

POT POURRI  
ELEVEN

PRESENTING

a mess  
of berry

DEDICATED, WITH GREAT AND  
SINCERE RESPECT, TO :-

BURNETT:TOSKEY

# MEANDERING!!!

Yep....I'm just going to meander....I've taken a few days off from my office, and instead of doing Mailing Comments I've written a number of assorted items about widely differing subjects. Actually, to be truthful, I'm in one of my anti-M.C.moods. Instead of reading each SAPS-zine and worrying about what I'm going to say, I've just read them for 100 per cent pleasure. I think M.C.'s for M.C.'s sake is all wrong. So I just ain't gonna do any. I must say that once again the mailing filled me with delight. It took some hours to read every page in every SAPS-zine, and it is surprising what a great variety of subject matter is included. The scoop of the mailing is in SPACEWARP...the Major Mayers speech reprint. I was bewildered and hurt at the demeanour of the American troops when they were in captivity in Korea, and the fact that the Turks were demonstrated to be so perfect in all respects shows that somewhere, something was very very wrong. Obviously, the American captives surrendered not only in body but in spirit, and the depths to which they sank ( thirty six men standing by whilst one pushed three outside to freeze to death ) should be a matter of deep public concern in the United States. I have read several books about the Korean Campaign, written from the British point of view, and I found no reference to lead me to assume that the same lethargy and apathy existed amongst British captives. I was most distressed to read the speech, but thankful just the same that Rapp had the initiative to pub it. Re Rapp, I noticed his ULTIMATE WEAPON seemed to have a number of encores in the mailing, although I noted with amusement that one of the publishers guessed a hoax was apparant. Yep, I'd say RAPP SPARKLED in the 50th mailing. GIM TREE rose even higher up the Berry Estimation Scale, with such a wealth of freshness and wit and sheer pulsating interest. The fotosheets in some of the SAPS-zines added considerably to the overall quality, and to sum up the mailing, I would say without fear of contradiction it is the best all round mailing I've ever been privileged to read, and I've waded through FAPA and OMPA bundles before now and found nothing like the bounding exuberance in SAPS. I know that it's going to continue. Still meandering. Of course, as I knew at the time, I bitterly regret my attack on Toskey, which is why I've dedicated this issue to him, as you've seen on the front cover. An O.E.'s job must be hard enough without bad-tempered members writing scathing words just because they are in bad form at the time. I cannot plead it was a joke, because it wasn't, I was really annoyed at the time, but now I mellowed considerably. All I hope is that Tosk will forgive me. It was my first ever outburst in fandom, and I'll try and live it down. Tosk took it like the gentleman he is, which shows even more his sterling qualities and my unstable temperament. I note Guy Terwilleger is anxious for me to publish my 30,000 word story in SAPS, and he even offers to pub it himself. The story is called THE MIND

STEALERS. At least it is original. I wrote it some years back, and at the time I thought it was the Irish answer to Sturgeon and Blish. Willis said it wasn't too bad, and I made the great mistake of sending it to Chuck Harris to criticize. He didn't comment adversely on the plot, he wrote pages about incidents in the story which he thought should not be...he didn't think a private detective would have a divan in his office...things like that. Also, in one paragraph, I mentioned 'millions of galaxies', and in big print Chuck wrote 'THERE ARE NOT'. I heard afterwards that Chuck was a very harsh critic, maybe the harshest in fandom, and I was pleased because he didn't slaughter my plot, only details of the action such as I have described. I must be truthful, and cast false modesty aside, and admit that when I re-read it a short time ago, it read very well. I didn't think I could possibly have written it. It is essentially a science fiction detective story, with clues scattered about., with snatches of humour too. One chapter, a short one, is probably the best stuff I've ever written..... remember I don't rate myself too highly as a writer, because I know I have many limitations, but I do think the one chapter I've particularly mentioned is high rate writing for me. So, maybe, if I don't get many ideas for the next Pot Pourri, I might just reprint the chapter...it'll give an idea of the tempo of the story...hell...I've wasted a lot of valuable space on that old story...and thanks for the interest, Guy. I'm still meandering, like... and I'd like to ask you all about a man called Chan Canasta..I believe he has made his home in New York, and you may have seen him on TV. He was on the BBC last night, and this is what he did. A man he didn't know was in a library ten miles away. The man was in fact ex-superintendent Tom Fallon, of Scotland Yard. In the studio, Chan Canasta gave a woman three cards ( she chose then actually.) A man was told to choose a number between 5 and 35, and a third person was asked to give a number between 1 and 15. Then, through a television link, Canasta spoke to Tom Fallon and asked him to choose any book from the library. Fallon turned and went to the bookshelves, and chose a thin one. Canasta said it would do O.K, but perhaps it would be better if he chose a thicker one. So Fallon looked round and finally hefted out a bulky volume. Canasta asked him the title, and Fallon said 'BUCKINGHAM PALACE'. Canasta stood rigid, and told Fallon not to open the book. Canasta went to a blackboard and wrote down the word 'fireplace'....then he thought a bit more and wrote ' on either side of the fireplace'. He turned to the woman and asked her to take the face value of the cards and arrange a three figure number. She said 199. He asked the man what his number between 5 and 35 was, and the man said '7'. The third person said the number he chose was '15'. Canasta told Fallon to turn to page 199, look down to the twelfth line ( 5 plus 7) , and the fifth word across on that line. Fallon almost fainted, and he read out exactly what Canasta had written on the blackboard. Will someone for Ghods sake tell me how he did it. Fallon was not in on the act, because he is a man of principle, a well known public figure, and the mediator, John Freeman, assured us that on the behalf of the B.B.C. he was empowered to say that until 15 minutes before the programme, only he knew that Fallon would be in the library. The B.B.C. would not sink to such public deception, therefore Canasta did it in some other manner. I can assure you that Fallon nor Freeman nor anyone on the panel was in on the act. I'd be thrilled if any of you have any theories. HOW THE HELL DID HE DO IT ? Follow SAPSites, I could meander for pages, but I see by the numbers on the side of the stencil that I've just one line left, and this is it. See you next mailing, cheers, John Berry, who wishes to apologise for no mailing comments.....

# CANASTA for BEGINNERS! (rejected by HOYLE)



A great deal of nonsense has been written about Canasta, I know, because I consider myself an authority on the game, and I've obtained most of the available text books on the subject, and they must consider their readers to have an I.Q. round about the 200 mark. To the beginner, the game must seem fantastically complicated, although here and now I must assure him this is not necessarily so. I do not have a 200 I.Q., well, not quite, but I can understand the game, and the reason for this short lecture is to straighten out some of the misconceptions which have arisen round it.

The text books lay down a maximum of eight people playing at one time, but provided the players have big hands in which to hold their cards, I do not see why there should be any restriction on the number playing. It well may be that the number of people playing is restricted by the number of packs available, but if you hold a Canasta Party, I would respectfully suggest that you fight against convention and tell them all to bring their own pack of cards with them !

Of course, the complication is that as the game progresses, someone will pick up the pack, and if ten or twenty people are playing the chances are that you may pick up two or three hundred cards. You see what I meant back there about having big hands. Of course, playing Group Canasta, as I've dubbed it, requires certain refinements. I mean, if you have three hundred cards in your hands, you're going to find it somewhat difficult to sort them all out, so I suggest a form of collapsable sloped fence which you can set up in front of you to arrange your cards.

Oh yes, I should have pointed out back there that the whole object of the game is to make Canasta's, and as this article is prepared just for beginners, I must try and give clear and precise instructions as to how to make them.

A Canasta is a collection of seven cards, made up all of the same sort with or without wild cards to a maximum of three ! Now if by any chance this is not clear, I would like to take you step by step, and try and keep up with me, because it is, quite frankly, rather a bore telling you all about this elementary stuff.

You've got to get seven cards for a Canasta...seven Queens or seven sixes or even seven sevens, but you can't collect seven three's or seven two's, because the threes are no good and the two's are wild. See ?

If you do happen to get seven all of the same sort ( except two's or three's ) you have garnered 500 points, because it is a Clear Canasta !

The opposite to a Clear Canasta is a Dirty Canasta, and to get a Dirty One your seven cards all of the same sort are not of the same sort, it's as simple as that ! You must have a minimum of four of the same sort, but

you can add a selection of wild cards, Joker's or two's, to make up the seven. A Dirty Canasta is only worth three hundred points, but if you have three Joker's included, well, a Joker is worth fifty points, so you've almost got the five hundred points you would have got if you'd have seven all of the same sort.

Oh, crikey, I don't want to get you mixed up, but back there I said three's are no good. I must amend that to say black three's are no good, but red three's are worth a hundred points and you pick up another card. Well, to make it absolutely clear, a black three is some use, if you put it on top of the pack, no one can pick the pack up, and, by the way, whilst I'm on about the pack, if you put a wild card on top of the pack, in order for anyone else to pick up the pack they must have two of the same kind ( though not Joker's, two's or three's ) and if you cunningly put on top of the pack (after it's sealed, or frozen ) something they have laid out on the table the chances are they won't pick it up...you see, they can't if it's on the table unless they have two more in their hand ( but not Joker's, two's or three's ). Once you've grasped this, you're well on the way to the higher things in the game, such as a Meld, although this really comes first.

The Meld often frightens potential Canasta players, but don't let it.

It's as simple as this :-

In order to pick up from the pack you've got to Meld, and in order to make a Canasta you've got to Meld ( although, if you're lucky, you can start with a Canasta instead of a Meld ) so you can see if you don't Meld you're going to be a bit of a liability to yourself or your partner ( oh yes, I forgot to tell you can play Partner Canasta, but forgot about that until you've got the hang of the easy stuff first ) and the only reason for playing Canasta is to build up points, and if you are going to play you may as well play properly, so pay attention and don't let your mind wander.

If you've less than fifteen hundred points, i.e., if you've just started, or didn't do too well on the previous play, your Meld must contain fifty points, and to get these you must remember the respective values of the cards. You see, cards are not worth their face value. Well, a ten is, but the rest isn't. An ace is worth twenty, a throe is worth five, but it doesn't count towards a Meld, a two is worth ten, and does count towards a Meld provided it is placed down in conjunction with at least two cards, both of the same sort, which make up fifty ! A Joker is worth fifty, but this doesn't mean you can put it down by itself as a Meld, you must still have two other cards of the same type, for instance, two fours and a Joker ( a four is worth five ) makes sixty. Some people try to be ostentatious and put down a Joker and two Aces for an initial Meld, but there is no point in doing this unless you are trying to make a Canasta of Aces, and you still have two more in your hand to pick up the pack in case someone with a shrewd card sense ( like me ) puts a two on it to seal or freeze it.

If your score is more than fifteen hundred points, your initial Meld goes up to ninety points, and once again, to make this, you can combine wild cards and ordinary ones to a minimum of ninety. You must not, however, have more wild cards than ordinary cards in a Meld....remember what I said back there about a Canasta, a Dirty One, having at least four cards of the same type other than wild cards.

I see I have used up all the space I am allowed in this issue, but if this series proves popular, I shall continue in future issues my famous notes on ADVANCED CANASTA, but in order to be able to follow it, you've got to grasp the elementary stuff above. Try your hardest, will you ?????

John Berry 1960.

# AVIATION

## ODDITIES 1,

for

Alan Lewis

We have at least one aviation fan in SAPS, Master A. Lewis, and as, in this particular issue I've tried to write for everyone, so this next couple of pages are included for his benefit, and, perchance, pleasure. There is much more to aviation than one would think, and with almost twenty-five years of study behind me ( the last five years rather half-heartedly, I must confess- a little thing called fandom ) I feel that I've gone deeper into the study of aeroplanes than most people, and can speak with semblance of authority on the less obvious aspects of it. That's why I've called this series 'AVIATION ODDITIES', because, I'm telling you, some mighty queer things have been built and flown.

### SPLIT PERSONALITIES. Britain

During the 1939-45 war ( 1941-45 in American record books ) a number of most interesting experiments were carried out with conventional warplanes.

Great Britain started the gimmick in 1942 with the General Aircraft G.A.L. 48 Hotspur. The Hotspur was a small glider used for training glider pilots who would eventually fly the tank and troop carriers, the Hengist and Hamilcar's, into France and Germany.

It was of orthodox construction, a mid wing glider with a single fin and rudder, with a span of 45 feet 10 inches.

Some genius thought of adding an extra fuselage to the wing.

This transformed a small trainer into a sixteen seat troop carrier. The Hengist, which I mentioned above, was a much larger troop-carrier, and so only the one Twin Hotspur, as it was called, was built. It's wing span was increased to 57 feet 11 inches, and it had a loaded weight of 6,450 lb. It was controlled from the port fuselage, there were no controls whatsoever in the starboard cockpit.

### Germany.

The Germans built some superb aeroplanes during World War II. Unfortunately, the relevant authorities couldn't meld together at all. For example, the Messerschmitt Me 262 was a most excellent twin-jet fighter, which could, if it had been built in sizeable numbers, have wrecked the American Fortress raids deep into German territory. It could have altered the course of the war, and added years to it. BUT...Hitler wanted it used as a reprisal bomber for use against England, and many months were wasted on fruitless development. I've merely given this example to show how things went wrong because of a crazy mixed-up policy. But, boys, there were some wonderful experiments...take the Heinkel He 111 Z.

The Heinkel 111 H was a German bomber first used in Spain in the civil war. Developments of it were used extensively by the Luftwaffe against Poland, France, England and Russia. Thousands were built. It was a nice looking orthodox mid wing twin-engined bomber with a single fin and rudder.

A British fighter pilot was cruising about one day over Paris towards the end of the war when he saw a sight which made him open his mouth in utter awe....he saw two Heinkel 111's stuck together !

Actually, it was a similar experiment to that carried out on the Hotspur. Two Heinkel He 111 H's were joined together by a middle section of wing on which a fifth engine was added.

Given the designation Heinkel He 111 Z, it was intended for towing gliders, and a bomber version was projected. The wing span was increased to 115 feet 6 inches. The loaded weight was 65,500 lb, and the maximum speed was 298 m.p.h.

If your interested, the fighter shot it down.

#### America.

Yep, America got into the act.

The North American P-51 Mustang was a snazzy fighter of American design which was made even better when it had a British Rolls Royce engine fitted to it.

Many were flown to England and were used by the R.A.F. and American air force, and used with considerable success. The P-51 was orthodox, a single-engined low wing fighter with a single fin and rudder.

North American, probably influenced by the aforementioned British and German experiments, fitted two Mustangs together, and gave this strange new aeroplane the designation P- 82 Twin Mustang.

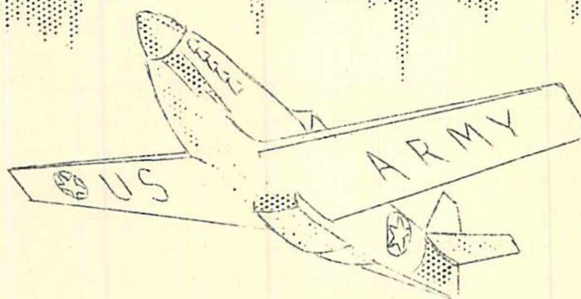
The official reason for this blend was that it " relieved pilot fatigue on long range escort missions." The fact that it also retained many of the P-51 Mustang jigs also undoubtedly influenced the decision to build in quantity. The top speed of the P-82 was over 475 m.p.h, which was pretty good going in those days.

Two pilots were carried, and the P-82 carried an extremely versatile load of bombs, ammunition and petrol, or a combination of all three.

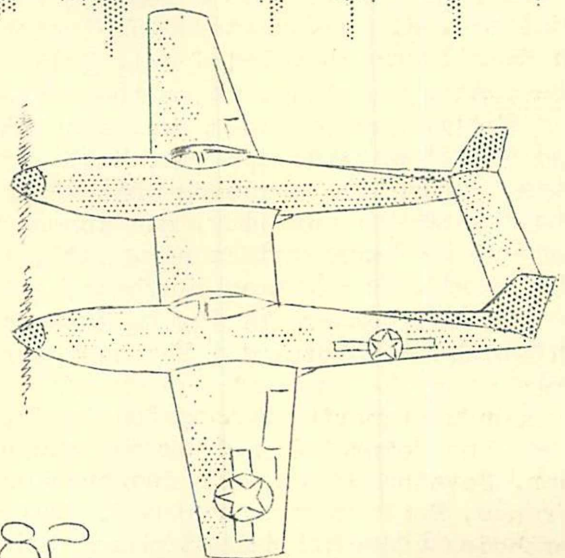
.....

As this SAPSzine will only be read by Americans, I've illustrated below the P-51 Mustang and the P-82 Twin Mustang, to demonstrate the idea.

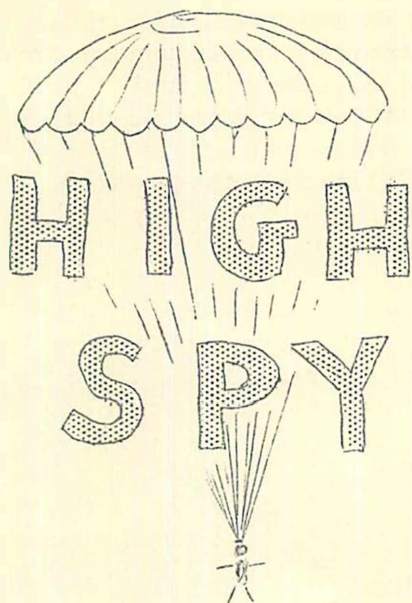
John Berry. 1960



P-51  
MUSTANG



P-82  
TWIN MUSTANG



It isn't often I allow myself the luxury of reviewing a book, but I've just read one, and was so impressed with it that I want you all to join in and share some of the pleasure. I'll tell you why I liked this book...there are two main reasons, because it is one of the most hilarious epics I've ever had the pleasure to read, and because it deals with the O.S.S., an American organisation which holds a particular fascination for me.

The book is called 'YOU'RE STEPPING ON MY CLOAK AND DAGGER', and is written by Roger Hall.

Even the dedication gives a glimpse of the joys to come:-

Dedicated  
To Whom It May Concern.

The O.S.S. has been the subject of a considerable amount of criticism right up the scale to sheer ballyhoo. It is therefore refreshing to have the opportunity to get a first hand account of the many types of American manhood which combined to make an organisation consisting of dimwits, slackers, and utterly brave and dedicated men.

Roger Hall describes how he joined the O.S.S., and gives a light-hearted account of his training. Actually, for a while, he was an instructor, but eventually managed to get to the meat of the organisation. In what I consider to be the wittiest exploit in the whole book, he gives a graphic description of how he carried out a 'problem'..that of getting into a radar factory and learning about its personel and its production methods...armed with letters of recommendation he'd prepared himself, he applied for a job, so that he would ( he hoped ) get a looksee round the factory. His wildest hopes were realised. His cover story was that he was a captain of paratroops wounded in Sicily and invalided out. This appealed to the boss, who took Hall into the factory canteen, where the workers were being bullied into buying more War Bonds. The boss gets up, and introduces Hall by his alias, Hawthorne, and amidst massive applause, Hall gets up, ' develops a limp on the way to the stage' and gives a speech which ' didn't leave a dry eye in the place'. In the newspapers next day, his speech was fully reported, and the sale of Bonds went up by leaps and bounds. Hall, in order to carry on the deception, made a date with the bosses daughter, a date he knew he would never keep, and as he concludes the episode, he manages to make the reader feel his regret at having to be such a cad in the interests of his self-appointed career in the O.S.S.

I was extremely interested in Mr.Hall's account of taking a parachute course in America. I took the equivalent course in England ( as he did later ) and the comparisons were fascinating...especially his pleasure in discovering that he had a spare parachute, just in case....and his chagrin when he later discovered the British didn't go in for this refinement !

It is obvious that all was not well with the O.S.S. organisation..and I almost squirmed as I read how Mr.Hall, after a heart-breaking effort to get an operational job, took off from England in a blaze of tears and handshakes, and was dropped in France behind the American lines. He explains the great

shame he felt at this unforgiveable faux pas.

Mr. Hall was a good man with the repartee, and it appears from this book that he built up a reputation as being an American junior officer who could handle the difficult 'stiff upper lip' British types. He was called in to manage this chore more than once.

In case my recommendation isn't sufficient to whet your appetite, I would like to reprint a short paragraph or two, not the wittiest part by any means, but typical of the rare high standard of true humour :-

Mr Hall, in Scotland..... "it was so cold at Dalnaglar that I'd let my hair grow to keep my brains from freezing solid. So did practically everyone else, and it finally reached the point where a person coming up behind the Norse Group would think he was overtaking a herd of yaks. As the weather grew warmer - above twenty degrees- the Major ordered us to get haircuts. One of the men promptly claimed a knowledge of barbering and pulled a pair of clippers out of his barracks bag to back it up. He proved to be the kind who leaves nothing above the neck but ears, and maybe only one of them. I decided to take my chances in Blairgowrie.....I came back looking like a survivor of the Deerfield Massacre.'

I like this little sample, too. Mr. Hall and two of his friends are taking a medical :-

Someone who should have known better sat us down in three chairs side by side, told us to cross our legs, and gave us a reflex test. He hit Gordon on the knee, missed his mark, and Eric kicked. He hit Eric on the knee, missed again, and shut his eyes to keep from seeing Gordon kick. When he whacked me he was finally on target, so we all kicked.'

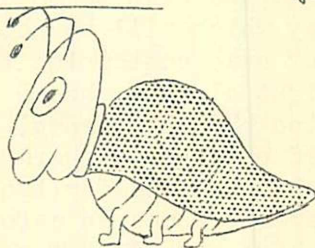
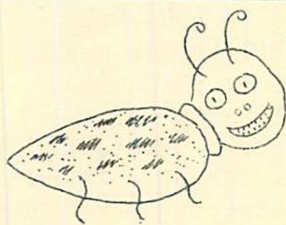
I cannot recall the last time I read a book and laughed out loud two or three times per minute. I started reading the book riding home on a 'bus, and I could not refrain from bursting out guffawing. At first, I tried to restrain myself, and contorted my lips into all sorts of strange shapes, but I must confess with a certain amount of pride that I found Mr. Hall really outstanding, and if my fellow passengers disown me in the morning, I'll think the deal was worth it.

The highest recommendation I can give to this work is to say that Mr. Hall would have made a wonderful fannish writer. If there is an iota of humour in your make up...get this...it is essential to your library.

John Berry 1960.

## ENTOMOLOGICAL ENTITIES :-

*Ted Forsyth*



One of my obscure hobbies during and after the last war was to collect documents relating to it. I was particularly proud of a collection of leaflets dropped over Germany, but one day my wife was looking for paper to light the fire, and she just knew that 'those little squares of paper with a foreign language on them were no good...you couldn't read 'em'... and literally a priceless collection went up in flames. She was probably

getting her revenge for a bundle of knitting patterns which I used to slip-sheet with !

My collection, or what is left of it, also contains ration books, identity cards, and various assorted pamphlets issued by the government to keep us all on the right track.

Whilst sorting through them the other day, and reading them, it brought back to me the full impact of life in wartime England. I lived in Birmingham until I joined the army in 1944, and probably because I was merely an adolescent when the heavy air raids were on against Birmingham, I used to look forward to them. As soon as the sirens sounded, I used to rush out and call for my pal, and we thought it great fun to dive flat when the bombs came whistling down, and to try and remove sandbags from incendiary bombs, to add to our

collection of war souvenirs.

One of the pamphlets, though, brought back memories of what I thought at the time to be a very humorous situation.....and so did the other boys and girls. First of all, I'd like to reprint a paragraph from:-

#### WAR EMERGENCY

##### INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS.

Read this leaflet carefully and make sure you and all other responsible persons in your house understand its contents.

Item (11) read thusly :-

School children. If you live in one of those areas and have a child or children of school age you wish to be evacuated you should send them to school on the day which will be notified to you. Each child should have a handbag or case containing the child's gas mask, a change of underclothing, night clothes, house shoes or plimsolls, spare stockings or socks, a toothbrush, a comb, towel, soap and face cloth, handkerchiefs : and, if possible, a warm coat or mackintosh. Each child should bring a packet of food for the day. School children will be taken by their teachers to homes in safer districts where they will be housed by people who have already offered to receive them and look after them. Parents of school children living in these areas are strongly urged to let their children go. Parents will be told where the children are as soon as they reach their new homes. The cost of the

With  
gas  
mask  
rampant  
(childhood  
memories)



the journey will be paid by the Government. Parents who are in an evacuable area but do not wish their children to be evacuated should not send them to school until they are told.

When this document came through the post, I read it to my mother, and she called my father in. He was down deep in the bowels of the earth, digging like a hysterical mole, building an air raid shelter to his own design. It had collapsed on him three times already, but no one could say my father was not a tryer, as he himself was heard to say in a high-pitched voice when they dug him out for the fourth time. He sat down in a chair, and my mother told him that I would have to be evacuated. He turned to me and said, "Don't worry, son, the needle won't hurt you", and he lumbered out again with his shovel.

I tried to persuade my mother that the last sentence was the one which concerned me, but she said I would just have to be evacuated whether I liked it or not.

The day was announced, the 1st of September 1939, and my mother took me to school. I was dressed in an overcoat, short trousers and a cap three sizes too big for me. I had a cardboard box over my left shoulder with my gas mask in it, and a bag over my right shoulder with underclothing and suchlike in it. In my right hand I held a newspaper-wrapped parcel of fish paste sandwiches, and in my left hand a book which bore a plain dustcover announcing that the book dealt with vulgar fractions, although this was camouflage for my only high class literary work, 'The Awful Story Of Maria Monk.'

My mother said 'bye bye' and pressed a ten shilling note in my hand.

The teacher tried to get us in a line, and checked us off against a list, and then we boarded a red corporation omnibus which took us to a railway station.

At the station, before we entrained, the teacher gave us a large label, on which we wrote our name and sex, and we tied this to our coat lapels.

The train shunted its merry way, and we finished up after about eight hours at a place called Lydney, in Gloucestershire.

I'd never heard of the place before, Lydney was a small town near the banks of the River Severn, and it was almost in the middle of the Forest of Dean, a place which was colonized by the Romans way back.

We got off the train, and a lot of social workers descended on us, giving each of us the once over in a most careful manner, sizing us up for their friends.

We marched to the local school, and I jingled my pocketful of coinage ( we'd played Poker en route ) in time to the strains of 'It's a long way to Tipperary', which we sang with all the verve of old soldiers.

At school, we were given an emergency pack of bread, chocolate and buns, which I presumed to be in case the people we were sent to decided not to feed us.

And then the really humorous side of the whole fantastic business began.

We stood in a line, and the prospective foster-parents walked up and down, trying to make up their minds what particular specimen they were prepared to clasp to their bosoms. From the way they continued to walk up and down the ranks time after time, I sensed that they didn't think much of the cream of British childhood which shuddered before them. I recall

figuring that I didn't think much of the prospective hostesses, either. If a woman looked at me and I sized her up as being a bit prudish and not addicted to poker or bows and arrows and sticky toffee and dirty boots and grubby knees, I crossed my eyes and stuck my tongue out and drooled inanely. If, however, the woman looked young and carefree and without much sense of discipline, I allowed a cherubic expression to cross my face, and tried to give the impression that I always washed behind my ears. Of course, the hostesses used psychology, too. If they didn't like the look of a grubby infant, they scowled, and if a nice clean child was apparant, they smiled and winked.

After over an hour, I was the only one left, and two hostesses tossed up, and the one who won smiled and walked away and the other one scowled and took me by the hand and dragged me away.

I was quite happy, though. We had to go to the local school, and as there were so many of us, a shift system was instituted, and we only had a few hours tuition every day. When not at school, gangs of us, some of whom had never seen a cow before, roamed the countryside like Apaches on the warpath.

For some months I lived this idyllic life, and one day my mother wrote and said that my school in Birmingham had been bombed, and she hoped I didn't feel too bitter about it...and within a few days I persuaded her to let me go back home again.

For some considerable time I missed having any lessons of any kind, which is my excuse for all the spelling mistakes in my publications...and say, that WAR EMERGENCY pamphlet was prophetic, too. It was published in 1939, and on the last page, it said, in big print :-

KEEP A GOOD HEART : WE ARE GOING TO WIN THROUGH.

Maybe, in future PP's, I'll write a few pages about teenage life in England during 1939 to 1945.....

John Berry 1960

## A PROBLEM FOR TOSK.....

Actually, I know it won't be a problem at all to Prof.Tosk, but to me it just doesn't seem true. Tosk, can you put this in simple one syllable words for me :-

(Regarding Guided Missiles)

'In a relatively simple missile, of, say, 1,000 components, if each has an efficiency of 99.99 per cent, then the reliability of the missile as a whole is 91 per cent. If the efficiency of the components is 99.90 per cent, the reliabilty of the whole drops to 37 per cent. That is, it is more likely to fail than succeed. As I said, I am surprised if a missile works at all.'

Tosk, this is from a treatise by a missile expert, and so it is obviously true, but if each component has an efficiency of 99.99 per cent, why hasn't the missile a similar efficiency. ? This must be elementary to you, but I can't see it ?

.....

During the last two years I've noticed that much space has been taken up in fanzines with various discussions about the man who has the United States in the palm of his hand.....Verner von Braun !!!

Most British fanzines, quite understandably, do not express very much appreciation for von Braun.

In fact, some of them have put in print some personal opinions which I'm sure have made von Braun's ears tingle !

Von Braun worked at Peenemunde during the war on the development of the V2 rocket which was used against England and caused some thousands of deaths.

Because von Braun knew that the rocket was designed as a military weapon, some British fanzine writers ( and newspaper columnists and broadcasters, too ) therefore regard von Braun as some sort of evil ogre who should be flung in a dungeon in St.Helena.

For one thing, most people forget that the brilliant von Braun worked under Major-General Walter Dornberger...Dornberger was responsible for the development of the V2, and allied weapons.

One other point seems pertinent to me.....if the British Government had had access to a V2 type weapon, would they have used it against Germany ? The answer is obvious...of course they would.

I must also point out that I am no more pro-von Braun than I am pro-Air Vice Marshall 'Bomber' Harris, who was responsible for organising raids on Germany. War brings the need for ruthless men. 'Bomber' Harris, chief of the R.A.F. Bomber Command during the war, worked out that Germany could be brought to her knees by flattening her cities. He organised one thousand bombers to saturate a target in a few hours...I was in Cologne after the war and saw the utter devastation, and the miracle of the 700 year old cathedral still standing amidst the carnage around it.

Whilst 'Bomber' Harris, as a result of official British post war policy, became a nonentity, von Braun and a number of his co-workers were approached by the Americans to continue their work on rocket development in the United States....and he has since got all the publicity for what the Americans have achieved...and yet I wonder if Americans realise that the 'father' of the rocket missile is an American... a lone pioneer of thirty or forty years ago, R.H.Goddard ?

.....

One thought is uppermost in my mind regarding America and the Space Age. Has von Braun done enough ?

America had everything in her favour...vast sums of money, and the celebrated von Braun...and yet Russia launched the first satellite back in October '57, and America was a long time following suit with a much smaller vehicle.

Much has been said about the great rivalry between the army and the air force in America, and undoubtedly this situation was ridiculous...no country, even one with such vast resources as the United States, could afford this

# THIS MISSILE MESS

stupid state of affairs ! Even the army had trouble, Charles Wilson, the American Secretary of Defence in 1957, almost wrecked the development of the Jupiter by forbidding von Brauns Army Ballistic Missile Agency in Huntsville to build a rocket with a greater range than 200 miles. Obviously, there must have been complicated internal political issues at stake, but, so help me, it seems just crazy.

I have the impression that America spent too much money allowing two rival outfits to work against each other, with detrimental results. Too much money is almost as bad as too little.

Take the British Governments attitude.

The Space Race, they say, is too costly for us. Do you realise that the British Government has set aside the gigantic sum of \$450,000 a year on space research ? Compare this with the contract for the American Strategic Missile 68, the Titan, a mere \$100,000,000.....

During the past few years, the British Black Knight has been developed and at present holds the world record for altitude from a single stage rocket and it only cost \$15,000,000 to develop. It is a fact that a Black Knight mounted on Britains Blue Streak Long Range Ballistic Missile ( also developed on a shoe-string budget ) could launch a satellite equal or better than anything yet launched by America and Russia. But the British Government seem to shrug, and say that the whole thing is too expensive, and let the American and Russians carry on with the good work.

No one can argue with my premise that Russia is way ahead of the rest of the world in rocketry. It seems to me that their great stride has been in the propulsion of the rocket, rather than its design and size. Very soon, relatively speaking, we are going to wake up one morning and hear that the Russians are on the Moon. And when that happens, Russia rules the world.

What is America doing about this ?

von Braun has worked out a theory that if America cannot develop a propulsive unit as powerful as the Russians have obviously done ( and the future doesn't look too rosy in this respect ), well then, cluster a battery of the most powerful units available and stick them under one rocket.

The result is the Saturn Project, initiated by von Braun at Huntsville. It is planned to have four stages with a total launching weight of almost 600 tons, and the amazing fact is that five sixth of this weight will be propellant ! Saturn will be powered by eight Jupiter power plants, and will stand almost 200 feet high, compared with the 90 feet of the 6,500 mile range Titan.

Obviously, as the Saturn Project has been publicly announced, other even more fantastic projects are in the planning stage, but time is running out...the Russian tests in the Pacific are the prelude for something really big...most probably a moon shot...and, it is my pious hope, the Americans will get there first.

Quite frankly, I don't think this will happen.

I fear in my heart that unless a miracle happens, the Red Flag will fly over Mare Nostrum.

The miracle could be the Saturn Project...and every sane man in the Western hemisphere should look at the Moon....look hard, and pray even harder that America gets there first.

It's going to take it !

John Berry 1960.

Undoubtedly, a fanac den is indispensable for a properly functioned career in fandom !

I have a considerable number of photographs of fans sitting proudly at their desks, with beautiful typewriters before them, and such items as staplers, mimeoscopes, portraits of BJO at hand, and in the background, vast bookshelves containing hundreds of prozines and fanzines.

This is as it should be.

It is obvious that as one progresses in fandom, more and more paper and effects will accumulate, and if it isn't kept together in a separate room, nothing but chaos will ensue.

A fan likes privacy, his or her own den, there to bask in the utter fannishness of his surroundings, or perchance to brood on the non-appearance of his favourite fanzine.

Unfortunately, the published details of my fanac den have earned me, or so I'm given to understand, the unenviable reputation of being an eccentric. I am forced to admit quite frankly that far

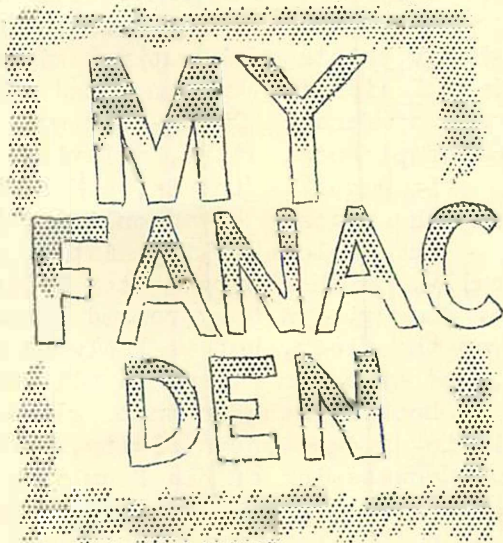
from eccentricity, the primitive furnishings of my den were forced upon me by nothing more or less than a scarcity of hard cash.

However, it is easy to understand from the the 'eccentric' theories came from.

For instance, I'm sure I'm the only fan in fandom able to boast of a table constructed from two old teachests and a couple of rotted planks, yet this is perfectly true.

In fact, I'd like to go into detail about my den. It doesn't exist now, sad to say, because it has been completely cleaned up and painted and papered and changed into a pretty pink bedroom for my little daughter.

But just about a year ago.....



.....

The room was about ten feet long and eight feet wide, the paper, a light red with faded clumps of blue elderberries, hung downwards in strips, and the paper on the ceiling had turned from white to spotted brown. It was a great expense to get the rest of the house furnished, and my den came last on the long list. Consequently, I felt relatively safe.

I speedily furnished my den - although I use the word 'furnished' advisedly. I've described the desk, and in retrospect, to an outsider, it must have looked uncanny, especially with the rusted Shaw-Berry Typewriter surmounted on the rotting planks, with the Tins of Baked Beans Gravity Feed hanging down the sides of the teachest, with me hunched up like an ingrowing toenail, sitting on an orange box.

Steve Schultheis was positively incredulous. I led him to my den, and he staggered a little with incomprehension, and then he shook himself and surveyed the den, and he said with conviction :-

QUOTE. "This is not true. I am the subject of a Berry Illusion." UNQUOTE. But it was all too true.

My Gestetner was also mounted on a teachest, in a far corner of the room, and a couple of dejected-looking bookcases comprised the basic furnishings. Oh, I forgot the armchair. A big brutal thing with a broken spring on the seat. It had been in my wife's family for some scores of years, and being too ashamed to

dispose of it by conventional means, they paid me generously to take it off their hands. Many was the plot I thought of, sitting in the armchair, trying to control the burst spring with adroit movements of my nether regions.

The decor was arranged, I like to think, to suit the most varied tastes of my many astonished visitors. Principally, the walls were covered with a mixture of the following; ATOM technicolour illustrations, coloured and glossy prints of beautiful girls in the minimum of clothing ( I'm sorry to admit I didn't take 'em ) and sometimes devoid of clothing altogether, pictures of fans, a QUINN original, and a considerable number of photographs of planets, stars, galaxies, aeroplanes and rockets.

It was, I maintain, a Mans Room !

The essence of masculinity !

The whole shocking display was founded, if I may use the expression literally, on the Berry Letter Filing System, which covered the entire floor space. Some visitors expressed surprise that I filed my letters by dropping them on the floor, but as I always used to explain, it took up so little time, and time, to a fan, is all important.

Looking back on that glorious room, I feel that instead of displaying marked eccentricity, it showed the true dashing spirit of a fan in full possession of his faculties, but hampered by a scarcity of surplus cash, as I've already stressed. The fact that the room inspired me to write more than 150 stories is sufficient justification for its careless but nevertheless unique appearance.

So, if the noofan feels he wants a den, in fact, needs a den, but hasn't got the necessary accumulation of \$\$\$ to organise it, I say 'Pooh'.

Undoubtedly a den is essential.

And even if only a small layout of cash is available, by using ones initiative and imagination, a considerable amount can be done.

I want to stress that in my opinion, an active fan needs a lot of privacy to concentrate on his hobby- and only in his own den will this privacy be found. I've had my share of trying to write to a deadline in a room with a television on and a wife talking about a new hat and children climbing over me and budgerigars mating up my sleeve.

The move to my den, back in '56, was the prelude to most of my better stories and the very frequent appearance of Berry pubs.

When my daughter started to grow up, my den was the only room available to change into a bedroom, as I've explained, so at the beginning of 1959 I once more found myself berift of privacy.

Once more I have had to continue my fanac in the living room - but this time, with the children much older, and much more inquisitive , it has become increasingly more difficult to put my mind 100 per cent on what I'm doing. Whilst writing, I have to answer such questions as ( from my daughter, aged 5 ) "Daddy, can I pick up the pack with a wild card and a Jack if the pack is frozen ?" ( So help me, that's true ) - and from my son, aged 9) "Daddy, why is the woman next door getting fatter ?" Surely, with this mental strain, is it any wonder that I sometimes yearn nostalgically for my little untidy, scruffy-yes-dirty room ?

And not only for the ease of filing my correspondence !

John Berry 1960

.....  
This is POT POURRI NUMBER ELEVEN, published by John Berry, 31, Campbell Park Avenue, Belmont, Belfast 4, Northern Ireland, for SAPS.....February, 1960.