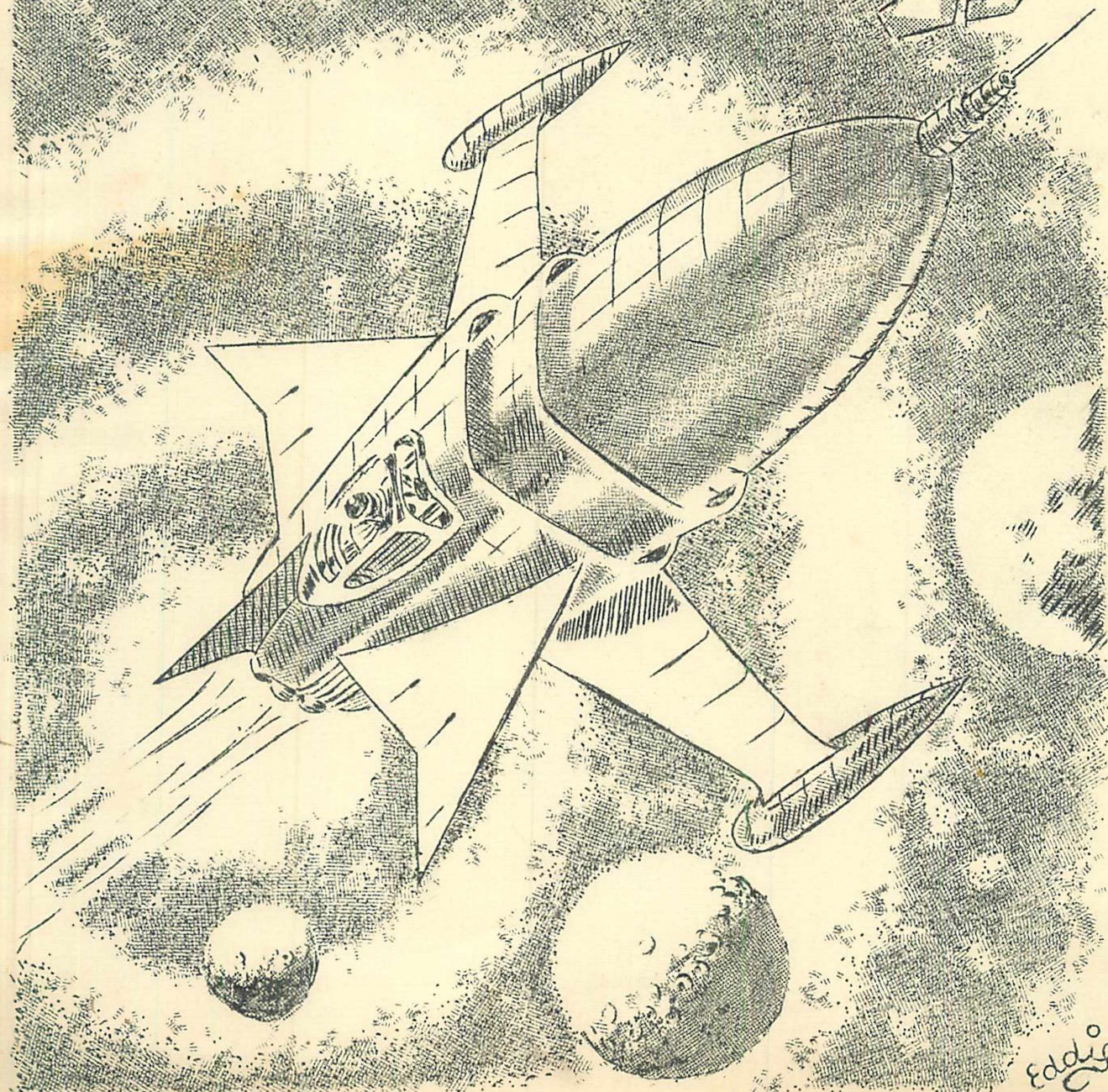


# AT ROLL! 19



Eddie





# THIS'N THAT

No mailing comments this time, again...sorry, but I really did enjoy the mailing, as did Walt Willis, who borrowed it, presumably to read comments on his column in WARHOON.

It may be that I'm a mite premature in this announcement, but as they say time is money, I can but hope it applies now. The new TAFF campaign is about to start ( and probably has started when this issue hits the mails ) and I want to tell you about the candidate I am backing...EDDIE JONES, member of the Liverpool Group. He is also backed by the following well known fans :-

BJO TRIMBLE.....LYNN HICKMAN.....TERRY JEEVES.....NORMAN SHORROCK.

I cannot as yet give the names of the candidates who will be in opposition to Eddie Jones, and therefore, at this stage, I cannot refer to their various merits and faults ( if any ) as I have done on previous campaigns. When I know the facts, I will devote an article to giving my opinions of the candidates. But as I have the great pleasure in supporting Eddie officially, I can at least start the ball rolling by exhorting all you SAPSites ( and the thirty odd fans who this issue goes to besides ) to make up your minds that Eddie is the man for you, and to send your subscription to the TAFF vaults, so that even in the unhappy case ( for me ) that Eddie doesn't win, there will at least be plenty of cash in the kitty for whoever does go have one heck of a time.

The witty slogan in vogue at the moment to boost Eddie Jones is 'ELECT-ED'...and it would be advantageous to his campaign if you would kindly quote this slogan on all your correspondence ( fannish wise, of course ) and in your fanzines and/or SAPSzines. The next POT POURRI will contain detailed pen-pictures of the fans running for TAFF, with, of course, a wealth of detail about Eddie himself. You all know from reading my SAPSzines over the last four years that I am light-hearted about most things, but really serious about things when the necessity arises...and when I discuss TAFF in either RETRIBUTION or POT POURRI I do so frankly, without trying to disguise my feelings...and I also do whatever I possibly can for the TAFF candidates I support. I don't know at the time of writing if DICK ENEY was successful in his campaign, although I sincerely hope he was...('is' )...but I can assure you that I cannot think of any fan on this side of the Atlantic who is more worthy of getting the TAFF trip than Eddie Jones. The 'hows' and 'why's' in the next issue of POT POURRI and RETRIBUTION, but, meantime, if you're the sort of business-like fan who likes to deal with things as they arise, vote for EDDIE JONES FOR TAFF...I promise you won't have any regrets !!! The Eddie front cover; and the intriguing illo inside speaks for itself...(themselves.)

For the classical music lovers, herewith a list of the LP's I've purchased so far...

Tchaikovsky Symphonies 4, 5 and 6.

Wagner's Tannhauser.

Rachmaninov's Variations on a theme of Paganini,

Tchaikovsky :- Romeo and Juliet.  
 1812 Overture.  
 Italian Caprice.  
 Barber's Adagio for Strings.  
 Reznicek's Donna Diana Overture.  
 Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto.  
 Dohnanyi's Variations on a Nursery Song.  
 Wagner's The Ride of the Valkyries.  
 Rachmaninov' 2nd Piano Concerto.

I know that doesn't measure up to much, speaking in terms of quantity, but I get an LP every month ( cost between \$3 and \$5 ) and it has surprised me how my collection has increased. I hold Musical Evenings every week or so; my most faithful supporter is Republic Of Ireland fan ( now resident in Northern Ireland ) Ian McAulay, who regular comes round and brings along some of his choice LP's, usually Beethoven, and he's converted me in a way, because although I wasn't previously ultra keen on Beethoven, I've fallen in love with his 5th and 7th Symphonies, and intend to get them for myself soon...although I've still one or two of my especial favourites to get, including Scheherazade, Brahms' Violin Concerto, Dvorak's 4th and 5th symphonies, and Sibelius's 2nd Symphony. Then I'll start accepting suggestions.

A word or two about the contents. I've hogged the issue again, except for the third chapter of George Locke's FARTHEST NORTH. Here is what's inside :-

Front Cover.....Eddie Jones.  
 This'n That (Editorial ).....Berry  
 The Key.....Berry  
 Army Daze.....Berry  
 Berry Visits the Republic.....Berry  
 Powerscourt.....Berry  
 Full page illo.....Eddie Jones.  
 Farthest North.....George Locke.  
 Yet More Canasta.....Berry  
 Snake Pizzicato.....Berry  
 Protection Racket.....Berry

(That's the way to get your published features to more than 500.)

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It seems to me that a strange situation has slowly risen in fandom...I've noticed that no good science fiction is being written nowadays; in fact, although I would have considered that the current space race to the moon to boost science fiction writing to an all time peak...I consider it's deteriorated to rock bottom. Pure crud, in fact. Nothing of note has cropped up for some time. Yet, on the other hand, I consider that the quality of fanzines...in writing, artwork and appearance...has reached an all time high. Not in Britain, I'm afraid, but most certainly in America.....

Ah well...never was all that keen on reading science fiction....

Just room to let you know, if you haven't already guessed, that this is the #19th issue of POT POURRI....printed and published by John Berry, of number 31, Campbell Park Avenue, Belmont, Belfast 4, Northern Ireland. 45 copies go to SAPS, another 30 or so find their way to fannish addresses all over the world...this issue is for the 57th mailing...for October 1961, although today is 30th August.....John Berry

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# THE KEY

The Director of Solar Archaeology, Xantheus XII, sat at his desk, reading the transcript of an ancient Martian obelisk excavated on the last tour. If only.....

An Apprentice rushed in without knocking, red of face, and out of methane.

Xantheus turned green with rage, and was about to remonstrate with venom, when the Apprentice waved a form..."It's just arrived from the Old Earth Tour, sir," he panted.

The Director paused...the Apprentices demeanour was sufficient encouragement to open the form without the preliminary incantation.

"Great Jehosephat," he roared. He galloped out of his study and turned left...the Apprentice knew he was going to report to the Prime One...and disobeying all

the recognised etiquette of Apprenticeship First Class, he went behind the desk and read the form :-

"Have discovered the Code. The greatest Archaeological discovery since the Rosetta Stone. Am holding everything until you arrive to take personal charge.

Director Class III.

The Apprentice came out in small lumps...the greatest discovery since the Rosetta Stone...chee.....

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Xantheus plugged into the methane tank and took a deep breath. A mite stale, he sniffed.

"Everything is left as it was when I made the discovery, sir."

The Director Class III spoke piously.

The Director nodded.

"Pray explain the relevant circumstances," he ordered.

"I sunk a shaft as directed in your list of co-ordinates...the 37th on page 973...an Apprentice went down, and returned with this."

He handed the Director a decaying yellow page, or rather a portion of one...the rip across the top was not square.

"You will notice sir...and I realise there is no need for me to say this, because you've obviously noted it already...that it is identical with the discovery made some hundreds of revolutions ago...of course, the top of the document has been destroyed by tearing, but the base of the letters remaining fit perfectly onto the copy in your second volume....."

"Quite. Of course, you made a further examination of the site."

"Yes, sir. I immediately went down the shaft. I found myself in a cellar. The walls were lined with shelves, some of which powdered at the touch. Of course, sir, it is many hundreds of thousands of revolutions since that horrible decaying air flowed therein, but considering all the circumstances, the cellar is in reasonable state..in fact..."

"Come...come...give me the detail I want...."

"Yes sir. Immediately, sir. In the centre of the cellar is a table, and the documents are in the centre of it, as though it was being perused when some incident occurred...most probably the Hydrogen..."

"I know all about that...."

"Sorry, sir. My apprentice recognised the documents for what they were...or what it was, if you'll excuse the ungrammatical term. He was under the impression that the documents were separate sheets of yellow paper, whereas in fact the metal clips had retained their grip, and as he picked up the top sheet of paper, the whole book ( if that's what it is, sir?) was therefore also picked up...the thin metal clips snapped at the rust-covered bends, and the pages fell to the ground in disarray."

"Inexcusable conduct. Return the Apprentice to Venus on the next shuttle. Meanwhile, half his methane ration."

"Not THAT, sir."

"I have spoken."

The junior Director gave a few orders, and looked at his superior.

"I will go down the shaft now. If the discovery is as you say, I may write generously on your report, although I cannot understand your lack of Apprentice control. Lead the way."

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With great patience, Xantheus collected the yellow sheets of paper. To hold them, he used rubber-tipped hand grips. He spread them on the hygienically covered table, and sorted them out in page number. His excitement grew at each operation.

"Give that Apprentice his full methane ration," he ordered in great glee. "This indeed is as great as the Rosetta Stone, in fact, it eclipses it. Imagine it, a complete decipherment of the Scrolls."

The junior director, seeing that his superior was waltzing like mad, thought the time was ripe for a subtle suggestion.

"I presume sir, that my actions on sending for you and sealing the cellar were quite in order."

Xantheus bestowed a rare wink.

"I would have done the same myself...in fact, I did so once in Jupiter, although it was a false alarm...not my fault, though, I thought it was the skeleton of the extinct talking puff-ball. No, your actions reflect great credit on my training, which I shall not be slow to point out to the Prime One.....let me see, oh...heh heh...so that's what it means."

It took several months to properly excavate the site. In an adjoining room, a considerable quantity of scrolls were found, together with various mechanical appendages which had been previously seen in illustration form, but no examples had ever before been unearthed.

Xantheus returned to Venus to a fantastic welcome.

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He sat at his desk and flicked through the first copy..heh heh.. everything in the scrolls became so clear and lucid...so esoteric and yet so really terribly witty. With waltzes purring, he allowed a feeler to delicately follow the lines of the letters forming the front cover...The Necfans Guide by Bob Tucker...gafia indeed...heh heh...the devils.....

John Berry  
1961



DEDICATED TO BRUCE PELZ.

I had decided to end my chapters on my wartime activities as schoolboy, office worker, aviation enthusiast and bewildered youth, in POT POURRI, because I thought none of you were really keen. Because of Bruce Pelz, though, I've decided to carry on. Unfortunately, because of this decision, I sent an article which should have been the next chapter to a young neofan in America, dealing with the years between 16 and 18, when I was an air cadet, and dealing with my endeavours to get into the Royal Air Force. This article is called PER ARDUA AD ASTRA, and I understand it is to be published in December, although I'm sorry to say I've forgotten the name of the neofan and the name of his fanzine. I'm sure you'll come across it, though, Bruce. This chapter deals with my first few months in the army.....

# ARMY

# DAZE

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I had to report in 1944 to a basic training camp in Worcester, about twenty five miles or so from Birmingham. Following directions, I had with me a small amount of money, about two pounds... a change of underwear, my shaving kit, etc. My mother came with me part of the way, although that isn't as bad as it sounds. She was born in Shropshire, and had aged brothers and sisters still living there who had farms, and she used to travel every week to Kidderminster, near to Worcester, to the market where she was able to obtain fresh eggs and butter, etc, which were delicacies when compared with the adequate yet frugal rations we were allowed.

I said goodbye to her at Worcester station, there were tears at our parting ( I don't mean from me, stupid ), and I asked the way to the army barracks, and walked to the camp.

I remember my initiation vividly. A couple of hundred of us had to report that day...we went to a room where our names were ticked off a long list. An 'old soldier' sat supping tea. We asked him what the army was like. He shuddered. He waved a hand out of the window. He said the squad performing on the barrack square had arrived two weeks previously. To me, they looked like old campaigners, and I ardently wished I'd been in the army for two weeks. The boys on the barrack square had sticking plaster on their right arms, were stripped off in merely vests and blue shorts, and were performing incredible physical feats with rifles. From their bewildered expressions, and by the way they looked at the sadistic instructor, it was obvious that a couple of the more befuddled ones would have given their left arm for a live round of .303 ammunition...or maybe two rounds !

Now remember that although I wouldn't go so far as to say I'd been delicately reared, I was somewhat sheltered. All I'd been interested in was aeroplanes, although I had struck up a nodding acquaintance with a young girl called Diane ( it's become more permanent since). I never swore, or had base ideas ( weel, not more than average) and was used to eat my meals with a knife, fork and spoon in that order !

As soon as thirty of us had gathered together, the soldier took us to a barrack room. It was bare...double-bunk type beds round the walls. When I say 'beds' I'm using the term in its broadest sense. They were merely wooden frames with three very hard square things cutely called 'biscuits' dumped on them. In the middle of the wooden floor were two high black stoves, and a couple of crossed brooms on the far gable completed a scene which made us all dive for the door. A horrible figure stood in the way, though.

He introduced himself as our Sergeant. He told us he would be like a father to us for the next six weeks. He said that, looking at us, he began to realise how badly things were faring on the home front, and he promised that those of us who survived the six weeks ( and he wasn't making any promises ) could consider themselves highly favoured. He said he would take us to get blankets, and show us where to get our meals, and for the rest of the day we could settle down. He said that things would be hopping in the morning. He wiped the saliva of his sleeve which had gotten there via drooling lips. He flashed us a couple of rows of medal ribbons and gave a terrible laugh which haunts me even now when I think about it, which I do sometimes when I've eaten too much supper and I dream.

I shall never forget that first meal in the army.

A queue was waiting outside the cookhouse, a queue heralded by a trumpeter playing 'Come to the Cookhouse door, Boys', and whom I understand was trampled to death before he reached the second chorus.

The door opened, and we burst inside. My feet didn't touch the floor until I found myself sitting at a square table which seated twelve. In the middle of the table was a plate with a square of butter on it. Men wheeled trolleys to each table with huge cans of food, and a corporal, who was in charge of each table, doled it out. When I had noticed the corporal sitting there, I presumed his duty to be concerned with our table manners, making sure that when we held the knife in our left hand, the 'little finger was rampant just so. But I had miscalculated. The corporal bared his teeth like a bear who can smell honey but can't find it, and he handed out bread. Naturally, when you've got bread, you want butter, so with something resembling a simper, I reached out my knife like a perfect little Lord Fontleroy. (No, not that one.)

The corporal grinned, and took a first aid pack out of his breast pocket and bandaged my lacerated fingers. He said he'd make sure I had a double ration of butter next time. He chided the boys somewhat. He said he admired the speed and dexterity with which they got their share of butter, but there was no need to cut the plate into cloven sections too.

I never did get to taste my first army meal. I coughed, and had the decency to put my hand to my mouth and say 'sorry'...and in a thrice my dinner was three tables away.

The tea tasted real funny. The corporal grinned and said stuff was put in the tea for our own good. He said it would make us behave ourselves. He gave a leer, and said he didn't drink it, because he had a girl friend in Worcester. So help me, I had no idea at all what he was nattering about. It took me a year to find out.

That night, the men in my hut talked about the prospects. Such language. I'd heard some of the words before, I admit, but never in such never-ending sequences. My ears turned red, then did their best to disappear down their own orifices.

I lay on my biscuits that night, and wandered if shooting was still the penalty for desertion.....



Next morning, I heard the door open. The room was still in darkness. I've always been able to judge the time accurately, and I surmised it was on the wrong side of six am. A torch-light flashed, and seeing me move, a mad man came over and pulled me out of bed. I remonstrated with as much dignity as I could muster, considering the fact that I'd only just reached the stage where I thought I'd be able to sleep...but the mad man was pulling everyone else out of bed too.

"Breakfast in half an hour, and you've got to shave and have your room scintillating," he roared, before embarking on a safari in the next hut, from which screams of pure terror shortly emanated from.

I gibbered in sheer fright.

I wanted to sleep. I had to sleep. I was a physical wreck. So I climbed back into my wet blankets again and shivered. Most everyone got back in bed too. One sucker picked up his shaving gear and moved towards the door. He peered out in the blackness, and said, in a horrified voice "He's coming back."

Second chap trampled to death in less than a day. Shocking, it was, the only consolation was the thought that it might have been the mad man trampled to death instead.

I was only just turned eighteen years old, and didn't need to shave every day. When I did shave, it was in lovely warm water, with bags of soap suds and bubbles and things. But this was different. It was six am...the water was as cold as ice...and there was no light. I don't know who I shaved, but the shaking hand that did me left a couple of memorable scars. It was precisely then that I decided to grow a moustache...I sorta liked my nose, big though it was...and what's more, I wanted to keep it.

The trumpeter, with four men with fixed bayonets round him, sounded the cookhouse call, and I was third in the queue...which wasn't so bad considering the two in front of me eventually shared the army 100 yard championship.

This time I had my knife ready, and when the sparks had cleared over the butter plate I saw I'd triumphed. True, my portion melted with the speed with which I whipped it away, but it's the principle which counts.

I remarked to the corporal that it was rather unique having clear soup for breakfast, and he told me it was porridge. The slice of bacon on my plate looked like a worm which had stopped out in the sun during a heat wave....and the tea tasted funny again.

Back in the hut, we arranged our biscuits and blankets as well as we knew how, and quaked in apprehension as we heard our Sergeant's voice three barrack rooms away saying 'good morning' to us.

"First of all, come with me to get your kit," he yelled. He got us outside, and then tried to get us into three ranks. He did everything except a multiple permutation. He closed his eyes, and sank to the ground in terror. He cried for his mother. Then he seemed to take a grip of himself. He pointed a hand..."That big building over there...GO"...and then stood out of the way.

We queued up outside a door, which was opened.

"Tunic" a disembodied voice yelled.

A Sergeant looked at us, did a rapid mental calculation, and shouted out a size. He shouted out many different sizes, but what perplexed me was the fact that all the tunics came from the same pile.

So did the hats.

I wouldn't say my head was any more queerly shaped than average. True, a phrenologist once wrote a thesis about it for his degree, but never did I

get such praise as the Sergeant gave me. You see, mine was the only head on which a hat fitted perfectly. He said that the hats were not supposed to fit. He said that the whole feature behind the unorthodox material and peculiar shape was to ensure it didn't fit. He said that if my tunic and trousers fitted too, he'd get me out of the army on medical grounds. I wasn't that lucky, though.....

The rifle I was issued with shook me most. It seemed so heavy I could hardly carry it...of course, I was carrying masses of equipment besides, including two of the biggest pairs of hobnail boots I ever did see. Like landing barges they were.

We crawled back to our hut and dumped the stuff on our beds. It was a pretty horrible moment. The woollen vests looked as though they'd originally been made for beaver hunters in the Rockies, they seemed about half an inch thick. The army 'drawers, woollen' came almost down to my ankles, and when I put my tunic and trousers on I looked like a sack of potatoes waiting to be thrown on a lorry. There were also masses of green-coloured straps and packs, which, in some inexplicable way, were supposed to fit together.

But we were rushed out again for our inoculations. We stripped off to the waist, to reveal thirty white bodies curled up like in-growing toenails...en masse, we looked like white termites huddled together in bewilderment after someone had picked up a flat stone. The Sergeant searched hurriedly for his hip flask when he saw us come staggering out, clutching our upper arms and looking like survivors from a couple of dozen illegal operations.

We all thought that what we'd gone through was the utter end, and I'll never forget the look of sheer sadistic delight as the Sergeant led us for a haircut.

I wouldn't go so far as to say that my hair style was effeminate in any way, but I was particularly proud of my long waves which crowned my head like a halo. Some people had made remarks about my 'mane', but it was nice and warm to have hair hanging over my collar.

I couldn't understand how the Sergeant imagined that thirty men could have a hair cut in ten minutes, and actually, I was first in the queue. I sat down in the chair, and said coyly "Short back and sides, please." I'll always remember that racous guffaw as the hairdresser (a soldier who, it transpired, relegated his duties between cutting hair and cleaning out the officers ablutions) selected a pair of scissors which looked as though they would have been more at home in a carpet factory. I was soon ankle deep in waves and curls, which my mother had treasured for years. His encore was effected with a pair of electric clippers which had previously been used in a sheep station in New South Wales. He took me out of the chair, and pushed me through the opposite doorway. Chee, it was coooollldd. I put my hands to my head instinctively and it felt as though I was massaging a chrystal ball. I was saved from about of spontaneous insanity by the appearance of the second customer. He burst out laughing when he saw my head, and I shook with sheer unadulterated bliss as I saw his shiny white pate. I'll never forget the next few moments, as the rest of the squad were ejected. We were at our lowest ebb, our arms cut to ribbons, masses of equipment to clean, completely bald, and late for dinner. Not that we could have eaten very much, our slashing arms were out of action for a couple of days.....

There you are...this chapter was to last for my first few months in the army, and after four pages I haven't finished the first twenty-four hours yet...you'll learn.

John Berry  
1961



# BERRY VISITS THE REPUBLIC.

For one week in July 1961, I took my family for one weeks holiday to Bray, Co. Wicklow, Eire. As Eire is to all intents and purposes a foreign country, I've decided to devote a page or two describing some of the aspects of the Way of Life south of the border.

(It is perhaps pertinent here to say a little about Eire, or the Republic of Ireland, or just Ireland; by all these names is it known. Since 1921, Ireland has been divided into twain. I live in the north-eastern corner, known as Northern Ireland...or Ulster, which consists of six counties. Eire consists of twenty six counties. Northern Ireland, although it has its own parliament at Stormont, just outside Belfast, is in fact part of the United Kingdom. Eire, as a republic, has it's own parliament, in Dublin, and has its own currency, stamps, etc. There are Customs posts at the border; but no passports are required to travel across the border.)

We reached the railway station at Belfast, and queued up at the Customs, for examination. Now the British Customs have but little interest in what one takes down south. They get a twitch in the nostrils when they examine people coming up from the south. So when the express to Dublin was due to go out, the Customs doors were opened, and the passengers streamed through. There was only one Customs man that I could see, and he was leaning against an examination counter, yawning. He wasn't stopping anyone.

Then he saw me.

My wife and the two children had galloped on ahead, to get seats on the train, and I was a mite handicapped by the fact that I was carrying four suitcases.

Some of you will recall in the final part of THE GOON GOES WEST that a Customs official at Prestwick Airport, in Scotland, took an instant dislike to me, and gave me the works...so much so that the bus driver outside, with a 'bus full of passengers to drive to Glasgow, hooted his horn for them to let me go so as he could catch his deadline.

And so here, in Belfast, this Customs man yawned, and then he saw my face, and his eyes lit up, a gleam of sheer triumph shafted across his features, and he stopped me. Just me, out of hundreds of travellers.

I know nothing of the psychology course which Customs men must go through, but obviously they are taught to be on the alert for smugglers with shifty expressions. I may or may not have had a shifty expression. When you're carrying four suitcases and have the train tickets in your mouth, you aren't inclined to have much control over your facial fluctuations. Shifty maybe, but a smuggler definitely not.

"Have you anything to declare?" he asked, trying to keep the leer under control.

I put down my suitcases in a movement reminiscent of a camel sinking to its knees after a gallop across the Sahara.

"No," I said.

The corner of his mouth twitched.

Only one thing saved me from having my pyjama's flaunted before the public.

My wife, presumably knowing the effect my face has on Customs officials, came back to see the performance. She had the keys to the suitcases, and pulled them out of her handbag.

The Customs man looked at her, and his face fell.

"You with him?" he asked.

She nodded.

"Carry on, then," he said, in a rather frustrated tone, and he jammed the train tickets in my mouth, and I was through.

Two hours later, the train drew in at Amiens Station, Dublin....

We exchanged platforms, and a Diesel took us to Bray, about a dozen miles south of Dublin....

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We sorted ourselves out in our room...a room with two double beds, and a superb view of the Irish Sea when the tide was in.

After lunch, we went for a walk to get ourselves orientated.

It was a Saturday.

It was also a flag day.

This means that deserving causes are allowed to make little flags, stick 'em on pins with a pertinent legend emblazoned thereon, and then volunteers try and sell them for a few pence to the general public.

This flag day was for the 'St. Vincent De Paul Society.'

Now Eire is a Roman Catholic country, and the society for which the flags were being sold is a Roman Catholic one.

So with rather clever moves I steered my family from this vast multitude of flag sellers. Please don't misunderstand. My refusal to buy a flag was not motivated by political or sectarian reasons. It was simply that I don't even contribute to my own church, so I was danged if I was going to contribute to another.

But I had under-estimated the opposition.

The beach at Bray is about a mile long, and to the south is an 800 feet high hill projecting into the sea, known geographically as 'Bray Head'. This was obviously an ideal place to view Bray, and there was also a 'chair-lift' sort of affair to lift the weaker ones amongst us to the summit of Bray Head without actually having to climb it. We made for this, and oh, the sheer cunning of the flag-sellers.

The road terminated abruptly, and a concrete footpath started towards the terminus of the chair-lift. But the walls either side closed together like a wedge, and slap bang in the middle of the wedge was a flag-seller. It was impossible to get past him without pushing him out of the way, and as he was about seven feet tall, this was out of the question. He jingled his tin of money, and stuck the tray of yellow and black flags under my moustache.

I spoke to him in what I hoped he thought was fluent German. His eyes widened at this, because my two children asked in English, 'Daddy, why wasn't I buying a flag?'

I looked at his feet, and let my eyes widen, and when he looked down, I was past him like a bullet. I didn't care about the children. They could buy a flag if they wanted to, but I wasn't going to. Definitely NOT.

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We took a cross-country route back to the hotel again...I sensed that the flag seller at the wedge was dedicated....

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The shops in Bray interested me considerably.

Bray is a famous sea-side holiday place, and most of the visitors come from England and Scotland.

Item. Cigarettes in Eire are cheaper than in Great Britain. In fact, whilst I was at Bray, the price in Great Britain went up from 4/1d for twenty to 4/6d. In Bray, they were 3/4d or thereabouts.

I stress 'thereabouts', for a most fascinating phenomena took place.

In the course of my stay in Bray, I discovered that, depending upon who served you, and to what degree of intelligence they assessed you, and what technique you adopted when you asked...that many different prices could be charged for the same brand of cigarettes. I purchased a brand called SWEET AFTON in tens. The minimum price I was charged was 1/7d....the most I was charged was 1/10d...and in between was 1/7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d...1/8d...1/8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d...1/9d and 1/9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d.

I discovered that if I politely went in a shop and asked for ten SWEET AFTON, and radiated good humour and happiness, it cost me 1/10d. If I edged in shiftily and unshaven, and spat out 'Ten Sweet Afton' as if I was a street ahead of a posse, I got them for 1/7d.

It was obvious to me that the local shopkeepers were out to fleece the visitors in quite a blatant manner.

Another item caused me some annoyance.

I went into a chemist to get a refill for my 35mmCasette. I wanted a specific type of film. The young girl was a mite bewildered, and asked the shop owner about my order, but although the girl spoke to me in English, she carried on the conversation with her boss in Irish. This I felt to be the height of bad manners. I continued my conversation with the shop owner (and I spoke somewhat testily) and discovered she could speak English perfectly too. When I left them, they were both jabbering away in Irish, presumably about my F.P.3 film, but, like I said, I didn't wait for them to discover whether they had that brand in stock or not!

The demeanour of the shop-keepers interested me.

It is no secret that a large proportion of the population of Eire are anti-English, and it seems to me from what I saw and what other visitors told me that the tradesmen are keen to sell their wares at inflated prices, and therefore have to be polite to the buyers, although, as a high percentage of the buyers are English, their natural inclination is to be aloof and to show their independence and their feelings of distaste towards the English.

The resultant demeanour was fascinating.

Some shop-keepers and their assistants were plainly rude. They didn't say 'Thank you' if you made a purchase, they just sorted out your change, dumped it in your palm, and turned to the next sucker.

On the other hand, at least fifty per cent of the shop-keepers were ultra-polite, to the extreme...I would even say fawning. They were so polite it was a mockery. They couldn't do enough for you. 'Sir' was every other word...and they bowed low when you left and entreated you to come again next day.

Only one shop-keeper in Bray acted normally...was just polite enough, and smiled as though he wanted to. His accent was English, he was old, and I presumed him to be a left-over from when Eire became a Republic and the English left. Trouble was, he charged me almost 50 cents for four apples...I mean, what chance did I stand ???

Whilst at Bray, we travelled around the hinterland quite a bit, as you'll read later, we visited an ancient site at Glendalough, 18 miles from Bray, but we also took 'bus trips to other seaside places nearby, such as Greystones and Dun Laoghaire (pronounced Dun Leery), and here I must had out egoboo to the 'bus conductors of the Irish transport organisation. They were exactly opposite to the mercenary tradesmen of Bray. They really were friendly, and were most anxious to tell you which were the nicest places to go, what times the 'buses ran, and where to get buses for the return journey. The 'buses were always on time, too. To talk to these 'bus men made the demeanour of the Bray shop-keepers even more difficult to understand.

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One afternoon we went to Dublin.

Naturally, in a couple of hours we didn't see very much of the city, but I was impressed with the layout of the main streets, and the cleanliness of the place.

We climbed Nelson's Pillar. It was erected at the beginning of the 19th century to celebrate his major battles.

The pillar itself is 134 feet high, and the summit is reached by a circular stone staircase, consisting (so my young daughter tells me) of 165 steps. At the top, it is something like the Empire State in miniature... I don't mean the view, I mean the sort of heavy-wire cage to stop people throwing themselves off it.

The large statue of Nelson stands above, with a keen expression on his face, although the elements and the birds haven't been too kind to him.

As a souvenir, I purchased a bronze-coloured statuette of the pillar, which now stands on top of my TV set, next to the Statue of Liberty which I brought back from America.

I was pleased to see the turn out of the Dublin girls. Certainly I've been to quite a few countries, and I can state categorically, that, girl for girl, the Belfast girls are by far the prettiest. But I also state quite as firmly that the girls in Dublin are the best dressed, the most chic, than anywhere else I've been to. I still cannot understand why Ian McAulay left them....

I discovered a shop in Dublin where they sell tins of fifty SWEET AFTON for 7/8d, just over a dollar...compare this with the current price in Northern Ireland, 11/3d. I purchased two tins, it was almost a pleasure to start smoking heavily again, after all these years. The shop-keeper (a most polite one, with none of the Brayish-ness I had half expected to encounter) informed me that I was allowed to take a couple of hundred cigarettes out of the country duty free....I had a quick mental image of the British Customs rubbing their hands in anticipation.

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A little about Bray.

Geographically, it's a nice place. When the tide is in, there are acres of small pebbles, but when the tide goes out, a sandy beach is revealed and bathing beauties disrobe with an uninhibited nonchalance which is rare and beautiful to see. I tripped on the pebbles three times during one superb strip, but I reckon that even with badly bruised elbows and knees I got the best of the bargain.

Behind the beach is the promenade, where you can walk up and down and sniff the ozone...behind the promenade is a long grassy strip, called, rather cleverly, the Esplanade, and behind this again is the rows on three storied boarding houses and hotels, one of which we lived in for the week.

Near the top of Bray Head is the ruins of a church, called Raheenaclogh Church. It dates from the 13th century. There is nothing left now but the two



gables, each of which has a narrow slit-like window., and the joining walls which are about four or five feet high. A notice in English and Irish explains that the building is under the control of the Government, and it exhorts the populace to refrain from mucking it about. Not that this has had much effect, because the sacred innards of the ruin are liberally scattered with empty bean tins, and beer tines, etc, and on one of my visits to it, three girl campers were actually brewing tea with a Primus Stove in the immediate precincts.

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A few word pictures about our fellow guests at the hotel.

Pride of place went to five tough young Scotsmen. They shared the room next to us, although considerably less than a wall partitioned us... merely two huge wooden doors which, in the old days, were probably opened to make a small but intimate dancing room.

These Scots boys were living bed and breakfast, which meant we didn't have the pleasure of their company for the main meals. Their forte was to drink heavily, because I forgot to tell you, drink, both beer and spirits, is cheaper in Eire than in is in Great Britain. As a climax, they brought a quantity of drink with them back to their rooms, usually round about one ayem. I presumed this was to contain them in the dubious but presumably delightful state of inebriation which they had been in since the very first day of their arrival.

They didn't worry about making noise, because in their blissful state they thought they were whispering. It would have perhaps have been sporting of them to remove their solid soled Italian pointed shoes, indeed, when they started on their nightly Highland Fling just about two thirty ayem, it sounded rather like a gross of Fred Astairs doing the heavy fantastic on kettledrums.

The fight took place on the Tuesday night. Round about two ayem, they were fairly consistant. It started over my family. One of the milder Scots boys shouted to one of the more rowdy ones to 'Shut up, there's kids next door.' The rowdy one didn't like this, and, as a prelude, four letter curses were slung between them...it sounded rather like a much-repeated phrase from page 180 of Lady Chatterly's Lover. The children slept through it, and I think Diane did, too, but I propped my pillows up, lit a cigarette, crossed my arms and listened quite happily. I would be the last one to try and spoil the fun of young chaps on their holidays.

Curses finished, they started on the fight proper. From the preliminary sounds, the beds were obviously in the way, and they piled them in a corner of the room, and I think the other three men were esconced in them at the time.

I could hear the seperate punches, they were, I think, in their pyjamas, because the blows sounded dull, rather like individual thumps on a base drum.

One of the protagonists developed a giggle, which infuriated his opponent. Three windows and a door later, one started to howl, and attested to the fact that as soon as he'd regained his composure he'd 'carve you up'. He put several four letter adjectives in the threat besides.

The other three had awoken from their drunked stupor, and at the hint that knives were going to be used, they set about seperating the pair. The pair didn't want to be seperated, and at the chime of four ayem the five of them were trying their hardest to seperate each other. Sleep claimed me, but I saw the five of them staggering about next day, and very sheepish they looked, too. Nice chaps, but a little too exuberant.

Two old ladies were at the next table. They were about sixty years old,

and had a tendency to look furtively over their shoulders, as if rape was imminent. From the demeanour of another old man sharing the hotel, they had a point.

The clientele was completed by an old Irish man and his wife. He came from Eire, and told us proudly all sorts of things about it. He had one complaint. Butter, he said, was exported to England, where it was sold at 2/8d per pound, and yet, in Eire, the people had to pay twice as much per pound. I tried to make him look on the bright side of things, and said, sure, cigarettes were much cheaper than in England. He gave a wry smile and said he didn't smoke.

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We made friends with two young boys, maybe fifteen years old, who served table at our hotel. They were fisherboys...they liked to go to the harbour every night and catch plaice and codling. Colin said he'd like to try and catch one, and we made a tryst to meet at the harbour at 8.p.m.

There were about fifty men and boys casting their lines into the still harbour water. I watched one young boy. Everytime he cast, something went wrong. The lead weight whirled round and entangled his line. He fixed that. Every time he pulled his line out, he'd caught a mass of seaweed. He learned to cast where there was no seaweed. Speedily, he managed to work out where he went wrong, and gradually girded himself up to a time where nothing could go wrong. Whispered words of consolation had drawn quite a crowd of sadists, and with his audience holding their breathes, he made a cast to end all casts. Calamity. The cast was so strong and powerful that the weight flew off at an angle and disappeared over the harbour wall into deep sea. The boy blanched and then flung his rod and line in the same direction as his weight. I knew how he felt.

One of the boys from our hotel, a bright young man called Brendan, fixed a grub on the end of a line, cast it, and gave it to Colin to hold. Immediately the line started to make patterns in the water, and he pulled it up, to reveal a plaice about five inches long, although to Colin it was like a 200 ponder.

In talking generally to Brendan about school and sport and suchlike, he said that all school children were forced to learn to speak and write Irish ( or Gaellic) and he said, rather sorrowfully, I thought 'We get too much of it, you know.'

I should perhaps have explained all road signs, traffic signs, destination boards, street names, etc, are all given in Irish and English. My impression, for what it is worth, is that it is government policy to try and get the population interested in the Irish Language, as a means of consolidating their enmity towards strangers 'from across the sea'...as a means of trying to coerce the people to sink back in the glory of their struggles for independence in the past...as a means of giving them a gimmick to prove how proud they really are to be Irish...and yet, so that people can understand, they still have to give the place names in English. In my opinion, here is a supreme example of retrograde action. But then, if they want to be bi-lingual, what is it to do with me? I can easily try and learn Etruscan. It'd be about as much use !!!

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We spent an hour each evening in the Amusement Arcade. There were two or three such institutions on the Esplanade, juke boxes blared out the latest pops, and long haired youths and dreamy-eyed girls in brightly coloured jeans lounged about by the juke boxes trying to give the impression they were having a helluva time. I thought the Hall of Mirrors was a wow. It's not often one



hears such bellows of unrestrained laughter. We did a tour of the rolled mirrors, and we saw ourselves as dwarfs and giants...it was a great relief to come to the last mirror, which was a normal one.

The 'bumper cars', at one shilling a time, proved entertaining. Colin crouched behind the wheel of his car like as if it was 'hot', and it was difficult to shake him off from my tail. I did everything except tag on to the end of the Ghost Train.

The 'One-armed Bandit' machines were well patronized...people stood at them putting pennies in the slot and working automatically...I never saw a jackpot, in fact, I think the users were hypnotized, as though it was the done thing to be seen at a machine. As I say, it was only one penny per go, I understand in Las Vegas and such places it's one silver dollar per go. People must be mad.....

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Came the end of the holiday, and all that lay in front of us was the Customs examination in Belfast. True, we didn't have very much, a couple of hundred cigarettes, two cigarette lighters, etc, but it was just the thought. Professional smugglers must be supermen....

The scheduled two hour journey from Dublin to Belfast took two and a half hours, and we climbed out of the carriage onto into the sardine-like throng on the platform, all waiting to be 'done' by the Customs. There was but one little door at the end of the platform, and half a dozen people per time were oozed through to the waiting band of itchy-fingered customs men.

My technique was obviously to make sure that I was squeezed through the door at the same time as my family, otherwise I was fair game, so I built a sort of fort behind me with the four suitcases whilst we gradually moved towards the door, and my ploy worked, because just us four were ushered through.

We laid our bags on the counter, and looked sort of bewildered at the Customs man.

"You together?"

We nodded.

He pondered, and after an uncertain pause, ushered us away. Memo to professional smugglers...Take the Wife and Kids with you.

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It was a cheap holiday, my total bill came to \$135...this included return train fares for four...hotel and all meals for one week for four...bus fares to places of scenic and historical interest...amusement arcades...cigarettes and souvenirs.

It would be nice to boast that we went to a foreign country for a holiday, but did we?

The connection between Eire, Northern Ireland and the British Isles is rather unique.

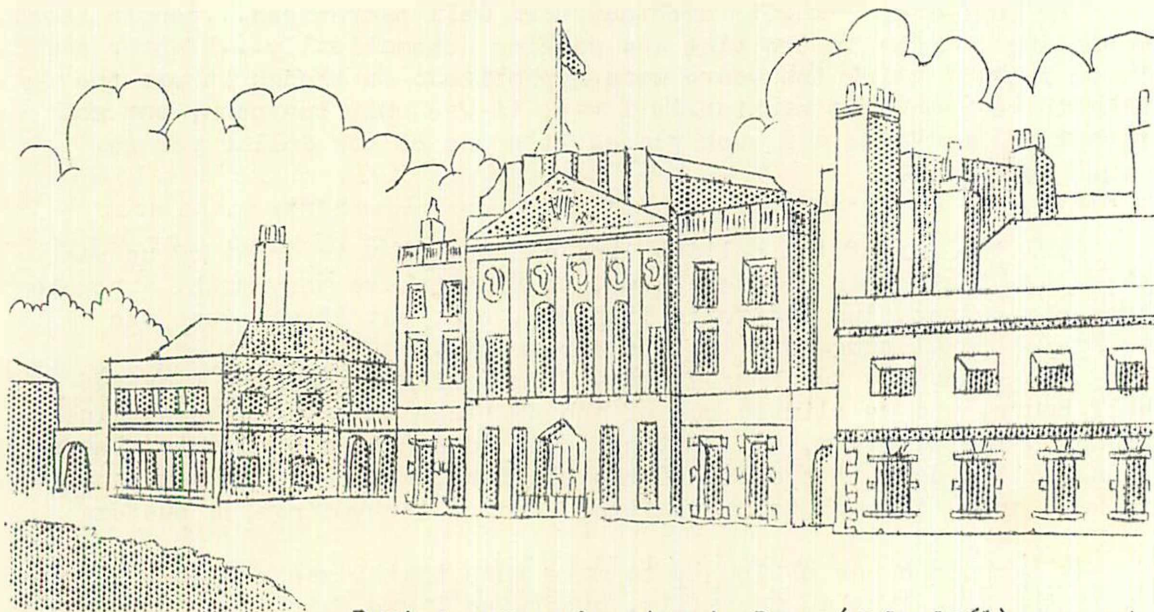
No passports are required to pass into Eire from Britain and Northern Ireland. Yet Eire has different coins (although they are the same denominations as in Britain and Northern Ireland) and different postage stamps, written in Irish (as are the coins.) Another incongruity is that Eire coins are legal tender in Northern Ireland, but not in the British Isles, but British currency is legal tender in Eire. Also, for the many hundreds of thousands of Eire people working in England, it is possible for them to become British citizens and still remain Eire citizens.

Memo. They love Americans in Eire.

Care to try it ????????

John Berry  
1961

# POWERSCOURT



During our weeks stay in Bray (July 1961) we went one afternoon to Powerscourt.

It is near the village of Enniskerry, which is just about three miles from Bray.

Only two 'buses per day ran to it, and we thought that there'd be a hell of a queue waiting for the 'bus, but my family, the four of us, were the only ones in attendance. Indeed, the 'bus conductor was quite surprised to see us. Yet everyone in our hotel had told us " You must go to Powerscourt," and yet we seemed to be the only ones with any desire to go to the place.

The journey only took about fifteen minutes, and we got off the 'bus in the little, quaint village of Enniskerry. A large notice board on our left implored us to go to Powerscourt, and stressed that we should make a special point of going to see the waterfall, 'the highest one in Britain or Ireland.'

We asked the way to this wonderful waterfall, and were directed up a hill and the first on the right.

Enniskerry is very small, like I said. It nestles on a hill-side, and has the greenest of grass surrounding it, also many trees. The rustic aura of this country scene was spoiled only by the rumbling refrains of Little Richard coming from one of the juke boxes in the cafe across the street !

I guided my family along the route so prescribed, and it took about twenty minutes of hard climbing to reach the 'first on the right.' Confronting us was a large gateway, about thirty feet high. On top of the gate was an eagle, the stance of which suggested it had grown tired of posing for the sculptor. Through the arched gate, and to the gate-house on the left of it.



A middle-aged man in his shirt sleeves was sleeping happily in the porch. When we woke him, he seemed bewildered that anyone should even think of coming to Powerscourt that afternoon. He thumbed out a book, gave us a ticket ( costing three shillings) which gave us the freedom of the vast estate.

He told us that Powerscourt House was about a mile down the tree-lined drive.

"You must see the waterfall," he told us.

I nodded my agreement.

"Where is it?" I asked enthusiastically, holding my wife up, who was rather tired after walking up the steeply-graded road in her high heeled shoes.

"Well, it's a mile to the house, like I told you," he said. I nodded. "And it's seven miles past the house." He closed the porch door quickly, and I bent down and fanned my wife's ashen features with my handkerchief, and then Colin gave me a swig of water from his plastic hip flask, and I got up too.

Slowly, we meandered along the drive. It was dusty, and the more knowledgeable members of the community who wanted to see Powerscourt and had the common sense to make a few preliminary enquiries, shot past us in hired cars, leaving a choking cloud of dust to surround us. But when the dust had settled between cars, we realised our lot wasn't so bad. The people in the cars may have had the comfort, but they couldn't possibly enjoy the pure freedom of the glorious countryside like we could. We stopped and looked across fields of waving barley to the purplish peak of the Sugar Loaf Mountain on the horizon, about three thousand feet high. It ain't much, I know, but it looked good to us.

Half an hour of sheer bliss, just us four and the freshness of the countryside (when the cars weren't passing) we arrived at Powerscourt House. My illo of it back there gives you a rough idea of what it is like. I stress 'rough' I know I'm no Eddie Jones.

I cannot give you any details of how old the house is, or who owned it, because it just wasn't ancient enough to excite me...save to say that it is probably 150-200 years old, is of a soft brownish stone, and it looks mighty pretty when viewed after a mile's dusty promenade ! One or two minor rather queer effects...on either side of the main door were two dinky little cannons on wooden carriages, the bore of the cannon barrels being about three inches, and by the side of each cannon was a shell about three feet high, from about a sixteen inch navel gun. Little touches like that usually make me burst out laughing ( vile-pro James White refers to such things as - vulgar ostentation-) but I was thinking of the walk back to Enniskerry, so I just groaned.

An arrow pointed to the 'Cafe and Souvenir Shop', and we followed the path round to the back of the house, and what I saw made me stop and ask Colin was he sure it was pure water in that plastic hip flask. Because what I saw were about twenty Spanish damsels, some in native dress, playing guitars and singing exciting cha-cha sort of songs. I closed my eyes, and counted to ten. I hadn't been over-working, and therefore I was amazed at the apparition. I sneaked a look at my wife, and she was passing a hand in front of her eyes, which were bulging like goose eggs with currants on the ends. Kathleen was hiding behind her mother's skirts, and Colin was a slashing blurr of dust on the horizon.

Then one of the Spanish girls twirled round swiftly, and I caught a tentatling glimpse of unmentionables, and I knew I hadn't imagined that.

Before turning the corner, I hadn't really been expecting to see anything unusual, but if someone had said to me, 'John, you're going to see something dead out of its natural environment when you go round that bend,' what I did see would have been the very last on my list. But instead of a mud-built adobe as a back-setting was this vast house, which made the whole thing ridiculous. Then I recalled the fleet of fast moving cars rushing past us leaving clouds of dust behind, so the beeeeootiful senoritas were really just mundane tourists. Indeed, what other explanation could there be? Actually, there just could have been another reason...I discovered later that the world famous Bray Film Studios are located at Powerscourt...I didn't know that at the time, so I didn't get to see the studios, although, from the obvious lack of activity, no films were being made at the time of our visit. That's the way the film producers work, "Ah, a Spanish film, we'll make it in Ireland"...."Ah, an Irish film, we'll make it on location in Spain."

Of course, me being a detective, I just had to confirm that the gals did come from Spain, so, straining at my wife's restraining arm, I followed them into the souvenir store. Got entangled with the last two in the doorway, but we sorted ourselves out in about ten minutes. I liked the way these Spanish girls spoke English in the shop, even to each other. Their English was good enough to confirm that they were'nt just practising the language...they realised it was just plain good manners when in company. It was an object lesson in manners to the two women behind the counter, who prattled in Irish to each other. One of the senoritas was addressing a picture postcard of Powerscourt house, so I sneaked a look over her shoulder and saw that the card was en route to Spain...although my wife was of the opinion that I was more interested in the V-neck of the flowered blouse, which had the most intricate red and pink small-petalled flowers embroidered on a background of small palm-type leaves, with little insects flitting about looking for pollen...but of course, I had no such motive in mind.

Being at a hotel in Bray, we were restricted to time, because if we didn't get back sharp at 6.p.m, we wouldn't get a meal, so we reluctantly started the mile-long trek back to the eagled-gate. This time we met pedestrians heading towards the house, and they all asked how far it was, and we told them with the confident air of people who'd been there. One old woman who was almost on her hands and knees asked us how far the waterfall was, she almost had a stroke when we told her about six miles, but she said she was going to see it.....

We turned left at the gate, and had the luxury of being able to amble down the steep hill. We stopped at a small but beautiful church which was attractive because of its quaintness and gem-like setting. It was a Church of Ireland building, and as Eire is a Roman Catholic country, we thought we'd pop in and see how the religious minority managed...we had actually just previously left the Church of Ireland for Methodism, but it's the same sort of thing, really...at least, it is to me.

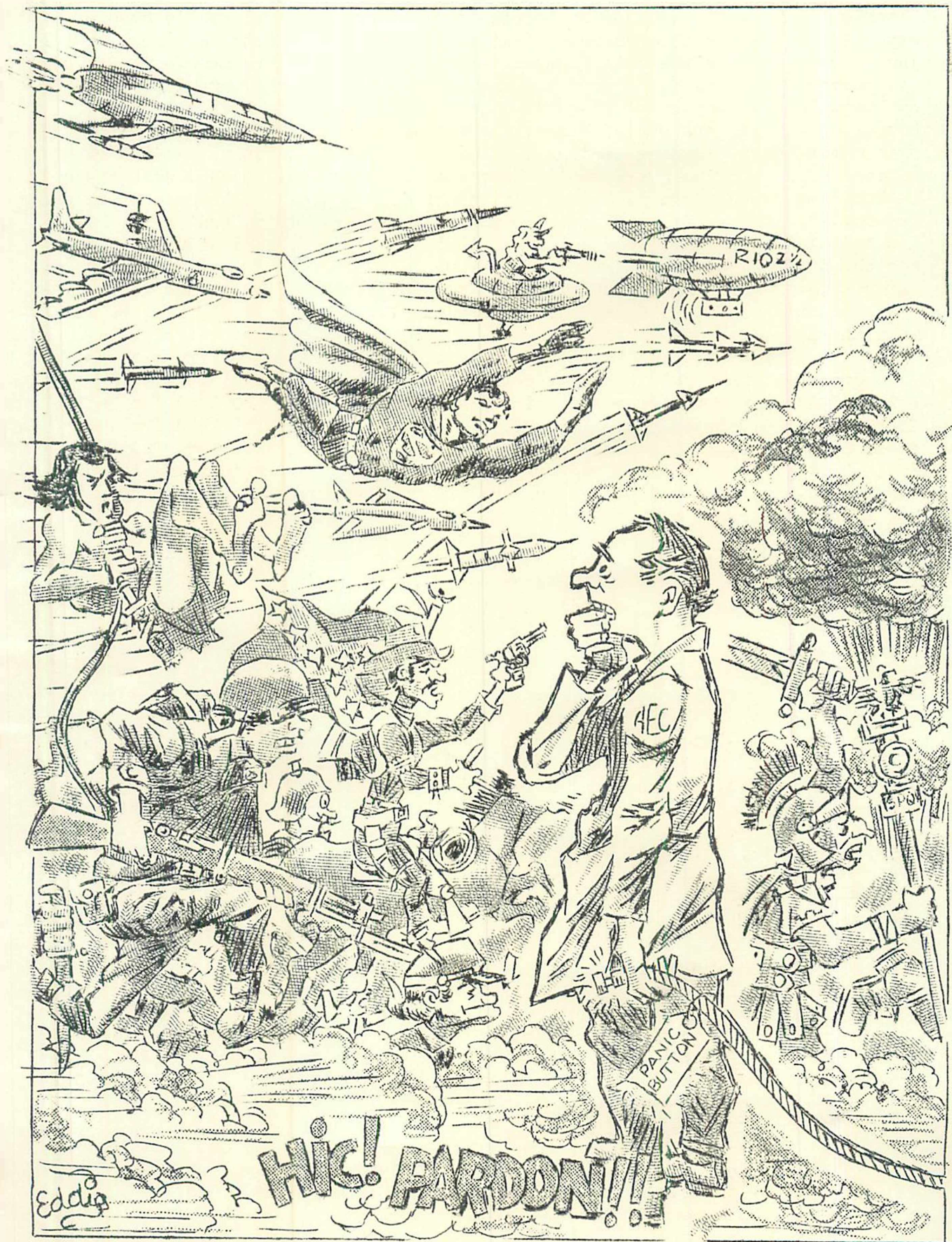
It was so clean, and inside the church there was always that uneasiness of atmosphere that I feel in church ( although it's a feeling I rarely get because I never go to church except to Weddings and baptisms, etc).

We slipped a few coins in the box set aside for visitors, so presumably other people were also attracted to the church as we were.

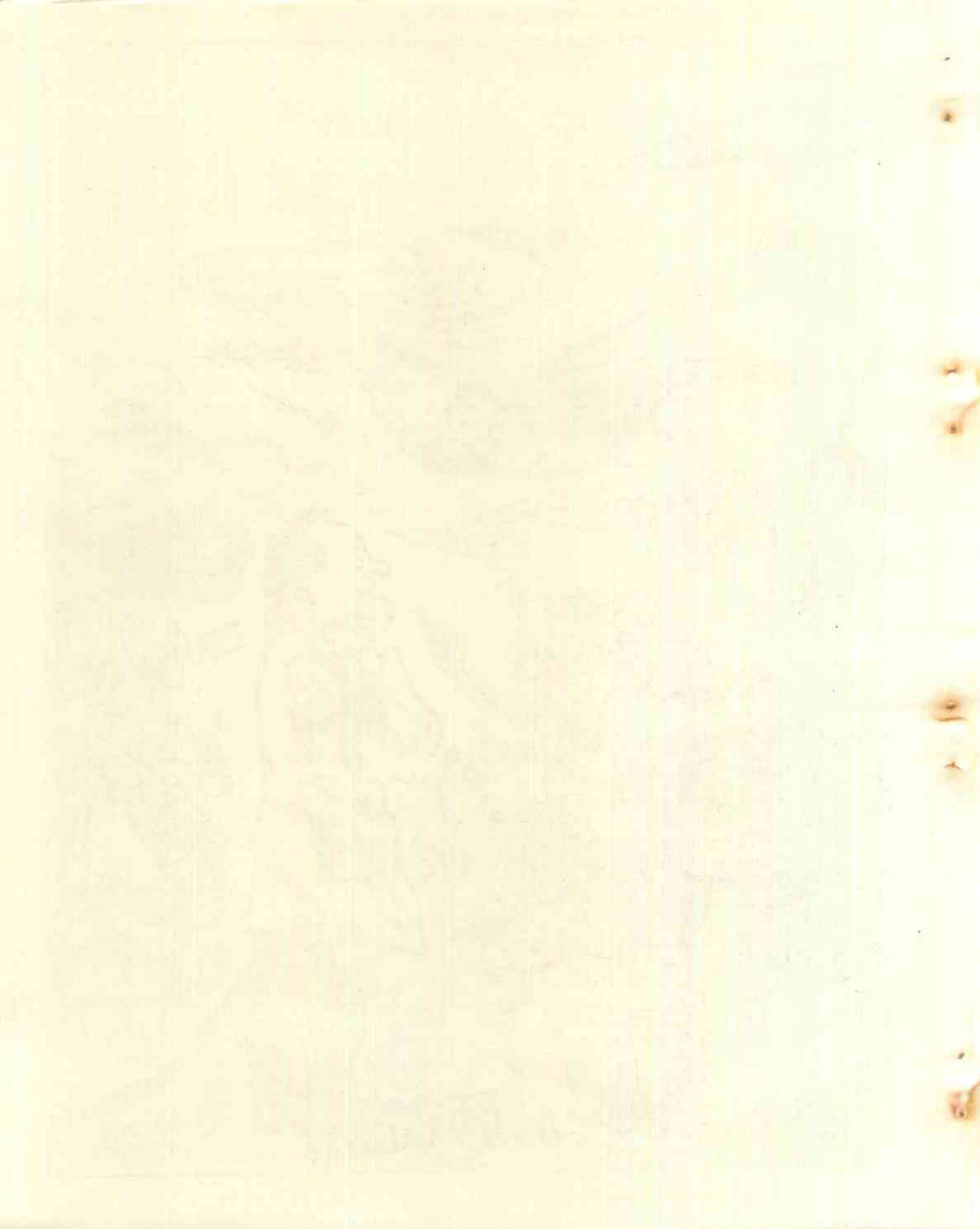
Back at Enniskerry, the 'bus was waiting for us, and just as we climbed in, the cafe juke box gave us the strident opening bars of the much-flogged 'Exodus' theme...I mean, Little Richard, Powerscourt, Senoritas, churches and the 'Exodus' theme...is nothing sacred?

John Berry  
1961











# GEORGE FARTHEST NORTH LOCKE. (Part 3.)

We eventually drew up beside the club-house, a tastefully laid-out series of dilapidated Nissan huts.

There were one or two of the active club members asleep in deck-chairs nearby, and a reasonably alert young man inside the office chained to the club safe in much the same manner as a British Railways Buffet tea-spoon is affixed to the counter. He regarded us as though undecided whether we were idiots or the police. ((We were a mixture of both-JB))

"You see," John whispered, "Northern Ireland is very provincial as far as aeronautics is concerned. This is the only flying club there is."

We asked the spare young man if there was any chance of a flight. He looked extremely shocked at the thought. But the possibilities of such a scheme being added to the club's venue began to fill his mercenary mind.

"It's not the normal practice," he said, "but I think we'll be able to fit in a couple of flights later on."

"What's the damage?" we asked.

"Oh, about a shilling a minute. Who'll be wanting to go up?"

There were three of us interested - John, wee Colin and myself. We gazed round the field a minute or two, drinking in a sight rarely seen since the conclusion of World War One. A Tiger Moth with the lop-sided gait of a daddy-long-legs with half its legs amputated, was doing its best to make a landing. It socked the ground with its front wheels while the tail was at least six feet off the ground. The front part of the machine, on touching the ground, sort of stopped for a moment, while the tail had no choice but to continue. Somehow, though, the aircraft didn't tip over onto its madly flying propeller, but remained poised vertically for almost a minute before subsiding gently onto its tail skid.

"That was desperate," breathed the Goon.

"What they call a pin-point landing," murmured the mercenary young man expertly. "Harry specialises in them. Now, which of you three want to go up?"

We both pointed at Colin.

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For about an hour we waited, while at intervals the club's fleet of aircraft - one battered Tiger Moth, a privately-owned job of slightly higher performance (a Hornet Moth) wandered around the skies. Quickly, the scene changed in our imagination from a decrepid 1960 flying

club to a busy air-field in 1917. The Tiger Moth became a real tiger of the air, bristling with machine guns for long range work, lances for medium range, swords and daggers for short range cutting and slicing. Also included were a couple of those rather unpleasant darts they used to drop on the heads of the Hunnish infantry, and a couple of scythes fitted by a keen gardener for use whenever the pilot should feel inclined to display his talents for hedge-hopping. Keep the garden hedges tidy and all that.

And Captain Egbert Balls was the most fabulous flyer of all time, with two cows, four stray cats and a bandy-legged duck to his credit. He was sitting waiting for the plane to return so that he could take off and fly into the sun and shoot down the dreaded Lichthoffman, Red Knight of the Sky-Phi. Lichthoffman of the handlebar moustache and long unruly hair....

Watching John completed the illusion. We looked at each other.

"I say, Lichthoffman, old boy," I said, recapturing in my voice the old fashioned chivalry of these knights of the air, "You'd better watch your step when you go into the jolly old blue. For I shall be coming at you out of the jolly old sun at you. Thought I'd better warn you."

"Ze Balls had better watch hoes step," mouthed the Hun, brandishing a sabre menacingly.

Just then the Auster landed. Lichthoffman gave an evil screech, leapt into the air and ran towards the machine - somewhat carelessly, as the still spinning prop lopped the tip from his spiked helmet. This, I thought, was a good omen for the coming battle. With a single bound, Lichthoffman leapt onto the high-wing monoplane, His resemblance for a second to a gazelle gave way to that of a fumbling, splay-footed camel as both feet went through the soft fabric of the wing. Nothing daunted, he stapled the edges together and clambered into the cock-pit. A moment later, the aircraft moved forward, skidded in a patch of wet grass, and soared skyward in what is known in aeronautical circles as a split-arse take-off. Soon, the machine was but a speck in the Heavens.

Several moments passed, while Captain Balls chewed his finger nails.(((Chmaging to third person for this bit. Okay ?Tough.))) When would the Tiger Moth return? He wanted to get into the air and shoot down the Hun. He mustn't get too far over the enemy lines. The Tiger, a highly consumptive machine, would run out of petrol rapidly. At last, a speck on the horizon grew large, resolved itself into the Tiger, and landed. A more normal landing this time.

Captain Balls, cool, calm ace of the air, moved casually towards it, stepped gently onto the lower of the two wings, and climbed into the cock-pit. The co-pilot smiled a polite greeting.

"Good afternoon," replied the intrepid ace. He seated himself, took two Avomine in case the air proved bumpy, and wondered what to do with the strange straps. He held the two ends up. "I suppose you join these together," he murmured, transforming his ignorance into the gay banter of the coolest and bravest of the men of the Royal Flying Corps.

The co-pilot fixed them

Captain Balls grasped the control column firmly in his mitt, and said, "Start the jolly old machine."

The co-pilot said "We're already a hundred feet off the ground."

"Oh." For a moment there was nothing but the howling of the air outside the cockpit. Then it hit him. The illness that has crippled



even the bravest of men. The Victoria Cross was as nothing against the dreadful disease for which the doctors could find no cause or cure. For a moment, everything turned into a kaleidoscope of terrifying images. There was an awful sensation of falling, of death...

And Captain Balls, distressed airman, clung to the joystick and howled louder than the wind. His feet flailed madly, and somewhere through the dank curtain of cold terror, he could hear his own voice....

"Let me down. What am I doing in this thing?"

His feet, still flailing, had suddenly caught something. He twisted his toes round it at the same time heaving heavily on the stick.

The aircraft gave an agonised croak, and four yards of fabric ripped off under the impact of the suddenly delivered seven Gs, as the machine screamed towards a black cloud in a steep climbing turn. Pretty soon, she stalled. For a minute, she remained suspended. A dreadful silence crept over everything - the silence of presaging doom.

The co-pilot muttered something about it being next to impossible to get her out of such a position. Then the nose dropped away, far, far down and to the left. The aircraft spun faster to the left. She was completely out of control - still stalled and in a spin. The wind around the wings screamed louder and louder.

Captain Balls clung to the stick like a limpot.

He felt that the co-pilot was trying to move it forward, resisted.

"Let go the bloody thing," the co-pilot swore. "And get your feet off the blasted rudder bar. I have to apply it the opposite way."

Captain Balls didn't hear him though. He had fainted. Delicately, of course.

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((Back to first person.))

I recovered after a time, and I never dared ask the pilot how he managed to land her. I thanked him nicely for the ride, and waited for Colin to have his flight. Back in the car, we talked excitedly about our flights whilst returning to 31, Campbell Park Ave. John is now a confirmed aeronautical addict, and will, I hear, be cutting down his annual wordage to the 500,000 mark in order to devote some time to flying.....

George Locke.

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This is a plea I've reiterated several times, but you cannot say I'm not a trier. I most desperately need another copy of POT POURRI #9, the issue I stencilled in Seattle, and which the CRY gang kindly duped for me. I am most anxious to put the first ten issues in one volume ( and the second ten issues will, I hope, be ready for binding soon ), which of course I cannot do, as I only have my file copy...of POT POURRI # 9. If some kindly disposed SAPSite will sacrifice his copy ( I don't mean 'sacrifice' in the term that the issue is priceless, rather I mean the sacrifice in time in having to go through back files of SAPS to look for it.) It was in SAPS bundle for October 1959, and I will be delirious with joy if someone will please send it me, for trade or cash.

Thanks for reading this.

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# YET MORE CANASTA

A few final notes about CANASTA is all. I've been playing weekly for more than three years, and I've picked up many more schemes and ploys and hints than will ever be found in the instruction books, and I want to pass them on, for what they're worth, to the CANASTA playing clientele of SAPS.

One interesting phenomena has come to light. I've played, and it's worked like a charm every time the situation for use of it has arisen. It's like this. Whenever the molding is 90 or 120, and the pack is sealed, quite a respectable pile of cards will accrue in the reject pile. With the molding so high, it is obvious that the game is in its final stage, and therefore if the whole of the reject pack can be obtained, the game is as good as won....therefore..item..how to win the pack? If you follow my ploy,

I swear that the pack will be yours, and therefore the game.

Of course, I've made a seemingly rash promise there, and in order to substantiate my claim, you've obviously got to have a pretty good hand, in fact you've got to have the vital 120 meld...ie..two Jokers and, say two jacks, or three of four Aces and a couple of two's, but after a few rounds, you or your partner should have a 120 meld, which should be put down as soon as it is ready.

Actually, I've been playing with the same partner, a certain Mrs.Jones, for a considerable time, and even yet I don't think she's learned my ploy, but by mutual and unspoken consent, she always melds if at all possible, leaving the higher strategy of the game to me.

Now this is the phenomena.

If the pack is sealed and the meld is 120 ( or 90), it is patently obvious that your opponents will do all they can to stop you picking it up, and it is a fact that they will always play low cards, ie, fours, fives, sixes or sevens. During research, I've seen as many as 25 low cards in the pile and no high value cards.

To utilise my ploy, therefore, and bearing in mind that you have a 120 meld in your hand, or, if you're lucky, your partner has put down the initial meld on the playing table...try and get a pair of low cards in your hand. As I say ( and as you'll discover if you watch for it ) the low cards will come flying out onto the reject pack because it's good play to do so. If you are lucky, you may garner a pair of fours, fives, sixes and sevens, although this is perhaps too much to expect.

There is of course a disadvantage. Sometimes ones luck is out, and you may try for my ploy and find yourself unable to meld...there's nothing more frustrating in trying to aim for a 120 sealed meld, and using the Berry ploy, and finishing up with a handful of small cards which in themselves don't even add up to a fifty meld. It's tough, and it's happened to me. Not often, though. If you do find yourself in such an unenviable position, you can always faint or throw a fit. When the other side have sorted out the pile and figured they made about ten thousand out of the sordid affair, you can always pretend you did it on purpose to give them a chance !!!



There is a certain technique in utilising black threes, the stop card. My experience has shown that, when circumstances permit, it is not really apt to follow the official dictum and sling it out as though it was red hot. It's primary duty is, naturally, to stop the pack from being picked up. There are only four of them available, and there is a certain amount of skill in making use of them...as opposed to merely getting rid of them. I must again make the stipulation that this basic ploy I am going to describe to you is entirely dependant on the cards in your hand, and the situation you find yourself in.

Imagine that the cards are dealt. The first player picks up a card, and puts one on the reject pile...and if he's got a black three in his hand he will automatically dump it. In a round or two, all the black threes will be out. If you and your partner pick up the reject pile upon melding, that's all nice and dandy. You've gained yourself the enviable position of virtually sealing the pack by depositing black threes, which means that the opposition cannot pick up, but you and your partner can. (By the way, the counter ploy to combat a glut of black threes is to seal with a wild card.)

Consider this position.

Your opponents have melded, or are about to meld. (It's possible by psychological observation to know when a meld is due by your opponents.) Therefore the black three will be used against you. Therefore, in these circumstances only, I would suggest that you do not reject your black threes, but dispose of surplus cards which are of no use. I always feel that if an opposition meld is due, do nothing to stop it. Let them meld, by all means. The more cards they have on the table, the less they have in their hands to worry you.

So the position is this.

Because you have anticipated a potential meld, you have in fact allowed it, even encouraged it, and have made certain that you have not disposed of your black threes, if any. I have 'worked' an arrangement with my partner, by rejecting certain cards, that she knows that she must try and retain her black three pending an opposition meld. As soon as the opposition meld is made, then is the time to start whipping out the black threes on the pile. Presuming that the opposition didn't achieve too big a pile when they picked up the reject pack, they now have fewer cards than you and your partner, and you have the black three, which, as I've said, serve, in effect, to seal the pack for the definite advantage of you and your partner.

Try it sometime, but be careful that the situation is tactically O.K. I wouldn't like to be the cause of the opposition getting their 5,000 points first time round !!!

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I'm pretty certain that you non-CANASTA players are by now very bored with these frequent ramblings of mine, but I know that some of you do play CANASTA ( I am also referring to the non-SAPS readers of POT POURRI) and I want you to take advantage of the various ploys I've devised. They should help your game if you play them in the right circumstances, but don't blame me if you make a mess of it...leastwise, you'll learn by your mistakes, even if the sorry lesson is a decision not to read Berry-type articles on CANASTA any more.

There are still a couple of major CANASTA ploys I'm doing research on, but I've got to hit a winning streak and get back my prestige as a good player before continuing experimentation.

John Berry

1961.

REPRINT SECTION. No, I'm not really in such a difficulty that I have to start reprinting my 'stuff', but a few items were published by other fans in days of yore, and they really require reprinting. Not that they're good or anything, just that, when they were first published, they were UNREADABLE due to the cruddy appearance of the fanzine. This first reprint is taken from MOTLEY, published by neofan Bill Gates, son of an American army colonel stationed in Germany, in 1956.....

# THE SNAKE PIZZICATO

## NOTES ON A TV PROGRAMME.

The TV announcer flicked his eyes from right to left for several seconds, trying to focus on both cameras at the same time. Finally, he settled for the wrong one. He simpered, and in a real posh BBC accent, announced the next item to be 'music from America'.

There followed a blurred picture of an earphone-headed cameraman waving his arms about excitedly, until finally two men and a camera appeared on my screen with a piano. One man, by far the older, smiled affectedly, and said that Mr. So-and-so (I've forgotten his name) had come from the U.S.A. to demonstrate this vitally new American music. He turned to the American, who was young, well-dressed and intelligent looking, and asked him to carry on with his lecture.

((NOTE. From hereon, I would like to state that my account of the ensuing five minutes is one hundred per cent factual. In point of fact, I have deliberately under-described some scenes so as to add that extra little touch of authenticity to the account.))

The American waved a confident hand at the piano-forte, the lid of which inclined upwards at the classic pose of 45 degrees.

"This is known as the Prepared Piano," he announced primly. "And here" ...pointing to the interior of the piano..." are several large bolts."

The cameraman obliged with a close-up, revealing large screw-bolts suspended from the wires.

"This is a hammer," he continued, recklessly waving a lethal-looking weapon," and if you'll just hand me my stop-watch, I'll play a tune."

The elder mopped his forehead and took two paces backwards, biting his lower lip in rather a worried way. He reached forward tentatively and deposited a stop-watch in the clutching palm. The American sat down, beamed at the unseen millions, pressed down the button of the stop-watch, and staring at it, commenced to play. When I say 'play', weell, play isn't quite the word..this is actually what he did. Between five and fifteen second pauses, he pushed down a couple of keys with a dextrous flip of the index fingers, and the resultant discord was like someone trying to get cat-gut whilst the cat was



still alive.

To my classically attuned ears, it was HORRIBLE. The only pleasureable thing about the pauses were that they gave you time to emit a strangled sob, and prepare the ear muscles for the next assault.

AND THEN, with a nimble leap forward, HE HIT THE SIDE OF THE PIANO WITH THE HAMMER,

So help me, he did.

A few more spasmodic key tickles, a couple of vigorous hammer thumps, and the American laid down the stop-watch, letting his eyes flicker modestly.

"Well, er, it most certainly was original," panted the announcer, ripping his bow tie off," and so goodnight to you viewers, and we'll...."

"There is more to come yet," interrupted the American."The Pizzicato."

So saying, he seduced a few more keys, liberally hammered the sides of the piano, then lay prostrate over the opened piano and PLUCKED THE WIRES.

The announcer ( a noted Chopin lover) staggered backwards, completely flabbergasted by this most unconventional performance.

"And you mean to say that people in America like this sort of thing?" he asked, obviously stupified.

The artiste grinned knowingly.

"Mostly sculptors, artists, painters, etc," he replied. He then picked up a pickaxe, and stuffed the ends of his trousers in his socks.

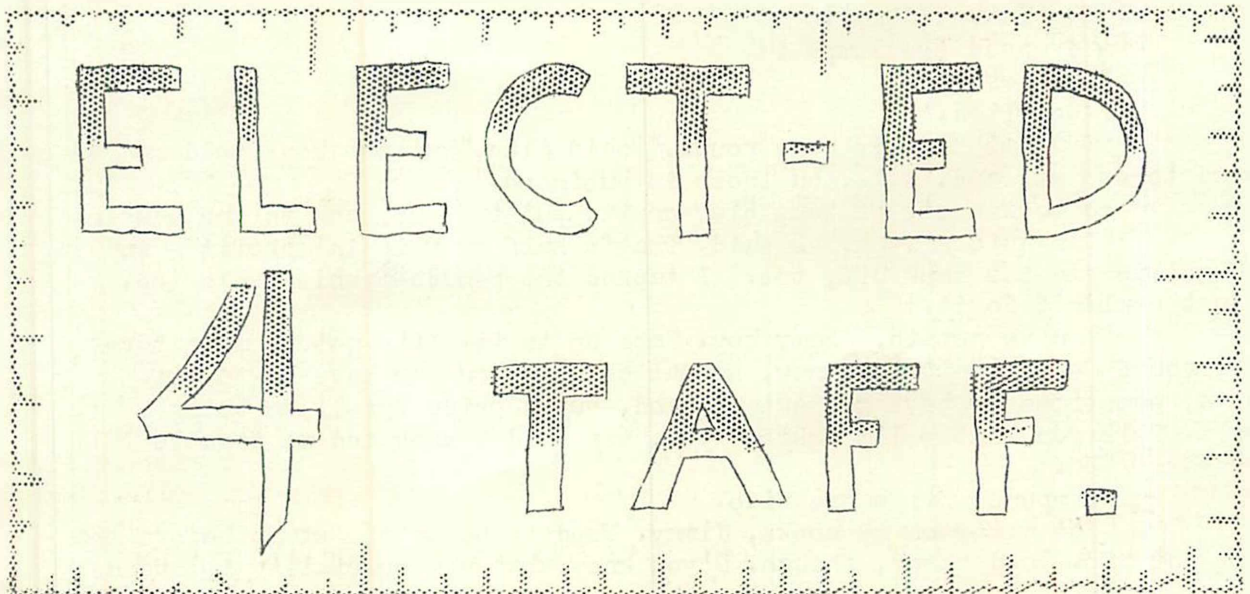
This was too much for me, and as the camera wavered to show the announcer being carried out, I switched the TV off.

Please assure me that this isn't for real. I didn't suffer a hallucination, because my psychiatrist was terribly pleased when I admitted seeing it. He'd seen the programme too, and was just about to go and be psycho-analysed.

If you must export culture from America, please, not this sort. Stick to the Marilyn Monroe calendars .....

John Berry  
1956

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(I've only had about half a dozen stories, etc, rejected in my entire fannish writing career. THE BLOGGINS SAGA, in RETRIBUTION, is one. This is another.)

# PROTECTION RACKET.

I knew it was Alec when he came in.

He smiled at my wife as she went across and asked for his order - but the smile changed to an indelicate sneer as he looked over her shoulder at me.

"Just tea and biscuits? - right sir, just a moment."

Mary walked past me to the kitchen - I walked over to him.

"You going to be a good boy, Jimmy?" he asked. He opened a solid silver cigarette case, selected a cork-tipped cigarette - he didn't offer me one. He lit up with a solid gold lighter - and puffed smoke into my face.

"I - I can't afford it - honest I can't. It cost me all my savings and a big loan from the bank to open this place - I told that to your two boys last week."

He smiled again, and thanked Mary for the tea when she laid the teapot, cup, sugar and milk in front of him.

"Pour, Jimmy," he said, rather coldly I thought. Mary looked at me, a frown crossing her face.

"It's O.K, dear," I said, forcing a smile, "an old army pal."

I poured the tea.

"Two lumps, Jimmy."

I dropped two lumps in.

"Drop of milk."

I complied.

"I don't usually come round," said Alec. "But the boys told me you wanted to see me, and, well, business is business."

He took a sip of tea, blew on it, put the cup back in the saucer.

"Ten quid a week," I said. "That's half my flippin' profit - and I've got to pay the bank off, too." I tapped the pseudo-marble table top. "I just couldn't do it."

"You've got to, Jimmy boy. Face up to it. It's not in my nature to be rough - it isn't you know, no matter what you may have heard. Of course, sometimes my boys get out of hand, but I pride myself on being subtle. Tell you what - I'm asking you, ten quid a week and no trouble?"

"No."

He opened his hands wide.

"Got a boy on my books, Jimmy. Used to be on the stage before the drink got him. Good actor, though. D'you know what his speciality is? Comes



into places like this- and he's well dressed, y'know ? He gives a big order, starts to eat, and then a spasm of pure horror crosses his face. He clutches his stomach, and just before he collapses on the floor, he screams out loud, "My God, I've got food poisoning." Fairly shakes the clientile. I've seen him in action, Jimmy, he's good. A regular little Sir Larry. Cleared the Regent Saloon round the corner in under twenty seconds."

I'd heard about it. Place closed the following week, now it was a place where poodles got their toes manicured.....

"Got you worried, Jimmy ?" Of course, that's only a curtain raiser. Fred comes into action next. A good boy. Can drop a stink bomb from across a crowded floor into a teacup. One afternoon, in a fit of exuberance, he dropped five in the main dining room of the Biltmore - one at each corner, and, a novel touch this, one smack bang into Lady Billing's opened handbag. Nice place, the Biltmore...it's a billiards room now, you know?"

He drank the remains of his tea, and put the cup down gently.

"Finally, Jimmy boy, if things remain, shall we say - unsettled- I bring Sailor into the fray. Now Sailor is what I would call a character. To give you a rough idea, he never washes. The smell is shocking. He never sports less than three days stubble, and his breath - Christ! He always makes his entrance in rather a flamboyant way. He kicks in the glass of the door and whips off the tablecloth off the nearest table to him, although on one occasion ( and I strongly deprecate this when on a job) he did a tour of the complete dining hall, and removed all the table-cloths. He then diverts his attention to the decor. I swear Picasso would be jealous of some of his abstract efforts. Let me see, now, the Adelphi - ah, at the Adelphi he reached the climax of his aesthetic career. What he did to the pastel green ceiling with ten bottles of tomato sauce had to be seen to be believed. At this stage, Sailor really gets down to work. On one job, someone dialled 999 as soon as he came in, and it took a squad car only two minutes to get to the scene. I'm not exaggerating, it took three men a full working week to clear up the debris. Sailor was round this morning looking for work...what shall I tell him, Jimmy boy ?"

My mouth was dry. Although I say so myself, the decor of my place was unusual but arresting. Got a couple of struggling artists to do it for three meals a day. Took 'em a month, but everyone remarked on the excellence of it. I shuddered to think what a few well aimed tomato sauce bottles would do - or even badly aimed ones.

"I guess you've got me, Alec," I said. "I don't want any trouble... tell you what, send you're boy round tomorrow."

"No," grinned Alec. "You interest me. Tell you what....I'll come round myself tomorrow afternoon - and have fifteen quid ready. Shame to spoil all these sea-horses round the walls. A marine motif ? Nice. Tomorrow, then."

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He came round at 2.30 pm, and sat down at the same table.

I told Mary to pop out for half an hour and I crossed over to Alec.

"Well, Jimmy ?"

"Come in the back room, Alec," I said.

He smiled, got up, followed me.

"I guess I've no alternative," I said grimly. "But your boys said ten pounds last week, now you've raised it to fifteen."

"Overheads. Well...?"

The smile was gone. He held out his hands.

I poured tea, and crossed the room for my wallet in my jacket hanging on the back of the door.

"Two lumps."

I dropped the sugar in his cup.

"You know how much milk."

I poured a drop in.

"That do ?" I asked.

He gave a sneering nod.

I lifted the cup and poured the contents over his thick greasy hair.

He staggered back, swearing.

I reached across, gripped the front of his tea-stained sports jacket and pulled him forward. I wiped his face with the back of my hand. I rasped the heavy ring on the ring finger of my right hand across his nose-hard.

"Listen, Alec," I said. "I've got . "

"You ----."

I'd heard the word before, so I ignored it.

"Nothing as subtle as a tape recorder under the table," I grinned.

"My solicitor told me it isn't acceptable as evidence in court in this country. No photographs either...can't afford the equipment."

He called me the same word again. I 'tut-tutted'.

I screwed his lapels in my fist, and pushed him hard backwards. He fell over the chair and sprawled over a couple of dozen empty milk bottles.

I sat down and looked at him.

"This morning, Alec," I said, "I made a full statement to my solicitor. Eight pages, including everything you said."

"My word against yours," he croaked. "No proof. I'll say I've never been here."

I ignored him.

"And I've instructed him to hand the statement to the police when I tell him to."

"You won't be able to talk when Sailor's finished with you," he said. The thought seemed to inspire him.

"That's where you're wrong." I explained. "All you told me about the Biltmore and the Adelphi and the Regent and Fred and Sailor is of course true. I knew you weren't bluffing. But my solicitor says that your detailed knowledge of the events proves guilty knowledge because it corroborates the facts in every detail. Therefore my statement will be believed."

He sat up, his eyes wide.

"I was never here," he said, "I've never seen you in my life, neither have my boys...."

I smiled as I played my trump card.

"Alec," I said pityingly. "I kept the cups you and your boys drank the tea out of. My solicitor had them powdered with a fine black powder, and you should see the beautiful fingerprints on them. One more thing, Alec. If the slightest incident happens, even if I trip on the stair carpet, my solicitor is handing everything over to the boys at New Scotland Yard...and the penalty for extortion is about ten years."

I opened the back door.

I pulled Alec to his feet, turned him round and kicked him through the door with all my might.

There was a loud clatter as he joined the rest of the rubbish in the back yard....

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John Berry  
1961.