doting parents, apparantly unaware of the traumatic shock they were fostering in their innocent little minds. Teenage girls in miniscule bathing outfits cavorted in the shallow water. He noted this also, and, appearing to establish a more suitable position for his appreciation, he flipped over on his back. But although his eyes appeared to be drawn hypnotically to the near-naked water nymphs (all the other male optics were doing likewise) in reality he sought out the white bundle of clothing - his bundle. "Directly in front of the KINKY KANDYFLOSS STORE " had been given as his directions, and, sure enough, there lay the bundle, littered amongst others, true, but undoubtedly his by virtue of situation and description.

He smiled. Fear, which had been very near the surface of his mind, slowly began to subside. It was all too easy. Lonsdale was right... a few moments more in the warm water, and then the casual walk up the beach for his clothing...

"You r name ?" asked Constable Manwaring, trying like hell to appear tough and at the same time polished, like the chaps on'87th PRECINCT! but, from the youth's yawn, not succeeding.

"James Cohen" said Alfie Carleton.

Manwaring wrote this in his notebook.

"Address ?"

"Number 16, Bridge Street, Tafferton. Look, officer, what is this all about."

Carleton, experienced with police interrogation, immediately recognised this mundane village constable as being inexperienced in the art.

Manwaring, realising he hadn't put mortal fear into the youth, and wondering had he been too hasty, picked up the transistor radio, and was just about to put the charge of larceny to the alleged thief, when, succumbing to some instinct he couldn't explain, he lifted the flap. The press-stud gave a little click, and Manwaring did a double-take. He turned white, and his wide-opened mouth suddenly became dry. His tongue seemed stuck to the roof of his mouth. Sizzling Snowballs. There, before him, was the same name and address of the youth he'd arrested for stealing it. QED. He'd dropped an almighty clanger.

"There seems to be some mistake, sir," he muttered to the sneering Carleton. "I thought you'd stolen that radio, but everything seems to be in order. You may go, with my apologies."

Carleton took the proffered transistor radio, and gave a condescending grin.

"I quite understand, officer. Please forget it. You were only doing your duty."

He couldn't believe his luck, but, with his experience, he accepted it. There was no haste to his movements, he even crossed the room to look at a large WANTED poster, detailing several of The Great Train Robbers.

Manwaring, with the door to freedom deferentially held open, suddenly frowned. Across the back of the youth's black leather jacket five large white letters spelt out the legend ALFIE.

"Alfie?" murmured the constable. He had no reason for saying it, no deep psychological ploy, he was merely orally giving vent to a feeling of bewilderment which had descended over him like a smothering blanket in a nightmare. Perhaps the very way he said it, softly, unbelievably, led Carleton to think Manwaring really had been playing with him all the time. Perhaps he had become so over-confident that the mention of his real name so unexpectedly uttered had penetrated his facade of innocence. Whatever the cause, he couldn't restrain himself from swinging round, eyes wide, and saying "Yes guv'nor."

Whistling nonchalantly (and slightly out of tune, thought Manwaring) a tall, broad, bronzed man, presumably Mr. James Cohen, opened the white bag, pulled out a yellow towel, and vigorously rubbed a well-muscled body.

Manwaring, still in civilian clothing, waited until the man had pulled on his trousers (with more modesty than usual) before approaching him to reveal the good news, how he had captured a sneak thief who had swiped Cohen's transistor radio, and then to tell him the bad news, that he would be required as a witness, and couldn't have his radio back until the case was held at the local Petty Sessions in three weeks time.

"Excuse me, sir," said Manwaring engagingly, " are you Mr. Cohen ?"

"Yes ?" snapped the man. He was worried. This couldn't be his contact, he was specifically told that an address would be on the inside flap of the transistor radio cover, and he was to go there. Definitely there would be no preliminary contact on the beach.

"Your address, sir ?" asked Manwaring, frowning slightly at the man's somewhat grim visage.

"What do you want to know for ?" said the man. His face had whitened alarmingly under the tan.

"I'm Police Constable Manwaring," explained the irritated policeman, " it's about your transistor radio - I must ask you for your name and address, sir, if you don't mind."

Putting his shirt over his head, and getting his arms all mixed up, gave Cohen time to think. Lonsdale had said the police, as opposed to the Special Branch men, were simple-minded. What could this one want ?

"142, St. Helen's Way, Bristol," said Cohen through clenched teeth.

Manwaring blinked. Things seemed to be complicated, when they should have moved smoothly along.

"Is that your permanent address ?" queried Manwaring, pencil poised.

Cohen bent down to fix his left sandal strap - giving him extra seconds for computing an answer. If he said it was his permanent address how could he explain the address inside the transistor flap which was unknown to him ? If he said it wasn't, he would be required to know the address under the flap. He stood up slowly.

"I know the Chief Constable very well, officer, and I shall report you to him," he hissed. Lonsdale said this always worked if you were caught for parking, or some similar motoring offence.

Manwaring straightened his shoulders.

"That's all very well, sir, but I have my job to do. If you'll just give me the name and address printed on the radio, I won't bother you any further."

Manwaring wasn't suspicious of Cohen, he was merely irritated at his arrogance and unco-operative demeanour. Cohen was complicating a simple issue. After all, he, Manwaring, had just effected a superb capture of a sneak thief, recovering in good order Mr. Cohen's transistor radio.

Cohen, on the other hand, was in an impossible position. And it was OK for Lonsdale to give his stupid suggestions for evading the police, but hadn't Lonsdale been sentenced to 25 years imprisonment.

And then, suddenly, Cohen went to pieces. The supreme self-control he'd used for years to convey his facade of expertise and efficiency crumbled. With one sandal on, and the other still on the sand, he turned. He blubbered incomprehensively, and ran down the beach towards the sea in huge strides.

A certain Mrs. Agatha Crymble, whose hobby was a rather unsuccessful study of the Russian language on the BBC Third Programme, looked up in amazement as a man ran past her, screaming at the top of his voice, in Russian, "Wait for me, wait for me."

She followed his splashing entry into the sea, and his ostentatious swimming strokes, throwing sheets of spray around him.

Police Constable Manwaring, mouth open, unable to register any movement, also followed, with wide glazed eyes, the wildly swimming figure, disappearing for seconds at a time behind the approaching white-topped waves.

And then, in the distance, the bobbing head was engulfed by a bigger wave, and as far as Manwaring could ascertain through a pair of binoculars he'd roughly siezed from a bird-watcher, it didn't come up again.....

John Berry
1966

REFRINT CORNER.....ORION #8.

Although I have been on nodding terms with fandom for some years it is only recently that I have become into the category of an acti-fan.

Therefore the dreaded state of affairs I am about to disclose will not come to you experienced fans as much of a shock. You will probably thrive on it. On the other hand, however, we have the wide-eyed blundering fan who has stumbled into this exciting sphere and is anxious to make his mark by submitting an article for inclusion in his favourite fanzine. To the latter innocent, then, I humbly dedicate this tragic resume of my frustrating endeavours to produce an ORIGINAL ARTICLE.

From the outset it was obvious to me that originality was one of the most important factors, so I immediately began to work on an article about a man who thought he was a penguin. I wrote and rewrote the mss several times until, as far as I was concerned, I had achieved literary perfection. It was utterly brilliant, the funniest thing I had ever written. As a preliminary test I gave it to my brother-in-law to read. He laughed until

THE
ORIGINAL

the tears ran down his face. "Superlative", "Magnificent" were just a couple of the adjectives he used.

I was jubilant at first, but later lost some of my earliest jubilation. After all, I had to face up to the bitter fact that (a) he owed me a five pound note, and (b), his mother, absently looking out of a window, had inadvertently poured freshly brewed tea down the back of my neck whilst I had been craning forward to catch his reaction. Still, I always think the best of people. His assurance that his laughter was confined purely to my article and not to the fact that I was leaping round the room, tearing off my clothing was some trifling consolation.

Then the great test came. I carefully typed out my article and took it along to Oblique House, my heart full of hope. I produced it with a flourish.

"What's that?" asked Walt Willis, wiping his printing ink-stained fingers on his similarly stained trousers.

I tried to appear nonchalant.

"A little thing I've written for HYPHEN," I said casually.

He grabbed it. He read it through twice. But he did not laugh, not even a titter. I wasn't unduly worried however, because you must realise that Walt is a big noise in this fanzine business and I am sure he has read so many pseudo-witty articles in the past that it would take something really shattering to do the trick.

Walt looked at me for a moment, and I thought I could detect a barely noticeable shake of the head. Was it awe? I wondered. Was it the belated recognition of my genius?

He threw my article over to Bob Shaw who was showing his wife Sadie some egoboo. With a sigh he gently lowered the ponderous volumes and gave his undivided attention to my effort.

He laughed, dear friend, he laughed.

Unfortunately I must confess that (c) Walt had superimposed a clever silhouette of a penguin on the mss with a printing-ink thumbprint, and (d), Sadie was affectionately tickling him under the armpits.

For a pulsating moment Bob sat deep in thought. Finally he trembled somewhat and tossed my article over to James White who was studying a fly that had landed on the wall just close to the Marilyn Monroe calendar. I didn't know James was an entomologist. I must say he was very enthusiastic about it. The unhurried way he read the first paragraph and then threw the pages over his shoulder to Madeliene then continued his contemplation was inspiring.

Madeliene held the tattered remnants of my penguin saga at arm's length. She smiled apologetically and explained that she was just going to make tea, otherwise she would have loved to read it. I like my tea as well as the next fan, so I couldn't complain.

After Madeliene had left there was an agonising lull in the conversation. I presumed they were so overcome with emotion that each was leaving it to the others to pronounce their united admiration.

I coughed.

"Did you like it?" I asked no one in particular.

"Tell him," suggested Bob.

Walt cleared his throat.

"You see," he explained, "ah - it has been done before. Bob has already written an article about a man who thought he was a Daddy-long-legs."

James turned from his vigil. The fly had disappeared long ago,

but I suppose James was looking at the calendar in case it came back. He does take his hobbies seriously.

"You must," he announced with authoritative finality, "be original."

I decided to turn my attention to pure science fiction. I had the splendid pro activities of Bob and James to inspire me. I hammered my brains for a plot, and gradually there evolved in my mind a gripping idea. Instead of portraying man coming into contact with alien life I would reverse the procedure. I would write a story in such a way as to build up to a terrific climax - the reader would find at the end that he had really associated himself with alien life coming into contact with man.

On my next visit to Walt's, I handed it over.

He read it through twice, smiling sardonically throughout. The previous process was repeated. He passed it to Bob, who, at that moment happened to be reading Walt's correspondence.

Bob allowed a quasi-professional look to flit across his face as he perused my effort.

"Let me see, Walt," he said thoughtfully, "wasn't that from a 1937 Astounding?"

"1938," actually, corrected Walt. He turned to me sympathetically, and with a perceptible shrug said, "You see, that's been done before...you must be original."

And so on.

That is the situation as it stands at the moment. I don't quite know whether I shall ever be able to write anything again....

John Berry

1955.

MOVIE REVIEW.

THOSE MAGNIFICENT MEN IN THEIR FLYING MACHINES.

I thoroughly enjoyed this film...because as you all know I am an aerophile, and in some of my aviation magazines I had read at length about the circa 1910 aeroplanes which had been rebuilt...in fact, a book has been written about the technical problems involved in rebuilding these old types.

The brief plot details...the editor of the Daily Post offers ten thousand pounds for the first man to fly from London to Paris. Aviators from all over the world travel to take part. Then comes a ten minute intermission, during which the lights came on brightly in the ASTORIA, and I gazed round at the boy and gal teenagers coming up for breath, the gals making a rush for the Ladies. The second part of the film deals with the race, and the fitting climax.

The film is in TODD-AO, beautifully photographed, with pride of place going to the air-to-air shots, showing sometimes half a dozen ancient planes flying slowly along and just above railway lines. There is considerable humour in the film, some of it downright mundane, like the Scotsman in a kilt

saying "Good morning," and I think Terry-Thomas replying "Good morning, madame."

The world's aviators I mentioned, all are type-cast characters, the American is Orville Newtown...complete with stetson and jeans, and whenever he appears the background music changes to a slow dreamy mouth organ. The French man is attaching himself to women all the time, and kissing men on both cheeks. The Italian looks like a slightly thinner version of Mussolini, and lets everyone know he is a catholic. The Englishman is exactly what you would expect..."I say there, you cad", and that sort of thing, also being a lieutenant in the Grenadier Guards. The character I liked most of all was the German colonel. Bullet-headed, duelling scar on left cheek, iron cross on tunic, a perfect caricature. He was the basis for most of the humour, and although an early impression might be that the director is ridiculing the German race through the colonel, I found he turned out to be the most sympathetic character in this long film. In a subtle way I think he stole the film.

The visual humour depends a great deal on that old standby, the sewer...at one time or the other most of the leading aviators find their way into it, some of them more than once.

Several English comedians, famous on TV, appear in various clever cameos. Benny Hill as the bewildered fire chief (just before the race starts, he chortles "My boys will get plenty of work today.")...Tony Hancock as the crackpot inventor, and Eric Sykes as Sir Percy's servant (Sir Percy played by Terry-Thomas)...Sykes' performance gave me the most pleasure, but I won't tell you why because it will spoil the effect.

Another English comedian, who has been touring the halls as a second rate act for years is also in the film...watch for him, Davy Kaye. He is the Frenchman's assistant. Kaye is only about five foot tall, and his part in the film is also small, but I read that he has been 'discovered' by an American director, and it is said that he will take the place of Edward G. Robinson.

On second thoughts, **THOSE MAGNIFICENT MEN IN THEIR FLYING MACHINES** was probably shown in America before it came to Belfast. Still, if you haven't seen it, and it comes round again, nip in.....

John Berry

1966
