





THE ROGUE RAVEN 30, which most of you thought would never be published, is brought to you in a spirit of "if I don't do a zine pretty soon, people will think I have gaffiated" by Frank Denton, 14654 - 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98166. I have just realized that it has been nearly a year since the last issue; something like ten months, at the very least. What can I say? The road to hell is paved with good intentions, or so my mother used to say. The best I can say, I guess, is to look for me when you see me. This issue is begun on September 29, 1980 and we shall just have to see when it gets finished and into the mail. As always, a Bran & Skolawn Press Publication.

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# DAMNING WITH NO PRAISE

By some stroke of luck I had, until recently, avoided being critiqued by Joseph Nicholas, the British reviewer of fanzines who thinks they should all read like The Times Literary Supplement. Rich Coad took care of that. He thought he'd send a bundle of zines over to Joseph and let him do with them what he has been doing with British zines this last couple of years. I was unfortunate enough to be included in the bundle with The Rogue Raven 28. In the most recent issue of SPACE JUNK Nicholas has his way with me. I can only say that I am in good company. Mike Glyer's SCIENTIFRICTION, Brian Earl Brown's MAD SCIENTIST'S DIGEST, JANUS, STARLING, PHOTRON, RUNE and some others are there to keep me from sinking all alone. Here's what Nicholas has to say. He's been talking about overwriting and blandness.

"Take Frank Denton's The Rogue Raven 28, for instance: although he tries to give the impression that it's all been written straight off the top of his head, his material strikes me as so clogged with petty detail that it can only have been rehearsed and re-rehearsed to the point where it became so ingrained that he could have written it in his sleep (and probably did). It's not that his material is completely without potential, it's just that his personal chat about conventions, spectator sports, music, holidays, and even books is utterly lacking in any depth of feeling or insight, and hence is nothing more than a parade of facts devoid of the overlay of opinion required to give them meaning. Dammitall, the voicing of opinions is supposed to be the raison d'etre of such personal writing -- but Denton has sanitized his opinions right out of existence, and The Rogue Raven 28 is in consequence dreary, superficial, and uninspiring."

Well, in spite of what Mr. Nicholas has to say, I do, indeed, simply roll a stencil into the typewriter and let go. I may have a few notes, very sketchy, to help organize this mess into some coherency. I don't have time to write to the depth Mr. Nicholas would like. That time is better spent in attempting to

## DRABBLE



write some fiction which I do labor over in an attempt to get it right. With this zine I am simply trying to stay in touch with quite a number of people. I would hope that anyone who finds this zine boring or "bland" and "overwritten" would drop me a card and tell me to remove their names from the mailing list. Ghu knows that with another postal raise in the offing fanzine publishers don't need to be sending their wares out where they are not wanted. Meantime The Rogue acts as a sort of letter substitute, I guess.

I used Joseph Nicholas' words as a part of my speech as Fan GoH at Moscon in Moscow, Idaho. After mentioning that any small reputation I might have in fandom probably stemmed from publishing the now-deceased ASH-WING and THE ROGUE RAVEN, I read the excerpt. Then I asked the audience how the committee could possibly have asked me to be guest. It gave me the opportunity to make a few remarks about not taking this whole thing, including self, too seriously and led to some further remarks about tolerance in fandom. I'm glad I'm the sort who could chuckle about it and it put the audience in a good humor. Thank you, Joseph.

#### WESTERCON

The 4th of July weekend seems a long time ago now, but a few remarks about the convention seem in order. One of the particular pleasures I had was that of being Toastmaster. Rather than a banquet the committee held a cocktail party. I was a bit disconcerted by this, wondering whether it would be difficult to get people into their seats and get the program rolling. As is usual when you work yourself into a lather worrying about such things, it all worked out just fine. I announced that we would be beginning the program in about ten minutes, that drinks were still available at the bar. By golly, it worked. When I was ready to go, the audience was collectively in its seat and ready to listen to pearls of wisdom. Not from me, mind you.

The Guest of Honor was Roger Zelazny and the Fan Guest was Bob Vardeman, an old friend of mine. It was a great pleasure of mine to introduce these gentlemen. I took the opportunity to open with a long list of ash jokes about our resident volcano, mostly one-liners, segued smoothly from Washington to New Mexico where these two authors live. New Mexico has a fairly long list of authors in science fiction and in other fields of fiction and non-fiction, but "Land of Enchantment" seems to mean something special when one talks about Zelazny, Charnas, Donaldson, Vardeman and several others.

I had not seen Roger Zelazny in quite such a mood as he was in that evening. He made up a long and involved story about not really being Roger Zelazny, but someone whom the real RZ had hired to attend conventions and give speeches for him. It was riotous and kept the audience laughing for a solid ten minutes or better before he branched into some serious remarks about his current work and plans.

Vardebob touched upon some aspects of his fannish career which I had not already used in my introduction, told people a little about his current writing career and ended with some remarks about the power of fandom to do things if they would put their minds to it. Particularly he aimed at the declining space program and the potential for fandom to be instrumental in lobbying for a continuation of the space program before it dies completely. I was much more impressed by his news that he would have five books out in the last quarter of the year. Playboy Press is publishing "The War of Powers", a trilogy that Bob co-authored with Vic Milan. The first volume is out: The Sundered Realm, and the next two will follow in November and December. Smart marketing by Playboy, so we don't have to wait forever for the trilogy to conclude. Bob's other two books are Nick Carter books, so he joins a long list of writers who have been Nick Carter. He would not mention the titles.

The convention was somewhat limited in size, topping out somewhere around 2000 members, I believe. This was dictated by the size of the hotel. Some folks also got screwed by the hotel, arriving with reservations in hand which were not honored. Bad scene. I was surprised at the number of people whom I would expect to see at a Westercon not being in attendance, including a goodly number of authors.

But by and large we enjoyed ourselves with much conversation with friends. The Sacramento crowd was there: Dale Goble, Jim McLeod, Mike Garells (chairman of next year's Westercon) Bridget McKenna, Dorothy Ann Eller. I saw Chris Sherman for the first time since Oakland and caught up with what he's doing. We sat in the lobby one evening and got to look at all of Lee Nordling's cartoons, some for the first time and others over again. We keep hoping that he'll get one of his cartoon strips syndicated one of these days. They are funnier than much of the stuff that appears in our daily newspapers. Who else? Joe Pearson, Mark Anthony, Cathy Hill, Gil Gaier, Bill Breiding, Don Fitch and many others whom I should have named and will remember after I finish this paragraph. I didn't see much programming but I sure did a lot of talking with folks.

Monday we had a late flight home so Bob Vardeman, an Albuquerque friend named Rabbit, Anna Jo and I took the bus to Universal City and did the studio tour. It was a lot of fun, although I would have preferred Disneyland. The studios were much closer, however, and easily reached by bus, so there wasn't really an alternative with the amount of time we had.

I remember buying only a few books at the convention: Gene Wolfe's The Shadow of the Torturer (which still hasn't shown up in Seattle); a 1st edition of Joan Vinge's Snow Queen (only 2nd editions showed up here) and a Sax Rohmer to add to my collection, White Velvet. I showed a lot of control this time around, didn't I?

#### THE BENTCLIFFES VISIT

Shortly after our return from Los Angeles, Eric Bentcliffe, his wife, Beryl, and daughter, Lindsey came from England to visit. Eric is a fan from way back, and currently publishes a fanzine entitled Waldo. (Eric left a few copies of Waldo with me, so the first people who drop me a postcard and ask for a copy can have them.) The Bentcliffes stayed for about eight days. I gathered that they had not had a very enjoyable time during the previous week in Canada, so we did our best to make up for it. I took some time off of work and we generally showed them around the Seattle area.

It's rather amazing that I found myself doing some things I had never done myself, although I have lived here for 18 years. I'd never been on the harbor tour, and found it quite nice. It was only my third trip up in the Space Needle, although it has been here since 1962. Of course, we did the public market, Pioneer Square, a day of book shopping, the Ballard locks, the fish ladders with salmon coming up to spawn. Outside of Seattle we did Northwest Trek, a wildlife park, went on to Mt. Rainier, and stopped for lunch at our cabin just outside that national park. On a gorgeous day we went to Tacoma to visit Fort Nisqually, an old log fort with towers at each corner.

Mostly we talked and talked and talked. Eric kept finding American paperbacks everywhere we went and I chuckled a lot as I do the same thing when we are in England. We had a good time talking about food, and Beryl brought along a couple of English cook books which are filled with very yummy recipes. Oh, yes, they got to see The Empire Strikes Back and were suitably impressed. All in all, we had a very fine visit with them and I hope that they enjoyed their stay with us. We drove them back to Vancouver, B.C. for their flight home and it was a sad parting.

## A LOOK AT MONTANA

When summer quarter ended about the middle of August I thought it was time to give way to a feeling of wanderlust which had been building for some time. This was not the summer to go to England, and one wonders, with the current state of the economy whether that time will ever come again. There were several things which I had been itching to do and I thought that I could combine them into one trip. Anna Jo had not gone to summer school this summer for the first time in a long time. Part of the summer she had suffered with a rather painful tennis elbow which she did not get from playing tennis. She's not sure how it came about, but she has doctored for it fairly regularly since the end of June and it still is not right. She's had a couple of shots of cortisone after all else failed, although neither she nor the doctors care to use the stuff. It does funny things to the blood vessels. At any rate, I asked her if there was anything special that she would like to do for the last couple of weeks of summer, and when she demured I sprang my route on her. She said that it sounded fine to her; anything new would be a nice break before going back to the classroom around the first of September.

The first part of the trip involved heading north and then taking the fairly new North Cascades Highway across the mountains to the eastern part of the state. This highway swings past the new North Cascades National Park on the southern side. The scenery is quite beautiful and I imagine that the country contained in the park is fairly rugged. The park is not developed and it is not intended to be. The only way in will be by foot for the most part. Mountains and peaks thrust themselves up with regularity in this area so quite a bit of picture taking was in store. As well, there are three dams which can be viewed from the highway. Lakes of the deepest green stretch out behind them storing water to be turned into power.

After a stay for the night in Omak, a sleepy little town except for one weekend each year when the Omak Stampede (rodeo) is in full swing, we moved on east. Sunday morning was a drizzle as we made our way onto the Colville Indian Reservation with its pine forests. The object for the morning's drive was to find the grave of Chief Joseph, the Nez Perce chief who had attempted to lead his people to Canada rather than be sent to a reservation in a part of the country which was not the kind of country which they were used to. He made a brilliant run for it, crossing Idaho and part of Montana, taking the entire tribe, grandparents to children, refusing to leave anyone of his people. They were caught very near to the border of Canada. Perhaps another day and they might have made it.

Joseph is buried at Nespelem in a little graveyard. While there is a historical marker on the highway as you pass by which gives a brief outline of Joseph's career, and tells that he is buried nearby, there are no directions. We wandered around the little town, finally spotted a church and then nearby found the cemetery. Joseph's grave sits under the single tree in the graveyard and is marked by a nice monument placed there by the Washington Historical Society in 1902. A bouquet of relatively fresh flowers were placed in a mason jar, several clusters of plastic flowers were stuck in the ground, and a single turkey feather, colored yellow, also stuck into the dirt, were the only decorations on the grave.

Joseph has been a hero of mine for many years and I had often thought that I would make the trip to visit his grave. I stood quietly in the drizzling rain and thought about this man of whom I had read so much. A man of a different race from a different time, a leader of his people, a people being swarmed under by superior numbers. Now he rests, largely forgotten, in a lonely graveyard in a small Indian village. I paid my respects, hoping that others occasionally do, people who are closer to him in heritage. He should not be forgotten.

From Nespelem the route generally was on to Spokane, then to Missoula, turning north to Poison, along Flathead Lake to Kalispell, up through Glacier Park, then back down the east side of the Rockies to Great Falls and Helena, back to Missoula and home via I-90.

One of the objects of the trip was to see Indian museums and several shows of western art. Spokane has a five-floored Museum of Native American Cultures. Primarily it contains art and artifacts of the coastal tribes and the Plains Indians, with lesser exhibits of southwestern tribes and a small but very nice collection of Pre-Columbian art. I had been under the impression that the museum was primarily northwestern tribal art. Not so.

The other Indian museum which we visited was that of The Plains Indians in Browning, Montana. Browning is on the Blackfoot Reservation. The Blackfoot are a proud people and have kept more control of their reservation than is generally true. The museum contains primarily Blackfoot art and artifacts. It is beautifully displayed and one can view the clothing, weapons, utilitarian articles and decorated articles such as mocassins, beading on dresses, papoose boards, saddles, war shields and headdresses.

The western art shows which we wanted to take in were in Kalispell, Helena, and Ellensburg. Our route and timing were perfect. The Kalispell show was on display in the old Carnegie Library which has been turned into a city museum. While it was to go for auction in early September, it was on display for a couple of weeks in the art center. The show in Helena was the best of the three. It was a showing and auction of artists who call themselves The Northwest Rendezvous Group. This group has as members a group of very talented artists, several of whom belong to The Cowboy Artists of America and a couple who have been accepted into the Cowboy Hall of Fame. Thus the quality was very high. There was less than 100 pieces in the show and the auction was a silent auction. If you wished to bid on a piece you simply put your name into a small receptacle by the work of art. One name is drawn and that person has a specified amount of time to make the purchase. So the price is fixed, rather than being bid up. The three pieces I would have liked to purchase, had I unlimited funds, were priced at \$14,000 - \$12,000 and \$6500. The total cost of the show came to something like \$383,000. This was a show for people with money. We went to the Friday evening opening and it was a hoot. The dress ranged from semi-formal through casual sports clothes to cowboy boots and hats with jeans. Everyone was in a friendly mood. Many of the artists were there and quite willing to engage in conversation. We eavesdropped on Paul Calle, who had spent a great many years as an illustrator for NASA. He does incredible work in several media. A pencil work depicting an Indian chief in full dress alongside a mountain man with his pack horse detailed every feather of the bonnet and every hair on the horse. Frank McCarthy had an oil entitled "Crossing the North Fork" which depicted a band of Indians crossing the shallows of the Flathead River on horseback.. That was the \$14,000 painting. If you have the slightest interest in what I'm talking about, look for the Louis L'Amour calendar for 1981. The paintings were all done by Frank McCarthy who is a master at detailing the old west.

I won't rave on any more about this particular show, but it was the highlight of the trip for me. We went back again on Saturday morning when there was no crowd. We were allowed to take pictures, for which I was grateful. We talked to a couple of people who were amateur painters themselves, and they just came to stare and to learn. One cowboy type had come up from the Denver area to take in the show. He would look over the paintings and sculptures carefully, then go outside to have a smoke, then come back in and start all over again. He said that he hoped one day to be half as good as some of the artists in the show. The show was held at the Montana Historical Museum on the capital grounds, a wonderful place to show it.

The Ellensburg show was pretty much of a letdown. The works were not of the quality of the Helena show and perhaps we were beginning to be saturated with western art. The hotel was largely taken up with artists displaying works for sale in hotel rooms. Most of two floors was filled with western and wildlife paintings. From Ellensburg it was a couple of hour drive home. We were glad to be home, but pleased that we had seen so much good art and had had such a good time.

I almost forgot to mention the Charles Russell Museum in Great Falls, because I was trying to lump the art shows together. Nothing is for sale, obviously, in the Russell Museum. It's a modern building with two floors of art nicely displayed. Besides a great number of Russell pieces, there is a considerable amount of art by Selzer, a student of Russell's. There is also a large number of small pieces of sculpture of animals, mountain men and their horses, and such. I asked permission to take photos and was told to go ahead. There is also quite a collection of Russell paintings at the State Historical Museum at Helena. We regretted not being able to get as far as Cody, Wyoming where the Buffalo Bill Museum has an outstanding collection with many Remingtons as well as Russells. Some other trip.

North of Missoula we spent several hours driving through the National Bison Range. We had been through here in 1968. We were not quite so lucky as to find ourselves in the middle of a moving herd of buffalo as we had done then. We did spot two rather large herds, one of about 50 animals and the other of about 80. But they were some distance away and we could only watch them through the binoculars. We did see several bulls fairly close. They are usually younger bulls who have lost the battle for supremacy and are driven away by the winning bull. They live by themselves until next year when they challenge again.

In exchange for not seeing large herds of buffalo at close range, we were rewarded with the sight of six antelope, then later a small group of bighorn sheep. I was able to get some fairly decent photographs of them. And, of course, as we returned to the office buildings, the home pasture always has some animals so that visitors are not totally disappointed. Four good sized buffalo with a big old bull shared one pasture, and the other had four elk, a bull, two cows, and a calf from the spring.

I should say a word or two about the book shops I discovered. The first was at Alberton, along I-90 and west of Missoula. A large sign along the highway proclaimed that the book store had 100,000 books. Not quite true, but it will have. It is owned by a fellow who has a book store in Pennsylvania. He has about 30,000 volumes there now and is shipping more by the truckload. There was a lot of good stuff, and I was pleased to finally get a copy of Austin Tappan Wright's Islandia in pretty good condition with dust jacket for \$18. The copies I have seen previously have been in the \$40-50 range.

Missoula has the Little Professor Book Store. This is a very good book store nicely arranged and with good stock. It also functions as a sort of literary centerpiece for western Montana. Whenever they hold an autograph party for one of Montana's authors, all the rest gather round and make a social occasion of it. There are a surprising number of people writing in Montana. A.B. Guthrie, Jr. is probably best known. Dorothy Johnson has been at it a long while and is best known for A Man Called Horse from which the movie was made. Richard Hugo is a well-known poet and the editor of the Yale Young Poets series. I had the pleasure of knowing him when he lived in Seattle, before he went to Montana to teach at the University. James Welch and Michael E. Moon are both younger novelists. Moon's John Medicinewolf was a pure delight to me and I read it at a single sitting. There is also a new novel recently published entitled Butte Polka but I don't have the name of the author. We also found an excellent bookstore in Kalispell. It was smaller, of course; Kalispell only has 16,000 people, but I was quite surprised at the activity in the town and delighted to find such a good selection of books. The Museum Shop at Helena netted several paperback biographies of mountain men to give me something to read this winter.

## LETTERS

I don't always run a letter column. Mostly it's been because I have only allowed myself ten pages for this zine and I've always managed to fill most of it myself. But I've been chewed out in a couple of letters for not having such a column. Secondly, the letter writers always say such damned interesting things. So, even though many of these letters are somewhat out of date, I'm going to give you a pretty good letter column this time. Maybe it will prove more interesting than what I had to say. At least part of the zine will be lively. So let's get to it.

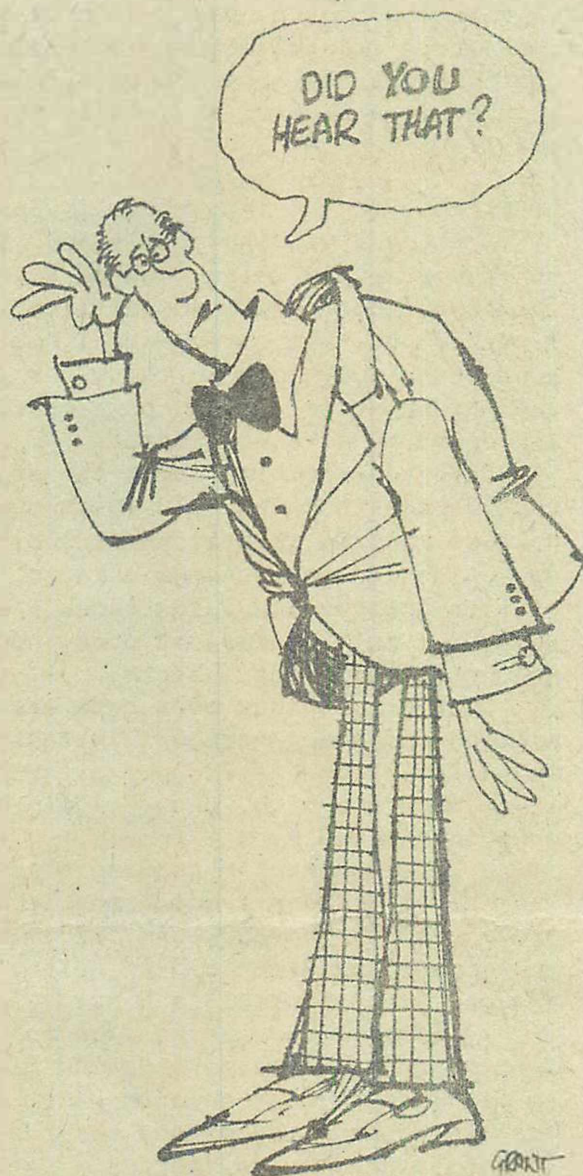
Darrol and Ro Pardoe have a new address as follows: 11B Cote Lea Square, Southgate, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2SA, England

I'm amazed at the amount of territory you cover when you visit England. You seem to have been to lots of places I've never seen, and I've lived in the country all my life! Ro knows Ilfracombe well; it was the place her family used to go for holidays when she was a child, mainly because her father was stationed there when he was in the Marines, and he got to like the place. Actually, he was drafted a month or so before the war ended in 1945, and being so late in had to serve a couple of years before it was time to come out again. The war being over and no actual warring to be done he spent his time in a requisitioned hotel in Ilfracombe! By all accounts he had a good time at the public expense, and drank a great deal of beer.

I share your opinion of the helpfulness of the staff at Foyle's bookshop in London. I think they employ a lot of foreigners - I have at times found it hard to communicate with the staff in English since they appeared to understand it rather imperfectly. It's not as good a bookshop as it was, say, 15 years ago, either. (Especially since they discontinued the second-hand section.)

I don't remember the Brecon Cathedral organ as a specially powerful one - there are some a lot more liver-shaking about (such as the one in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, if they really pull out all the stops). It's more fun anyway if you're doing the playing because then you can relate the power of the sound to what you're doing with your fingers and feet. When I was younger I used to practice on a local church organ, and I'm afraid I used to enjoy startling people who wandered into the church while I was practicing by suddenly striking a chord with all the stops out when they were least expecting it. It was a nice, powerful organ, and you should have seen how people jumped! I must have been malicious in those days.

// Darroll concludes with a note that he and Ro expect to make a trip to the States again this spring and will probably be visiting Seattle. That gives us something to look forward to. // The bit about Ilfracombe, other readers may not remember,



is along the north coast of Devon and where we finished out hiking on The Coastal Footpath. It's also where we will pick up again next trip. // You may recall my enthusiasm for the organ concert in Brecon Cathedral. It was our first experience at a true organ recital and, while it may not be particularly powerful, we were impressed. //

Al Fitzpatrick, 38, Northfield, Barley Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 7JS, England

I enjoyed reading your zine. I like things of this type which tell about what other people are doing because I do so little myself. There is nothing like working shifts to knock one's social life in the head. Also I suppose I do little by choice. I worked out that on my wage I could either read as much as I wanted, go out regularly, and attend only cons in the UK or I could read as much as I wanted, go out very little and attend at least some cons overseas as well as in England. Since I like travelling I elected to do the latter.

With your moaning about the state of the record industry all I can comment is that I hadn't noticed. 10 years ago when I worked in a record store I did begin to collect records (mostly country blues and traditional folk) but that was then. These days I don't even possess a radio, let alone a record player. All I have is my little cassette player and a few tapes - at the moment it's being used to play "Goon Show" tapes. I must confess it does, however amusing, constitute a distinct handicap when attempting to write letters.

Currently things over here are not so good. Unemployment has reached nearly 1.9 million and the government is taking a very unrealistic view of the problem. At least inflation has dropped a few points and is now down to a rate of 21%. Even so it is much too high, though I did hear that it is lower than the rate of inflation over in the U.S.A.

At the moment I'm tending to read more in the mystery field than in sf/fantasy. Recently I've been reading mostly older English detective novels such as R. Austin Freeman's Dr. Thorndyke and Freeman Willis Croft's Inspector French. I collect at the moment Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe, Van Gulik's Judge Dee, Edmund Crispin's Gervase Fen and Arthur Upfield's Bony.

// Al mentions having made one trip to Germany and a trip to the U.S. to attend Minicon in Minneapolis. He had plans also to attend Noreascon II and I'll be waiting to find out if that came to pass. // Somehow I have recently found myself without the dollars to buy many of the records that have recently been released which I would like to add to my collection. So I've simply been making a list against the time when I find the wherewithal. // The rate of inflation currently stands at about 12.7% according to some figures I heard the other day. That's much lower than the 21% Al mentions. I also notice that the British pound stands at \$2.45 American. That is higher than I remember it. Nope, I take that back. Around 1975 it got up to \$2.56// You do pick on some pretty good mystery authors, although I have not sampled Freeman or Crofts. The others I have and all are good. Upfield's Bony is a favorite of mine.

Phil Stephensen-Payne, c/o Systime S.A. (Pty) Ltd., P.O. Box 3238, JOHANNESBURG 2000, South Africa

Glad to see you liked "Berserker". I have always been fond of it, and recently have grown into quite a Saberhagen fan in general. I think the Berserker series went downhill a fair bit after the first one, and several of the stories in the latest collection ("The Ultimate Enemy") are merely 'point' stories illustrating some odd fact Saberhagen has found, but they never cease to be entertaining.

I cannot share your interests in soccer, or folk music; you struck a common chord on the subject of walking. I confess I have never done much of the Coastal Footpath - mainly because it didn't exist when I was in that area - but my father has walked several bits of it with great enjoyment. My favourite walk in the UK was the Pennine Way, which we did most of several years ago. In many ways the major drawback of Joburg as a city is that, stuck as it is in the middle of uninspiring veldt, the nearest walking country is about 6 hours drive away.

// It looks to me as if Saberhagen is coming on strong. He's had a lot published here recently; the expanded with new material Empire of the East, the vampire book (the name escapes me at present), and Thorns, which I haven't gotten to as yet. I'll send you a copy of the last, just in case you haven't gotten it yet down your way. //

Eric Bentcliffe, 17, Riverside Crescent, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire CW4 7NR, England

Don't ask me to describe it...not yet, anyway. I think I'm suffering from Culture Shock as well as from Jet Lag and the thing that passes for a filing cabinet inside my skull hasn't tidied itself out yet. I shall, I will, I think, write an account of our adventures in the New World and I've even jotted down (very sketchily) approximately what we did on which days, but I need to let it all meld together a little before I can take it apart and look at it. That might make sense to travelling giants such as yourselves.

// Eric, wife Beryl, and daughter Lindsey visited the Denton household for eight days toward the end of July. We tried to show them as much of the Great Northwest as we were able and we think that they had a good time and enjoyed themselves. I quite know what Eric means. It does take some sorting out. The impressions are many and varied and it just takes time to sort them all out. The Bentcliffes are welcome back any time. //

Paul Skelton, 25 Bowland Close, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5NW, England

It's been a long time since the Raven last flew. Too long. I'm writing this LoC at lunchtime in the pub I am wont to frequent. It's a nice pub to sit in over lunch but, alas, I can't afford to eat there. Basic snacks are about £1.30 which I can't spend 5 days a week, so I sit here with a pint of Robinson's Mild and a packet of Planter's Peanuts. Up until about a year ago these were very rare but now they've made such inroads into the UK market at the expense of the 'greasy' salted peanuts of tradition that the major British firms are all bringing out their own inferior equivalents. I think I'll have to form a "Royal Society for the Preservation of the Greasy Peanut" before they all disappear completely. Actually this is a quite pleasant pub, more comfortable, but with less character, since it was recently modernized. It is close by a canal and it's a pleasant place to walk to in summer when the towpaths aren't redered impassable by the mud and puddles. The canal is now only used by pleasure craft but it still feels wrong to see signs at entrances to the towpath saying "No Horses."

One day I hope to have the opportunity to get to know you and Anna Jo better, either by your visiting us on one of your many trips (in which you never seem to get further north than Antarctica) or by visiting you in the States. God knows when Cas and I'll ever be able to afford such a trip, but I'm determined that one day we shall. I've got to, because I want to write a trip report. I want to share the wonders of America with all the American fans who no longer experience them, just as your trip reports have re-opened to me the wonders of Britain. It has always been a puzzle to me why so many people travel so far whilst others are making the same journey in reverse. Why do I want to go to America when I've never been even to any of the places you mention in your travelogues? Your walking trip, casual, relaxed, "arrive to a hot bath, a couple of drinks in the bar, a lovely dinner, and a bed to sleep in" is so near to Paradise, perfection, it makes me want to run straight down there, and get started.

I, too, bought Greenslade's "Pentateuch" but still haven't gotten to hear the second LP. Have you heard Jean Michel Jarre's "Oxygene" or "Equinox"? Still, to me, the best synthesizer music I've heard.

// Gads, is nothing sacred? Next you'll be telling me that they've done away with fish and chips. It was startling to find McDonald's on the Strand. // We hope that you do get a chance to come over our way so you can see the Great American Way of Life, or, at least, meet some local fans. Bentcliffes were here, Pardoes are coming. Get in line; you and Cas may be next. I recall a trip report of yours when you and Mearas went to Wales. Wales is not quite the same as America, you say. See next letter. //

Lea M. Day, Ntcc Box 3022, FPO Miami, FL 34051



I spent 19 months in Wales, and reading your travels in the Cornish and Welsh areas made me miss the times I spent in my local drinking the ale and throwing some extremely bad darts. Cardiff, with that castle! A ways outside of Cardiff is Castle Koch. It was built by the 3rd Marquis, same as most of Cardiff Castle was, and it wasn't much, master bedrooms, kitchen, servants' quarters, and a stable, but it looked like a fairy castle in a children's story. Brecon and Barry; they were both nice. I spent a day at the Barry docks on an American ship doing some Navy junk. Such a bleak area that it was berthed in. Once you found the right road to the

docks, it wasn't too bad. Wales is delightful, but the roads could have been made wider in places (right about where the hay truck comes at you) and corners that were not 108 degrees. (And keep the sheep off of them).

I can agree about the hired help at Foyle's in London. With one small exception, I have never had decent service there. They don't seem to care. The bookshop across the street is a lot more fun. They had a punkrock type as a cashier. Nice guy, knew his books, but those 15 studs in his left ear?

// I visited Barry particularly because I needed some information for a scene in a novel on which I am working. It was a blustery day, winds whipping in off the Channel (Bristol), a chop and lots of spray even in the protected quays. There was an American Navy vessel there at the time. As you say, the dock area is pretty bleak, but the town itself was quite nice. // 15 studs, eh? All I got to see was the colored hair and the bondage trousers. Oh, yes, and one fellow with a kilt over the bondage trousers. Quite different, I must say. //

Mike Glicksohn, 141 High Park Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6P 2S3, Canada

About six weeks ago I finally got around to buying myself a Betamax and while I'm still only starting to build a library of films I certainly don't regret the purchase. I somehow doubt they'll drop much more in price and with inflation running as high or higher than the interest rates the banks are paying, it seems that now is a good time to buy if you're serious about eventually getting one. I haven't found it has increased my television watching, though. It has increased the amount of time I spend looking through the TV Guide but so far there's been very little I've wanted to record and keep. That's fine with me, however, since it's very easy to spend a couple of thousand dollars a year on tapes if you record indiscriminately.

Boggle is a great game, too, and one that's been dealt with quite frequently in fanzines. Dave Locke and Jackie Causgrove are two Boggle enthusiasts and have written about it (and the modifications on it they use) in their various fanzines. It was Joe Haldeman who first introduced me to the game but he always used to win by cheating; he'd know more words than I would which I thought was decidedly unfair and taking advantage of his professional skills as a writer. Since I teach math and the Boggle cubes have no numbers on them, I always thought that this was weighted to his benefit.

I went to see Crucifer of Blood when I was in London, too. Most impressive staging; that scene where the ship floats out of the fog was awe-inspiring. I also saw The Gin Game, Rocky Horror, and a fourth play whose name escapes me at the moment but was probably Deathwatch or something very similar. All good stuff, although theatre isn't quite as inexpensive in London as it once was. Of course, nothing is as inexpensive anywhere in England as it once was, as I'm sure you found out. Even in comparison with the prices I remembered from just two years earlier. Still, the trip was well worth every penny it cost even if I do still feel I missed 90% of SEACON.

// I, too, succumbed to a VCR. My attitude is much like yours. I've become a very careful watcher of the TV Guide, but haven't taped very much yet. Shogun was the first, Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy with Guinness and the repeat of The Nine Tailors. I have some friends, however, at the other end of the spectrum. They have hundreds of tapes of movies. Their tape collection is like my record collection. // This coming summer will be the cyclical year to go back to England and I'm being frightened by the stories that came back with people who visited there this summer. It should be worse by next July. Perhaps my cycle will have to change to a three-year one. //

Chester D. Cuthbert, 1104 Mulvey Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 1J5 Canada

You mention having done some considerable bookhunting during your travels. My own limited experience in local bookshops has formed my opinion that really good books are always scarce. I know that there are some full-time bookhunters who have no permanent home and who maintain only a mailing address or two; one of these, who specializes in Edgar Rice Burroughs, called to see me when he passed through Winnipeg on his way to Toronto and stayed overnight to see my collection. He sent me his Toronto address, but a letter I wrote to him almost immediately was returned to me. He had already left, and I have not heard from him since. I suspect that book scouts curry through the stocks of books in many cities during a year. This one carried a list of dealers and collectors with him. And these experts in various fields of literature seem to make finds that I do not; perhaps they are the reason I find so few good books.

// The fellows whom you describe are really professionals. They can scout a book store in fifteen minutes or less. Where you and I will spend an hour, they have a routine, know exactly the things that they are looking for and certainly have a much greater knowledge of books than I do. Bob Brown, here in Seattle, finds books that I don't even know about. I recently met Pat Walker, who works somewhat like the fellow who visited you. He knows what he's looking for and where he can sell it at a profit. He's an interesting guy, spending part of the year traveling, and part of the year betting on horses. Specialists, that's what they are. I don't hit the stores often enough, another consideration. In a city like Seattle, and, I suspect, Winnipeg, the books get picked over frequently. //

Mike Hall, 8318 - 90 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6C 1P1, Canada

It sure is nice to get fanzines from you. TRR is a very comfortable read, somewhat akin to the time-honoured cliché about the slippers and the pipe by the fire.

Don't feel guilty when you don't publish as often as, let's say, a monthly Edmonton fanzine, but do an issue when you feel like it. After a while everybody stops bugging you about it.

I enjoy reading your trip reports, and especially the fact that you seek out new bookstores wherever you go. I got into this enjoyable pursuit with a collector friend of mine in Winnipeg, and every time I visit a new city, for a con or whatever, I try to visit at least one new one. I've found it strange that most trip reports I read in fmz don't mention this. After all, we are supposed to be science fiction fans, I guess, and to read the stuff, you have to buy it first. Hmmm. Perhaps everybody does it but doesn't want to talk about it. SF marches back into the closet.

// Well, I guess this issue proves that I am doing an issue when I feel like it. It's been a considerable amount of time since the last one. // I agree with you, obviously, about visiting book stores wherever I go. You never know what you are going to find. Finding the copy of Islandia over in Montana was really unexpected. I had a chance one time to buy a copy that was going for \$8 and thought it too high. Now it's around \$40 usually. It's a novel I recommend highly and shouldn't be too difficult to find in paperback in a second-hand book store. A most unusual novel. //

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21740

Your jury duty is something that I hope I never catch. I covered circuit court for the local newspapers for six or eight years, and developed headaches just sitting there and listening with no decisions to be made plus the ability to walk out and take a break from testimony whenever I felt like it. If my name should ever have been drawn, I think I could have minimized or eliminated service by being truthful: announcing when questioned my conviction that 99.8 per cent of all defendants in criminal cases are guilty unless the prosecution has absent-mindedly made a technical error and charged them with the wrong thing, and that 99.7 per cent of all plaintiffs in civil suits are more interested in revenge or money than getting their wrongs righted.

I'm sure you heard some unexpected reasons why that member of the prosecutor's office challenges jury panel members. One local attorney always observed one strict rule, to challenge anyone who lived within three blocks of his home in any direction. This was the approximate range that the attorney's children covered when playing outdoors, and the attorney didn't want to risk having a juror whose backyard his kids might run through occasionally. As a rule, local defense attorneys in criminal cases don't want blacks on any jury that tries a case in which the defendant is black. Most blacks in Hagerstown are quite decent people but they're so anxious to see their race make a good image that they feel it's something like Caesar's wife being above suspicion, and they feel no mercy toward any black who has gotten far enough into trouble to be indicted because he's damaging the black community that way.

The lure of video recordings has me in a dither, too. I'd like to postpone purchase another year or longer, until the improvements to video tape recorders stop coming so thick and fast. But I'm haunted by the suspicion that some things I would love to have on video tape will never turn up again, and the longer I delay the purchase, the more I'll never be able to preserve. My television set is a dozen years old; it still has the original picture tube, that's bound to burn out before long, and the cost of a new tube, installation, and adjustments to the old circuitry would be virtually half the cost of a comparable new set. So I'm hoping that television sets with built-in recording mechanisms will be produced soon. I'm sure I wouldn't take a recorder on location or carry it to someone else's home to play, so the built-in type would be ideal for me.

You think it's sort of boring to find little change in stock at local used book stores. Just be thankful you aren't living in far off, exotic Hagerstown where there is just one used book store. I've gotten so I can look at the shelves containing the sorts of books I'm interested in and spot instantly any new arrivals, simply because I've seen all those spines so often that any change leaps instantly to attention.

// The mere action of jury selection is fascinating in itself. Twice I sat in the jury box during the entire selection process, being one of the first twelve drawn, and then was dismissed. In neither case were the dismissed jurors told the reason for their dismissal. In one case dealing with a handgun folks who had admitted to the ownership of firearms were chosen and I think I may have been excused because I had owned a handgun which had been stolen from my house. One poor fellow to whom I talked had been through jury selection eight times and had never been chosen.// Well, by now I've broken down and bought the video tape recorder. One discovers very suddenly how much tape costs. It teaches one to be highly selective all of a sudden. So far everything I've taped has been made for television; no movies so far, but that can't be far off. And nothing that I have taped so far have I sat down to watch again. Puzzling, isn't it? // I taped The Return of Frank Connor the other night. My gosh, Conrad has gotten even heavier than he was five years ago. I kept saying to myself, he used to do all that running. I hope he doesn't do it in this film or he'll have a heart attack for sure. Not a bad two hours of television. // I take back everything I said about used book stores in Seattle. To have only one such available must be some sort of purgatory. At least we have a goodly number. //

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Harry Andruschak, Sheryl Birkhead (3 times), Sal Di Maria, Dorothy Ann Eller (in person), Dale Goble (in person), Mike Horvat, Richard Labonte, Luke McGuff, Bridget McKenna, Tim Marion, Gary Mattingly, Jim Meadows III, Peter Presford, Keith Roberts, Steve Sneyd, Eric Bentcliffe. Thanks, all.

\* \* \* \* \*

SUSAN WOOD

R.I.P.

I suppose that most of fandom was shocked by the news of Susan Wood's death in Early November. It saddened those of us who knew her well. The fannish world will be the worse for not having her around. Her death is a great sadness. All of us will sorrow over it.

Rather than dwell on the unfortunateness of her death, I wish to remember here some of the good times I spent in her company.

No one who was fortunate enough to receive her fanzine, Amor, will ever forget the fine writing which Susan did there. It was a great pleasure when Amor arrived in the mail. I'm sure that most people who received it sat down immediately, as I did, and read through it at one sitting. It was one of the finest personalzines published in the last ten years. It was always filled with Susan's natural ebullience whether she was relating how she had introduced visitors to Vancouver and environs, describing her teaching at the University of British Columbia or describing a trip to the coast of Vancouver Island or a hike in the forest north of Vancouver. One could tell that she cared for the people with whom she came in contact, particularly her students and her fannish friends. And she cared for the city in which she lived and the beautiful area surrounding it.

I recall parties at Susan's house, fine discussions about Canadian authors, Susan's specialty. I remember excellent banana and date nut breads which Susan would bake and proudly present. I remember her kicking the smokers out to the back porch where we would perch in the cold winter night air and continue whatever conversation we had brought with us from inside. We smokers always went together, huddling together in our vice, and sort of moving with a herd instinct whenever the bellwether smoker moved toward the porch. There was no way we were going to go individually, with no one to talk to, and all of that good conversation going on inside. Sleeping on the floor overnight and those of us normally grumpy in the morning making monumental efforts in the morning to be pleasant.

Greek restaurants in Vancouver where Susan had found the best food. Sharing excellent meals and more excellent conversation. Trudging down the street in Oakland for blocks with Susan, Eli Cohen, Lynn Dollis and Rick Mikkelson to find a szechwan resaturant that Susan knew of.

I remember Susan's interest in finding A Room of Our Own at most Vancouver conventions, and one of the finest discussions of fanzine publishing with everyone sitting around and sharing ideas about graphics and how to cement electrostencilled art, and how to slipsheet, and how to get BNFs to write for your zine. I've sat in on many fanzine panels and never enjoyed one more than that one at V-Con.

I remember Susan's pride in knowing some of the members of Stringband, a Canadian folk group. She would buy copies of their records and present them to those American friends who were interested in folk music. We might not have heard of them otherwise. This was typical of the thoughtfulness with which Susan bought presents

for people. They were always just right and I know that she must have spent a lot of time in making sure that the present fit the person for whom it was bought.

Certainly Susan was successful in her life. Her doctorate, her tenure at the University, the editing of The Language of the Night, that fine collection of the essays of Ursula K. LeGuin, her involvement in an important feminist magazine, her recent taking over of the book review column for Andy Porter's *Starship*; all of these point to her success and we had hoped and expected for much more from her.

I guess we'll never know why Susan left us. It's a tragedy. But perhaps each of you who knew Susan will take a moment and think about the good things which happened while you were in her company. Many of you knew her far better than I did. No matter how long you had known her, it would be a nice remembrance, I would think. Goodbye, Susan.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### ALONG THE BOOKSHELVES

A few brief reviews, nothing overlong nor very critical. More in the nature of letting you know what I've been reading, at least in the sf field. I seem to be reading a lot of mystery-detective stuff lately.

Eye of the Zodiac by E.C. Tubb. DAW Books, #163, c1975. \$1.25

I'm a little bit behind in this series, am I not? This is Dumarest of Terra #13. #23 is currently on the stands. I'll catch up one of these days. This isn't great science fiction, of course, but there is something appealing about the series. Dumarest ran away from Earth as a young man, and now is trying to find his way back. Naturally each adventure finds him closer to the clues to finding where Earth is. This adventure details a trek into the interior of a planet with Dumarest as a guard to a neurotic man and his sister. Good adventure stuff.

The Sundered Realm by Robert E. Vardeman and Victor Milan. Playboy Paperbacks, c1980. \$2.25

This is Book One of the War of Powers trilogy, all of which have been published by now. Good marketing by Playboy, having the three volumes come out in three successive months. I've known Bob for about a dozen years and am really pleased to see his writing career moving along well. Vic I met once at a MileHiCon in Denver.

Fost Longrider is a courier carrying the spirit of a philosopher in a jug. Not only is he pursued, but finds himself saving a princess from a floating sky city. He becomes involved in her affairs, arriving at the sky city as the princess' mother has been slain by an evil sister. The princess is captured and Fost takes it upon himself to ally with the underground and bring about the princess' escape. At the end of this first book, they manage to escape, but there is the promise of much more adventure ahead. Fast paced, lusty adventure for an entertaining read.

Lore of the Witchworld by Andre Norton. DAW Books, #400, c1980. \$1.95

This is a nice collection of Witch World short stories, all of which have appeared elsewhere except for the final story, "The Changeling." All have strong plots and strong women protagonists. My favorite stories from the collection are "Sand Sister," "The Toads of Grimmerdale," and "The Changeling." Obviously a must for all the fans of Witch World, but also a good introduction to Andre Norton's more recent work.

Voorloper by Andre Norton. Ace Books, c1980. \$6.95

This is one of Ace's large format quality paperbacks. It is very nicely embellished with line drawings by Alicia Austin. It is one of Norton's "Forerunner" stories. The setting is a planet with what appears to be an African veldt-like geography.

Bart s'Lorn, a young man, works with his father in a freight business. They haul goods in wagons drawn by an ox-like beast called gars. On a particular trip they are accompanied by a young woman healer, Illo. Bart's father is killed in an accident. Bart and Illo determine to investigate the Tangle, a dense thorny area of vegetation which keeps the colonists out. Near the Tangle several towns have been destroyed in the past by unknown forces. When they are able to force their way into the Tangle they discover the remnants of a Forerunner civilization and face great danger. This is a typically good Norton adventure.

The Shadow of the Torturer by Gene Wolfe. Simon and Schuster, c1980. \$11.95

What to say about this book? Gene is such a fine writer and he has proven it over and over again. This is the first book in a trilogy he calls "The Book of the New Sun." My only sorrow is that we have to wait until February, as I recall, for the next part.

Severian is adopted into the Guild of Torturers. He is trained from his youth to torture. But he succumbs to the physical and spiritual beauty of Thecla and allows her to die. For punishment he is banished to a northern city where he will act as executioner. In this book, however, he barely begins to leave the city. He meets a set of twins, is tricked into a duel on the Sanguinary Field, is befriended by Dr. Talos, a man with strange powers, and perhaps a charlatan. And he meets the strange woman by the Lake of the Birds, where the dead lie. Dorcas, I am sure, will continue to be an important part of this story.

Wolfe's prose is so rich, so full, so complete, that it almost makes one ache. If you are one of those sf fans who don't read much and are more involved in other aspects of fandom, perhaps reading only a few books a year, make this one of them. That's not a request; it's an order. Simon and Schuster, please hurry with the next volume. It's to be entitled The Claw of the Conciliator.

Timescape by Gregory Benford. Simon and Schuster, c1980. \$12.95

Greg Benford is a scientist who can write fiction as well as any of our current writers. And he makes his science understandable. He's crafted one heck of a story in this novel.

England in 1993 is in a bad way, as is much of the world and getting worse. A scientist there, having discovered that tachyons travel both forward and backward in time, theorizes that he might be able to send a message back to a time when something could be done about the degrading of the environment. If such a message were translated, things might turn out quite differently near the turn of the century.

A young physicist in La Jolla, California is working with a graduate student when he discovers that the interferences in the experiment can be decoded. He must fight his department head, and most of the scientific community to make people believe what he has learned.

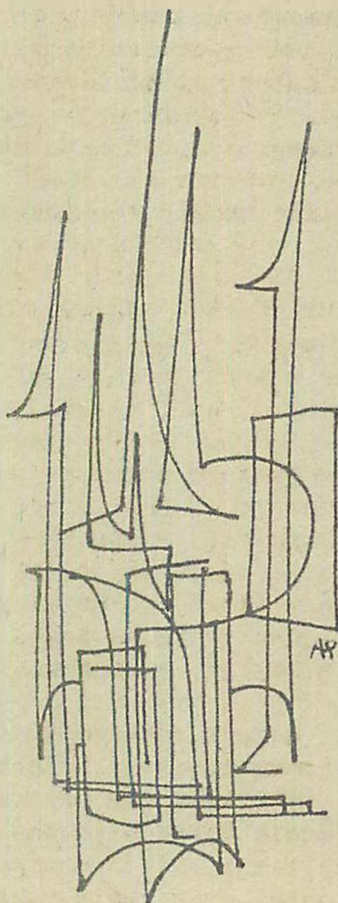
Greg's characterization is excellent and I was particularly impressed by his handling of the Kennedy assassination. It showed that he had done his historical homework as well as his scientific. Each of Greg's books has impressed me and I recommend his work warmly to you.

Firestarter by Stephen King. The Viking Press, c1980. \$13.95

Must I confess that this is the first King book I have read? I know. People have been telling me that I must read him, but other things got in the way. King turns out to be a very good story teller.

Charlie and her dad are on the run from a secret agency. Dad and Mom had been guinea pigs in a drug experiment during college. Charlie, their daughter, can start fires. She has pyrokinesis. The agency wants her. They kill her Mom in trying to get her. Charlie and her dad escape for a while, but are finally captured. Working to be free is the challenge. Telling the world is a greater challenge. And John Rainbird, a stoic Indian, stands in their way, subverting the child.

Excellent story, and it sure won't be the last I read of King, now that I've broken my pattern.



The Animals of Farthing Wood by Colin Dann. Elsevier/  
Nelson Books, c1979. \$9.95

Watership Down certainly gave the impetus to authors who wished to do books with animal characters. I suspect that such books appeal to a small number of people, but I happen to be one of them. This one isn't going to be a classic, although I've heard that it did win an award in England. Much like Watership Down, this one starts with the impending destruction of the habitat of a group of animals. A toad, carried off to be a pet, returns from a long and arduous journey to tell his friends of a wildlife sanctuary where they will be safe.

The many different animals join forces to make the trek, Fox, Badger, Owl, Mole, Rabbit, Hare, Weasel, Adder, and others. Many adventures befall them on the way; fire, capture in a barn, cornered in a church, loss of their leader, Fox. Entertaining, but about what you might expect.

Duncton Wood by William Horwood. McGraw-Hill Book Co., c1980. \$12.95

This is an animal epic, nearly 600 pages long. It can be placed on a par with Watership Down, I think. It has the fullness and richness of the former, and it is a big story. Moles, it is this time. Once again, if you aren't bothered by anthropomorphism, you ought to enjoy this book. It has good and evil, moles with mystic vision, healers, the evil villains, a long and

dangerous quest, a mole monastery, overwhelming love; everything you might ask for in a story about humans. I will admit that at about page 400 I had to set it aside for a while. But when I picked it up again, it sped to a nice finish. Perhaps it could have been edited a bit, but it is a full book. I highly recommend it to those of you who like animals stories.

Ladies from Hell by Keith Roberts. Victor Gollancz Ltd, c1979. £5.95

If you've been paying attention, you know that I am a great fan of Keith Roberts. Pay no attention to the fact that I am also his friend. In spite of his poor choice of friends, it doesn't affect his writing one whit. Keith is one of Britain's finest sf writers who has one hell of a time selling his writing. It's too good to be sf, editors must think. At least Ed Ferman still buys an occasional story for consumption over here. But for this book, you've got to have an English Connection. Five stories in this collection, and I think that "The Big Fans" is the only one to have seen publication in the U.S. The others are "Our Lady of Desperation," "The Shack at Great Cross Halt," "The Ministry of Children," and "Missa Privata." All are excellent. Why can't some U.S. publisher pick this up and at least do a paperback? Meantime, Parker and Son in Oxford will be happy to set up an account for you and invoice you when they send the book. They even let you pay to a bank in New York with American dollars. The address is 27 Broad Street, Oxford OX2 6AQ, England. Set up an account now, so that you can also buy Molly Zero by Keith when I tell you that it has been published.

Out There Where the Big Ships Go by Richard Cowper. Pocket Books, c1980. \$2.50

Richard Cowper is another of my favorite writers from England. He seems to have become known over here last year with the publication of The Road to Corlay, and to

some readers a bit earlier when "The Piper at the Gates of Dawn" was published in The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction. This later became the prologue to The Road to Corlay. All of which is by the by. I hope that American readers are beginning to discover this fine writer, and this book is a good introduction to his work. Besides the title story, there are "The Custodians," "Paradise Beach," "The Hertford Manuscript," and "The Web of the Magi." Each is different in its own way, each is fairly lengthy. These are stories that you can sink your teeth into. I like Cowper a lot. I don't think his novel, The Twilight of Briareus, has been published over here, but if you run into a British paperback of it, buy it. It's an awfully good novel. If I rave about Cowper and Roberts, it's because I think they deserve to be read by more people. Just doing my little bit, don't you know.

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Fannish friends are always asking me what I've been reading in the mystery field so I thought I'd spend a few lines with even less formal recommendations here. Seems like many sf fans like a break once in a while and many of them read mysteries.

Tony Hillerman is excellent and his new one, People of Darkness, maintains his high quality. A tribal policeman, investigating what seems to be a minor theft, runs into murder and a cover-up many years old. He has to find out about an Indian cult, and elude a hired killer out for his life. (Harper and Row, c1980, \$9.95.)

Another Weeping Woman by Donald Zochert is his second book, and tons better than his first. It takes place in Montana, where a girl is mauled to death by a grizzly. Except the coroner finds that she has a bullet in her head, and then further volunteers that she was dead even before the bullet. This is a tough novel; not for those who like the gentile type. (Holt, Rinehart, Winston, c1980, \$9.95)

Either you like Dick Francis or you don't. A lot of people do. Whip Hand (Harper and Row, c1979, \$9.95) has ex-jockey Sid Halley back for his second appearance. That's the first time Francis has ever used a protagonist over again. Halley has three separate investigations going in this one; a charity scam, doped horses, and some corruption in the Jockey Club. If you are a Francis fan, you won't miss this one.

The Edgar Winners edited by Bill Pronzini (Random House, c1980, \$11.95) is an excellent collection. Most of the short story winners of The Edgar from 1947 to 1978 are included and Bill has put together the list of all Edgar winners in every category as an appendix. Most useful.

Harper and Row is to be congratulated for bringing out the novels of Cyril Hare in their paperback Perennial Library. Now for those of you who do like the gentile type of mystery, these are quite good. I've read Untimely Death and When the Wind Blows. Three other titles are out and they all feature the quiet solicitor, Francis Pettigrew. Good writing, worthwhile puzzles, satisfying solutions. What more could you ask?

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Well, let's see what foolishness I can finish off with. I had no intention to run on this many pages. TRR is supposed to be a ten-page zine, but I guess I got carried away. Maybe if I did it a little more often....do you suppose?

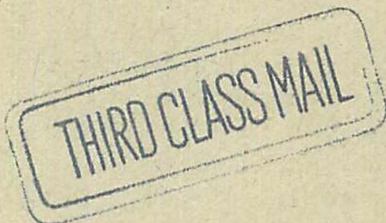
Twentieth Century Crime and Mystery Writers has been published. What's that got to do with anything? Well, I made my first writing sale to it. I wrote five small critical essays on English mystery authors John Blackburn, Victor Canning, Clive Egleton, Michael Gilbert and Hugh C. Rae. The book is a monster, nearly 1600 pages and was published by St. Martin's here in the U.S. and by Macmillan of London over there. Cost: \$50 (ouch). It has brief biographies, critical essays, full bibliographies of both the crime and non-crime writings of the authors and, something by the authors themselves, if they chose to write something. It boils down to a mystery lover's bible. Diehard fans of the genre will have to have it; others will hound their libraries to get it. Now, if I could sell some fiction.

ODDS AND ENDS

We got a post card in the mail the other day. The top line said Mt. Baker - Snoqualmie Forest. The second line said "We have moved." What???? // Got a couple of books from Robert & Phyllis Weinberg in the mail the other day. Fields of Sleep by E.C. Vivian. It has illustrations by Thomas Canty who does highly stylized, but superb work, to my way of thinking. The others were some books by Henry Treece about early Britain. Nicely done, larger size paperback format with very interesting art on the covers. Titles: The Golden Strangers, The Dark Island, and The Great Captains. I'm missing one entitled Red Queen, White Queen. I've started the first one and it's very interesting; concerns those dark, prehistoric days of Britain. // Tankcon, that moveable feast which takes place between Christmas and New Years, will be held in Sacramento again this year. A small gathering of scattered fans to enjoy each other's company, drink too much beer, eat too much spaghetti, watch too many crummy movies on somebody's VCR, and beat Frank at Scrabble and Backgammon. Why do I keep going back? Can't stop after ten years of it. // I haven't even talked about music or records this time. Hiroshima's first album was most interesting, with jazz koto. Yep. Their second is not so hot. Would you believe disco koto? // Joined the Columbia Record Club again. I couldn't pass up getting 13 records for 1¢. Now if I can only remember to cancel when I have fulfilled my obligation. // Have you seen Kit William's Masquerade? Beautiful art, a story with a mystery to it, and somewhere in England a very expensive piece of jewelry buried for you to find if you can figure out the clues. I've heard that some poor lady has had her back yard dug up four times already. Oops, had a long discussion about back yards when Eric Bentcliffe was here this summer. To the English "back yard" is very pejorative. I believe they choose to say "back garden." And that's what she had dug up. // Well, I'll end here. Don't know if this will go in an envelope or just be folded in half. Hope you have a very happy holiday season. See you in '81. Best of New Years to you.

ART THIS ISSUE: Cover: Jim Garrison, 1 - Fagan ("Drabble"), 7- Grant Canfield, 10 - Bruce Townley, 16 - Andy Porter.

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