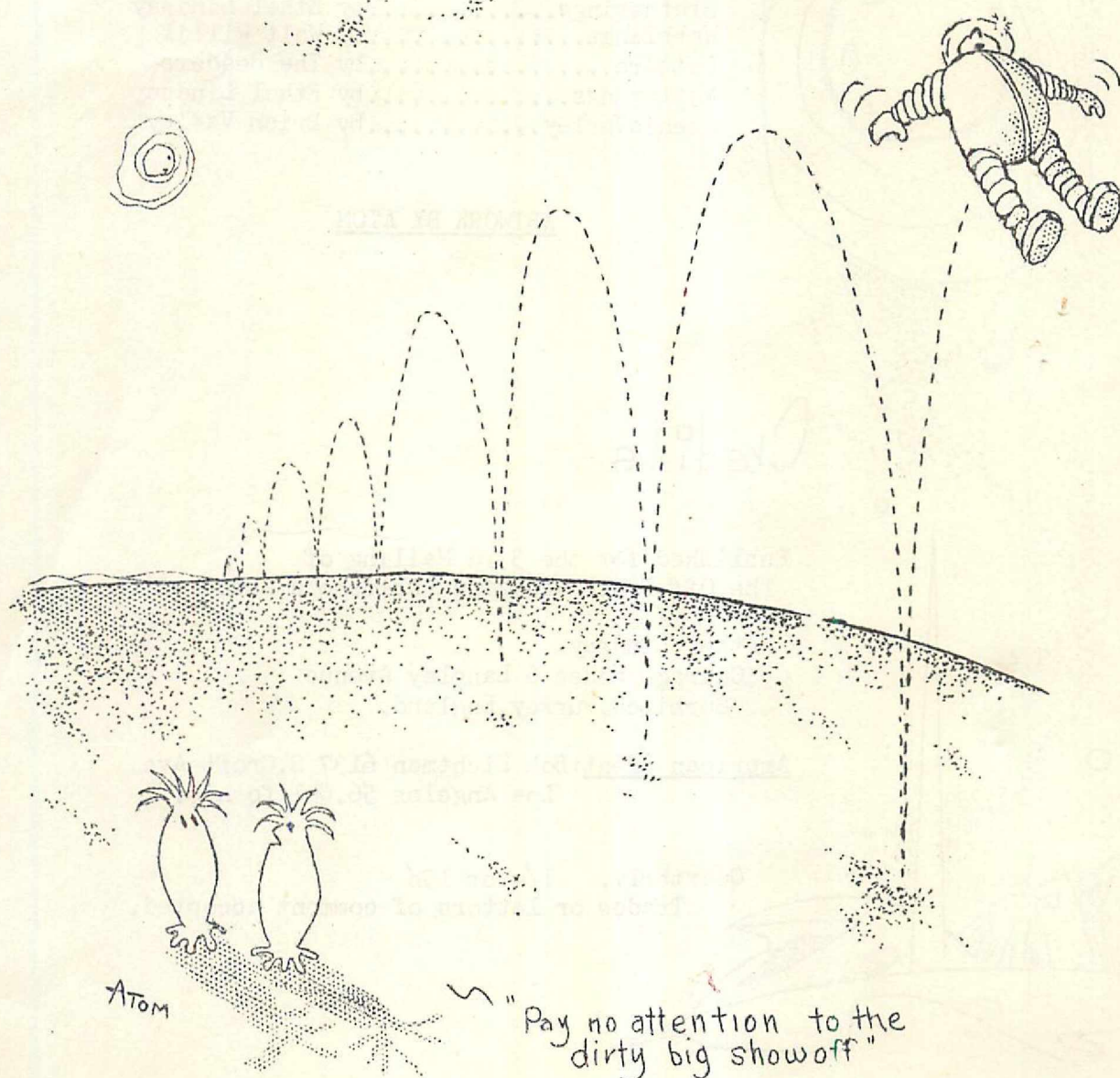


Scottie

29



Atom

"Pay no attention to the
dirty big showoff"

Oct. 10

Scottish

29

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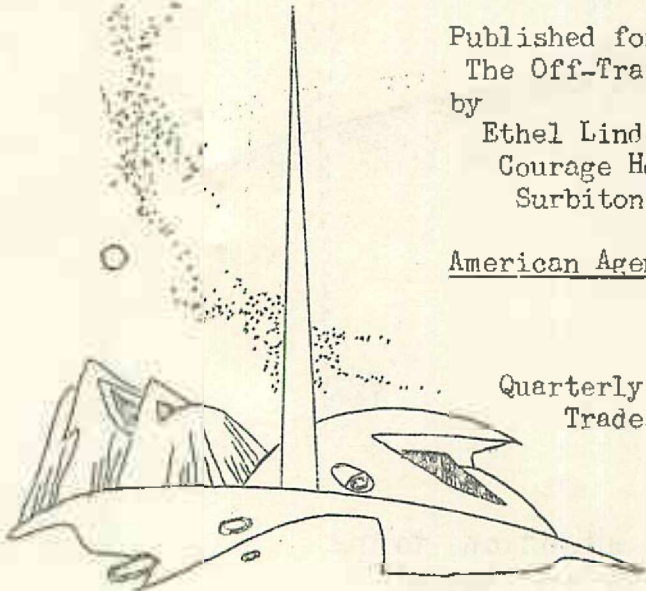
Credits

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On the Thirty Second Mailing:

Phenotype:No CCIV:Eneya: There is apparently, some difference between yourself and Ted White. While I am sorry when these things happen in fandom I cannot be surprised: fandom is no more perfect (and thus free from quarrels) than is anything else in this life. However, I do wish that this could be kept out of OMPA. Would I be correct in thinking you have been attending the equivalent of our evening classes when I read these very interesting notes on the course you took? This past winter the Varleys and myself have attended a course every Monday night; now that it is ending I find myself quite keen to start again next winter. It is hard to make up my mind which course to take as there are so many fascinating ones to choose from.

Amble:No 10:Mercer: Imagine calling MachiaVarley "it"! You do know he is bigger than you I hope? I agree with your judgement of THE WALL, in fact I would make it stronger. The series was spoilt by this great emphasis on getting the next writer into a hopeless predicament. It says a great deal for Bill Donaho's powers of organisation that he was able to gather the mess together and make it something coherent. I am so pleased at the biography you are embarked upon - I wish everyone in OMPA would have a stab at this.

The 2nd Saturday:No 2:Mercer: Thank you.

Outpost:No 2:Hunter: That is the idea Fred, get them on their toes, proper covers, good layout, this OMPA needs. Although there is considerable improvement all round this mailing. What a lovely description of Up-Helly-Aa....you will be having all the American fans clamouring to have the 1965 con in Lerwick instead of old London. Say! I wouldn't mind myself. How nice it is to read mailing comments written with zest and wit; aimed at the editor and yet readable by others. Keep this up and you will have my vote in the next Egoboo Poll. I am strongly reminded of the late and lamented OMPA member Nigel Lindsay as I read your zine. I have no higher praise to give.

A Folio of Philby:Baxter: I am struck first of all by the strong resemblance to the work of Rostler as I survey the figures on the cover. The Bestiary was fairly uninspired, the female heads at the end were best. Only my amateur

opinion mind! I am no art expert.

Erg:No 12:Jeeves: I was so pleased to see your tribute to Ron's unflappability whilst he was running the Harrogate con; I too was impressed by the way he avoided the staring eye and shaking hand evident generally in con committees. As the con reports have been so scarce I enjoyed the two you presented and only wished they had been longer. Betty Kujawa is a doll:why doesn't she write for us like this more often? It made me laugh out loud.

Ul:No 7:Metcalf:Somehow or another I do not believe in that book by Rich Brown that you recommend; but lend me your copy and I'll be convinced. Sounds like a good book to read, after all what is it that makes some people uninteresting? I do wish you'd write just a leetle something else with your mailing comments.

Pfoot:No 1:Spencer: Well: it is nice to know what has been keeping you away from us. I had begun to think you had run away from arguing with me about 'culture'. You wouldn't do that, would you?

Envoy:No 7:Schultz: I thought your story was very well written although the plot was so very slim as to be almost nonexistent. You had better retract about Brian Varleys marriage in a hurry. Not only is he married, but to a very definite personality named Frances. I was a witness at the marriage and can assure you - he is hung up all right! He calls me his second reserve—

Dark Star:No 1:Carr:Your lecture on grammar naturally aroused my interest; I trotted round with it to the Varleys. We checked and found that no great emphasis had been put upon the use of the semicolon in our schooling. Yet I left school at 14, Frances much later, and Brian had a grammar school education. So there isn't much to go on there. I do not mind this type of criticism though, in fact I welcome it. Will promise to be more careful.It would seem reasonable to figure that the earlier one leaves school the less grammar will have been absorbed. Like most of my bad mistakes, I only spotted the wrong spelling of Poul Anderson's name after it had been duplicated. Nice to see you in OMPA again; also to receive a double helping of mailing comments. I would trade your lady on the bacover for the whole of Rackamart.

Souffle:No 3:Baxter:Your article on the bone-pointing came in well after Bobbie's lot on Black Magic. My opinion: that the man dies of his own fear. Your opinions on the Egoboo Poll were very sensible, I agree with them all. Particularly that there are too many vague categories and that a place should be made for non-members contributions to be recognised.

Sally-Port:No 1:Cheslin:I have a couple of very dear friends who early in my publishing career determinedly presented me with a dictionary as a Christmas present. Have you any dear friends like that? If not, bedad, I'll buy you one myself.

Sally-Port:No 2:Cheslin:I really have no idea what killed the mammoths(two mmmms)but surely there are some explanations in the text books?

Envoy:No 6:Cheslin:Caves seem to be fascinating you a lot just now it seems; I assume you are dreaming of a nice large dry cave. Now, when I think of caves I always think of something small and wet. Your idea of immobilising the armies in your week of power by destroying all their paperwork is positively brilliant! I too thought TROUBLE WITH LICHEN disappointing; it stop-

ped where it should have started. About your book reviews: it is better to do only a few thoroughly than many in this bitty fashion. I was glad to read your con report, they have been very thin on the ground this year.

Mailing Comments:Linwood: I'd comments if I could find anything to comment upon, but this is too small for that. Still: I got the title of a book from it!

Vagary:No 16:Gray:I can see that your mailing comments have been written in a hurry and straight onto stencil. There is too much of it Bobbie; you go from one controversial statement to another with generalisations flying in all directions. The tone of writing is heavily biased with continually loaded statements. I thought you were more objective than this.."idlers and chisellers" .."a load of unwashed bums".."jumped up jerks". It strikes me you weren't thinking, merely emoting. First it is "The majority of CNDers are a load of etc." then a few sentences on it is a diatribe against nationalisation. I notice you carefully ignore the Electricity Board when you talk of nationalisation. Another statement of yours: "six years of Clem's lot" and we are "reaping what they sowed". We are reaping what they sowed after nearly ten years out of office? Cor! I would have said - my! but you have become very reactionary, only I'm not sure that it is so in the ordinary sense. It is more as if you were against everything, and could just as easily swivel round and argue from the opposite position - with equal heat! Now Bill' sober attitude in describing the theory of reincarnation is a welcome relief after all that steam you let off.

Morph:No 27:Roles:I was tickled by the page of FORGOTTEN LORE particularly with that recipe that started "Take a haggis". Just any old haggis you had in the cupboard I suppose..lovely! That Scottish was the correct usage for the people of Scotland was taught me in school from as far back as I can remember; and I went to school first over thirty years ago remember. It is not just a new fad. On the whole I think a people should be called by their own preference. It is just as easy to write Scots as Scotch surely? At the moment I must avert my eyes from that tempting book list of yours..going to need all my pennies this year.

Binary:No 2:Patrizio:I wonder how many fans have charites that they particularly uphold? I send all my stamps for instance, to the Muscular Dystrophy people, but the address was flung out by mistake a while back and I've a full envelope waiting to go. Another that I feel deserves support is the Danilo Dolci Fund. A very slim issue, more meat next time, huh?

Dolphin:No 2:Busby:Someone Over There sent me a book called THE DOCTOR BUSINESS all about the AMA in a very critical vein. I am halfway through and quite croggled at it all. I am too fly though to get myself into the position of appearing to tell Americans what kind of health service they should have. I figure it wouldn't be polite. I had to smile at your comment on Barrie. I ought to confess that it is only THE LITTLE MINISTER that I can take without wincing..some of his other books I could not re-read. You like embroidery! Why, so do I, and I find it difficult to put down once I start. Lately I have found two unusual designs. One tablecloth had mallard ducks-gorgeous colours. The other has the figures of Harlequin,Pantaloon,Clown and Columbine dancing around the edge. Enthralling work.

Mainiac:Main:I hope you soon get the time to add to your mailing comments. These were rather dull I'm afraid.

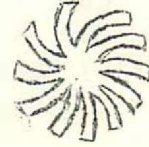
The Elizabeth St Burle:No 1:Kearney:It is no use telling me to stop watching GUNSMOKE and go and do something. I haven't time to watch television..too busy fanning. Now why should you spell it 'gotten'? That is an American spelling - it is no use writing a spiel against all things American when you then proceed to imitate them. It's not consistant. Glad to see you are keeping Ken Potter in OMPA..we'd miss him.

Sizar:No 7:Burn: You need a new stylus or more patience -that lettering! Now, throwing discretion to the winds---I cannot abide what you call poetry. To me it reads like someone trying to be clever. It is odd, I have decided to read a story by someone you know. I try to think how I would judge this story if I did not know you at all, and its no use, I cant!

Inertia:No 1:Fekete:Thank you for the bonus zine. I am glad you told us about yourself first, I do like to know at least the age and general appearance of my fellow Ompans. This is a nice thick offering and obviously well planned. Hope you get back into Ompa soon.

Offtrails:Whilst the Egoboo Poll makes very interesting and, to me, pleasing reading, I feel that some of the results are a bit peculiar. I cannot see why the method of counting the votes should be so complicated. Why not just have a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place and count up the votes given that way. Thus the person with the largest number of first votes is it. For categories I would like it pared down to: Best Ompazine, Best Writer, Best Mailing Comments, (to encourage the things) Best Cartoonist, Best Artist, Best non-member contributor.

Bill Donaho richly deserves his place at the top of the Poll.



Wetlands

by
Walt Willis

While Lee Hoffman is steaming on her midnight choo-choo through Alabama on her way to her first convention, I think maybe I should interrupt my own train of thought for a confession. This is a dark secret I have been keeping from fandom for many years, and I only make a clean breast of it now because it will be impossible for you to understand these memoirs without it. Not to make any bones about it, the skeleton in my closet is this. I am neat.

Neat by fannish standards, that is. By mundane standards I am no doubt slap-happy enough, but compared to Shelby Vick (who once lost his typer in his fan room) or Duggie Fisher (who mailed out his fanzine copy by copy whenever he happened to trip over a subscription) I am not a proper fan at all. If you haven't already ground this page under your heel in disgust, I'll explain how it takes me. I don't put the letters I receive in any of the recognised places like the floor or under the bed, I actually at some stage or other file them. Yes, in real manila folders with a file tag.

When I first started this addiction I put everything on the same file just as it came in. This was my own infallible invention to prevent letters being put on the wrong file, and it was convenient for passing comments on to contributors. But of course when I began to correspond with more people it became difficult to find previous correspondence, so I took the momentous step of opening special files for people like Lee Hoffman and Chuck Harris.

It was from this fatal decision that you are now suffering. For having followed Lee Hoffman halfway from Savannah to New Orleans, you are now

unceremoniously jerked back out of that timestream and deposited breathless in London, where another portentous event has just occurred.

Oh. No, it hasn't. The letter I was looking at was dated 16th January, 1951, but I now notice that my reply was dated January 1952 and in those days I was quicker to answer letters than that. We won't come to that portentous event for another four months, so back to Lee Hoffman and the Nolacon. Sorry about these dizzying transitions, but I am close to Ethel's deadline, and the explanation about the filing system will serve for alas too many discontinuities in the future.

During the next few weeks there trickled into Belfast a small stream of hectic airletters, letters and postcards from Lee in New Orleans (including one reading simply "MET TUCKER!") from which I gathered that Lee had had a wonderful time, and that the denouement of the Great Hoffman Hoax had been sensational. Though not perhaps as sensational as Lee had hoped, judging from one letter in which she repeated three times darkly "Fans are blabbermouths." Indeed by this time quite a few fans were party to the great secret, and were comparing notes. One was Ian McAulay, the original Ian McAulay that is, whose description of Lee as she was at that time was disarmingly frank compared to the delicate hints of older fans:

"When I got off the train at Savannah I nearly fainted. Boy what a surprise! A big fat girl came up to me and said, "Are you Ian McAulay?" Before we move into the stirring events of 1952, "The Year of Not Enough Time" as Lee called it, there are a couple of 1951 letters I can't throw away without some record. The first because it was written by a great sf writer from whom we won't hear again.

"Dear Walter,

Thanks for the Winter SLANT. C.L. Moore and I were delighted. I hastily enclose a buck for our subscription. The magazine is very refreshing, somehow. I'm not sure exactly why. Possibly it's its high literacy which compares so favorably to the majority of U.S. fan magazines, though there's more to it than that. Possibly the maturity of the humor (most of it, I qualify) gives SLANT its extremely pleasant air. At anyrate, there is no air of feverishly compensatory neuroticism, the sort of thing which makes many U.S. fan magazines rather embarrassing. I've always felt that writing should involve at least some amount of mental activity. This may prejudice me fatally. I'm sorry I didn't see your article on Van Vogt and Kafka. They do have something in common, certainly. But your statement that Kafka seems to be a s-f writer manque - couldn't you with equal justice say that most science-fiction writers are Kafkas manque? It rather turns, to my mind, on the definition of science fiction, a term for which I've found no satisfactory answer as yet. I'm working on it, though; wish me luck. I suspect the answer may turn upon method, as in the "pure" detective story, fathered by the Gothic, the detective was a symbol and not necessarily the protagonist; the criminal was the centre of the target, and the inductive process the method. In s-f, my present hypothesis is that the target needs better definition, and perhaps the method. Since I get confused quite easily, I admit that I may be wrong. But at least I know there is a target. This automatically puts me one up on Kafka. On the side of general popularization, I still say that what s-f needs is an H. Rider Haggard. Glad you like FAIRY CHESSMAN, and thanks for your kind words. I got the advance copies on the

book last week, but couldn't bear to re-read the story. I figure that a man's reach should exceed his grasp, and, whenever I pick up one of my published yarns, I realise that it certainly did.

Regards.

Henry Kuttner"

And the second because it contains a piece of information about a famous story which however slight would otherwise perish completely.

"Dear Walter,

I shall introduce my section on proauthorship very adroitly this time with a true story. Part of the story could have been told earlier, but the end has only just supplied itself. When I sent you a little story for SLANT some time ago it was only after two prolonged searches for the thing. After the first, I decided LOOK OUT, GRANDAD was lost for ever and sat down to write another short piece for you. The only idea that occurred to me was the not very new one about human beings refusing to follow out the commands of an electronic brain for their own good. Good enough for SLANT, I said blasphemously to myself. I got under way as follows, viz.

On Earth a town dies. Its name was Katahut.

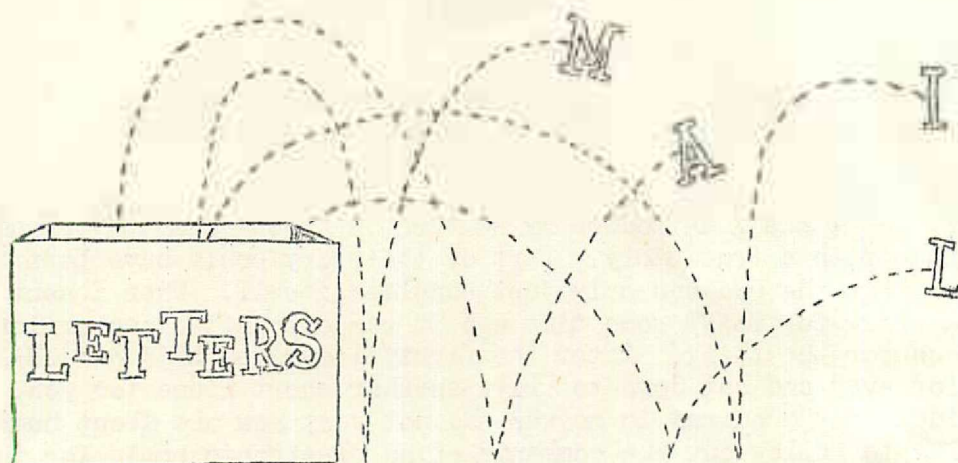
But Katahut was on Venus.

It was like Koko's story to the Mikado. When Economics Centre said "Let a thing be done", it was as good as done--practically, it was done. When EC said a town must die, the town was as good as dead--practically, it was dead--so why not say so?

This went on happily for a while. But when I reached the bottom of the second page, it became obvious that KATAHUT SAID NO was not, as I had intended, going to be finished on page three or four. So I put it aside and instituted another search for LOOK OUT, GRANDAD--this time successful. I sent it off, and that was that. Last week, however, I heard from my agent that he had just sold KATAHUT SAID NO and another story, THE BLISS OF SOLITUDE to Galaxy. So when you read KATAHUT in Galaxy, remember the first two pages were written for SLANT. That may enable you to add a few trenchant phrases to your comment about rejecting stories merely out of a high regard for H.L.Gold.

J.T.McIntosh."

W.A.Willis



James MacLean
Box 401
Anacortes.
Washington.
USA

"Brian Varley's "Scotland-for-ever Free Press report" was hilarious. That's the way it should be, all right! A few nits should be picked off it, tho, to wit: it's obvious that the Cymry, whom Brian was so thoughtless as to call 'Welsh' (a degraded, unintelligent epithet characteristic of its inventors, being derived from a Germanic word meaning 'furriner'), being of Celtic descent and one of the few other races naturally inclined towards true civilisation, would be assisted by their Scottish cousins (once the latter attained their rightful position of ascendancy) to regain their ancient independence -- in fact, they'd probably be assigned the thankless job of assisting and re-educating south-western England to a level of real civilisation and morality at which the English could for once be trusted to govern themselves and put an effective rein on their instinctive desire to lay waste all other cultures they contact. For such a monumental and urgent task, indeed, the help of the Cymry would be indispensable; it might even be necessary to call in teams of technical assistants from other races that approach true civilisation, such as the Twi, the Bushmen, etc. And while naturally a unified government of Breatunn (the new official spelling) under a House of the Common elected by the English, dealing with minor matters internal to England, in which the English could be educated towards responsible self-government, and a House of Natural Lords composed without discrimination of all properly validated clan chiefs in the entire island, by which foreign policy and all matters seriously affecting the national weal would be handled, would be necessary until the task of English re-education had been completed, Mac Varley should have emphasised -- in view of the apparently wide-spread misunderstanding of the true situation overseas -- that as nearly complete self-government as possible would be instituted and vigorously encouraged in England at the village and borough level, where the issues dealt with are within the comprehension and competence of the Englishman. In considering the make-up of a cabinet, Brian apparently has mistranslated the Gaelic term 'Ruadh' as 'sandy-haired' when the correct meaning is 'red-haired'. It is well-known that one of the



outstanding national characteristics of Alba Mhor (Great Scotland) is red-headedness, of which it possesses more per capita than any other nation in the world not excluding that other homw of the Gael, Eire, and a variety of ethnological and historical arguments make it apparent that the selection of red-haired Scots (excluding of course, bald Scots with sunburn) is the most practical guarantee of obtaining a true epitomy of the inimitable Scottish character. The mention a bit later of the unfortunate but necessart exclusion of members of the Siol Diarmaid or Clan Campbell from critical positions in the Government could also have been somewhat elaborated with a view to making the situation clearer to overseas readers. This is not inherently due to distrust or animosity felt towards this large and undeniably Scottish clan, since modern methods of education and ethical training (the irresponsible and uninformed minority of overseas opinion which uses the phrase 'Scotch brain-wash' for our recently developed educational techniques should be briskly ignored) insure that Campbells of the current generation are free of all (or almost all) traces of the unfortunate treacherousness, dishonosty, viciousness, antipatriotism, etx evinced by their ancestors; rather, it stems from the fact that the inclusion of members of the numerous, intelligent and capable MacDonald clan in all branches of the Government is unavoidable if the national interest and ancestral honor are to be best served, and tha maintainance budget for governmental offices will not bear the strain of over-time wages, special equipment, etc incurred in cleaning up the blood spattered on floors walls, ceilings, delicate office machinery, and important papers when by accident or in the course of official duties MacDonald meets Campbell. And it does seem rather poor taste for Mac Varley to omit mention of the mass singing of 'an t-Suaithneas Ban' in honor of the Royal Stu at Family which invariably preceds any renditions of Lallans songs in the House."

Seumas Mac Gille-Sheathain.

+++Mind you its not Mac Varley: he is as English as Toad-in-the-hole, and Lancashire Hotpot, but he'll be tickled to death at your letter. What are you doing in America man? You ought to be a member of the SFCoL! You would get on swell with Ian Peters...+++

Sharon Towle "Have just received my first SCOTTISHE, and enjoyed it
325 Great Mills Lane very much. I know almost nothing about Britain, especially present-day Britain, and think this zine should
Lexington Park, Md, USA teach me a lot about what it's like to live over there.
Not factual details, so much as the way British fen talk and think---which I think will tell me a lot more that matters than fact articles ever could. You might tell Walt Willis that I can't help thinking of England as a country of long dresses and longer engagements. I've never been over there, and as his comments show it's very easy to stereotype places you haven't seen."

+++Weeel..I'd better explain for a start that both Brian's article and the letter above are writton tongue in cheek. We don't really hate the English in fact by best friends are English. Still: you'd go a long way before you would meet something finer than a red-haired Scot!+++

Betty Kujawa "Delighted to hear that Brian will be doing a Common
2819 Caroline Market article. Please do thank him for me. As you know
South Bend 14 I have been waiting a LONG time for something on this
Indiana, USA order in a Brtizine. One thing I pray Brian will not
dwell too much on New Zealand butter..I mean taken in perspective, the future peace and prosperity and lack of war for all Western Europe surely is of far

greater importance to all the world than the loss of market for butter and dairy stuffs from New Zealand..eh? Like NZ butter can be sold elsewhere if we all put our minds to the problem whilst this great opportunity to have European solidarity and peace cant have such a simple solution. Again thanks deeply for giving me information on the facts of the National Health..like I said this is what I've been wanting to know..and its a blessing getting it right from the, you should excuse the expression, horses mouth. Am completely croggled that 50 per cent of the wealth of Britain is still owned by 2.5 per cent of the population! See????This info we dont have here."

+++If there is one type of person I like it is the type that in a discussion welcomes new facts with open arms. Nice to know that you are that type Betty!

Sid Birchby "I happened to read Bob Coulson's letter directly after
1 Gloucester Ave. the article about the clearing of the Highlands and what
Levenshulme nowadays one might call "the Scottish atrocities" You
Manchester 19 will remember that Bob's letter was an apologetic for
the de-tribalisation of Africa. He said, in effect, that it's a pity the
indigenous native cultures have to be broken up, but that modern world conditions practically demand it, if Africa is to be brought up to date and given better living conditions. I don't wish to poke fun at him, because on the whole I agree, but one could imagine the 18th century English intellectuals saying much the same about Scotland. In fact, I found myself reading 'Scotland' for 'Africa' throughout the letter. A friend of mine who is a Scot and former Moderator of the Church of Scotland in Nairobi, used to generate a certain amount of heat when tackled about this problem of de-tribalisation. He maintained that steam-rolling all the individuality out of a race is too big a price for progress. In his view an association of independant states was far preferable to a single super-state, and a lot less liable to fall apart from internal stress. Of course, this doesn't mean that certain primitive practices should be allowed to continue unchecked. What about female circumcision, for instance? Or-to start an argument-male circumcision!The trouble is that tribal customs are usually part of a unity, and if attacked at any point, the lot falls apart. For example, the Masai cattle-based society, which is incompatible with the land-erosion problem on the reserves. Force them to cull their herds and you are-in their eyes-stealing their wealth. Being traditionally a warrior tribe, they react by forming cattle-raiding gangs, and their neighbours and former slaves, the Kikuyu, become No 1 target. Since the Kikuyu will shortly have a large say in independant Kenya, they will no doubt do something about it. It could be another Congo."

+++This business of de-tribalisation and the clash of cultures is a vital one today. Yet most people act irritated at its mention, as if to say- well they will have to lump it. To my mind it ought not to be beyond the ingenuity of civilised man to find a way to introduce civilisation without completely destroying the original culture.+++

Ian Peters "I found Betty Kujawa's letter fascinating and quite
88 Newquay Rd. impressive. It is refreshing to find someone with the
Catford. courage to speak her mind while lacking(apparently, anyway) the facts to support her contentions. She is suffering from two main drawbacks. 1)The inability of people who have never known poverty to appreciate what it is to be poor. As a member of a profession I am quite comfortably off but after a "lower-middle-class" upbringing and a financially-tough university career I shall never be able to understand people who have enough money not to worry about it. But I digress 2)seemingly ignor-

ance of present-day Britain (and please Betty I beg you, read SCOT June 62, page 6, para 4.) Britain today is suffering from a condition known as THE AFFLUENT SOCIETY. Of course the poor are better off, the most depressed class being the Old Age Pensioners, a hangover from pre-Welfare state conditions. I am daily in all manner of homes, from slums to the very wealthy and am constantly amazed at the standard of living in the "poorer" class homes. So many cars exist on this little island that parking and driving are becoming a real problem. Slums are a hangover from the Industrial Revolution, we are now in the process of a Social Revolution, the slums are being broken up, children are growing up in new surroundings, thus we hope breaking the vicious circle. We are not "soaking the rich", incomes are at a higher rate than ever before and the buying power of money is also high. Money is more evenly distributed and few wealthy people are having to blow their brains out. The money taken in taxes is used to improve social services thus benefiting everyone. Besides, the poor also pay their share of taxes. I doubt that taxes have dissuaded men of ability from creating new industries. Businesses and buildings are springing up all around. Mrs Kujawa then moves onto nationalised industries and it is obvious how her mind is working. "Britain is tainted with Socialism." I personally feel that the Socialist Government did great harm to Britain, not least in that it made America suspicious of us. It beggared us financially to bring in a N.H.S. Instead of concentrating on recovery after the war, they insisted on ideological extravaganzas which could have been achieved at much less cost some years later. I was reared in a right wing atmosphere, but have gradually veered left until I now stand in the middle of the road. I accept the NHS as a very fine ideal though it suffers from growing pains. But no one in this country need beggar themselves to have an operation; and surely that is the ultimate aim of medicine that the finest treatment be available without regard to creed, colour, or monetary status. Why are the Yanks so keen to get us into the Common Market? I will tell you. They wish to remove Britain's independent voice from world affairs; separate us from the Commonwealth and release these markets to American business, as happened at Abadan. What is so good about the Federal form of government anyway? It is clumsy and difficult to work even in America where there are few historical or lingual barriers; it results in severe contrasts of justice and taxation and interferes with control by the ruling body. I bleed for Mrs Kujawa taking a cut in her personal income to further the C.M. I personally am contributing to the Anti-Common Market League and I can do no better than close with its slogan- COMMONWEALTH BEFORE COMMON MARKET."

+++ It has taken all my ingenuity to edit this down to a reasonable length. Please folks..have mercy on my page count. The more I read of reasons for not going into the C.M. the more I agree with Brian Varley when he said to me he would like to hear a few less negative arguments from either side. Like can Ian give us some reasons to show we will benefit from not joining?+++

Robert Coulson
Route 3
Wabash
Indiana, USA

"You make your hospital patients sound so healthy that I wonder what they're doing in hospital; they seem to be in better shape than I am. The AMA doesn't want socialised medicine in this country for the simple reason that today the doctors have a higher average income than any other professional group; the feeling is that they wouldn't be so well off if the government paid their salaries. On the other hand, there is the fact that every conscientious doctor deserves every penny he gets -- leaving aside any question about them being nature's noblemen and angels of mercy, the medical profession requires more -- and harder -- preparation than any other, and the performance of the job itself is harder than that of any other -- damned few lawyers get called out at 2:00AM. They deserve their pay. (The drawback being that there are fewer really dedicated doctors today). There is also the fact that even with the present high pay as an inducement, there is a shortage of doctors in this country. Without the big pay, it would be greater... Personally I think that the advantages of socialised medicine are probably about equal to the disadvantages, so I'm not violently against it -- but it does have disadvantages. I'm not sure that Varley really answered Betty K. I don't doubt for a minute that there are sound economic reasons for Britain to hesitate about joining the Common Market -- but on the other hand I don't doubt for a bit that there are an awful lot of British Citizens who oppose the joining for exactly the chauvinistic and isolationist reasons that Betty mentioned. If Britain doesn't join, I shall hope it is for the sound economic reasons, but if Betty wants to use the tv show she saw to prove that Britains are as "race-conscious" as us Hoosiers, I'll back up her right to do it."

+++I will leave it to Colin Freeman to answer your points about the tv show Betty saw..but..I will tackle your other point. Recently I was sent from the US a book called THE DOCTOR BUSINESS by Richard Carter (Doubleday & Co) The sender cheerfully informed me that I could use it as "ammunition" in my discussion with Betty. I would recommend it to anyone interested in the merits or otherwise of "socialised" or "organised" medicine, it made my hair stand on end at times. It says that it is "An analysis of how the policies and practices of the American Medical Association influence your doctor, your pocket-book, and your health." The point I would like to make is why do you have a doctor shortage? I am lending this book to Colin; anyone else wishing to borrow it, just let me know.

Alan Dodd
77 Stanstead Rd.
Hoddesdon,
Herts

"I thought Brian Aldiss' letter was one of the funniest I've ever read, a real gem -- how does he find time to write letters as well as telling the rest of America about the PRIMAL URGE of the Conservative British as witness his most recent book. Er -- well, it was most recent when I wrote this but he writes so darned fast that he's got about three going all the time on s&e"

Rick Sneary
2962 Santa Ana
South Gate
Calif

"From my own fund of knowledge I know a claymore doesn't have three edges, so it must be Brian's blinding skill that makes it possible for his satire to cut three ways at once..This is..well, I'm lost for words. But it is the best piece he has done yet, and if I was publishing I'd be sending along copies to Punch as agent. They might at least trade subs."

+++

Harry Warner
423 Summit Ave.
Hagerstown
Maryland USA

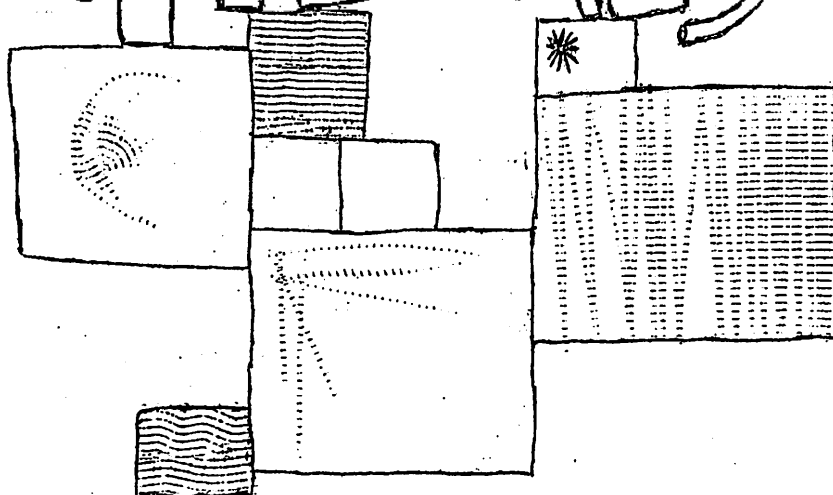
"A mild form of socialised medicine is stirring up a big fuss over here at present. The president wants it for the old folks and the physicians and hospitals are raising all kinds of a ruckus. Locally the fight against it was handicapped when a man burned to death in his bed at the local chronic disease hospital. After that it was not very wise to issue statements about how poor care the British patients get under their medical care program."

Colin Freeman
c/o Bennett
13 Westcliffe Grove
Harrogate, Yorks.

"I didn't exactly agree with some of the opinions of Ian Peters. His mouth is obviously bunged up with Scotch porridge oats that his tongue is permanently stuck in his cheek. Independence for Scotland! We'll fight to the last man. Anyway I'm more interested in the present than the past which somehow brings me to Betty K. again. Where on earth does she obtain her 'fants'? Her contention that the rich here have been bled dry and the proceeds given to the poor? This she claims has discouraged new industry that would otherwise have been employing these same poor. This is an absolute fallacy. Turn to the financial page of the Daily Paper any day of the week and glance at the company balance sheets. It is an unvarying story - "record profits"; "Increased dividend"; "bonus issue"; "record turnover." Tax is high but not too high. It is certainly nowhere near crippling, and there's nothing sick-looking about profits in this country. Inherited wealth is perhaps one group that could claim that it has been bled to death. Death duty is just about as high as possible and our Dukes and Lords etc. are having to throw open their ancestral homes to the common herd for half a crown a time in order to keep the old places going. I guess that an anti-socialist is not going to like this much on principle, but it hardly can be argued that such a system discourages new industry. This is still fundamentally a capitalistic society and people still get rich here. I guess we are just trying to extract the best from both worlds - Conservatism and Socialism. We make plenty mistakes but I don't think we are making such a bad job of it really. That little pat on the back sort of brings me to the section of Betty's letter where she accuses us of chauvinism and isolationism in our attitude to the Common Market. This is something that Americans simply don't understand. The man in the street knows little of the economic implications of the CM. and the politicians not much more. His antipathy is emotional - not financial. Perhaps he is even a little bit afraid. The three main members of the Market are France, Germany, and Italy. One's spectacles would have to be very rosy indeed to discover any strong bonds of friendship and trust between ourselves and any of these countries. Whether justified or not I think the average Englishman believes that any of these countries would trample on our faces if they would derive any benefit from so doing. We don't claim to be perfect, but we do insist that we are different from the continental. Just as a fan claims to be different from a mundane type. Supposing Betty went to live with a mundane family. Would she be able to convince them that fandom was the best way of life or would she perhaps be a little afraid that she might have to abandon her fanatic altogether in order to fit in with the new family?"

+++ And that does it. This is July 23rd and any letters coming in after this will just have to go into the file for next time round. My thanks to those who wrote. All comments are passed on to the contributors, so please don't forget to mention if you liked a piece. The mailing is also passed round to them, so that they may see the comments there also.+++

mattterings



This issue is being put on stencil in June. My intention is to have as much of my fanac ahead of schedule as possible before leaving for the States on August 20th. On my return there will be a trip report to write and I wish to leave the field clear for that.

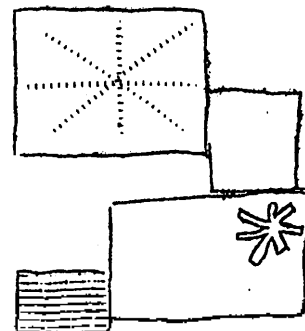
I will also have the December issue of SCOT finished before I go - this will be a "Christmas" issue; and the only thing holding up its completion is MachiVarley complaining bitterly that he can't think of a thing to write about Christmas.

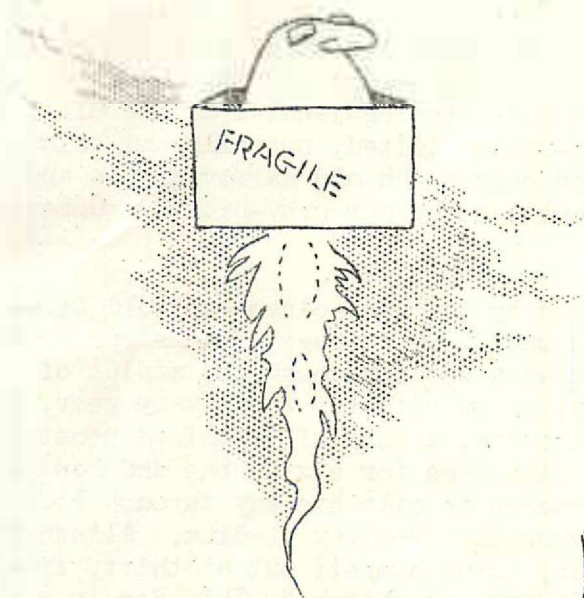
Fine thing!

I should be interested to hear the views of the readers of SCOT on which is the better way for a TAFF delegate to issue the trip report - in one whack as in COLONIAL EXCURSION - or, by instalments in a monthly fanzine as has been suggested. The first way is, of course, of more benefit to TAFF as proceeds have always gone to it. I intend following the majority opinion.

The prospect of visiting America has filled me with an itch of excitement. I have been happily head down over maps plotting the spots where US fandom dwells. I do not know if the US OMPA Members follow the British custom of an informal OMPA gathering at convention time; but I will try to meet them all and tell you what they are like on my return.

contd on last page.





MachiaVakley

Some while ago in this column I referred to an infernal machine, graced by the name of a solid fuel boiler which, until dismembered, was responsible for supplying hot water for all domestic purposes, including the bath. This passing mention brought forth one or two illuminating remarks from America on the lines that they understood the normal British method of taking a bath was in a tin-tub placed on the hearth and filled with buckets of water. One wonders how these ideas are formulated? Are they the result of travelling widely throughout the United Kingdom conducting a census of the ablutionary systems in private establishments, or maybe based on one or two films such as "Sons and Lovers" and "Love on the Dole" - these being the only two films I can call to mind wherein the bath-on-the-hearth gambit was introduced. Or could it be that Americans, as we are told the Russians do, base their picture of Britain on the collected works of Charles Dickens?

One writer went on to say that maybe, someday, we might even get around to central heating through the use of atomic energy. It may well amaze some of our American brothers to know that modern housing developments over here do incorporate central heating and any new house may have it installed provided, the occupiers are prepared to pay the obvious extra charges. Point is though that many don't because they don't see a real need for it. You see, we have

a very temperate climate in these islands. For example temperatures with more than five degrees of frost are rather rare even in the depth of winter. Against this I saw a report in the paper last winter that New York was suffering 40 degrees of frost (Fahrenheit that is) and if I lived there, then brother I'd want central heating! Man, that kind of weather is only fit for polar bears.

What kind of picture of us do the stay-at-home Americans have. Cloth-capped, belted, braced and hob-nail booted, clattering off down cobbled streets by gas and moonlight to tend to our spinning-jennies at the mill. Or, the upper crust, bowler-hatted, pin-stripe suited, umbrella and brief-case laden, the bleak ensemble enlivened only by an old Harrovian tie and a dew-fresh rose in buttonhole, picked doubtless by our grey-haired, gumbooted gardener.

This is, I suppose the picture created by too much cinema and old films televised, but does the view apply both ways? What image of American society is relayed to Britain, indeed to Europe as a whole through the medium of Hollywood? Ten-times divorced at forty, a new wife for Xmas every year, trips to Reno, out with the old and in with the new, a sort of legalised prostitution Children who's life consists of living with Mama for six months and Pop for the rest of the year. Pop of course ranches or oils his way through life in a fifty roomed mansion with a patio bigger than Wembley stadium. Alternatively, with similar cityfied accommodation, burns himself out at thirty five dreaming up horrible slogans about "Whiz washing whiter." This Pop is a fully fledged automated member of the Rat Race, obsessed by saluting flags and crumbling cookies, addicted to chattering "Yes" like a hysterical parrot whenever the inevitable J.B. (hard-faced, heavy-chapped tycoon type) hoves into sight.

Pop believes in several things, in a firmly established order. Of paramount importance is the Company. Well behind comes his collection of status symbols, then his wife who can also be a status symbol if the Company approves of her. Fourthly comes God as a sort of afterthought which comes usually after getting the sack and blind drunk in that order.

Mam, on the other hand, wears feathery hats on top of a feathery brain. She is addicted to short-sightedly running into fire-hydrants in her sixty foot long runabout and using the child-psychiatrist as a sort of highly paid baby-sitter as she fluctuates between the beauty parlour and bridge parties. She is also a marvellous cook given half a dozen cans and an opener.

These are the high-class types. The only alternative is to live in a seething tenement, going about at night in fear of your life from teenage gangsters and crooked union organisers. In these circumstances you live in utter squalor, your ears battered by the screaming, kicking fights of your happily married neighbours. Your nose is assailed by the stench of sweating human bodies, fat and partially covered by grey underwests, by rotting vegetable waste. Pop here gets beaten up regularly twice a week for some vague reason and pays through the nose for the privilege of flogging himself to death working at the docks. Mom is blowsy by thirty and finished by forty. Junior grows up with a flick-knife between his teeth and a bicycle chain wrapped round his fist and having reached the ripe old age of 15 practises with these instruments on his Pop.

This then is a cinematic picture of America, I don't believe it, indeed who does, but if Americans can believe of us what they see on their screens why does not the reverse apply? Don't the Americans, or some of them, think deeply enough to identify the difference between fact and cinematic fiction, or are they so self-centred that they cannot see beyond the boundaries of God's own country? Or, hopefully, does this apply only to a very few?

However what really worries me is that, as ghastly as is the view of America given by Hollywood and such writers as Schulberg, Miller, Mailer and Shaw, there is an even worse picture created by the news which filters through. A picture dominated by the John Birch Society and a hundred others like it. A picture of Americans building their fall-out shelters, buying rifles and pistols with which to massacre their neighbours should the H-bombs come blasting over. A picture which includes solid hard facts like the news item which says that bakery firms in the US had taken orders for nineteen million dollars worth of "survival" biscuits, especially manufactured for fall-out shelters.

This is the picture that really horrifies me in that, a nation which thinks it can preserve itself in an atomic war, is a nation that can talk itself into dropping the first bomb.

Brian Varley.

It is about time that I introduced Brian Varley properly to my SCOT readers. He has always been a keen reader of SF and was a member of Manchester's one time active SF club. He has in the past held official posts for fandom - work on the Fanzine SPACE TIMES, and Treasurer for the ManCon being two. He writes but only under coercion or wheedling. He is tall, has a laugh that is called by his friends "a dirty laugh" and has recently proved himself to have another talent - for public speaking. The theory held by his wife Frances and myself is that he has not only kissed the Blarney Stone but probably he also swallowed a chunk of it.

Ethel.

The majority of the letters which came in after the last issue, were of quite considerable length. This made up for the fact that they were less numerous. For this issue I have run off 140 copies. Fifty copies go to OMPA leaving me 90 copies to distribute. Many are to fellow fan editors in trade, some to people who have subscribed, and some to letter writers. To those of you who fall into none of these categories I regret the chopper awaits. I have cut down with this issue, and will do so again with the next. Many of you have received SCOT without asking for it, so I will take your continued silence to indicate that you do not wish to receive it. Mind you, I do not expect any busy fanned to write a letter of comment: I am very well satisfied with the trades I receive. I also know that the number of zines being published is high, and a letterhack has a busy time of it; so I do not mind if a letter only appears every second issue.

However: after having made all these excuses for you --- chop! chop!

The next issue has the loveliest ATOM cover I have ever seen..and that's saying something. There is also a Xmas article from Sid Birchby, and Walt has an enthralling instalment. Brian will produce a Xmas column "if it kills him" --- I quote!
Any typos, please pardon..I am not quite myself..by the time you read this I will be in the States..and at the moment due to excitement, I am not in a fit condition to concentrate! Like: hoots mon!

Ethel.