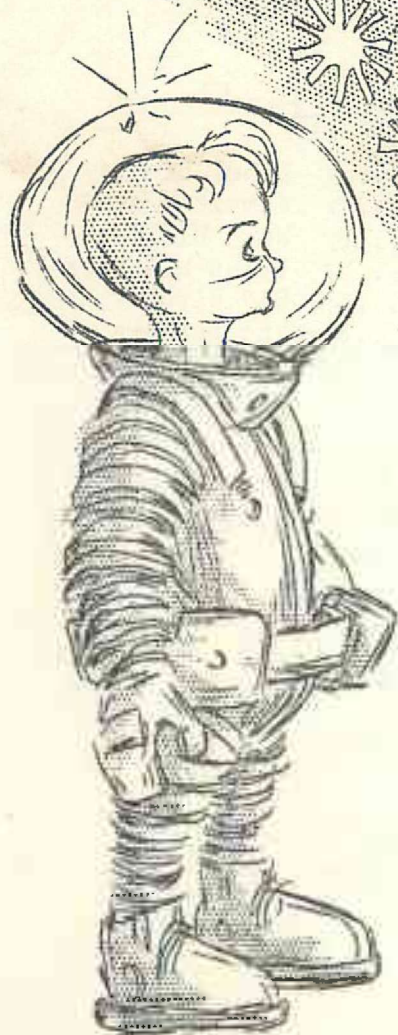
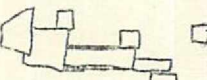


SCOTTISHE



Atom

SCOTTISHE 30

Credits 

All artwork by ATOM

Edited and produced by
Ethel Lindsay
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For the December 1962 Mailing of
The Off Trail Magazine Publishers
Association.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL
OUR READERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

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EDITORIAL

.....By.....ETHEL.....

It is now mid-November; before I left for the States I had quite a lot of this issue run off, so that all that remained for me to do was the letter column. I have deliberately not written any mailing comments as is my usual custom; for I am deliberately concentrating all my efforts on getting my trip report out quickly. Once this is done SCOTTISHE will return to normal, and HAVERINGS will start up again. I asked for opinions on how the trip report should be produced--and the majority vote was for a one-shot. It will be on sale in the usual way with proceeds to TAFF.

I do not want to anticipate my report...but I really must say that it was a wonderful and unforgettable experience; nor can I praise too highly the warm generosity of all my hosts.

Apart from working hard at the report, I've been having quite a time with mail which, since my return, has not merely doubled - but well-nigh trebled. I don't know what's got into you all--but bear with me if I owe you a letter--it's coming!

One of the best books I've read this year was ADVISE AND CONSENT by Allen Drury. Apart from the fact that it tells a very good story, it is painlessly educative about the American system of government. To anyone at all interested in politics - I highly recommend it. I was given some other political books by Anna & Len Moffatt--THE MAKING OF A PRESIDENT by TH White REPORT OF THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN by James Michener ROOSEVELT IN RETROSPECT by John Gunther, and these I have also thoroughly enjoyed. Americans surely expect a lot from their politicians; it makes me feel tired just to read the day's time table of any campaigning politician. Still: it makes fascinating reading, and I don't wonder that politics is one of the most favourite spectator sports.

In the last mailing Bill Donaho casually asked for information which called for some research. Being extremely busy at the time, I called for help in the general direction of Jimmie Groves, and not without results. Jimmie has a positive genius for providing answers when quickly needed. You will find the results of his research on the following page. Thanks, Jimmie!

The amount of money left in the British side of the TAFF treasury when handed over to me was - 1 shilling and fivepence. By dint of mentioning this at local fan gatherings; I have now raised it to 10 shillings. Money is acceptable to TAFF at all times, you need not wait until you are voting. Would anyone else like to give the Fund a further boost? Send it to me.....

Ethel

In VIPER 6 Bill Donaho asks for information on the effect of the NHS in Britain, specifically on the effect on birth and death rates and provision of birth control information. I hope the following figures and information fill the bill. One note of warning, statistics are notoriously easy to misinterpret so these should be considered as indication only.

Total number hospital beds per 1,000 head of population.

	USA	England & Wales	
1925	6.9		
1935	8.4		
1937		10.8	
1949	9.7	10.4	
1956	9.6	10.7	
1959		10.5	Source A

Health Indices:

Country	General Mortality(1)			%deaths under 5yrs			Diseases(2)	
	1931	1957	%D	1931	1957	%D	1957	%D
England/Wales	12.3	11.5	8	12.2	3.8	14	11.1	67
USA	11.1	9.6	1	13.5	7.9	7	8.3	62
Sweden	12.5	9.9	0	8.7	3.2	26	8.9	62
Canada	10.1	8.2	9	24.6	12.4	9	8.4	70

Notes:(1)Crude death rate per 1,000 population

(2)Deaths from selected infectious diseases per 100,000population

%D percentage decrease of 1957 on 1951

Source A

Birth rates for USA and UK rates per 1,000 head of population

	USA	UK
1920	23.7	23.1
1940	17.9	14.6
1950	23.6	16.2
1955	24.6	15.4
1957	25.0	16.5

Sources:

Source A:The Genesis of the NHS,Jefferies

SourceB:Statistical Abstract USA,1958

Source C:Annual Abstract 1961

Source B

Source C

On the birth control question - there is a Family Planning Service and a network of clinics dealing with this service. My information on this point comes from the following book -"Family needs and the Social Services".This concerns a survey of about 1,000 families in the Greater London area.The aim was to find out what use was made of the social services and what changes were needed.

page 46 Percentage of families with different numbers of dependant children who use the Family Planning Service.

one child	5%
two	10%
three	8%
four or more	19%

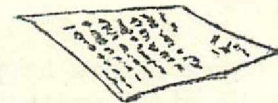
page 135-"Sixty-one of the mothers interviewed had used the service,8% of the sample. This service was one which had been used by rather more of the mothers of families at the top of the occupational scale than at the bottom. This is the kind of service which mothers need to seek for themselves if they wish to use it. The question:"Has there been a time when you needed help without getting it for some reason" produced a positive answer from two mothers only"

Jimmie Groves.

BY Walt Willis

WARBLING S

I REMEMBER ME...



When someone dismisses our hobby as worthless I think of Chuck Harris. Not just because he is one of the finest people I have met through it, but because his father once took me aside and thanked me for fandom.

Chuck contracted meningitis while serving as a nursing orderly in the Navy during the war and lost his hearing completely. Being stricken suddenly with deafness in adult life is a very different thing from growing up with it, and back in civilian life Chuck became a virtual hermit. Then he came into fandom through the International Science Fiction Correspondance Club and started writing letters, first to American fans and then to me. But he still never met anybody. When I was about to make my first trip to England he wrote and explained about his deafness and asked me not to call on him.

I accepted this at the time, but after I got back home I kept nudging him and the Epicentre towards one another, and on 16th January, 1952, Chuck wrote:

Remember I told you I'd written to Ken? Monday I had an answer from Vince. A damn nice answer too. Five pages mostly about duping. Vince asked me to go see him at the Epicentre (and Ken). Listen "...where else can you see them but at the Epicentre? We've been meaning to ask you around ever since Walt Willis gave us a glowing account of your letters((ta))along with the reason why you fight shy of the White Horse..." I shall go up on the 27th probably...I'm a bit scared of going..."

The historic visit actually did take place on the 27th, and next day Chuck reported to me:

CHUCK VISITS THE EPICENTRE. Last night!!! Hell, I just can't describe everything that happened. It was the most enjoyable night that I've had out for a long time. I think Vince and Ken are really terrific. Even Gold couldn't have had a better welcome. Almost all the time I was there Vince balanced his portable on his knee and provided a sort of running commentary.. Primarily I went to see the duplicators but we never got around to it—I'm going again Sunday week!!

And so it started, the nucleus of what came later to be known as Sixth Fandom, the closest and happiest gestalt ever formed in international fandom. It lasted until the Great Mackenzie War, but that was a long time in the future, and meanwhile for some of us fandom became in one sense of the hackneyed phrase a way of life. It was one that was to end in tragedy for Vince Clarke, but for Chuck I cannot think it brought anything but good. After visiting the Epicentre he went to the White Horse and then to Conventions lost his sensitivity about his deafness and became as social a person as anyone. I don't think he would have done all this so quickly and easily in any other group. Where else can you progress so circumspectly from letters to meetings: where else do people find it natural to converse by writing things down: and where else, let's face it, are people so sensitive towards one another?

Chuck is now happily married and, temporarily at least, has left fandom. But he still writes to me and he's still the same likeable character I was swapping promags with back in those early days. Here's some correspondence we had way back in late 1951 which shows his characteristic style:

Dear Walt,

What a bloody silly place to hide a spares list. I want those zines I have made tix after. Don't misunderstand this and send me a cruddy heap of Amaz and FA. Let us have no misunderstandings about this. Either send me those ASF I have listed or stand by to run out of fandom.

This was a footnote to a letter I wasn't to bother answering. I replied:

Dear Chuck,

So I'm not to answer your letter am I? No wonder, after you made such an exhibition of yourself, coming cringing and whining to me for magazines instead of asking for them forthrightly like a healthy clean living English lad. And what magazines! Look, Harris, you may think it's smart to follow the crowd like this, typical of you rabble-rousing agitators, but do you never think that I might welcome a spot of originality now and then. Where's your initiative (and don't say you never had one, we were too poor)? What's wrong with solid substantial mags like AMAZING and FA, which can be used for a variety of purposes about the house? But no! He must ask like everyone else for aSF and F&SF, just because everyone else is doing it these days. Don't you realise that AM and FA have the biggest circulations of any sf magazine? They MUST be good. The mere fact that the superficial observer notices FA good about AMAZ shouldn't put you off. Study them carefully, maybe they're in code. I have a beautiful stock of FA and AMAZ here and because of our beautiful friendship I'll let you have them for exactly the same price as those tiny little magazines you asked for.

These AMAZ and FA have been in my possession for a long time and I can recommend them as being thoroughly housetrained and free from eyetracks.

Chuck came back with:

Dear Walt,

Ongoshohboyoboy, do you really mean this about these Amazings? You would really let me have 'em? I did start to save these at one time but couldn't get enough to make it worth while. I've got a swell idea about these,—you know how Unger sells those complete sets of asf and Unk at such ridiculously high prices? Well, IF you had a COMPLETE set of Amz you could do the same. I've always tried to help you since you entered fandom -- with a little help you may go far -- and I am willing to stretch a point and let you have my Amz in exchange for those tiny ol' asf. Please don't thank me for this, -- we fen must stick together and try to help each other.

We were all mad for old Astoundings those days. Talking of which, I have a curiosity here, a letter from myself to Vince Clarke, signed with an assumed name, and the reason it came back into my possession was that he wrote to Chuck on the back of it and Chuck passed the conversation on to me. That was one of the nice things about our relationship. Every time Chuck went to the Epicentre he or Vince kept all the pieces of paper on which Vince had written down what he said to Chuck, and afterwards they mailed them on to me. It was like being there. Come to think of it, there's another little piece of fannish history buried in this letter, because it was sent inside a copy of Astounding. It was all in pencil and in crude capitals, and it said:

DEAR MR. CLARKE,

I AM ENCLOSING AN OLD 'PROZINE' FOR A ~~WARRIOR~~ SUB TO YOUR S.F.N.E.W.S. I HOP THIS IS AL RIGHT BECAUSE I HAVNT GOT ANY CURRENT ISSEWS JUST A LOT OF THESE OLD THINGS WHICH I FORGOT TO GIVE TO THE SAVAGE MEN LAST TIME.

FANCERELY

A.N.E.O'PHAN

P.S. I THOUGHT YOUR CONQUEST OF SPACE WAS VERY GOOD.

The enclosure was the April 1943 issue, which Vince needed for his collection. I had needed it for mine too; in fact some of you may remember that I made a sort of fannish Holy Ghraill out of it. But curiously by this time it was not the only wartime ASF I had missing, but the only one I had. Two people had sent me April 43's but I'd sold the rest of my collection to help the Fund Shelby Vick had started to bring me to the 1952 Chicon.

And that is really jumping ahead a bit. We should really go back as far as June 30th, 1951, when in the middle of one of his letters Shelby Vick embedded this casual query. "Any chance you might strike an oil well, and attend the Nolacon? I said, equally casually, no but if I did I would. Wherupon Shelby hit me with this----in a PS!

I'm instigating a contest. It's to find out who is the most popular foreign fan. There is, of course, a possibility that you will win. If you do, and if enough money is donated, you will be brought to the Nolacon, post paid...You might make sure you can come, in case everything works out.

Walt Willis

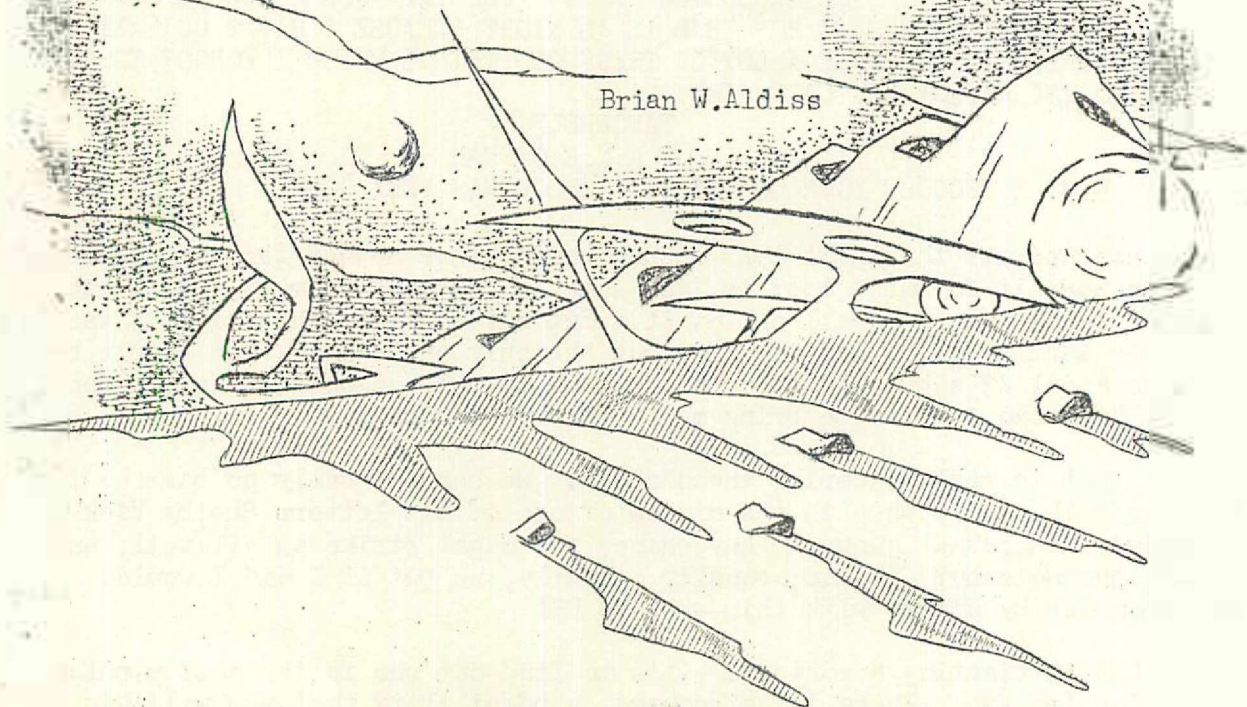
SF: A Supposition

Supposing that ninety percent of it
Could be described as trash.
Supposing this, being translated, means
That all the writing style is brash -
Clauses fleeting, luminosity
Of sentences less than their mass
And quite without escape felicity.

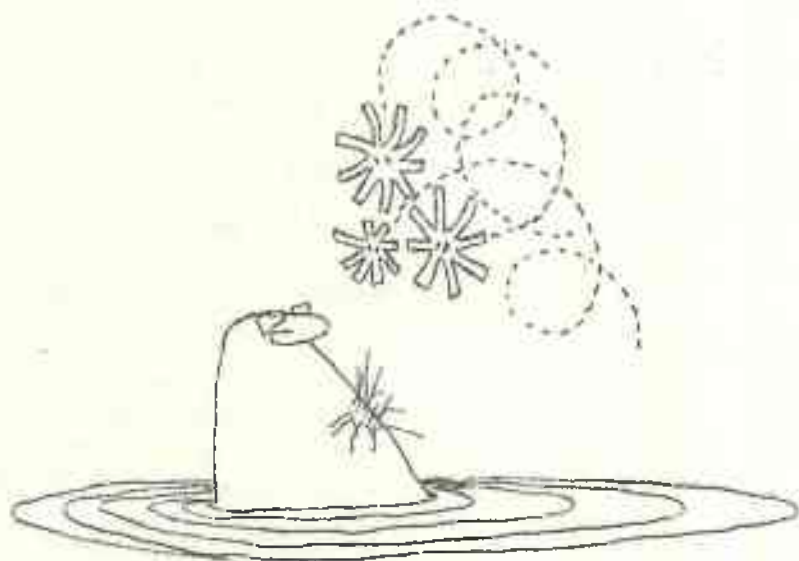
Supposing that furthermore the punchline takes
Precedent over sense;
That plots, being ill-woven, were
Out years ago; that our science
Throws scientists into a rage;
That melodrama taints our drama,
Guff our talk, and pulp our grandest page.

Suppose as well that all we think sublime
Is spoilt by wooden characters.
Suppose all this! Far-off, far-fetched,
SF is still what he prefers
Who needs to have a dream unfurled,
A hope, a leap into time's mists,
A world beyond the mundane world.

Brian W. Aldiss



machiaVarley



It was the evening of Christmas Day, the curtains were tight-drawn against the bleak night and a large fire crackled in the hearth. With chairs pushed back the men sat around the table and puffed contentedly upon their cigars. On the table lay the debris of a sizeable Christmas dinner. There was a lull in the conversation as the men carefully inspected the glowing tips of their cigars.

"Well," said Jack eventually, "it's been good to have a day off. I reckon I was beginning to feel the strain."

The others all looked at him; a telepath listening in would have been astounded at the similarity of their thoughts. Why in hell's name had he to bring up that subject, couldn't he leave it alone for just one day in the year. Still, the minds ran on, he was young, much younger than the rest of them and allowances had to be made, or at least they had to be today. Tomorrow, the thoughts bubbled on more happily, they might well turn that youthful inexperience to their own advantage.

Harold heaved himself out of his chair and strolled over to the sideboard. "I think we need a drink to wash the meal down, chaps. What'll it be Charles, a Burgandy?"

The tall man stretched out his legs and nodded. Harold passed him a glass and turned to the young man. "How about you Jack, rye, bourbon, or maybe a Coke?" he asked.

"No, make it a Scotch on the rocks." Harold turned to the sideboard and busied himself with the bottles. He turned again holding two glasses, one he gave to Jack and then walked across to the other side of the room. "Vodka for you Nicky?" The bald, stocky man took the glass without a word and emptied it swiftly.

Harold took back the glass and refilled it, then looked to the fifth member of the group. "Would you like anything," he said, gesturing at the array of bottles.

"To hell with him," said Jack, "who invited him to the dinner anyway, I didn't."

"I did though," said Nicky raising himself in his chair, "if you want to make anything of it."

The fifth man smiled and said in a soft voice, "Nothing for me, I have to draw my belt in. I'm slimming."

Harold shrugged and picked up his glass. He looked at all the bottles, a dozen bottles of spirits gleamed palely back at him. Behind them, darkly glowing, were the serried ranks of wine, the finest vintages from the vineyards of the world. He sighed regretfully and picked up a bottle of brown ale. "Well at least it's indigenous," he said as he filled his glass.

Charles sniffed appreciatively at his drink. "I propose a toast," he said, "would it be too cynical to suggest 'Peace On Earth'?"

"Waste of good wine" said the fifth man, "you must be practical these days." "Yes" said Jack, "not that oldy. It sounds like a dirty word to me, I even heard Lenny Bruce use it once. How about 'May The Best Man Win'?"

"I'll drink to that," said Nicky quickly. The fifth man nodded. The other two looked at each other, then reluctantly raised their glasses. "May The Best Man Win." they all chorused.

The clock over the fireplace gave a warning click, then started to chime. Twelve o'clock and Christmas was over for another year. One by one the men filed out of the room, down a passageway and, as they went, gradually their faces altered. The twinkle in the eyes disappeared, slowly the corners of the mouths hardened, lines of tension started to appear. They turned into another room, bigger, colder, brilliantly lit with harsh white light. In the centre was a small table with chairs around it. The men took their places at the table.

"How stands the game?" asked Jack

"Well" said Harold, "Charles took a dip in the Community Chest and got a bit of help. Nicky bought Cuba but couldn't afford to build on it. Jack threw a ten and nearly got 'GO'. Then it was my turn and I landed in Washington."

"That makes it your turn Mao" said Nicky, turning to the fifth man, "all you need is a six and you'll land in India."

And so the players hunched up in their chairs and bent their heads over the Monopoly board.

All the spectators could do was watch, and hope they'd still be playing next Christmas.

Brian Varley.



SID BIRCHBY

In the sleepy old village of Crumbleton, in Warwickshire, England, a new and significant revolution is taking place, fraught with significance for this nuclear age. Our special reporter brings you an on-the-spot investigation of a trend that promises to bring new hope to millions and there may even be money in it, too.

Neddy Bodger, craftsman of the old school and village layabout, spat shyly onto my shoe when I stopped him on the street to quiz him on the movement that is sweeping across the country like, as he put it quaintly, 'a dose of salts'.

What does it mean, I asked him, to the ordinary man and woman? How does the new Changed Bodger infuse this new spirit into his daily work? What of true British craftsmanship in the new age?

He told me of the housewife waiting for a plumbing repair to be done. Once she would have been told that he would call next day. And the man with blue flashes coming out of his TV set...no longer is he told that nothing can be done till next Thursday.

"That's all changed now," says Neddy. "We've got this 4-minute missile warning system in operation now, so I don't make no more rash promises to customers. If a job's liable to take more than 4 minutes, it don't get done at all, never mind next Thursday. Stands to reason, don't it?"

Alert to the glowing implications of the Crumbleton experiment, social engineers up and down the land are now readying themselves to adapt its fundamental message to a nationwide project with deadline December 25th! Code-named 'Operation God-Rest-Ye', this is nothing less than a full scale campaign embracing every advertising medium including Old Moore with the object of rallying the entire country to the Four Minute Christmas.

Spearheading the campaign with his 50-mega-print booster leaflet, at least one of which will find its way into the most significant section of each household, public-relations consultant Phineas T. Barker crisply summarised the main objectives of this new movement which is sweeping the country like, as he wittily put it 'a dose o' salts.'

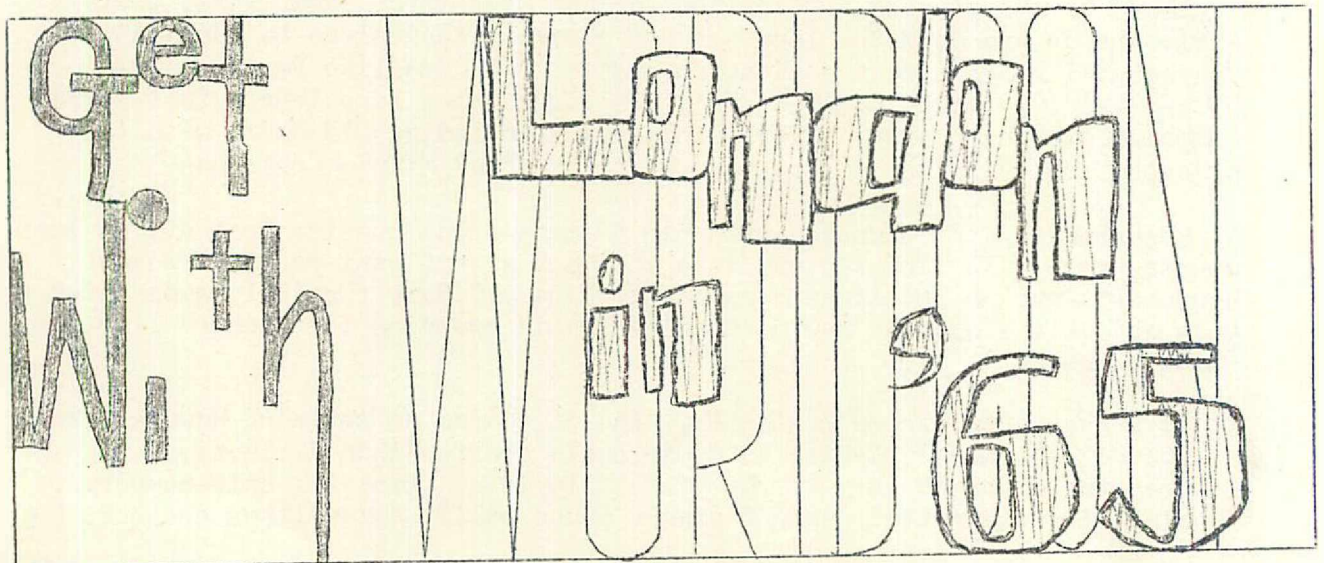
1. No TV shows to exceed 4 minutes. And of course no serials. However, to protect sponsors' rights, no commercials shorter than 4 minutes.
2. Beer to be served only by the pint. This is no time for half-measures.
3. King-size cigarettes, long-distance phone calls, and waltzes are out.

4. One-can turkey dinners, the quick-step, and zip-fastening trousers-flies are in.
5. No greetings cards. They may never get there.
6. Give presents for posterity; Flint axes, rubbing-sticks, disembowelling knives, all make acceptable presents.
7. Carol-singers to sing only one chorus and the refrain, then knock at the door and wait for the fall-out.
8. Do not not-open till December 25th: you may not feel like doing so by then.
9. Mix your wassail-bowl a little at a time.
10. Four minutes allows ample time for wishing all your family circle a Merry Christmas. At the same time, give them their New Year greetings, in case there isn't one later.

Claims Barker, in a voice throbbing with emotion: "If this campaign lights a fire in the hearts of our nation, and chiefly makes lots of money for me and my sponsors, we plan to follow up with a big Scottish appeal for Instant Hogmany. This I feel will be a great success. Already keen first-footers are conditioned to knocking back their whisky as fast as possible between midnight and the time when they pass out cold, so that I can predict a warm reception for our two new time-savers, the Capsule Bagpipe and the Haggisburger."

And the future? Competent foreign observers are already evaluating the data now accumulating from such pilot schemes as these, in the firm belief that there is a message here for the whole world. Already there is talk in the map-rooms of Compressed Kazotskas and 4-minute Chinese egg-timers being launched from the Free World. In France and West Germany, a Smaulle de Gaulle and a Subtractanauer is being seriously discussed. For this is, let us not forget, One World and indivisible, at least for the moment, and what Crumbleton does today, the entire world does tomorrow.

Sid Birchby.



LETTERS



Ian Peters
88 Newquay Rd
Catford, London
SE6

"SCOTTISHE 29 left me with mixed feelings. I am distressed that people like Colin Freeman should have so missed the point of my article (merely the correction of various misconceptions) as to cackle on about

"Scottish Independence!" Rather I believe there is a case for some degree of regional autonomy in Scotland since the present administration has resulted in considerable depression of the Scottish economy, as compared with that of England. I would be more interested in Colin's opinion on the subject than in his archaic type humour. Actually, shame on me, I don't much care for porridge and when I do take it I prefer it with sugar. But his remarks on the E.C.M. are pithy and I am in complete agreement. I can vouch for the fact that the average Scotsman feels the same way as his "average Englishman." (Would it not be possible, Ethel, to register SCOTTISHE with the American authorities as an educational journal??) Colin's "average Englishman" God bless him, doesn't claim to be perfect (why didn't you underline that?) but does claim to be different from the continentals and presumably wants to be free to be different in his own way. This is an emotional aspect, as he admits and it is amusing to see the English (sic!) faced with a situation the Scots have endured for generations. I am fresh from a long and rather bitter argument with Jimmy Groves (who is not a bad bloke for an Englishman) on the Scottish question and it is just this emotional aspect that is difficult for another nationality to appreciate. I don't suppose it would matter economically if the whole of the Highlands were cleared and made into a National Park. But for Scottish interests to be constantly placed in an inferior position to her larger neighbours is, emotionally, a galling thing to a Scot. Even our name would be unmentioned if we left things to London--goods for export from Scotland are mostly marked "Made in Britain" those from England, "Made in England." No wonder other nations call us all Englishmen. I am an internationalist. I believe in the free admixture of races with as few barriers as possible but internationalism would be a pallid affair unless each nation retains its cultural heritage which makes it unique. I thoroughly endorse Sid's letter on that point. Even Englishmen are coming to realise this, as witness, the case in the papers last year when an Englishman refused to give his daughter permission to marry a Scot on the grounds that he was a foreigner and he did not believe in racial intermarriage. Let's see how the English like being ruled from Rome.

Your plea for less negative arguments against joining the E.C.M. I find difficult to understand. We don't gain much by not joining, we progress much as we are doing now. But note that trade with the Commonwealth is increasing at a higher rate than trade with Europe and it is Empire markets that will be hit by our joining. There is nothing negative about keeping food prices down—at least 5/- a head per week. No, Ethel and Brian, I don't think your comments is justified however elegant it may be dialectically. Yes I remember, Ethel, brevity, brevity."

+++Now if some of my other letter writers would take that hint..this column might be kept within practical proportions..there were seven pages from Betty Kujawa, and Don Geldart sent five..I suppose it's good practise in editing+++

Sid Birchby
1 Gloucester Ave
Levenshulme.
Manchester 19

"Regarding the Common Market argument which I see threatens to invade the pages of future Scots I think one thing to bear in mind is the extent to which this country has already had its fortunes swayed by international considerations for many

years past. Look, a friend of mine has connections with a firm that makes the papers that cigarettes are wrapped in. Nowadays, paper made mostly from Indian hemp. Before the war, mostly from..you'll never guess...imported Russian rope-soled cast off shoes. I kid you not. The outer papers, such as the linings from the tinfoil, are mostly Scandinavian wood-pulp in origin, and the cardboard packs probably Canadian. All this seems to mean that quite a few countries have had a hand in that packet of Woodbines you buy from er..the IMPERIAL Tobacco co.(I hope they do make Woodbines otherwise my argument is a bit weak, but you see what I mean) How can we retreat inside our Commonwealth without upsetting all out existing trade arrangements? What are the Russians doing with their old rope-soled sneakers these days, now that we no longer smoke them? Is it any wonder that Krushchev is bitter? Maybe he has to smoke them himself." +++I suspect you of trying to sneak anti-smoking propaganda into this magazine+++

Seth Johnson
339 Stiles St
Vaux Hall
New Jersey, USA

"I got the impression that Britons took their baths in portable tin baths from my British correspondants who mentioned it in passing. One of them lives in a house over 500 years old and even has to use toilets in back yard. I suppose the

thing is that most houses this side of the pond were built since 1850 and thus mostly contain plumbing and WCs. I just wonder if you have official figures on what percentage of the British public live in modern houses i.e. houses built since World War 1."

Sharon Towle
325 Great Mills Lane
Lexington Park
Md. USA

"Tell me—does the film SATURDAY NIGHT AND SUNDAY MORNING give a fairly accurate picture of British factory-worker's life? I'm not referring to actions of lead characters, but the way the people were dressed, the houses they lived in etc."

+++I did not see this film; but your question reflects the same thing as Seth's, namely that Americans have little knowledge of conditions here in the North. Oddly enough it is a thing that is beginning—at last—to worry Authority..the great gap between the two halves of our country. And when I say the North I do not mean only Scotland, but the North of England as well. Any Northerner reader like to comment upon it..THE GUARDIAN has been running a series of articles on this very subject.+++

Peter Mabey
54 Wolsey Rd
East Molesey
Surrey

"This is primarily an apology for not sending a LOC on HAVERINGS or SCOTTISHE, but keeping the BSFA library going doesn't leave much spare time. I've ordered a copy of NINE PLANETS for the library-dunno why Brian couldn't have suggested it a bit more

directly-after all I have been asking for suggestions for books we ought to have from any reader." See next letter...

Brian Aldiss
24 Marston St
Iffley Rd
Oxford

"The night has swallowed me - I'm up to here in work that I have brought upon myself, much of it not very remunerative. So you can reckon I speak to you through the dark, g~~a~~ssily. I meant to have written some time ago, making the usual jolly noises about glad to know

you're back, hope you had a good time, thanks for card. Awful errors of omission! It's not that one's sins catch up with one so much as that one cannot catch up with one's sins. Forgiveness begged - begged in fact in the dubious shape of a poem, which I tender for consideration for SCOTTISHE; though tender is hardly the right word because I should not be at all hurt if you did not want it. This tiny masterpiece is sent with regards and, of course, free -I'm not singing for my supper but for(as the title makes clear) my superstition. Don't write back! What I need most is to feel that someone owes me a letter instead of my usual vice, vice versa."

+++Which may mollify Peter, but letter-owing..you think you have troubles.How would you like to get 5 letters in one day, and when you say at the sight of them 'Jesus bids us shine!' you get for you sins, 6 letters the next day?+++

For the poem many thanks.

Joek Root
702 Ocean Front
Santa Monica.
Calif.USA

"Thanks for Scot-it's not sercon but it sure is fun.So far I've only read the mailing comments and the letters -the easiest bits - but its been a hard day, and I cant take anything stronger yet.Good heavens, does Aldiss pun like that when he talks too? Memo to Research:buy

him a drink in '65 and find out. Do you know if Rick has ever done any serious poetry? With his gift for putting words together, it ought to be quite something - have you ever seen a sentence that more perfectly conveys its meaning than "Sunsets are no less beautiful than they were, and more people have time to look"? I will happily take issue with you in answer to Buck: unless the people themselves are uniformly dull, each and every one of them, the culture that is the sum of them will be neither dull nor uniform. Can you picture(to paraphrase Mr Fry) acculturation happening to a fan?"

+++Well: doesn't a fan acquire the culture of fandom by contact?+++

Bob Tucker
Box 478
Heyworth
Illinois.USA

"SCOTTISHE the 29th arrove yesterday and my first guess was that you had hurried home and cranked out a new issue before you'd unpacked your bags. I ripped it from the envelope, eager to know your reactions to Chicago and the rest of the USA..but alas, this was

stencilled in June. Well, I'll wait impatiently for your report on things. "MachiaVarley" delighted me. The amount of misinformation and uninformation abroad in this land, concerning things British as well as the rest of the world, are enough to sadden a cat. Much of it originates with idiots and is circulated by still other idiots, and again much of it originates with calculating but intelligent villains who hope to trap the gullible. And they do.

Some of your published letters (written by intelligent persons) reveal how much misinformation they have absorbed in a lifetime. Of course our capitalistic institutions and persons use the British system(s) as a whipping boy, a horrible example and a purgatory. They feel they must defeat it if they can, or thoroughly blacken it if they cannot defeat it, because the introduction of any such similar system here will affect their pocketbook..and that can't be tolerated. The recent medical plan was a beautiful example. The proponents called it "prepaid medicine"(which it was not in the full and literal sense)while the opponents called it "socialized medicine"(which it was not in the full and literal sense) The thoughtful bystander could easily separate the men from the boys, and the heroes from the villains, by noting the tactics and scare-slogans used. Very few people stood their ground and thoughtfully explained one side or the other in unemotional language, giving needed information. Most of them tried to scare, to bully, to lie. Many Americans believe this and other misinformation because they are so naive as to believe in their newspapers and magazines. To this day our local paper prints atrocity stories concerning the British medical system, although the editor is an extremely intelligent man and knows better. Too, the paper delights in printing letters from readers who claim to know the "true facts" because they once visited London on a weekend tour. Bah. But Varley is right you know. We do live in tenements or in Reno. All of us. And I took a switch-blade away from my two-year-old just yesterday. It was fun meeting you."

+++And it was a pleasure and an honour meeting you. Only today, whilst I was doing a spot of tidying up..I filed away a large pile of letters of thanks from ex-patients of this NHS hospital where I work. Lots of the cataract operation patients-the first thing they do when they get their glasses..is write us a letter.+++

Wim Struyck
Willebrordusstr 33B
Rotterdam 11
Holland.

"Interesting was MachiaVarley. Lack of understanding between different people, yes, thats something giving a lot of headaches. But is it because of the Americans reading Dickens and the British seeing Hollywood pictures? Or is

there a real difference that we just can't understand. I've got to know a lot of Americans and I generally like them. I've got to know that Hollywood isn't America. But when I read my papers, say about race difficulties (just now more troubles in Oxford USA) or about their (exaggerated?) fear of Communism, their shelter-building, their religious sects, their KKK, I often ask myself, who are these people. Are they Americans just like the ones I know? Are they exceptions or are the fans?I correspond with the exceptions. I just cant combine the ones with the others. Somehow I dont understand America is spite of all my relations. And I think more of the same goes for the British. They have things I dont understand. And probably you could find such things among the Dutch. And I think this is natural. I sometimes cant understand other Dutch people. Can a man even understand a woman? I feel I'm getting on dangerous grounds. Time to stop."

+++I hope you are not expecting me to answer all these questions! One thing though..just try to realise the size of America..really think about it--that in itself explains a lot of things I think. Shamefacedly I must admit the most I know about Holland comes from reading I WILL MAINTAIN by Marjorie Bowen, it is however one of my favourite books.+++

Rolf Gindorf
Wolfrath/rhld
Hans-Bockler-Strasse 52
Germany

"Don't let it worry you that it took so long to figure out what face belonged to that hat which I left when I visited you. After all, it is a posh hat as you said yourself--and it's remarkable indeed that you did associate it with my face. As a matter of fact, I knew all along where that hat of mine must be. I discovered that something was missing half-way between London and Dover, if only by becoming aware of people not staring at me in wide-eyed horror. I grabbed at my head..my hat was gone all right. Now I should tell you that this was the thirteenth time I'd forgotten that thing since I let myself be talked into buying it, and the places where I had to retrieve it include the Deutsche Bank, the Embassy of the United Arab Republic, a butcher's shop, two reputed hotels and one or two other localities about which I'd rather not speak. So I was getting good and tired of the whole business anyway and decided right there that I was through with the darned thing. It could remain in your wardrobe as an exhibit, for the continual merriment of your visitors. The fannish thing to do I guess would be to set up some Award with my hat as a trophy. You can dispose of it in whatever way you think least dangerous. You'd better"
+++Come Easter,,I'll auction it for TAFF.....+++

Betty Kujawa
2819 Caroline
South Bend.
Indiana. USA

"Need I tell you how tickled I was by that last SCOT. I'll never be able to do it justice.Hoot mon and cheers galore to my friend Ian Peters for that Highland history report--you can tell him he'll get no gripes from me on this article

As you well know Mother and Aunts and Uncles and Grandfather Kennedy brain-washed me when it comes to Scotland,,and I almost stood at attention when reading this reply to Donaho...By now you've read of the defeat of the Medical bill--not only by the Republican side of the House. Recent polls show a sharp decline in general public enthusiasm for the Bill directly after JFK's big brassy Madison Square Garden tv show,,which must denote something of American's feelings on the subject.The Common Market:Brian gives a resume on France,Germany, and Italy..if you reread my remarks you'll see I was looking at the future..I feel that in the years before us they have a good chance to change and improve and it will be due in the main to the CM. I am taking the long-range view, and the general good of the entire world. The CM is going to really shake up British labor unions--the feather-bedding et al is gonna catch hell..this I am sure will color organised Labors arguments like wow. Your exports to the Commonwealth since 1954 have gone ~~wn~~ 49% to 36% of your total foreign trade. Your exports to Europe for the first time this year exceeded those of the Commonwealth group. "Britain needs a bigger more dynamic market than the Commonwealth, in which fewer than 20 million citizens have any real purchasing power. Australia has a population only a wee wee bit bigger than that of Paris and Rome combined. Mr Heath said.. "What we are dealing with is not tariffs or trade. We are dealing with fundamental human values They affect the future of millions of people here, in Europe, in the Commonwealth and right across the world." To a people who see the general good of socialised medicine I ask this--why cant you also see the common good of the CM, US of Europe wherein England will be as brothers with the European segment of mankind???? The France and Germany of today--are they all that distasteful? Brian is sorry that fumbings lost England her chance in post-war days to grasp the leadership of the European Community. In the concept I am envisioning thats something like Illinois aiming to 'lead' or to rule the rest of our states. You'd dig a kind of CM wherein England has the leadership all neatly

under her control Brian? That's kind of like the little acorn that the oak trees of desire-to-rule come from eventually I fear. In a United States set up we look at it a bit differently, far as I know neither Indiana or Ohio.. by gawd not even Texas wants to play the game only as long as he/she can be coach, referee, and star half-back. And its nice this way kids..honest. We ain't had a real war here among ourselves for 'bout a hundred years now. I greet Ohionans and Michiganders quite warmly.:I've had Georgians in for lunch—New Yorkers have slept in my home..true I did marry a Hoosier..I haven't heard of late of any Hoosiers wanting to tell the rest of the country how this and such must be done on any great scale,our rivalry here is consigned to the grid-iron on autumn saturday afternoons. Even our Texans are quite bearable now. My fears as to our atomic secrets being put at the disposal of those 6 non-atomic powers are about nil. Personally I suspect that we all know all about those 'secrets' in the first place. The idea of Greece,Spain and Portugal having inside info can hardly count if they were as Florida, Oregon, and Arizona..yes?~

+++I hope you will forgive me for almost slashing your seven page letter to bits, but this issue is already far bigger than I intended(a slim SCOT this time to let me get on with the trip report thought I..best laid schemes etc.) But I would plead with letter-writers to recall that SCOT is a 24 page zine and gets bigger over my dead(beat)body. I must make an effort to summarise another point that Betty makes. This was on the subject of the Newburgh Welfare reforms. She sent me a clipping which tells of a film shown on tv which purported to show a man who was unemployed and victimised by the withholding of welfare benefit. Later the man went to the City Council and confessed that he had been paid by the tv company to tell lies. He then went back again on tv and repudiated his statement to the City Council. Sounds like a real savoury character doesn't he? Though whether that proves that withholding benefit is a good thing..I dunno. However I had asked if there was any more news about Newburgh..and this is all I have received so far. and a final quote from Betty.."I got No idea how or where I could find out the actual veracity of that Lincoln quote..doubt if ANYONE could to the satisfaction of all..as is damn if I'd take just Sandburgs word on it..knowing his strong partisan feelings..no thankee." +++Now to wrestle with Don's 5 page effort!+++

Don Geldart
Sgts Mess
Intelligence Centre
Maresfield Park Camp
Nr Uckfield.Sussex

"I fail to see how anybody can be so adamantly against the CM as the anti-CM people are. The main arguments that I have heard are that we might lose some of our long held traditions; their argument is an emotional one. The cost of food may rise but it's my opinion that the

cost of living generally will fall. One example is cars. In Germany you can buy a Volkswagon for £300. A British Ford Anglia-without tax-costs £450. Entering the CM would give British industry a much needed kick in the pants. Perhaps if this happens then all our industries will not go the same way as our once great ship-building industry.One of the neations that we defeated during the last war, is catching up with us in ship-building by leaps and bounds, Japan has passed us by. Do I hear cries of 'cheap labour'? The majority of our out of work ship men would love to be in a cheap labour very nearly social paradise of the Japanese ship yards. With management relying upon past glory, and unions that have strikes over things that would be too ridiculous for ALICE THOUGH THE LOOKING GLASS, this once mightly industry has set an example which the rest of Britain seems bent of following into oblivion. The glorious Commonwealth to my mind isn't as great as some would

us believe. The Commonwealth is rapidly changing. A large part of Canadian industry is American owned. The Holden Car Company in Australia is a GMC subsidiary. Since gaining her independence India has built two large steel works; one was built by the Americans, the other by the Russians. There is a large dam being constructed in Kenya..by the Italians. This list could go on for pages but just these few items should show that the Commonwealth only turns to Britain when it wants to. Rightly too, for they are independent countries..but! neither should they expect us to put their case before the future of our own country"

+++There Don, I hope I have managed to do justice to the bulk of your letter, but brevity, dear boy, brevity..not only the soul of wit, but the best way to get over hard telling facts.+++

Harry Warner
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland
USA

"I can't think of any more extreme example of diligence and energy in fandom that you demonstrated by doing all this publishing ahead of time, before making the trip. I intend to be tense and apprehensive about

SCOT for the next six months because this is the 29th issue and it's the 30th issue that has been fatal to so many good fanzines, for some cause that nobody has been able to analyze. Your letter section is particularly good this time. SCOT has some wonderful ability to draw out deep thoughts from individuals who don't normally exhibit this side of their potentialities to fandom. Colin Freeman seems to take off a mask in his letter, for instance and where else can you find letters like those in this issue from such wise people as James MacLean and Ian Peters? I don't think my mental image of England conforms with any of those that frighten Brian Varley. The biggest influence on mine is probably British movies seen on television: their spectacular and fictional features tend to fade after a few months and remaining is the impression of a nation which lives much as people live in this country minus America's more violent modern features. More specifically, my imagination paints Britain today to me very much like my memory's picture of the United States of 1930 when I was a small boy and still hadn't seen lots of the facets of American life and such nastiness as television in every home, drag-racing and jingoism as a way of life were unknown."

+++Wistfully I recall what a wonderful feeling of work accomplished I had before leaving for the USA. Now all I see is a formidable pile in front of me..but I will work clear yet! SCOT won't fold; but I do have to struggle hard to keep it within manageable proportions.+++

Robert Coulson
Route 3
Wabash,Indiana,USA

"..a point to make is that in Africa the native leaders, who are the spokesmen for the people most affected are quite in favor of "progress" and the destruction of so-called

"native culture" is going on just as determinedly--if not quite so efficiently--in the independent nations as it did in the colonies. I'm certainly not going to tell Nkrumah that I know more about what's best for his country than he does--even if I do."

+++This is because of the general assumption that the material standards of civilization can only be obtained by embracing its whole way of life. In others words--not only fling out the bathwater--but the baby as well!+++

Roy and Chrystal Tackett
915 Green Valley Rd,NW
Albuquerque
New Mexico. USA

"I must sincerely agree with Brian's remarks about the Americans and the impressions people from other countries conjure up. If I didn't live here and had only the movies and tv programs we see day in day out to

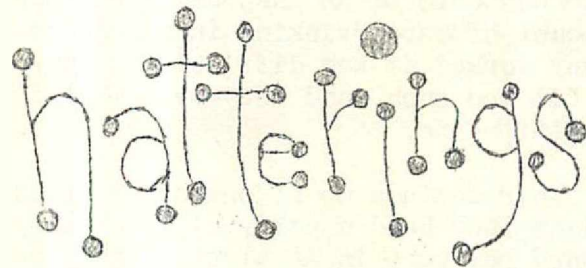
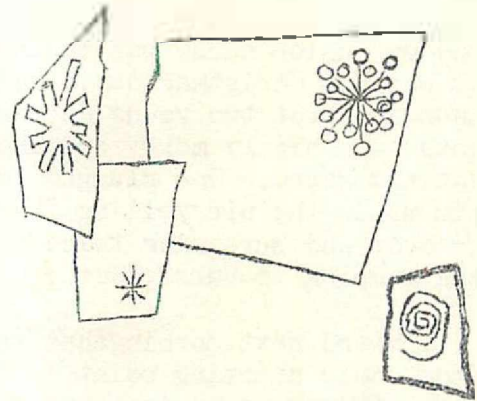
guide my opinions of the place I'd say it was rather a ridiculous mess. However, like with your country, there is no need for one to come up with these onesided views, if they pay attention to things other than movies and fable stories. Just watch the news pictures that come out and one can pretty well keep up with the progress and ways of dress, travel and etc....Chrystal."

"The military medical program which takes care of dependants as well as the serviceman is a form of socialized medicine. Actually what needs to be done is to give the doctors some competition instead of nationalising them. Problem is they all belong to the same club or union or whatever one wants to call the AMA. What we need is for some disgruntled doctors--say those who were able to afford only one new Cadillac this year--to pull out of the AMA and set up their own business organisation. Call it the NMA or some such. Then we could get some competition going. "Appendicitis? See Dr Jones for the finest in appendectomys. Remember, nobody will cut you up for less than Dr Jones." Actually the Doctors aren't so bad here. The big expense is the hospital. The docs earn their money for the most part, but something must be done about hospital expenses which have reached the point of being ridiculous."

Colin Freeman
Ward 3
Scotton Banks Hosp.
Ripley Rd
Knaresborough,Yorks

"Thanks a lot for sending me the book-THE DOCTOR BUSINESS. It was nice to read a lot of facts to support my own opinion on the subject. The book was obviously biased - probably justifiably so, but I would really now like to hear somebody arguing for the

other side. I didn't find Betty Kujawas' arguments too convincing. Thanks muchly for letting me read it. I was tempted to use it as a basis for an article and tie it up with the recent dispute in Canada - but I'm inclined to agree with your point of view that we'd be at a distinct disadvantage arguing with the Americans and Canadians about their own country. Although I'm sure that the NHS is just great for England, I'm not too keen on sticking my nose in US affairs where they really don't concern us.+++ Considering the amount of discussion there has been in this zine on this very point, it is amazing the number of letter-writers who still persist in using the word England when they mean Britain. But to return to the subject..in her letter Betty mentions a book called "Socialized Medicine in England and Wales" by A.Lindsey. When she quotes from this..as she promises to do..it may then be legitimate to quote from THE DOCTOR BUSINESS. I think I have proved to my own satisfaction that we can argue on these points without acrimony. In fact Betty also said in this letter that "hope SCOT readers aren't seeing Colin Freeman and Betty at loggerheads in 'real life'--I mean via our tapes etc we are the best of pals and I adore him passionately!" I have quoted this because I want readers to understand that the letter column is open to as free argument as possible-but personal acrimony is not welcome. I mean- I can write that I think Colin's article on the NHS in the latest PANIC BUTTON was misplaced humour and a poor show without implying that I think he is an idiot. I don't..and whilst I cannot say I adore him passionately(after all Betty is safely married) I can say that he brightens my fanzine reading considerably. And that, dear friends, is the end of this column for this time round!



Christmas in Hospital

Nowhere is Christmas celebrated more enthusiastically than in hospital. The staff embark upon its preparations with a crusading zeal; the idea that one must 'make up' for the patient's loss of Christmas at home is seen in the light of so fierce a duty and dedication that many nurses who are only part-time will apologise for having to be with their families. It is a tradition -hard of dying- that all full time staff expect no off-duty that day.

My first Christmas was spent in the Children's ward which had an enormous tree that took the Staff Nurse days to decorate. Sister affected to be annoyed by its presence..interfering with the serious work of the ward..but I noticed that when the work was done she was not above standing proudly by it with some admiring visitor.

My first surprise on Christmas morning was that we all received the gift of a book from Sister; this was another tradition. There was the further welcome gift of 2/6d from a patient's Father. By the afternoon I had learnt that all ordinary hospital discipline fled after the patients had received their dinner(served by the surgeons with much sharpening of knives!) Going round the wards were carol-singers, and a party of senior nurses and doctors with short skits making fun of all those in authority. We juniors were told we might for an hour visit round the other wards; to our amazement we found nurses dancing in the male surgical ward to the music of a gramophone, we gladly joined in feeling as if it might be the end of the world!

The other clear recollection of Christmas that I have was of much later when I was a staff nurse on night duty. We had a two months old baby very ill and fretful who kept up a steady and piercing scream. I had tried my best to soothe him; yet in the end had been forced to sit in an armchair hushing him to sleep. This took ages and the work to be done was piling up--two am and my junior nurse was making swabs as for a wager--we were not thinking that it was now Christmas day. Suddenly there was a commotion along the corridor; then in burst two young doctors, one being pushed in a wheelchair by the other, both were highly merry and inebriated. "Merry Christmas!" they bellowed. We sat and gaped. One plunged forward, grabbed the baby from my arms and chucked him up in the air yelling "Lovely baby!" Immediately the baby was as wide awake as ever and screaming twice as hard. I gathered up my wits, grabbed him back and gasping to Nurse, "Get rid of them!" shut myself into the duty room.

I heard next morning that these doctors had left a trail of havoc behind them from their starting point in the Casualty department where they had tipped out the contents of an instrument cupboard. In those days there was always a fair amount of hard drinking in the doctor's home; knowing the long and hard hours they worked it was difficult for anyone to condemn them. Still: this was just a bit too much, and they were haled before the Medical Superintendent to pay a stiff fine.

This reminds me of one other classic spree indulged in by the doctors. One night they held a party at which they decided to play darts. They had no dart-board but were in an alcoholically carefree mood of improvisation. They drew a series of dart-boards on the oak panelling of their diningroom and used various instruments as darts! Practically all the panelling was ruined and had to be paid for by instalments from their salary.

When I left my training school I worked for a while among Tuberculosis patients. This was in the days before a cure was found so they were all reconciled to a long stay; and therefore determined to make the most of every party. With Christmas they really went to town. For weeks beforehand each ward saved towards their party. They were held on different days to enable as many as was possible to attend. The wards vied with each other in serving up impressive arrays of food and drink. I was acting as ^{Relief} Sister at that time so I was given an invitation from practically all the wards. This mounted up to a party every day for two weeks; I soon found that it palled, and grew heartily sick of the sight of roast turkey and the sound of ROLL OUT THE BARELL.

It was that Christmas that I remember coming on duty to one of the funniest sights I've ever seen. This was a ward of women who all lay face downwards in full length plaster casts in which they were supposed to stay immobilised. I found them all swinging their legs in the air in time to the music-as I looked down the ward all I could see was a forest of dancing legs. I had to burst out laughing, and they laughed and -dearie me - what a time I had getting that ward restored to order!

In the old days Christmas in hospital was definately mostly for the children. All the waiting lists were scrutinised for the poorest children to be brought in. Among those poor children it was the greatest treat in the world to be going into hospital at that time. There would be a tree: they would see Santa; there would be presents and lots of food to eat, and they would be the envy of

their school-mates. These children were poor all the year round, but every Christmas the bounty would flow.

Nowadays this is rarely necessary. In this area at all events one is hard put to it to find a 'poor' child. Where the shoe pinches now is among the old and our traditional party for children has been turned into an old folks treat. The old folks have always appreciated the Christmas stay in hospital. We knew when we went round their wards singing carols before breakfast that there would be scarcely a dry eye to see us. I can remember clearly the first time on a Christmas morning when I was moved to tears. An Aunt had given me a handbag, new and unused and asked me to pop it into someones stocking. I chose a woman of 70, rather sharp-tongued but kindly at heart. When I looked in the ward on Christmas morning I saw to my amazement that she was sitting in bed, clutching the bag to her, rocking backwards and forwards with tears streaming down her face. She was moaning.. "I can't remember when I last had a present." I had to leave the ward to master my own tears and to reflect how terrible it was to be lonely.

The most elaborate preparations for Christmas I've ever seen was when I first came down to London. In that hospital there was a great spirit of rivalry among the sisters to see who could have the most elaborate ward decorations. They must have spent pounds upon their projects to say nothing of hours of work. One ward was decorated as a Greek temple and had cardboard pillars all round the walls remarkable like marble. Another was an olde English garden with paper flowers everywhere. The one that struck me as most original was a ward which was divided into small rooms down either side of a main corridor. This became a street in Paris and each room was a different shop complete to the last illusion. Such a work....and it all came down again within two days. Frankly I thought they were all a bit daft!

Well: a happy Christmas in 1962 to you all - and may you never spend it in hospital, but if you do..don't expect it to be peaceful!

Ethel.

