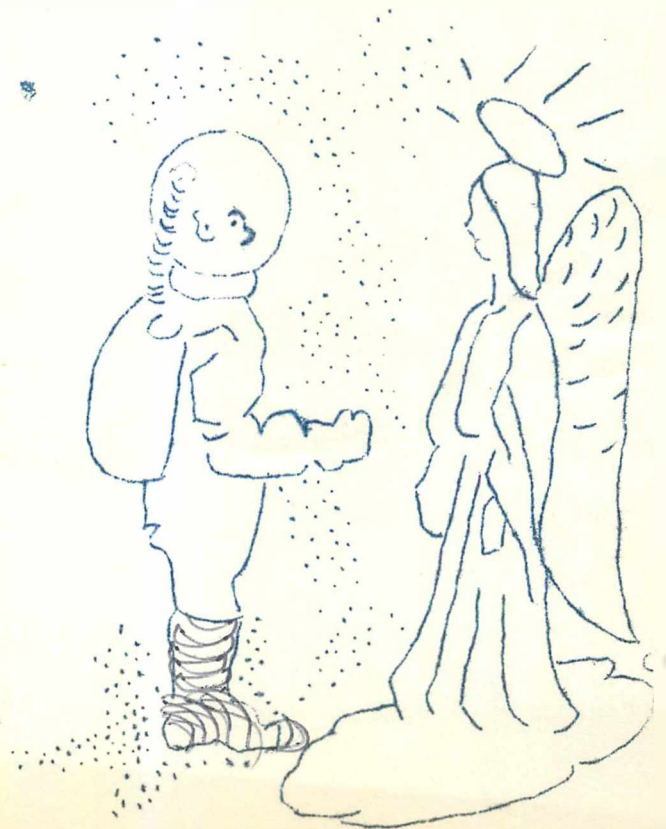


The Scarr



"TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER."

Editorial

The SCARR 9

September 1965

OMPA 45

IN THE last issue I printed 13 poems. I could not make any sense out of them (I still can't) and I wondered if they really meaningless or if I was just plain stupid. I included three that I KNEW to be meaningless: 2, 5 and 9. Harry Warner and Mats Linder suspected a trap, but it wasn't meant that way, honest! Earl Evers picked 2 and 9 as the worst. The authors are:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Edwin Brock | 2. Barbara H Charters. | 3. Theodore Roethke |
| 4. William Empson | 5. David H Charters | 6. Kendrick Smithyman |
| 7. Peter Levi | 8. & 13. Chas Tomlinson | 9. M. |
| 10. Thomas Clark | 11. Peter Redgrove | 12. I A Richards |

Here is No. 1, and an extract from Norman McCaig, Literary Critic:

It was, I think,
on top of a bus
I saw no more
than a mop of
dyed black hair
that made my face
into a warm black
hole that screams.

Mr Brock's language is always simple, direct, colloquial; but because he sees some way into a brick wall and won't cheat about his feelings, whether they are about personal and domestic matters or remoter instances of human suffering, these are true poems.

Seems that this is the age of incomprehensible paintings, cacophonous music, scraggly hair-styles, disreputable clothing and absurd poetry.

+++ +++ +++ +++ +++ +++

Apparently the harder one tries the more errors one makes. Like when I took the stencil with Ian's piece out of the typer I found I had put the word "sundance" for "suntranned." So I used corflu and tried again, and this time it came out "sintanned." This was very close to the meaning but I tried once more and now it's very nearly "suntranned." No prizes are offered for spotting the other mistakes.

+++ +++ +++ +++ +++ +++

While cutting a stencil at the office one night I had to leave for a few minutes. During my absence one of the cleaners printed her name on the head of her brush with my correction fluid!

Slainte,

Geo.

FAR-OFF FIELDS

by
Ian R. McAulay

THIS IS THE TIME OF YEAR when the giant corporations, research institutes, and other employers of the world's scientific manpower start their annual search for a fresh intake of scientific minds for their staffs. This process has by now become one of the mainstays of the brewing and distilling industries, not to mention the hotel and catering trades, though no doubt in the future a lot of scientists in England will be voting Conservative thanks to the Labour Government's efforts to do away with expensive account entertainments.

In the Universities prospective graduates, research students and those merely in search of a change are stocking up on reliable hangover cures and indigestion tablets preparatory to the three months social whirl ahead of them, their fervent hope that they won't get signed up too early in the season while under the influence of drink and a glamorous signer-up of scientists.

Firms are rivalling each other to produce seductive advertisements extolling the wonderful locales in which they have their labs, the marvellous facilities for all hobbies from archery to zymurgy, the great anxiety that they have for all their scientific employees to cruise first class around the world attending conferences for six or seven months of the year.

"Come to work in glorious Culleybackey," reads a typical advertisement of the kind now appearing in the journals, "and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of good living and friendly companions." The accompanying picture may show four or five comely young ladies lustfully pawing a ~~portly~~ male character who presumably represents an average scientist employed by the firm. After a few more paragraphs designed to convince the reader that anyone who lives by choice elsewhere than Culleybackey is a cultural clod and probably a Commie as well, the advertisement may, though this is optional, mention something about the sort of work done by the firm. If it does, it will stress the need for fresh scientific minds to achieve a breakthrough in the exciting problems facing the lavatory paper industry or whatever the business may be.

Dazzled by this concern for his welfare the typical research student writes to the seven or eight firms who have made the most attractive pitches and receives by return of post seven or eight invitations to make expenses paid trips to visit the various laboratories. The lavish entertainment on these visits eventually breaks down the resistance of even the strongest willed young scientist and finally he signs a contract. Immediately the directors become too busy to take him out to lunch and his entertainment drops down to sausage, chips and tea in the canteen. The gleaming showplace lab that so impressed him is closed up and he is shown the grimy cubbyhole in which he will have to work. No longer is he chauffeured through the expensive suburbs, now he gets a slow train from a dirty and mediaeval station. And so, disillusioned by the ruthlessness of tycoons and the world of industry, your average young scientist starts his working life. Is it any wonder that so many of them go on to invent the atom bomb or something like it?

+

ABOUT 25 years ago (after a period of visiting the Employment Bureau, known affectionately as The Dole) I began to work for Short Brothers, aeroplane manufacturers. In 1959 Bob Shaw joined us and six months ago we welcomed James White to the fold. But whereas James and Bob take their ease on Day-shift I am on Nightshift, when the real work of the factory is done. From his headquarters James has sent me this note about

THE THING FROM BELFAST LOUGH

MY REASONS for writing this are complex and multitudinous and total at least three in number — to cut my inferiority complex down to size, to change my eye-colouring from Envy Green to their usual Romantic Mud-Brown and to tell you that strange and wonderful things happen in work during the day as well as at night. Not as strange and exotic as the night-long orgies of tea-drinking and worse that goes on with you night-shifters, of course: our excitement is much more clean-cut and goshwowoboyoboy. You see, we make aeroplanes and carpet sweepers and other things too secret to mention — you must have noticed them lying around while your fifty-odd cleaning ladies are chasing you about the main hangar — and feel proud and kinda humble when one takes off and lands safely, even in fog.

All things considered it is nice to have a job where one can exercise one's sense of wonder and legs by climbing in and out of half-built aeroplanes, or going up to Bob's office for story conferences and to guzzle tea served by soft-voiced effeminate girls out of cracked cups. He seems to have an unlimited supply of these on call in all shapes, sizes and colours, and it takes keen observation, sensitive handling and about three weeks for the permutations to work themselves out. All of them are white, of course, although a few have touches of paint. Some are rather straight up and down and serve their purpose, as it were, in a pinch, but most of them are curved to give a slightly top-heavy appearance which is aesthetically most pleasing. And, to be fair, only a few of them are cracked or show any sign of mishandling, and these are quickly replaced by a new model. They are very economical, too — sixpence a week as opposed to threepence a day, which is the going rate in the Planning Office — and they never have to be washed before or after use. They really treat visitors well in Publicity.

But sometimes tea served by scented, seductive, effeminate girls out of sexy, top-heavy cups becomes of secondary importance, and today was one of those times. Bob wasn't there when I got to his office although both our teas were already poured. I was just settling down to go through his paperwork for Classified, or even interesting, material when he rang to say that a Hovercraft had come up the Lough that morning to have some special equipment fitted, and

it was now about to take off from in front of the main hangar. The surface of the tea rippled gently in the wind of my passing.

Bob was out on the apron between the thing and the ramp which it would use to enter the water, not in front of the hangar with the main crowd where there was some shelter from the wind — but as things turned out this was a Good Thing. In appearance it was a cross between a grounded Ark and a furniture van, and its most striking feature was its noise — a growly, ground-shaking clatter that was like a volcano recorded at $7\frac{1}{2}$ and played back at 3. And it was only warming up its engines, because it was still stuck fast to the ground and not even straining upwards. But then suddenly things began to happen.

The noise went from indescribable to unbelievable and it began heaving itself upwards, an inch at a time, until the heavy rubber apron used to contain its air cushion started flapping and letting the air escape from underneath. It began to move along the front of the hangar, its velocity building up quickly to that of a slow walking pace. Then it seemed to be getting into difficulties. Despite its propellers being angled to compensate for the stiff breeze that was blowing, it was drifting sideways towards some of the onlookers, including Bob and me and the car we were sheltering behind. We decided to shelter a little further behind it. Then the noise diminished to merely deafening and the hovercraft sagged heavily onto the concrete. A Royal Navy Petty Officer engineer jumped through an inconspicuous opening in the stern. He was carrying a suitcase and he marched away without speaking to anyone. This seemed to be a very bad sign. But nobody else abandoned ship and the Army Captain who had been giving hand-signals to the pilot (driver?) began signalling to some of the onlookers.

This officer was an unconventional type. He'd left his uniform jacket back in the hovercraft and his trousers were held up by a brightly coloured elastic belt. His cap was jammed down over his ears (to keep it from being blown away) and his shirt sleeves were rolled up, displaying lean, muscular arms covered with rippling bronzed goose-bumps. He began gesticulating in unmistakable fashion, and within a minute the car was surrounded, lifted and carried to safety by the Captain and about twenty other people. A real John Wayne type, this officer — his hands were muddy and he rubbed them dry on his pants.

A few minutes later the thing heaved itself a couple of inches into the air and began to slide towards the ramp. More air spilled from under the edges of its apron, a howling gale of it. Toffee papers, cigarette ends, small stones and one "No Parking" sign struck onlookers, and within seconds there wasn't a speck of dust on the entire concrete apron — it was all in our hair and eyes. I screamed a witty remark at Bob and he nodded appreciatively, then shook his head in admiration — or maybe he hadn't heard me and was playing safe.

Then there occurred the sort of incident without which no major spectacle is complete, the vicious, sadistic touch which appeals to the beast in all of us — or me, anyway. The Incident of the Vanishing Puddle.

This puddle was about five square yards in area and about two inches deep: large as puddles go without being vulgarly ostentatious. But it lay between the crowded hangar wall and the flight-path of the monster, its ripples growing more and more agitated as the thing thundered closer. The blokes lined along the hangar wall saw what was going to happen, but too late. There was a sudden burst of fog as the puddle was converted into fine droplets and hurled against the wall. Where the puddle had been there was left only a damp patch of concrete. The hangar wall was dark with moisture, except at ground level where pale, dry, pathetic shadows of heads and bodies and arms in fear-contorted postures gave mute evidence of another mass martyrdom to Science. It was tragic, really. I couldn't help laughing.

The way it went down the ramp was startling — I had to remind myself that it was riding a frictionless cushion of air down a six to one gradient. When the spray and upflung seaweed had settled we watched it tearing down the Lough at about sixty miles an hour, fuzzy behind its curtain of spray, the shapelessness of things to come.

I was twenty minutes late getting back to the office — me and about eighty others. Have you ever seen eighty people sneaking unobtrusively back to their desks all at the same time — it's like a stampede on tiptoe. But the Boss didn't say anything — he was a couple of minutes later than we were. I call that tact!

|||||

LETTERS

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Md. 21740.

It has just occurred to me to wonder about the use of the zipcode (the number after my address, not the kind of illness that people used to get when they went up for rides in dirigibles without wrapping up well). The United States Post Office Department is breathing fire on bulk mailers, warning them to start putting the zipcode on every piece of outgoing mail if they want to retain their bargain rates, and I'm spending a half-hour or so every day filling out postal cards to inform these bulk mailing firms about my own zipcode so that I can continue to pay through taxes the loss that the government incurs by delivering worthless advertisements below cost. But what will happen when the postal authorities get tired of brutalizing the little fellows and the big firms in this country and turn their attention to foreign climes? Will Northern Ireland stand up for its rights if its mail authorities are ordered by the United States to start sorting out mail intended for Americans, by zipcodes, so that it may be processed more easily on arrival at an Atlantic Coast port? Will it be necessary for the United States to try to force zipcodes of even higher denominations on other parts of the world, if the electronic devices that will scan these code numbers suffer neuroses upon encountering zipcodeless mail addressed for other lands? Whatever happens, I would advise you faraway people to be patient and forgiving,

no matter what insults the American postal service may inflict on you, on the theory that this is preferable to being friendly with the American postal system and possibly imitating its methods of operation. [If the zipcode system slows down deliveries the UK will adopt it.]

Slobland Revisited was one of the finest Bob Shaw items, a breathtaking statement if I've ever made one. Curiously, just in recent days I've been hearing something out of Slobland, I think. The next house to the north of 423 Summit Avenue is a large brick building that has been converted into apartments. The people in it are lower middle class folks, nice people, the kind I prefer. But on several recent mornings, when I've gone to the bathroom for the same reason that dogs go for walks around the block at night, I've heard the most dreadful cursing and threats coming from this house. The bathroom window faces to the north, it's impossible to see from where I'm sitting who is talking, or even to be sure if the voices are coming from outside the house or through the summer-opened windows. The argument is brief and violent and one voice fades away in the distance and there is silence before I can conveniently arise and see what is going on. If I then go out to investigate, I find all the people who are home chatting on the front porch or working in the garden or otherwise enjoying each other's company. Nobody appears agitated enough to have cooled down quickly but I don't dare ask about the source of what I've heard, just in case a couple has a short fuss but cools down rapidly. I've come to wonder if there isn't a spacowarp just outside that window through which sounds leak from some other space and other time when I am exercising certain areas of my brain that control specific muscles which are not used elsewhere in the day.

I am certain that you are baiting some sort of trap for your readers with these two pages of modern poetry. [More of a test, perhaps.] I can't believe that you wrote it all yourself. Some of it reads like computer poetry but other stanzas do not have the slightly Lewis Carrollian logic that computers usually put into their verse. Or maybe you did it all by choosing words blindly in dictionaries with an index finger, aided by a rhyming dictionary at certain points. Anyway, I'll go along with the game, now that I've salvaged something from my dwindling stock of respect by pointing to my suspicions. Poem number five is my favorite, because it has considerably more energy than anything else on these two pages, and and although it's quite a close contest for the other distinction, I'd incline to favor the very first poem as the worst.

Sid Birchby has chanced upon a melancholy but interesting pastime, that of investigating outdated guidebooks. War, depression, and the ravages of time make those old volumes sometimes sad and sometimes funny, but most of all frightening to me. The fright comes from the way they demonstrate the instability of everything around us. The local library has an old guidebook to Maryland, intended for the use of motorists back in the 1920's when I was a tiny boy but able to remember the things it describes. Hagerstown looks solid enough and hardly anything in it looks new to a quick glance. But there is not one blessed thing in the instructions on how to drive through Hagerstown from east to west that is still correct. The trolley tracks are gone, the church that used to be a signal to bear to the left has been torn down and replaced by a new church, the hill in the western part of town has been partially leveled,

anything good in such "poetry." As I see it, trash can be nothing but trash even if you happen to call it poetry or art.

Now, I want you to understand that this is by no means criticising you for having included these verses in your fanzine, because I usually get a big kick out of reading that kind of poetry, and my theory is, you do too. And I strongly suspect you of having published some nursery rhyme done by a ten-year-old, or some such thing, just to see how many of the readers would pick that as the best of the verses. What about it, huh? Didya?

As a science fiction fan I'm a little pleased to see at least something which has got to do with sf, being the tit-bits from your diary. Well, I was just wondering what has happened to that good old science fiction. Recently, I've read one of last year's Hugo candidates and one of this year's. The first one was not sf, it was fantasy and rather bad fantasy: it was Heinlein's "Glory Road." Now, I'm all for breaking out of old habits and traditions - when it leads to better things. But Glory Road isn't. And as for the other book, it certainly was labeled sf. Well, it wasn't. Science fiction, I mean. It was Pangborn's "Davy," and it was an unusually good book compared to most part of the better sf, but it wasn't sf. Not that I didn't enjoy it all the same, but when it's nominated for a Hugo and everybody says it's sf, then I expect to read an sf book.

FIVE HUNDRED YEARS after the Third Atomic War a Nostalgist tries to reconstruct from fragmentary remains an old tragedy entitled

THE SHOOTING OF DAN MCGREW

There's a little yellow idle

("Idle" may also be spelt "idol,").

To the North of Khatmandu,

(The spelling of this word places the locale of the story in North Africa. Cf Bantu, Timbuktu, &c)

There's a little marble cross beneath the town.

There's a broken-hearted woman

(Possibly "the lady that's known as Lou.")

Tents the grave of Dan McGrew,

("Tents" may apparently also be spelt "tends." "Tents" would seem to be the more correct, as in the expression, "The fun was in tents," but even the ancients must have judged this occasion too grave for fun.)

While that yellow god forever gazes down.

He was known as Dan McGrew

When he signed on the Burroo,

(This refers to an old semi-religious ceremony, which consisted in standing for long periods in lines in the open, in all kinds of weather, before signing the

Visitors' Book. It must have been a doleful ceremony.)
He was hotter than he felt inclined to tell;

("Hotter" may mean that he was wanted by the police, or
that he was an expert at "lovenacking," an old pastime
like football.)

But for all his foolish pranks
He was warshipped in the ranks,

("Warshipped" was a term usually employed by Navy person-
nel. It is used here by poetic licence.)

And the Colonel's daughter smiled on him as well.

(Possibly because, in their quaint phraseology, she had
just had her National Health teeth and wanted to display
them.)

He had loved her all along
With the passion of the strong:

The fact that she loved him was a mere detail.

(A poor rhyme, but very realistic.)

She was nearing twenty-one,

(Referring to the magic numbers 38-21-36, which were worn
by many women as a charm.)

And arrangements had begun

For to celebrate her birthday with a ball.

(This refers to the sending up of balloons or thin rubber
balls filled with a light gas, at festivities.)

He wrote to ask what present
She would like from Dan McGrew.

They met next day as he dismissed his squad,

(A squad consisted of four men. Sometimes referred to as
squaduplets.)

And jest like that she told him

That nothing else would do

But the greenfly of the little yellow god.

("Greenfly" is rhyming slang for "eye," e.g., "North and
South" meant "mouth" or "apples and pears" for "stairs."
The word jest, a corruption of just, is used to show it
was a joke — or the thought of an idol moment.)

On the night before the dance

Mad McGrew seemed in a trance,

(That is, he was not very sad nor wildly happy — just
medium.)

And they chaffed him as they puffed at their cigars.

(Chaff comes from corn: i.e., they told him corny stories.)

But for once he failed to smile,

And he sat alone awhile,

Then went out into the night among the stars.

(A somewhat obscure reference to Hollywood.)

He returned before the dawn

With his shirt and tunic torn,

david
h
charters

AMERICAN ANGLE

EVERYTHING in Northern Ireland is done differently. This may sound like an extreme statement, but I think you will find it pretty nearly true. Everything is different from anywhere. I have suspected at times that the Irish take a perverse pleasure in these differences, and often, in fact, try to deny that they exist. And the Irish, I have discovered, are great rationalisers: they are quite able to convince themselves that where any difference exists, they are in the right. This is a peculiar talent, shared with political parties, school-teachers, philosophers and the Belfast Corporation. Of course this whole discussion is pointless if one is logical and doubts the absolute qualities of right, if one refuses to make a value judgment. But just for the sake of argument, let's assume that right is absolute — what is right for one country is right for another.

Picture yourself driving a motor-car in Northern Ireland, on the left hand side of the road, of course, but we won't go into that. You

come to an intersection at which you plan to go straight across. On your right is a long bridge, on your left the road divides a few yards along with a traffic island in the fork. You go straight across, after stopping to see that nothing is coming. Logical? Yes. Irish? No. You go to the left, cross into the right lane, turn right, stop, start, cross into the left lane, turn left and go on. You have just crossed one end of Belfast's Albert Bridge. No comment.

I came to Ireland for three weeks holiday at the beginning of April. I'm still here. Such is the fascination of the place. It's also because the Irish make it extremely difficult to get away. Just before I was to leave in April I made inquiries about the possibility of extending my visa and getting a job here for the summer. I found it was necessary to get a work permit. So I wrote the Home Office in London to see about this, and had to forward my passport, as there is no machinery for dealing with such rare objects as passports in Northern Ireland. To obtain a work permit I had to have a worker's visa as well as a specific offer of work. I found this out when the Home Office wrote back three months later, after I had been working illegally for six weeks rather than starving! I wrote and told them not to bother, but just to extend my tourist visa till the end of August. No answer. I wrote again. Still no answer. I was desperate. I was due to go home in two weeks, and still no passport. People were beginning to hint that I was in the country illegally. Finally the passport arrived, just as I finished my third month of illegal work, one week before I was due to stop. See how easy it is to cut through red tape?

Then there's the weather. No one will deny that that is different. I wondered at first why everyone was so preoccupied with the weather, but this wonder was soon overtaken by the question of when/if it would ever stop raining. I kept referring to my pocket calendar, looking desperately for summer. Finally I discovered from a reliable source that summer was scheduled for the last Friday in August. And it is absolutely no good to tell me that last summer was great, and that this one is the coldest for forty-three years.

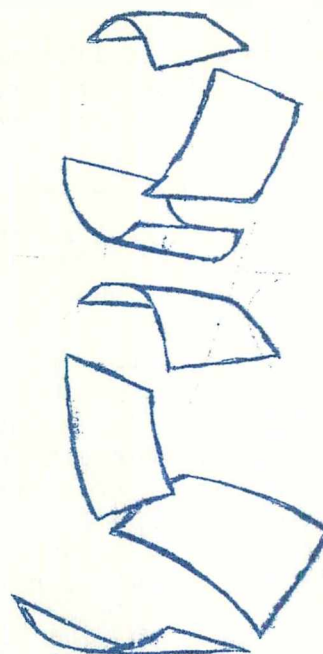
I was interested in visiting Short Brothers & Harland, where the Belfasts are being built. Through a friend in the company's, ah, administration, I applied for a pass. After two months none was forthcoming, so we walked into what is supposed to be a heavy security area and toured around at our leisure, saw what we wanted, and just as calmly walked out. Official Secrets Act, ha!

Then there was the mystery of the mislaid but. Did you ever hear a sentence ending in a conjunction? Neither did I until someone said, when I suggested going out of the house, "It's raining, but." At first I thought a derogatory remark was being passed, but such was not the case. Does this type of grammatical construction sound good, does it convey the meaning? Yes. But where else is it done.

I've heard a lot of sentences in my time, and.

+++++

Peeps into my Diary



Nov 29 Wed Maurice Walsh THE GREEN RUSHES. Romances of the Black & Tan era in Southern Ireland. Walsh seems to have the curious idea that the Sinn Feiners were gentlemen. || American cruiser in Belfast illuminated with strings of lights — dunno if it's the aftermath of Thanksgiving or the beforemath of Christmas.

Dec 6 Wed Frank Crisp THE NIGHT CALLERS. Pb. Apparently British; better written than most, though petty detail is given too much room. And when the investigators discover that it is aliens from Jupiter/Ganymede who are stealing girls the book suddenly ends. Maybe it's a big joke of Crisp's: he may have a funny sense of humour.

Dec 21 Thu Peter de Vries THE TENTS OF WICKEDNESS. Another clever-clever novel. Don't like authors busting their braces to show how smart they are. Liked one bit: Lives of great men all remind us
Not to let their labours blind us.

Dec 27 Wed Manning, Coles, NOT, NEGOTIABLE. Typical quote: Maurice knew why, he was wearing scund shoes which gave out a firm tread, scund shoes are not worn by such as live there, he might be police. He saw no one at all but felt himself watched, a child began to cry and was abruptly hushed. Maurice shivered and hurried on. The passage turned, branched and turned again, the rooms were smaller and more numerous, they were once the menservants' bedrooms. Unquote.

Dec 31 Sun In Dec Amazing Sam Moskowitz says Murray Leinster was born in Leinster County. Irish geography is not compulsory in the US.

Jan 31 Wed Will James SUN-UP. Placing of words like entree and equilibrium in juxtaposition with knoved and hissself give the impression that the book was written by an erudite cowpoke.

Feb 4 Sun Department of useless information. David R Atchison was President of the USA for ONE day, 4th March 1849. :: The Diet of Worms (UGH!) took place in 1521. :: USA towns game: Ash, Kan.; Carpet, Tex.; Shapeless, Mass.; Verray, Ill. :: Shortest month ever was

September							1752
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
-	1	2	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30	-	

Well, at least it helps fill the diary when I've no science fiction (?).

Feb 22 Thu Erle Stanley Gardiner THE GRINING GORILLA. Quote (p70): Mental telepathy. End quote. What other kinds of telepathy are there?

Feb 24 Sat Bennet Cerf says that Shakespeare once asked a friend if his coat was torn at the back. After looking the friend reported, "No holes, Bard."

Mar 5 Mon Paul Jennings I SAID ODDLY DIDDLE I? Mildly humorous short pieces. Part of a series (the Oddleian Library?) such as Oddly Enough, Even Oddlier, Gladly Oddly, Idly Oddly, etc.

Mar 10 Sat V Ransetta THE UNCHARTED PLANET. (Other authors in this series are Aldiss, Dickson, Kornbluth, Pohl, Kuttner.) Rocketship with two spacejockeys go on a trip, but they do not seem to have any idea what the instruments are for. Bad. Not even funny-bad. "Suddenly the ship lurched..." Gah!

Apr 8 Sun Densil Neve Barr THE MAN WITH ONLY ONE HEAD. A "dirty" bomb is exploded and causes sterility in men. A cure is found. That's all.

Apr 15 Sun Walter S Tevis THE HUSTLER. 140pp. Novel of the film I saw a few days ago. The cover shows a heroine with mountainous bust: the book says they are just mole-hills. She is dragged into plot for no reason in book & film and in neither case does it help. (A hustler is a man who goes round pool-halls and traps poor or average players into playing for money.) In the book you do not know (or care) what happens the dame; in the film, after an aimless, senseless affair with a friend/enemy of the "hero" she commits suicide (and you do not know or care why). The book (English publication) does not explain the American game of pool & one cannot take much interest in the games except for the results; in the film neither cameraman nor director tried to make the shots clear or interesting. Book is 100pp too long; film 2 hours too long.

Apr 26 Thu John E Muller THE MAN WHO CONQUERED TIME. Hero makes a time-machine, goes back and meets a pteradactyl (sic). (This may be a sick pterodactyl.) In the end he bounced on the end of time and so came back to the present!!

May 19 Sat Terence Haile SPACE TRAIN. Michael Glyce, using rockets, makes an engine which can travel at 3000mph on rails which he lays down on his own farm and in the garden next door where it winds in and out round the flowerbeds. The rails are magnetised so as to keep the engine on the rails. Having interested the authorities in it a special track is laid from London to Birmingham and Mike takes a party of politicians on its maiden run. But his partner, a very naughty man, switches off the magnetism and Glyce & Co take off into space, where they sort of land on a sort of planet where there is a colony or something of crabs. They sort of take off again and head for earth. Meanwhile, back on earth, the saboteur builds another train and takes it for a trial run.

By a strange coincidence the space-train crash lands on the other! Huh! The train is pressurised so the space-travellers have plenty of air for the trip, and they just happen to have enough food in their pockets to keep them going. An amazing story!

Jun 23 Sat Victor Wadey A PLANET NAMED TERRA. (Wadey uses words like guage and stimulous.) The scientific gobbledegook is as good as G O Smith's. The rest is a queer mixture of rosicrucianism & reincarnation: after death on Earth everyone is reincarnated on Terra, 253,000,000,000 miles away. It is very hard to disprove this. The crew of a spaceship get there accidentally & meet Leonardo da Vinci (who has been resurrected in other sf yarns), Anne Boleyn, &c. Anne has improved so much she is now a sort of Divine Intellect. Henry VIII is not mentioned: it would be indelicate.

Jun 26 Tue Neil Bell THE FLOWERS. Written to show the stupidity of war and the useless killing of young men. Bell does not approve of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, but does not mention other course open to the allies, such as surrender to the Japs, or let the war drag on for months with thousands of allied men killed. Wonder if Bell had been in a Jap POW camp would he enjoy having his stay prolonged by a year?

Jul 28 Sat BoSh showed us a puzzle last week which he got from an American magazine. As it was mainly composed of chess-pieces I cannot reproduce it here. So I have made up my own version, a much better one!

GLC) IRELAND (JOHN

JIM

IVAN

WALT

ROD

ROD

July 29 Sun Nal Rafcam THE TROGLODYTES. Author should have spelled his name nal rafcam. A good book for quotes:

- (1) The log keeper poured over his books every hour or so. /Poor devil — kidney trouble!/
(2)she sank. Oblivious to view. /Mrs O'Blivious?/
(3) Astonishment was shown upon the faces of each member of the crew as he came into contact with the unalignable environs about them. /With several faces each it was no wonder they couldn't align the environs./
(4)the forecourt of a very portentous looking atrium. /An ingenious portmanteau word: portentous + pretentious./
(5)foistering a giant wind tunnel project on his government. /Another./
(6) The satellite which caroused around the world..... /With aeronautics on board./
(7) He slipped misadventurously and tumbled on the pavement.
(8) The German had notated a belief that the.....
(9) Any perpeteia at this stage would spell disaster, the human race was contending enough with other pandenrics without the loss of its "guardian."
(10) "Something of a very strange nature seems to have occurred not far from here. I think you should see the phenomenon for yourself. I may be wrong in my estimation but I fancy it is imperative that someone in authority should pass some comment on it." /Considering this was spoken (On the phone) by a street-sweeper, it is just about perfect./

I do hope nal rafcam writes more stories!