Shangri-L'Affaires

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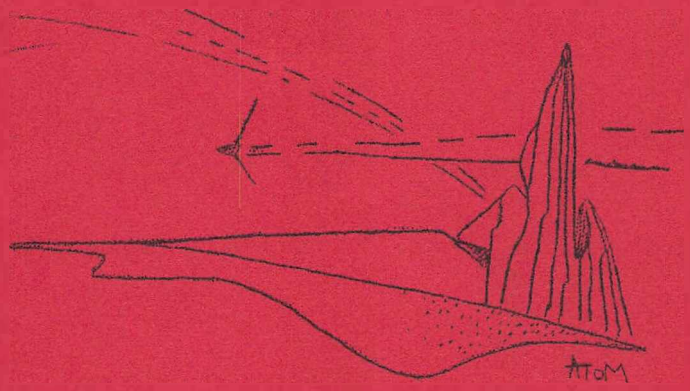

November-December 1963 No.67

the SHAGGY MAN

EDITORIAL COLUMN

PAST

With our noses flattened against the glass, Bill Blackbeard and I cupped our hands around our eyes and peered through the dusty panes of 637½ South Bixel. Now the home of the Specialized Watch Repair service, the place had once housed the LASFS clubroom. Long long ago, when F. Towner Laney walked among us.

A few weeks later -- all this took place last summer -- Gail Knuth and I drove past 2790 West Eighth street and she pointed out the General Adjustment Bureau building, a new concrete block structure that stands where, a few years ago, the Fan Hillton once stood.

Such places are part of the visible or semivisible traditions of the Society which one can view on a casual sightseeing tour of the Los Angeles area. There are numerous other ex-clubrooms and gathering-places of the LASFS to be seen here and there, if one troubles himself to look for them.

But one of the really important traditions of the LASFS is its official organ: Imagination!, Shangri-LA, Shangri-L'Affaires, or whatever title it goes by. In one form or another, this club publication dates back to 1937, when T. Bruce Yerke -- and, behind the scenes, Forrest J Ackerman and Morojo -- published the first 19-page hektographed issue of Imagination! As for Shangri-L'Affaires itself, I remember receiving the first issue of it I ever saw when I was stationed at Alamogordo (New Mexico) air base in the summer of 1942. It was issue #5, August 1942.

As Steve Tolliver observed in an editorial in Shangri-L'Affaires #64, March 1963, this fanzine is as old as some of the people who have edited it, and over the years "it has evolved a personality and a countenance of its own." That's why some of us in the LASFS damnwell didn't want to see Shaggy die when the former editors lost interest and enthusiasm and resigned en masse, an event which occurred at the LASFS meeting of 26 September 1963.

Nobody can blame Steve Tolliver, Al Lewis, Ron Ellik, and John and Bjo Trimble for getting tired of the job. Some of these people had been

connected with the publishing of this magazine almost continuously since it was revived at the end of 1958. (Al Lewis, in fact, edited an issue of Shangri-LA back in 1951.) Their services to the club magazine have been far above the call of duty. But even so, I hated to see the coup de grace administered to such a venerable, but still vital, institution as Shaggy merely because the editorial staff quit. Shaggy has had many editors in the past, and will have others in the future. It has outlasted feuds, wars, alarms, and sieges of gafia and mundac besetting its editors. After surmounting such obstacles to existence, it is obviously much too young and strong to die.

So here is Shangri-L'Affaires, back again. A new editor and staff, but the same old magazine. Shaggy extends cordial greetings to all its loyal readers and friends, new and old, as it begins a new (and, I hope, golden) era.

PRESENT

Of course there are a few changes in Shaggy's friendly and familiar countenance at this point, and a few more are contemplated for future issues. I have deliberately made the magazine look somewhat different to emphasize the fact that an Old Age is out and it's time to begin a New. I won't claim that the face-lifting process has actually improved the magazine, but I hope that it has at least made it look distinct from recent issues. Now you won't make the error of blaming Tolliver-Lewis-Ellik-Trimbles for what your shocked eyeballs behold.

Still, only people who are not familiar with Shaggy's past could imagine that it is suffering from a complete break with tradition. Nothing could be farther from the truth. In the years since 1937, when the LASFS (originally the LASFL) first began to publish a club organ, nearly all possible changes have occurred at one time or another -- even to the adoption of dummied righthand margins. The more Shaggy changes, the more it remains the same.

No radical shifts of policy ought to be feared, in any case. Shaggy has long been a popular fanzine, placing high on fan polls, a habit it fell into in the fabulous days of the Burbee editorship. On more than one occasion it has been nominated for a Hugo. I don't intend to spoil a winning combination, but I do intend to try to mould the magazine into a more distinctive club publication. I mean no disrespect to the former magazine, however. The old Shaggy was a fine magazine, right up through the latest issue of September 1963.

FUTURE

As he explained last issue, Ron Ellik doesn't want to write his "Squirrel Cage" column any more at present. I hope he can be persuaded to revive it eventually; when he does, Shaggy certainly wants to print the column again. Bjo tells me that she wants to continue "Fallen Angelenos" as her time allows, and if her time is very limited at present, there is still hope that she will write an occasional column.

Loyal readers will recall that at one time a special Doc Smith issue of Shaggy was planned and announced. The main feature of this issue was to be an index of the Lensman series compiled by Ron Ellik and Al Lewis. However, this index eventually became a major project of such magnitude that it could no longer be encompassed in a fanzine like this,

and Ron and Al tell me that arrangements are being made to publish the Lensman index elsewhere. Its loss to Shaggy immediately diminishes the importance of the Doc Smith issue, however, and if we can't offer Doc a fanzine worthy of dedicating to him we would rather not publish such an issue at all. Furthermore, only one of the several essays on Smith that were planned ever reached our files, so that it would be difficult to produce a Doc Smith issue without starting from scratch. The single essay that was written for the issue will appear in a forthcoming Shaggy but no Doc Smith issue is contemplated at present.

In this editorial I have been talking a lot about the history of Shangri-L'Affaires and its predecessors, and fans who are interested in fandom's past will be glad to hear that a forthcoming feature will at last describe in full detail the history of this official organ and the other publications issued by the LASFS over the past three decades. If tentative plans do not go awry, this will be the first of a series of historical studies of the LASFS in its various manifestations. The article and an index of LASFS publications will appear next issue.

The subscription department has been directed to act promptly (but fairly) in cutting off subscriptions upon expiration. Please renew when you are notified, or you may miss an issue. Shaggy is particularly desirous of contacting all interested fans in the southern California area and in reaching active fans everywhere. If you publish a fanzine, remember that we trade by arrangement. We also bestow free copies of this fanzine for letters of comment (published or not). All mail (except subscriptions in the Sterling area) should go to the editorial address.

THE BULLETIN BOARD

The poem in this issue by Edith Ogutsch appeared in an earlier version in the Denver Post Empire Magazine. Though never before published, Harry Warner's article "The Chimes at Midnight" was originally written for Skyhook. Ron Archer's illustration for Alexei Panshin's article is also from the Skyhook files.

While we have considerable material in the files or promised, we still need feature articles. Articles about science fiction are par-

(Concluded on page 22)

SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES, official organ of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy society: Paul Turner, director; Leland Sapiro, senior committeeman; Forrest J Ackerman, junior committeeman; Redd Boggs, secretary; Ed Baker, treasurer. Issue #67, November-December 1963. Published bimonthly, and sent free to all active members of the Society; available by subscription at the rate of five issues for $1, or 25¢ per single copy, from Redd Boggs, 270 South Bonnie Brae, Los Angeles, California, 90057. In Sterling areas please subscribe from Archie Mercer, 70 Worral road, Bristol 8, England. We exchange with other fanzines by arrangement and give free copies for letters of comment. Please send all contributions, letters, and exchange fanzines to the editorial address.

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THE CHIMES AT MIDNIGHT

BY HARRY WARNER JR

EVERYBODY AGREES that the unbroken tradition of science fiction publishing began in 1926 with the first issue of Amazing Stories. Hugo Gernsback has been lauded for his pioneering effort, which permanently founded the colony of science fiction magazines in the wilderness of the newsstands, where previous similar efforts had failed. The prozines of the late 1920s and early '30s have been collected so diligently that it is now almost impossible to purchase copies in good condition, unless a collector's library goes up for disposition. Every fan who began to read the prozines between 1926 and 1940 or thereabouts read those early issues of Amazing Stories, Air Wonder Stories, Science Wonder Stories, Wonder Stories, and Astounding Stories, either as they appeared at the newsstands or via the second-hand stores. As late as 1943, it was still possible to pick up prozines dated in the 1920s for a dime or so per copy in cities where no great accumulations of collectors existed.

Unfortunately, this golden dawn of the prozines is partially obscured by an ugly cloudbank. Nobody is willing to read the stories in those old magazines today. Most of today's foremost critics insist that their contents were unreadable, impossibly written, and useless for reprinting or anthologizing. It is difficult to sort out memories of fiction from the stories themselves without doing the drastic deed of rereading some of these old magazines. I have done so, picking at random two issues of Amazing dated in 1928 and two issues of Wonder Stories with 1933 dates. The Amazings came into my possession as back issues,

after I had been reading the prozines for years; the Wonders were among the very first prozines that I purchased from newsstands. This re-reading process was a bittersweet activity, often tedious, occasionally amusing, and frequently evocative of long-forgotten literary delights.

The general impression left upon me is that the magazines aren't quite as good as we once thought that they were, and that they aren't nearly as bad as today's critics insist.

I think that it would be possible to divide roughly any field of fiction into four categories. Working backward from the present, the first classification would be modern stories -- those that are being written today, or have been written recently enough to sound contemporary. Secondly, there are the stories that have become old-fashioned, because many of us can remember the long-ago days when they were written and can contrast the tastes of those days with today's preferences. In the third group would be the stories that appeared before most of us were born, removing us from the scene as observers of their day, and ranging all the way back in time of appearance until they merge with the fourth group, the classics written at the time when the field of fiction in question was just coming into existence.

Now, in the field of general novels, the best sellers, it is quite easy to see where the divisions tend to fall. Modern writing in today's sense begins to spring up in the 1930s, with a few privileged souls like Hemingway and Faulkner emerging as early as the 1920s as pioneers. Most fiction dating during the first 25 years of this century is in the old-fashioned category, like the novels of Arnold Bennett and Gene Stratton-Porter, whether it is as good as the former's or as bad as the latter's works. The third category starts near the end of the nineteenth century and moves backward in time nearly a hundred years; everything before that is original and trailblazing enough to go into the fourth category.

As we grow older, the popularity of these general novels undergoes strange shifts. There was a time not too long ago when Dickens was hopelessly old-fashioned Now he isn't; he is Victorian and quaint, no doubt, but not old-fashioned, and the critics reserve for The Old Wives' Tale the whiplash that once stung The Old Curiosity Shop. F. Scott Fitzgerald is just completing a transition from modern to old-fashioned writing; Sinclair Lewis moved into the old-fashioned group more than a decade ago. It is noteworthy that a novel's popularity shifts depend largely on the group it is in. A novel that has become old-fashioned almost never appears in a new edition; on the other hand, it is extremely fashionable to seize for revival upon works that have safely slipped into the third category. Witness, for instance, the great Melville and Dostoevski resurrections of recent years, and the one that is now beginning to brew around the sepulchre of George Moore. Works in the primitive category manage to keep about the same place in the scale of critical estimates decade after decade.

Science fiction as a popular literary field is so new that the four categories are jammed up pretty closely at present. It may be another half century before they spread out a bit. Modern science fiction goes back only to 1940 or a trifle later. The old-fashioned period runs from about 1920 to the start of world war 2. The safe third category doesn't reach backward in time much past Jules Verne. The primitives are so scarce that they hardly rate as a category for science fiction.

The crucial point about this labeling of periods is this: Like beauty, old-fashionedness is only in the eye of the beholder. And the main thing that is wrong with the stories in the first decade of the prozines is the fact that most of them have become old-fashioned. Admit this to yourself while reading them, and you'll enjoy most of them. Passages in them seem absurd because the author made a wrong guess about the next direction of progress for civilization. Englishmen seem to have been as frequently used as Russians when a villain or a fool was needed as a character, another annoying but essentially unimportant trait of old-fashionedness. Finally, the old-fashioned tendency is queerly amalgamated with a primitive, pioneering trend, because the short science fiction story was really being born as a literary form in the prozines of those years.

There were plenty of science fiction novels written during the first quarter of this century. But the problems of writing a short story with a sf theme and setting and making it a good short story are so great that they haven't been fully solved even today, when the sf fan accepts many things by a hint in a story, the things that once required paragraphs of explanation. Even Wells turned to pure fantasy or weird fiction for many of his short story themes. If Gernsback deserves pioneering credit, it belongs to him for his decision to devote his magazines principally to short stories and novelets at a time when all the science fiction classics were novels or even series of novels.

One more drawback to reading these old magazines lies in the fact that Gernsback wasn't really interested in the story. He apparently viewed his magazines as a way to sell more magazines to the same persons who bought Science and Invention, and some "stories" from the first years of Amazing are barely over the borderline from the speculative article. The most extreme example is probably Cecil B. White's "The Return of the Martians." The story is a description of the technical method used to contact Mars, which makes up the first chapter; the manner in which Mars replies to the contact, representing the second chapter; a third chapter in which Mars offers to give the hero a trip to the fourth planet; then the journey to that planet and a sightseeing tour. There is nothing bearing the faintest resemblance to plot, to character development, to conflict, or to a climax. The prose simply stops after the sightseeing. A half-hour's work would have turned the "story" into a long popular science magazine article on how Earth and Mars might establish communications and how a man from Earth might travel to Mars, in addition to some description of what he might see there.

More frankly presented as speculation were the series of "Baron Munchhausen's Scientific Adventures," by the editor himself. And to give the devil his due, Hugo combined knowledge of the obscurer scientific work of his day with his imagination to score a number of excellent guesses about what might come next. His "telegraphone" is a near-perfect description of a wire recorder. Presumably Gernsback had read somewhere about very early experiments with this system of recording. Even so, it was the 1930s before magnetic recording became practical, he was writing in late 1927 or early 1928, and he did a thorough thinking-out job on such matters as erasure, amplification, and even automatic starting devices.

It is customary to credit John W. Campbell with putting social significance into science fiction stories, starting about 1940. But these pioneering magazines contain a remarkable proportion of yarns that are

"Baron Munchhausen's Scientific Adventures," by Hugo Gernsback, Amazing Feb. 1928 through July 1928.
"Captive of the Crater," by D. D. Sharp, Wonder Stories, June 1933.
"The Final Triumph," by Nat Schachner, Wonder Stories, June 1933. ("The Revolt of the Scientists," part 3).
"Four Dimensional Robberies," by Bob Olsen (Alfred John Olsen Jr), Amazing, May 1928.
"The Individualists," by Laurence Manning, Wonder Stories, June 1933. ("The Man Who Awoke," part 4).
"The Master Ants," by Francis Flagg (George Henry Weiss), Amazing, May 1928.
"The Master Key," by Charles S. Wolfe, Amazing, April 1928.
"Men of the Dark Comet," by Festus Pragnell, Wonder Stories, June 1933.
"The Miracle of the Lily," by Clare Winger Harris, Amazing, April 1928.
"The Moon Tragedy," by Frank K. Kelly, Wonder Stories, October 1933.
"Murder on the Asteroid," by Eando Binder (Earl and Otto Binder), Wonder Stories, June 1933.
"The Return of the Martians," by Cecil B. White, Amazing, April 1928.
"The Yeast Men," by David H. Keller M.D., Amazing, April 1928.

concerned primarily or secondarily with the social structure of mankind. The authors did not give the impression of having gone through social upheaval themselves, and there is none of the first-hand descriptions of politics and big business that will be found in Heinlein's stories. Even so, the theme is there. Frank Kelly's "The Moon Tragedy" is filled with fine detail that you wouldn't think to find in a story of this era: bits of business which do not further the story but do put sharper focus on the world that the story depicts. His characters do not shake hands, because that custom is out of fashion, there is artificial illumination outdoors that eliminates night, characters drop without explanation by the author reference to such things as a "milcellion" whose nature becomes clear only much later.

Festus Pragnell's "Men of the Dark Comet" deals with a space captain who knows his own job in every detail but is "a dull, ignorant man" on "the growing authority of the scientific expert in every field of human endeavor" and "the modern tendency for popular governments to lose their power to industrial leaders." "The Final Triumph" is part of a series of connected stories by Nathan Schachner with the general title, "The Revolt of the Scientists." This is as socially significant as The Grapes of Wrath. The references to Technocracy cause the eyebrow to get more than the normal amount of exercise; however, it is an amazingly frank, realistic picture of 1933's depression troubles. There are good, detailed scenes of angry farmers, financial tycoons creating a plot, and what happens when all credit is suddenly cancelled, even a quotation from Stuart Chase. The science fiction element is scanty, merely a climactic transformation of gold into tin and the destruction of imprinted inks.

I suspect that more stories in these magazines are significant than a hasty reading might indicate. Frequently after 30 years it is almost impossible to be sure whether the author is serious or satirical. Occasionally a story reads too much like a parody to be a mere accident. Witness these quotes from "The Master Ants" by Francis Flagg: "What year

is this?' '2450,' she answered in perfect English.... 'Hum,' muttered the professor, making a quick mental calculation, 'Five hundred and twenty-five years in the future.'" The sense of parody is strengthened by the story's obvious patterning after "The Time Machine." It is a time travel story which opens with a prolog in which characters are identified by profession instead of names, exactly as in the case of the Wells novelet, followed by a brief speculation on the nature of time that is equally similar to the earlier story.

There can be no doubt about the Lewis Carrollian atmosphere in Laurence Manning's "The Individualists." The author's "The Man Who Awoke" should be reprinted immediately. In this section alone are many delightful things: The "cities" consisting of large machines surrounding the individual, one "city" to each individual; the mirror men, who are perfect and are surrounded by mirrors in order to augment perfection in the only logical manner; and dialog like this: "'Isn't it lucky that they want to destroy Hargry for the sake of public peace?' Bengue's eyes opened wide. 'What ancient nonsense is this! Of course they could not interfere with Hargry's personal liberty. Once started, where would such a principle stop?'"

On the other hand, it is undeniable that these early prozines contained some incredibly bad writing. Some stories sound like the things you find in first issues of fanzines. Even in context, this quotation from Clare Winger Harris' "The Miracle of the Lily" sounds just as bad: "'Great God, man, do you know what they are?' he screamed, shaking violently. 'No, I do not,' I replied quietly with an attempt at dignity I did not feel. 'Insect eggs!" he cried, and shuddering with terror, he made for the door." And here is a sample of the conversation between two individuals which will be found in "The Return of the Martians": "'I have here a translation of one of the volumes contained in the library and need the assistance of a psychologist and an astronomer to work out details in the apparatus described here and, afterwards, in the operation thereof."

The preoccupation of these older stories with descriptions of the props comes as a shock to the reader of today. I don't believe that it hurts the literary quality of these stories, and once the reader becomes accustomed to the methods of the writers, he doesn't mind it. The attention to exact detail in scientific instruments, procedures, and general surroundings is obviously the sheer delight in speculation that became possible with the creation of a pulp magazine market. It is not different from the manner in which the first photographers were content to make pictorial records of their surroundings, from the simple enjoyment of seeing familiar things reproduced on photographic paper. Later writers got away from the habit of describing everything in detail, just as photographers have concerned themselves more recently with eliminating unneeded detail to improve the total effect. Today's prolific authors of science fiction might find their output seriously curtailed if they took the trouble to think out their machines and methods after the fashion of the previous generation of dirty old pros. Eando Binder's "Murder on the Asteroid," for instance, contains in its very first paragraph an explanation of the reasons that the rocketship's temperature went much lower every time the airlock was used.

Baron Munchhausen is particularly scrupulous about full detail, even when it involves mere physical surroundings: "The room, which is about 150 feet in diameter, is about 60 feet high." Predictably "The

Return of the Martians" is jammed with the same sort of thing. The method of avoiding meteors has no part in the events that occur during the flight to Mars, but we are told about it in full: The pilot used "the objective of a huge refracting telescope.... The focal length of the lens, which was over eight feet in diameter, was about one hundred and twenty feet. Sixty feet away, over our apartment, was a plane mirror which reflected the converging beam back again to a point just ahead of the pilot, where another mirror reflected the beam down to the eyepiece." In "Men of the Dark Comet," I thought that I had spotted a lazy author. At one point, Pragnell mentions an instrument which shows the distance and direction of Earth's sun, without giving details. But a bit later in the story it bobs up again, this time fully explained as "using the shortest known rays of the sun, harder, that is, more penetrating, than even the gamma rays of radium, it always indicated the distance of that body."

Occasionally an entire story is devoted to the working out of a speculative situation. D. D. Sharp's "Captive of the Crater" and one of the Munchhausen adventures are concerned with falling all the way through an opening that extends completely through the moon. These two stories quite possibly provided the idea for Ross Rocklynne's "And Then There Was One," a later and much better yarn on a similar basic idea. "Four Dimensional Robberies" by Bob Olsen couldn't exist if it weren't for the speculation about a four-dimensional object's powers if utilized in our three-dimensional world. It is filled with hyper-space, hyper-forceps, and a hyper-cube. "The Master Key" by Charles S. Wolfe is science fiction only by courtesy. It is a brief locked room mystery in which an electromagnet is used to shoot the bolt. It is amusing to note that Hugo's artist dutifully pictured the climax of this story, giving away its ending to the reader the instant he opened to its first page.

It seems to me that the proportion of good stories to bad stories is just about the same in these early issues as it was in almost any later age of science fiction. I would estimate that one-fourth of the stories are definitely worth reading, a proportion that strikes me as still holding good for the prozine field as a whole. When we rave today about the almost uniform excellence of the contents of the Astoundings of the early 1940s we tend to forget the equally comprehensive illiteracy and trashiness that existed in the Ziff-Davis publications and several other prozines of the same time. And it is false reasoning to assume that the earliest prozines should have been uniformly excellent because competition was scarce and two or three magazines could choose the entire world's best science fiction. The quantity of science fiction that is produced changes with the size of the prozine market; when two dozen magazines are publishing science fiction, many more excellent writers turn out science fiction for precisely that reason.

The question of anthologizing and reprinting is more complex. I think there is a crying need for collections of short stories and novelets drawn solely from these earliest prozines. However, it is rarely advisable to mix stories from this period with stories published in the '40s and '50s. The jolt of transition is too great; chances of success are as slim as the rarity with which a compiler succeeds with an anthology that contains both science fiction and weird fiction. I have ignored the novel-length stories for the purposes of this article, simply because in the early days they were mostly reprints or translations from other languages. Most of the original novels that found their way into the prozines in those days became famous enough to go between hard covers many years ago.

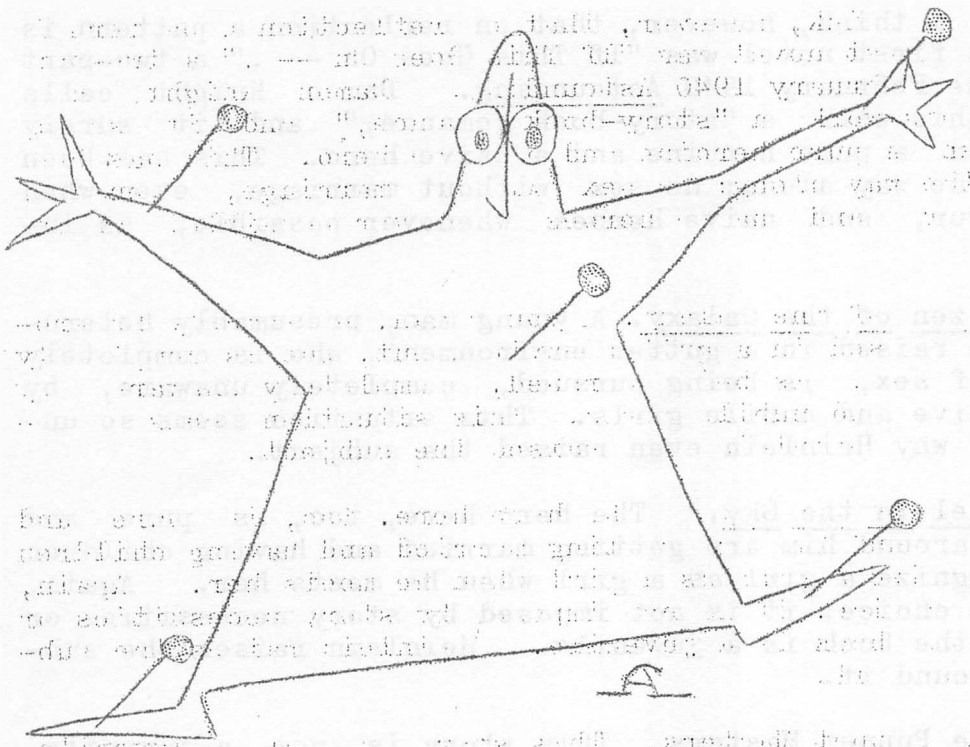
From the four issues that I dug out for re-reading, I can recommend several items. Dr David H. Keller's "The Yeast Men" has probably been reprinted in book form already, but should be kept in print somewhere as a delightful modern version of "The Gingerbread Boy" and several other childhood classics. The Manning and Schachner series already mentioned would need no apologies today for any reason.

"The Moon Tragedy" suffers a trifle from jingoism, but is otherwise a very interesting story. It must be almost unique in prozine history as a complete Greek tragedy. It is not difficult to find prozine stories that end tragically, but this novelet tells the reader from the very beginning that the characters will die violently, death hangs over almost every page, and some of the writing is curiously effective in context, although out of context there is nothing remarkable about the imagery: "A brief burst of white light blossomed like a hot unhealthy flower." "Hope burst and grew like a warm seed in his brain."

The elderly Falstaff was reminiscing with some old cronies when one of the most famous lines in Shakespeare occurred: "We have heard the chimes at midnight." I grant that there is nothing remarkable in the everyday sense about the sound of bells at the midnight hour, except for the effect they may have on men, when they are heard and when they ring 50 years later in the memory of the same men. Millions hear these bells nightly without listening, and hundreds of millions have failed to write a great line about these chimes. All of which does not detract from the overwhelming effect that the phrase represents for the play's spectators and readers, the same emotional impact that Falstaff as a character was intended to feel from the phrase.

I think that the first years of the prozines should mean for any reasonably mature reader approximately the same thing that the chimes at midnight meant to the Garter Inn crowd. Viewed in their proper perspective, they possess a definite significance of their own. If they fit in a special manner into the individual's past, they can be evocative of a whole world. There is nothing sacred about them. They should be laughed at, in places, ignored in many other pages, and viewed condescendingly from spot to spot. But there are things in them which should be read. If anyone takes the trouble to read them, I think that he will be willing at least to avoid the easy way out: that of calling them unreadable, and will agree that they deserve the same sort of attention and criticism as the magazine on the newsstands today.

PACIFICON II. The next world sf convention will be held in the Hotel Leamington, Oakland, California, 4-5-6-7 September 1964. Memberships are available at $2 from William Donaho, Pacificon II treasurer, PO Box 261, Fairmont station, El Cerrito, California.



HEINLEIN: BY HIS JOCKSTRAP

by ALEXEI PANSHIN

IT ISN'T TRUE that Robert A. Heinlein is anything as simple or as complicated as a newly revealed, authoritarian exponent of free love.

The evidence for the opinion that this is Heinlein is based on his three most recent novels: Starship Troopers, Stranger in a Strange Land, and Glory Road. However, Heinlein's odd sexual notions may be found in different form much earlier than in these works. Heinlein's gift for oversimplification, his belief in the imposition of panaceas by the man who knows better -- his belief that there are panaceas, that there are men who know better and who have a consequent right to do things to people for their own good -- all these things go back to Heinlein's very earliest works. These attitudes simply haven't been as apparent heretofore, that is all.

Since Heinlein's authoritarianism requires less digging and less examination than does his attitude toward sex, I want to skip over it lightly, simply mentioning some places where it appears. In his early story "Lost Legacy" (originally "Lost Legion," 1941), and in his later story "Gulf" (1949), Heinlein has self-appointed flying squads of justice, parapsychs in the first case and geniuses in the second, who kill all the evil people in black hats. In his University of Chicago lecture reprinted in The Science Fiction Novel, Robert Bloch points out the easy acceptance of revenge as an instrument in The Door into Summer: anything being all right for the man who knows better. The Puppet Masters is permeated with authoritarianism. We need not mention some of Heinlein's published statements, his Patrick Henry League, and whatnot.

The difficulty with Heinlein on sex is that, at first glance, all the evidence prior to Stranger in a Strange

Land seems negative. I think, however, that on reflection a pattern is apparent. Heinlein's first novel was "If This Goes On -- ," a two-part serial beginning in the February 1940 Astounding. Damon Knight calls the love interest in this work a "story-book romance," and it surely was: an affair between a pure heroine and a naive hero. This has been typical Heinlein all the way along: no sex without marriage, even when it would logically occur, and naive heroes whenever possible, as insurance.

Example One: Citizen of the Galaxy. A young man, presumably heterosexual, a former slave raised in a gutter environment, who is completely blind on the subject of sex, is being pursued, completely unaware, by two different, attractive and nubile girls. This situation seems so unlikely that you wonder why Heinlein even raised the subject.

Example Two: Tunnel in the Sky. The hero here, too, is pure and ignorant. The people around him are getting married and having children but he can't even recognize a girl as a girl when he meets her. Again, this is Heinlein's own choice: it is not imposed by story necessities or even by the fact that the book is a juvenile. Heinlein raises the subject and then walks around it.

Example Three: The Puppet Masters. This story is not a juvenile, the hero is not a juvenile, and the hero is not naive. However, when the hero is invited to the heroine's apartment overnight and the prospect of sex is definitely mentioned -- this in a culture where sex is supposedly more casual than it is today -- nothing happens. The hero sleeps in the living room. Sex waits till, at the hero's insistence, they get firmly, tightly married, so unusually firmly that the marriage clerk finds it necessary to comment on it.

It might be said that Heinlein was bowing to magazine conventions, but this doesn't hold because Heinlein could have liberalized his attitudes when the novels appeared in book form. The sexual conventions are one thing he didn't change in the hardcover Puppet Masters, so it can be assumed that this is what Heinlein wanted to say.

In the case of "If This Goes On -- " Heinlein completely rewrote the story and lengthened it considerably. He realized how much bushwa his story-book romance was, so he tossed it out the window. He didn't toss out his hero's unbelievable innocence, however. Even at a nude swimming party where others are... no, no sex. Even when the heroine (a very experienced girl) offers her fair body on a sleep-in basis, apparently no sex. John Lyle, True Hero, holds out for marriage and gets it. No matter how unlikely all this might be under those circumstances, this is the way Heinlein wanted things, and that's the way he wrote them.

I think it is clear that every example I have cited is the result of a romantic, that is to say, puritan attitude. "Romance" in this sense is the result of repression; it is an internalized thing. The authoritarianism, the oversimplification, the panaceas, the good guys vs. bad guys are all part and parcel of the same romantic attitudes.

As I said, Stranger in a Strange Land and Glory Road seem to be exceptions. They are not.

Somewhere along the line, it seems obvious, Robert A. Heinlein discovered that there was a discrepancy between what people did in the real

world and the cultural ideal he had accepted so wholeheartedly. He is obviously an intelligent man and he would notice a thing like that.

The supreme popular example of romantic idealism in our culture is probably the Boy Scout. As an ex-Boy Scout of long standing I can remember that more time was spent on Boy Scout camping trips in telling dirty jokes than in any other single pastime. In the last decade I haven't heard one-tenth of the filthy stories that I heard and told in two years of Scout activity.

It's a normal reaction or over-reaction. It's a way of saying that you're really grown up, that you're a man. It's a way of saying that you really know what's going on even when you're a Boy Scout. And it's daring. That's why dirty jokes are told.

The one element common to every dirty joke I can think of is impossible exaggeration: that is, unlikelihood. In 1959 Heinlein made up a dirty joke, and a really good one: "All You Zombies..." Moreover, he got it printed, and reprinted too. It was fun, it was daring, and it showed the world that he really knew what was going on. So he told another at tedious length: Stranger in a Strange Land. And did it again in Glory Road. And they were simply shocking, in the same way that a 15-year-old kid is shocking when he says "shit" to his parents.

But the attitude is as superficial in Heinlein as in any Boy Scout. His mask slips regularly in Glory Road to show the old romantic underneath. Oscar, the hero, will go to bed with anybody -- only not with those Vietnamese 'cause they seem childlike. (Does Madame Nhu strike anybody here as childlike?) Oscar will go to bed with anybody -- only not with the old girl friend who sent him off to the wars in the traditional way, not because she is married, but 'cause he doesn't feel like it. And Oscar's wife-or-whatever, the Queen of the Universe (what she is actually, for real, called in the book is even more ridiculous than that: She is the Empress of the Twenty Universes, if you please), she will go to bed with anybody, only when it comes to the test, see, she has this wound in her side and she just isn't up to it.

Isn't that odd?

Oscar Gordon is as naive as any Heinlein hero ever was, any statement in the book to the contrary notwithstanding. It might not even be simple ignorance in this case; it might be claimed that he isn't even half-bright (on other evidence than his sexual oddities). He, too, insists on marriage before he will submit sexually to his True Love, even though she is perfectly willing and suggests they use the nearest convenient clump of grass and even though marriage here is not customary.

Isn't that odd?

The point is, Stranger in a Strange Land and Glory Road have in common with the garden-variety dirty joke these characteristics:

Improbability compounded: (a) Social. Would people actually act like this? Think, for instance, of the Oneida community. Everybody diddling everybody is just plain unlikely. (b) Personal. The dream of beautiful naked women chasing me is now and always was plain fantasy.

Obsession: Sex is only a small part of life, yet without it these two novels would be pamphlets and pretty slim ones at that. This is not balanced. It is on a level with bedroom historical novels.

There is a third similarity as well. In dirty jokes, sex is never fun or interesting. It is a function, something one does in the same manner as one goes to the toilet. In the two Heinlein novels, sex is treated in the same way. Actual relations are never described in detail -- they are talked about (at great length) and done. That is all. If Heinlein is so damned concerned with "good sex," he does an almighty incompetent job of selling it. In these novels, sex becomes the business at hand, to be done because it must be, and it comes out as a pretty grim business. Not interesting, not pleasant, not fun.

I think it can be said that the apparent difference between the Old Good Heinlein and the New Nasty Heinlein does not exist. Heinlein is now what Heinlein has been: a 56-year-old adolescent.

Writers of this sort are not rare. Adolescent attitudes toward power and sex are the meat of Burroughs, Spillane, Fleming, a good percentage of paperback novels, comic books, and Norman Mailer. Heinlein happens to be a better writer than most of these, or at least was until recently, which is the reason his last three major novels are regrettable. He has let his adolescent, romantic, or anti-romantic side loose and I suspect the desire to "shock" and to show he is more of a man than any other kid on the block will continue to rule Heinlein from now on. Don't expect to see anything new and adult. Heinlein's ideas are not going to change at this late date.

The stranger is a romantic boy who can't tell the difference between the real and the unreal. The glory road is no road at all; it is a path of an Uncle Wiggily game.

LOVERS' WINE

translated from Baudelaire

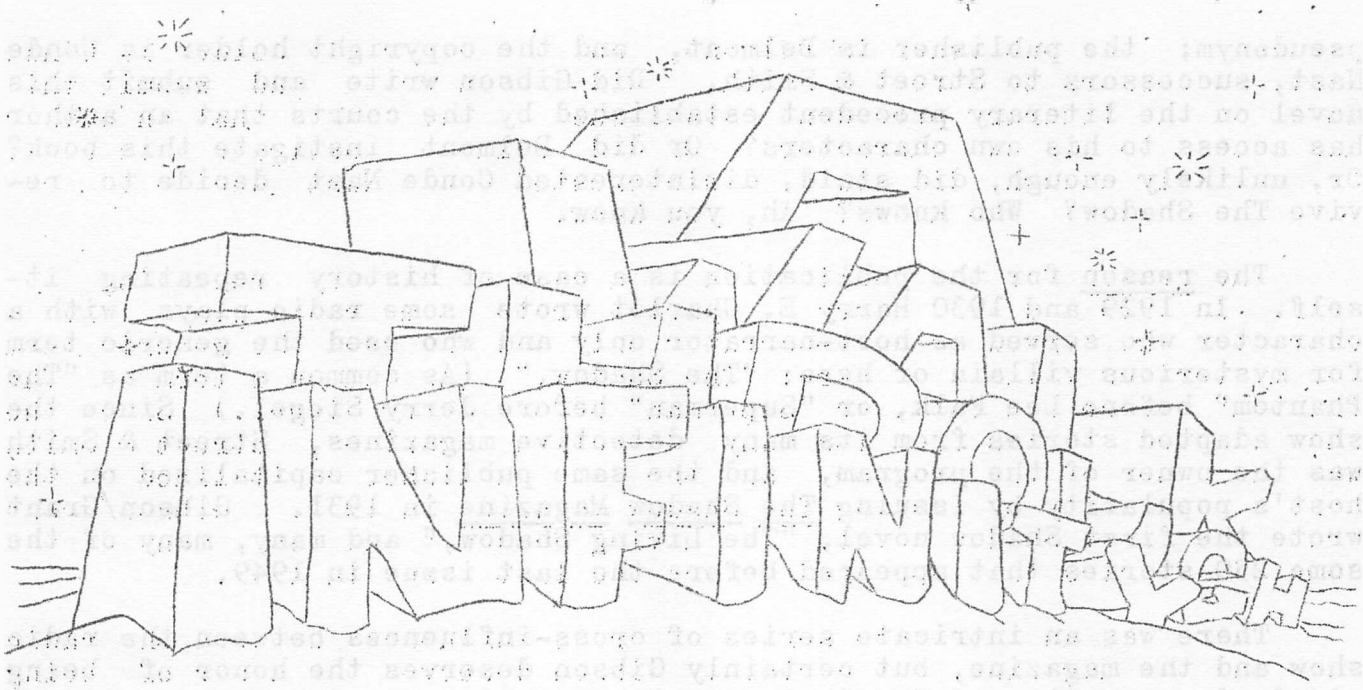
This day the prospect above is a splendor!
Unbridled and bitless, let's go on a bender,
No spurs required, a-horseback on wine,
Let us close with this sky -- beglamored, divine!

Like two angels implacably spun
On the lid of the eye of the hurricane,
Into the morning-blue crystal montage
Let us follow the distance, the distant mirage!

Sweetly balanced on the spread form
Of the knowledgeable whirlwind
In a parallel brainstorm,

My sister, breasting it, mind by mind,
And side by side, let's fly -- ask no truce
Nor think to rest -- let dreamy paradise seduce!

-- VIRGINIA KIDD BLISH



SKULK, SHADOW!

RETURN OF THE SHADOW, by Walter B. Gibson. New York: Belmont, 1963.

The hypnotic eyes above the hawk-like nose, burning out of the cover of a paperback book beneath the legend Return of the Shadow, did not come as a complete surprise to me when I confronted them that October day in the Year of Our Lord 1963 in the Alvarado bookshop. Only days before, I had been discussing with Ron Haydock the possibility that the "Master of Darkness" might be revived between paper covers. But here it was, no longer speculation. The Shadow's return was already substance.

The world is adrip with nostalgia these days. Infantile citizens foolishly suppose that this is not the best of all possible worlds, this Hydrogen Aged globe. Such nostalgia makes me recall reading as a boy, in the late 1930s and the '40s, The Shadow Magazine and being properly awed. Recently I reread some of those yellowed pulps with their dog-eared Oriental menace, their Graves Gladney covers and Cartier illustrations, their rupture-easer ads. Could any mere paperback book with no illustrations and with legible printing capture this mood? It could. Despite references in the novel to TV sets and the United (not League of) Nations, Return of the Shadow is one of the best damned Shadows I ever read -- the first of a paperback series, I hope.

The blurp facing the title page informs us that "Walter B. Gibson, who created The Shadow and wrote the stories under the pen name of 'Maxwell Grant' now brings to his multimillion audience a brand new Shadow adventure...commissioned as a paperback original...." Gibson, the original author of the magazine stories, seems to have improved with the years. Or perhaps he just had longer to work on the story than he did between the fortnightly pulp issues.

The story of how this particular book came to be would be interesting. The byline is, significantly, Walter B. Gibson, not his official

pseudonym; the publisher is Belmont, and the copyright holder is Conde Nast, successors to Street & Smith. Did Gibson write and submit this novel on the literary precedent established by the courts that an author has access to his own characters? Or did Belmont instigate this book? Or, unlikely enough, did staid, disinterested Conde Nast decide to revive The Shadow? Who knows? Ah, you know.

The reason for the publication is a case of history repeating itself. In 1929 and 1930 Harry E. Charlot wrote some radio plays with a character who served as host-narrator only and who used the generic term for mysterious villain or hero: "The Shadow." (As common a term as "The Phantom" before Lee Falk, or "Superman" before Jerry Siegel.) Since the show adapted stories from its many detective magazines, Street & Smith was the owner of the program, and the same publisher capitalized on the host's popularity by issuing The Shadow Magazine in 1931. Gibson/Grant wrote the first Shadow novel, "The Living Shadow," and many, many of the some 250 stories that appeared before the last issue in 1949.

There was an intricate series of cross-influences between the radio show and the magazine, but certainly Gibson deserves the honor of being adjudged co-creator of The Shadow. It was the current cycle of re-runs of "The Shadow" radio program in Chicago, Boston, Cleveland, and elsewhere that caused Newsweek to call for a revival of Shadow novels.

Although there is nothing in the body of the story to explain his 14-year absence, The Shadow is the same "familiar figure...a cloaked shape with a slouch hat...silhouetted against the crimson sky above the distant mountains" that we all remember. I read this story of The Shadow's "return" with a feeling of jubilant relief. Still, the character may have changed a little since his last appearance. On radio, The Shadow had the power of hypnotic invisibility; in the novels, he had only the camouflage of his black attire in the darkness to conceal himself. In the present novel, I think Gibson makes a conscious effort to bring the character more in line with the radio Shadow.

The back-cover legend informs the reader that The Shadow is "a strange creature clad in black, with the power to cloud men's minds which he learned in the Orient, and a mocking laugh...." And in the story The Shadow uses hypnotic powers on several occasions -- not an attribute I remember from the pulp novels -- though, I must admit, not to achieve the effect of invisibility. But at one point The Shadow makes an unexpected visit, and the suspect croaks, "Who -- who are you?" and The Shadow responds in a sepulchral tone, "A ghost, a ghost from the bottom of the gorge, here to haunt you in the name of vengeance!" Friends out there in Radioland, that dialog should sound familiar!

Readers of the old Shadow novels will meet old friends unknown to listeners of the blurped "more recent radio...appearances." Besides Police Commissioner Weston, Inspector Joe Cardona, Moe Shrevnitz ("Shrevvy"), you'll find Harry Vincent, Clyde Burke, Cliff Marsland, Miles Crofton, Rutledge Mann, Burbank, and others -- nearly all the others, with the obvious omission of Margo Lane -- and all, like their chief, remarkably untouched by their 32 years in action against the underworld.

The story itself is at once typical of The Shadow novels and superior to most. In the magazine The Shadow himself tended to be the most mysterious and fantastic element of the story, usually a tale of mundane

crime and criminals. Here Gibson mixes in other elements of the fantastic, entirely appropriate to a story about a super-hero like The Shadow: The kidnapping of key UN members and their replacement by exact doubles, an eerie full-size castle, and a climax in which a horde of mindless zombies battles a mob of spies using a mammoth collection of the world's deadliest weapons: bolos, machetes, rifles, kris, Malay barong, African spears, Fiji war lances, Sudanese throwing knives, and other juicy implements of destruction. But of course none of these are as dangerous and effective as the big .45 automatics, black cloak, and taunting laugh of the Master of Darkness, The Shadow!

The book is pleasantly free of the contrived sex of the contemporary paperback in general, despite the cover's tiny figure of a half-naked, fully bound girl which the cover artist depicted without any text justification. The cover artist also rendered a close copy of the dust jacket of the hardcover edition of the original Shadow novel, The Living Shadow. Those eyes...that nose...The Shadow nose!

-- JIM HARMON

WISTFUL VISTAS

I LOVE GALESBURG IN THE SPRINGTIME, by Jack Finney. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963.

Mention Jack Finney and somebody will say "...Ray Bradbury..." in the space of nine seconds. It doesn't work the other way around in any space of time under 35 minutes, which argues something about the comparative stature of the two writers. And indeed, one is forced to admit that despite similarities Finney is the much less fascinating writer qua writer. He has always been pretty well modulated, never guilty of the excesses that mar such huge quantities of Bradbury's work. For the same reason he is a lot more fun to read than Bradbury 68 percent of the time.

Though both writers are actively concerned with the wistful power of the old, less complicated days (they disagree as to when those days took place) and the Nostalgics many of us are trading on during these fevered times, Finney is far less obsessively involved. Where Bradbury's visions are often mauve, fringed with black and gashed through with screaming scarlet, Finney's are always pink and pale blue and silver and hardly tinctured at all with alien hues. Finney stopped reaching frantically a long while ago and said the hell with it. He decided to leave the past where it belongs: in the past. And to dip into it fastiddily sometimes like a cat into a fishpond by means of excursions in the best time machine available: the disciplined imagination. By this means he has come to happy terms with the past (his past? One wonders sometimes) without feeling compulsion to recapture it, to relive it as Bradbury and other, greater writers often attempt to do.

Finney is a hack writer, if you will. The term is yours, not mine. What must have begun as nostalgia has become story material worth 5¢ a word. He has written the same story 654 times and will probably sell it 1078 more times before anybody gets tired of it, least of all Finney himself. After all, he gets doubly paid: He has the fun of drifting off on these temponautical excursions in the first place, and then of cashing the lovely green check from McCall's or the Post afterward. After all the trips he has made, probably he enjoys the checks a little more,

but he doesn't show it. Well, after all, he is a hack. Praise be for hacks. The fantasy field could use more of them, if they were all of Jack Finney's level of competence and charm. Finney's yarns make the pleasantest reading in the field since Theodore Sturgeon got waylaid by the National Review.

When he first popped up in our field, Finney was writing for the smaller markets occasionally; he even wrote for Fantasy and Science Fiction. Those earlier stories were collected in the delightful collection called The Third Level. The present collection derives entirely from the slick magazine market. As a result these stories are perhaps a little slighter than the others, or so one is persuaded to imagine. At least there is nothing here that is quite so joyful as "The Third Level" or some of the other stories in that first collection, but everything is done with practiced skill and quiet enthusiasm.

Like Bradbury, Finney had a midwestern boyhood to begin with, and later a California manhood. But presumably there was a waystop between, in New York City, a place Bradbury managed somehow to avoid. The three backgrounds offer Finney ready-made material, and the only trouble is, despite his rosy nostalgia for "the old yellow streetcars, or horse-drawn fire engines, or...wall phones" of midwestern towns, 1903, he has the cursed faculty of enjoying himself in all these places and in this day and age. The yarns in I Love Galesburg in the Springtime are most of them paeans to another period of history, and thus Finney can avoid the onus laid on most slick magazine writers these days of being an unofficial salesman of suburbia's virtues and commodities, but he has the inclination toward touting the pleasures of backyard barbecues and rumpus rooms and the transcendental qualities of Lark filter cigarets and Heinz cream of mushroom soup. In the middle of his lyric to Galesburg, Illinois, 1903, he finds a good word to say about tract homes. Or maybe that was an editorial addition. Some of his characters look just like movie stars, James Stewart, John Carradine, i.e., like the people in ads.

Alas, no more than Bradbury can, Finney couldn't depict a colorful believable character even with the aid of a paint-by-numbers set, not to mention the standard writer's bookshelf: Plotto, Elwood's Characters Make Your Story, and Roget's Thesaurus. He comes closest in Charley, the budding con man in "A Possible Candidate for the Presidency": He is delightfully larger than life, but unfortunately the focus on him is a little blurry. In most of his stories, Finney's basic situation fills the wide-angled screen right to the edge, and there's no room for anything else: The situation becomes plot, setting, and characters all in one. And like the footloose time travelers we are, we view things from a short distance and a sharp angle away.

Sometimes we become involved in the situation, of course. Like Whitman afoot with his vision in "Song of Myself," we enter sympathetically into the tenderly depicted tableaux, but we never get so desperately immersed that the whole of the past rises out of hell to seize and oppress us.

One of Finney's most successful stories is "Where the Cluetts Are." In this yarn the things that happen in the story are shown happening to people we have met and have a nodding acquaintance with. Sam and Ellie Cluett build a Victorian mansion from plans found on the dusty top shelf of an architect's office; after they move in, they find themselves captured by the past in the house that is "one of those occasional rare and

wonderful houses that acquire souls and lives of their own." In depicting the couple haunted by the lovely past, Finney exhibits the skill of a Henry Kuttner.

But he doesn't, of course, dare to follow through. They drink lemonade from a brown stoneware pitcher, play croquet on the lawn, and while away the long summer afternoons reading Dickens and Scott in fine leather-bound old volumes. But so far as we know, nobody ever makes a trip to the outhouse at 3 a.m. in 20° below weather with a Sears Roebuck catalog under his arm, and Ellie Cluett never falls victim to childbed fever which modern wonder drugs mysteriously can't cure. Kuttner would have moved directly and inevitably to this logical conclusion.

The past in these stories is never dangerous or unpleasant. In fact, the only unpleasantness in these stories is minor and easily mended, usually by true love or good fortune. The Javert-like cop in "The Face in the Photo" ends up "back where he really belongs," on the San Francisco police force in the year 1893. The unhappy endings, most notably in "The Love Letter," are happily sentimental.

Outside of the stories already mentioned, I liked best the title story and "The Intrepid Aeronaut," which does a remarkable job of empathizing the sensations of a trip in a captive balloon over the dreaming rooftops. I liked least "Prison Legend" and "Love, Your Magic Spell is Everywhere," which are pretty routine rewrites of fantasy themes not original with Finney. Finney is always at his best when he is lovingly rewriting Finney.

-- DON H. NABOURS

KIT OF KATANGA

THE NIGHT SHAPES, by James Blish. New York: Ballantine Books, 1962.

Here is a new book from an old dependable author that the publisher blurbs "Science was helpless in the face of prehistoric realities brought to life" and "An original Ballantine Science Fiction Novel." That's what the cover says.

But it's straight out of Jungle Stories! This is not to imply that this is bad, but if anything the story is fantasy, not science fiction.

Much as Burroughs gave us a white Tarzan many years ago, we are given Kit Kennedy to identify with. I guess we wouldn't want to read the story if the hero were native. Of course we do have an Afric king, Tombu, who accompanies Ktendi (KK) on his adventures.

Coincidentally or not, the action takes place in a region better known to contemporary readers than the largely imaginary Tarzan lands and the locale of the typical yarn in Jungle Stories. Katanga province of the Belgian Congo in the early 1900s was pretty much unexplored. Ktendi, king of a tribe in the back country of the area, is called into the river-town of the Congo, seat of the Residency, to lead an expedition -- purpose undisclosed to him -- into the interior near his own kingdom. He heads a strange crew, including a lovely girl, seemingly at cross-purposes and ill-fitted for the task, whatever it is.

While the expedition is en route, it is attacked by a strange band of warriors. All but our two heroes are taken captive to a hidden val-

ley, where the main action of the novel takes place. The purpose of the expedition is revealed; fate takes a hand in the lives of the various members of the expedition; and a real Jungle Stories plot is under way. The climax comes when the Night Shape in the area takes part in the events. There is quite a bit of fast action writing, with mystery, suspense, and fantasy elements intermingling.

Ktendi, during this time, has been adopted by a 25-foot boa constrictor. This is an integral part of the plot and is carried over into what seems to be the anticlimactic part of the book, separated from the first section by a lull, an idyl, in which Kit gets involved with the woman, Paula. After this, we plunge into more fast action, even more flamboyant than the first, which winds up the novel in thundering style. Fantasy and jungle-story are mixed into a fine concoction of adventure. Everything winds up right, of course. The hero gets the girl for sure, the boa is happy with them both, and the recesses of Katanga remain unmolested by the curious horde from the outside world. The Night Shapes play their part and retire from the scene.

After reading the story, you can spend some time browsing through the two-page appendix of Swahili terms in the back of the book. I sometimes wonder why it shouldn't be best to translate everything into plain English and forget the italicized gibberish. A pretentious display of knowledge like this is nothing more than literary snobbery. But other than this, The Night Shapes makes a good 35¢ value.

Unfortunately, it costs 50¢.

-- ED COX

THE SHAGGY MAN concluded from page 5

ticularly welcome, though fannish material can also be used. While a great deal of artwork is already on hand, Shaggy will be using very few "spot" illustrations henceforth and is interested in contacting artists who would be willing to do headings and illustrations on assignment, to accompany specific articles and departments.

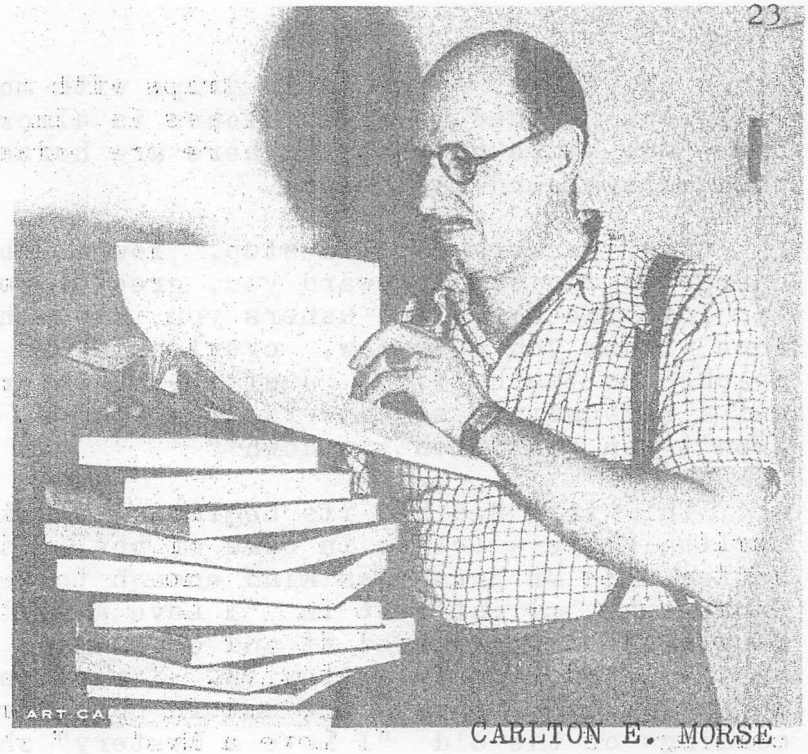
O HUSHED OCTOBER

The big tree at my window doesn't realize that southern California has no seasons. It is full of yellow leaves and green fruit. In the mild twilight occasionally it drops a green fruit with a wicked clunk, followed by a yellow leaf or two that drift down like the tail feathers of a winged amber mallard. And now, against the eternal rumble of the city I hear the cricket in the grass of the backyard tuning up and saying contradictory things in his strident song: saying be content and unhurried, for this is the significance of things -- the serenity of the yellow leaves shaking loose and sailing earthward, the lonely cricket voice warbling in the dusk -- not the rattle of the traffic in the street; saying bestir yourself and add to your stores. For even in seasonless California leaves die at last, and the insect prophet of the dying year pipes his lonely farewell somewhere in the dark.

...But enough of autumn thoughts. Now it's time to wish you all merry Christmas and the best for 1964. -- R.B.

I CALL ON CARLTON E. MORSE

by JIM HARMON



CARLTON E. MORSE

IN A TIME that has seen the revival of novels of The Shadow and the reappearance of such comic book stalwarts of the 1940s as The Flash and the Human Torch, it is still a little surprising to find the revival on the radio of that self-same Shadow -- as well as the Green Hornet, the Scarlet Pimpernel, Orson Welles as Harry Lime, and other old time favorites. And it was with considerable pleasure that I learned recently that possibly the best of all radio-character shows, "I Love a Mystery," is being announced by radio station WRR in Dallas, Texas, for very early rebroadcast.

There is also some dickering going on in Cleveland and doubtless in a number of other cities. I knew William Spear (director of radio's "Sam Spade") was planning a television "I Love a Mystery," but news of actual broadcasts of the radio original is good news indeed.

Of course I must admit that I myself have been listening to "I Love a Mystery" for some time now, thanks to a trip I made to the home of its creator, Carlton E. Morse....

The trip from Los Angeles to Redwood City, just outside San Francisco, is a long trip on the highway. Redwood City is no small town; it is a port city and trade center, but it is a pretty quiet, drowsy place. From there, you take a road that climbs sharply into the mountains, hugging curves that could spell sudden death, all in a heavy fog that even the bright sun cannot completely burn away. Here you pass through stands of redwoods, and climb, upward, onward, until you come to a high wire fence with barbwire running along the top and festooned with signs that read: "No Trespassers -- Violators Liable to Danger." You follow the fence till you come to a small stone pylon bearing the name "7 Stones." Heavy padlocks have been unclasped from the gate by unseen hands, and you drive inside.

You drive on and on, higher and higher. You pass a small comfortable-looking cottage, and then through an abrupt break in the big trees you see -- a castle. No, not exactly a castle, but a huge baronial hall with ranch-like trappings. You follow the long driveway till the house

looms above you. The manse drips with moss, and in stone niches stand religious statues. Seven Stones is almost the reality of the Sky Ranch from "One Man's Family." There are horses and cattle and sheep and pheasants around the place.

Your car brakes to a stop. You climb out and a lean high-domed energetic man comes toward you, greets you, and shakes hands. He invites you into the house and ushers you into a huge room with the largest picture window you ever saw, overlooking an expanse of redwood forest that reaches to the horizon. Just as you enter, a small mantel clock booms out a resounding, somehow familiar chime, and Carlton E. Morse says, "Won't you gentlemen sit down?"

This trip had had its beginning weeks earlier when I had written Carlton Morse a letter in care of the Writers Guild. They forwarded the letter, and Mr Morse was kind enough to reply. In return, I wrote him, expressing my interest in "I Love a Mystery," telling him how many people still remembered it and considered it a classic in the same sense as the Sherlock Holmes stories. I mentioned that people were interested in seeing the stories come out in book form, and I asked him about recordings of the old "I Love a Mystery" shows, inquiring whether he had any tapes or disks of the program available. At the time he made no comment about this, but I still wanted to see Morse, who is one of my all-time favorite writers, and at last an appointment was set up.

And here we were, sitting across from Mr Morse in his living room. He is not Jack Packard or Paul Barbour, contrary to what one might have expected. He is a gentleman and a gentle man, and gives the impression of having been wealthy all his life. His family must have been well-to-do, and he is a cultured man. He is very friendly, very courteous, but reserved. He lives up here on the top of a mountain behind a wall of redwoods and a fence of mesh wire for the frankly stated purpose of getting away from people. He likes solitude, and there is plenty of solitude up at Seven Stones: an almost depressing, dark green solitude. It surrounds you and crowds in at all the windows.

Mr Morse looks about 50 years old, but he is actually around 70. He had a strange crosshatch on his cheek, not like a real scar but like the drawing of one in a comic strip. Actually it wasn't a scar at all, but some passing injury that was healed by my second visit.

As we entered the house we had passed an alcove with a bookcase that was crammed with some 126 volumes bound in leather: the collected works of Carlton E. Morse. These were the radio scripts, his original typescripts corrected in his own handwriting, of "I Love a Mystery," "One Man's Family," and several of his other shows. All beautifully bound, they make an imposing array of books that you see just fleetingly as you go past.

Later he got out these bound volumes and thumbed through them. At my request he named off all the "I Love a Mystery" stories for us. There were exactly 38 of them, not counting repeats. The series began in 1939 -- Bill Thailing's research indicates that it began on 16 January 1939, on the Pacific coast only, and went coast-to-coast on 2 October of the same year. The Hollywood series ended in 1944, just one day short of 1945. The New York series on Mutual, running from 1949 to 1951, just one day short of 1952, was all repeat: the same stories acted by a new cast. Russell Thorson, Jim Bowles, and Tony Randall played Jack, Doc,

and Reggie, replacing Michael Raffetto, Barton Yarborough, and Walter Patterson (later Tom Collins), who comprised the Hollywood cast.

Mr Morse described how Jack, Doc, and Reggie first met. It was when they were fighting as soldiers of fortune with the Chinese against the Japanese in 1939. In the opening chapter of the series there was a pitched battle, and the three of them vow that if they get out of this alive, they will meet again in San Francisco on a certain date. They get separated during the battle, and on the appointed day Jack and Reggie show up, but Doc isn't there. They presume that he did not survive the fighting, but all of a sudden Doc arrives with the police hot on his heels. He is wanted for murder! And that was the first episode of "I Love a Mystery."

Mr Morse thought Barton Yarborough was so good as Doc because Morse had based his character on Yarborough. He was nevertheless pleased with Jim Bowles' portrayal of Doc in the New York series. Originally Tony Randall had tested for Doc -- he was born in Oklahoma but had lost his accent -- but he became Reggie instead. Walter Patterson, the original Reggie (he was also Nicky in "One Man's Family"), died around 1940 (suicide, according to the newspapers), and from the way Mr Morse spoke of his death, Patterson was probably closer to him than any of the other actors in the Carlton E. Morse productions.

Later our host led us into the kitchen of Seven Stones, another big room with a fireplace and a whole bookcase devoted to cookbooks. He mixed everybody a drink; I took vodka and tonic. We chatted some more about his work, about his hopes and plans for the future. Despite his age, Mr Morse looks forward, not backward. He plans to write a serious novel; he wants to leave a memorial behind him, and he doesn't think that much of "I Love a Mystery."

He probably does not really appreciate how much that radio show meant to a lot of people, and how good it was. I think it was a real work of art. It was an adventure story, and had little social significance, but neither did Treasure Island or Sherlock Holmes, and I think "I Love a Mystery" was on a level with those works. Morse is like Conan Doyle, who never fully appreciated Sherlock Holmes. He admitted, however, that "I Love a Mystery" was his favorite radio show, and that he preferred writing it to writing "One Man's Family."

Then, very matter-of-factly, he took us out to the barn, and answering the suggestion I had made in my letters to him, he exhibited an amazing sight: his stacks of recordings of "I Love a Mystery." He picked up a box at random and handed it to me. He said that I could make copies of these on tape if I wished and if I would sign a receipt for these master recordings and promise to return them on my next visit, a month from then.

Ron Haydock drove me to Redwood City on the second visit just as a favor, since he himself is not particularly interested in "I Love a Mystery." Mr Morse was even more friendly this time than on the first visit. He served us lunch -- "a simple country luncheon," he called it. Pickled dinosaur eggs. Actually, they were pickled pheasant eggs, I think. There was also fried chicken and a truly lavish array of food. Mr Morse said that he was looking forward to a trip to his ranch in Arizona or Nevada; after that, he was going to visit the city he has built under the North Pole. But he particularly anticipated the trip to

the ranch, where he wouldn't have to bother about modern conveniences such as indoor plumbing and electricity. His foreman on the ranch wants to install such things in the house to make it more comfortable, but Mr Morse insists that it remain primitive.

We met Mrs Morse and their daughter. Patricia Morse is an attractive woman, very devoted to Carlton. Their daughter, Noel, was about nine years old at the time.

This trip Ron and I went to the barn with Mr Morse and we loaded up with all the recordings available from such well-remembered stories as "The Secret Passage to Death" (1941) and "Island of Skulls" (1942), both from the old Hollywood series, and "Bury Your Dead, Arizona" and "Temple of Vampires" from the later New York series. During the next few weeks Bob Burns and I, using Bob's equipment, dubbed off these records onto tape. No other disks of "I Love a Mystery" exist, unless NBC, CBS, or Mutual possess recordings deep in their files. If such exist, even Mr Morse found it impossible to obtain dubbings.

But now, of course, many of the recordings I borrowed from Mr Morse may be back on the air in some localities. If it is true that he owns no other recordings than those I obtained when I visited him, the radio series can only consist of three serials: "The Thing That Cries in the Night" (also known as "Faith, Hope, and Charity"), "The Million Dollar Mystery" (aka "Richard's Curse"), and "Bury Your Dead, Arizona." All of the other stories are incomplete and could not be used commercially as they stand. The three complete serials, consisting of 15 minute episodes, could be run two in one half-hour chapter per week, making a 22-week series (with slight editing) or nearly six months of broadcasts.

All of these stories feature the New York cast -- Russell Thorson as Jack, Jim Bowles as Doc, and Tony Randall as Reggie -- so if you want to hear Michael Raffetto, Barton Yarborough, and Walter Patterson in these roles, you will have to drop over to my place (I say smugly) or -- as soon as it opens its doors in 1965 -- visit the radio library of the Hollywood Museum (I say generously).

LOST ATLANTIS

I crouched, spring-taut, beside the black lake's edge,
Prepared, when light unveiled the realm below,
To scoop the creatures from the slimy sedge
And satisfy this need of mine to know
The secrets of the glittering life that skimmed
Beneath the murky surface of this lake;
Why was I then so chilled and leaden-limbed
As drop by drop the depths grew less opaque?

The world revealed was placid and serene,
With claws and supple fins, and rocks in flower;
When suddenly a shadow, not marine,
Rose from the deep and gripped me in its power.
And just before my reason lost control
I saw the lost Atlantis of my soul.

-- EDITH OGUTSCH

PICKING A BONE WITH SHAGGY

CONDUCTED BY
ED COX

We commence this issue's letter-column with a letter oddly enough, from a fan who, 21 years ago, dropped his fannish activities but is considering a comeback.

"Dear Ron,

The editorial of Shaggy would have saddened me seriously, if I hadn't heard just before this issue arrived that Redd Boggs is taking over. I hope that he doesn't adopt a publication schedule similar to the one that has prevailed in recent years for Skyhook. Somehow I get the impression that Charles Burbee will be the next person to lend a hand with the magazine, in faithfulness to the tendency for all fandom to revolve upon itself and to find itself as it was before it began the long progression through the infinite circle of time.

The Fritz Leiber article is so splendid that I didn't find myself thinking that this should become an introduction to the next HPL anthology. It doesn't have the aura of fake erudition and high-sounding empty statements that normally go into the first pages of collections of fiction. I can't remember the last time that I read an essay of this sort that is equally apropos to the person who has read the works in question and to the one who is unacquainted with them. (I'm both guys in this case because there are some HPL narratives mentioned here that I've not encountered. And I regret to say that my once lukewarm enthusiasm for the writer has cooled to the point where I positively cannot remember if I ever did accomplish that former goal, to read "The Colour Out of Space". I think that Lovecraft is one of those individuals who is peculiarly suited as a topic for essays, even if he's no great shucks to read in person. Scott Fitzgerald might be a mundane equivalent and I imagine that Ernest Hemingway will involuntarily take on that status in the next ten years or so.)

I didn't read the final installment of "Glory Road". Heinlein reportedly did the cutting himself for the serial publication, so weaknesses caused by the abridgment are at least partly his fault. My general impression was that of an author who couldn't decide whether he was or was not writing a picaresque novel. The construction is in that pattern and the lack of an inexorable progression toward one final climax also tends that way. But the picaresque novel stands or falls by the ability of the author to make

each episode all-absorbing and fun to read in itself, so that the reader presses onward to the next because he wants more, without stopping to think that there's no reason why the order in which events happened should not be shuffled.

Only in fandom do I find people admitting that they are happy to find a good meal for a dollar in a strange town. I am like this, and I imagine that there are other individuals with such ideals in the mundane world, but they don't publish travel accounts admitting to it. I really believe that Bjo has done better than Tucker in this account of experiences in a gambling town.

As I said in FAPA, I didn't care too much for the new Tevis novel. It sounds as if whole episodes were inserted simply to make the writer sound knowledgable about a wide range of subjects. But more fundamentally wrong with the book is the lack of energy and purpose that besets most of the characters. They don't seem to have any great desire to accomplish things. I did like the concluding dozen pages or so but I can't imagine the novel as a serious contender for the best of the year.

I took the trouble to look up that radio station for Norm Clarke, and sure enough, there is a KJAZ. It is an FM station in Alameda, California, on 92.7 mcs in case that city is within reception range of Los Angeles. I assume that it's an all-jazz station, since the trick call letters are usually obtained for a specific purpose. If I ever go traveling, I want for this reason to get close enough to Sulphur, La., to hear the kind of programs that are broadcast by an AM station, KIKS. These call-letter directories are quite interesting. For instance, there is KCHS, an AM station that doesn't look unusual, but it is in a city of whose existence I was previously unaware, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. I have a strong suspicion that there may be a Mexican station with fannish associations, since my incomplete Mexican list contains a XEMO, XELO and XEXO. By the law of averages, there must be a XERO somewhere, if not a XENO.

It is a shame that "The Squirrel Cage" will not be with us any longer. This reminds me very much of the time I dropped my own fannish activities because of the press of the great commercial world, back about 1942. I keep thinking that maybe I should become active again.

I wouldn't want to discourage John Berry. But my parents bought me two rabbits of opposite sexes and different colors when I was about eight years old. We kept them in seperate cages for a while, then allowed them in the same cage for a while, then sold eight small rabbits for 25¢ each to a local restaurant, and I never did catch on. At that time, I was trying to convince all my small friends that the embryo grew in the woman's breast instead of in a less crowded area of her body as my friends kept insisting, and I had enough trouble attempting to prove this point for me to pay much attention to an even more fundamental matter involved in the process of racial survival.

All the art is fine but I still feel cheated when a fanzine comes out of Los Angeles with someone other than Bjo as the cover artist.

Yrs,. &c.,
Harry Warner, Jr.

/// I never had any experience with rabbits, but I've always wondered about the-birds-and-the-bees bit. The only thing I ever learned about was S*E*X! I feel left out. And I sure hope you return to active fandom, soon, Harry. Then we can talk about baseball outside of FAPA... Next up is somebody who doesn't talk about baseball much but appears disappointingly seldom in FAPA....or out.

Dear Editor of Shaggy:

I have but brief comment on Shaggy #66... Eather my brief time away from things has let me skip a cog on knowledge, or someone is pulling a fast one... For all I know, your cover artist is of the same water as that famed lady writer, Dorcas Bagby... Or am I more of a proventual clod than I had thought?

I'm really writting to find fault with Good Buddy Ed M. Cox's review of The Man Who Fell To Earth by Walter Revis. I can not see how Mr. Cox who came into Fandom during Fifth Fandom when letter-hacks nit-picked the science in every story, can claim that this is a science-fiction story. Maybe an allegory or a fantasy, but not science fiction as we used to know it. Or, at least, not logical science fiction. The writing might look good, and the characterization might be strong--but I forget this when I'm stopped every so often by things that are just plain stupid.

Harry Warner has allready panned it for lacking originality (as so many johnny-come-latelys are guilty of, such as Rod Serling), and pointing out the weakness of the supposed patents...in one case because it will probably be on the market here, some time before the date set, without it coming from Mars. Let me just point out a couple of the stupid things in the ending...

Take the great scene where the hero, blind and bitter, tells his one friend about the record he made of Martian poetry, that he hopes some FM station will play someday so the folks at home can hear it... Now this is moving and dramatic as hell, but it isn't very smart. For the next thing he does is write out a check for a million bucks for his friend, and it takes a lot less than that to buy and run an FM station of your very own... Something a sharp businessman like him would know (but either Tevis doesn't or hopes the reader doesn't).

But take the other matter, about him giving up the whole project, and so all the folks at home will slowly starve, and that will be the end of Mars. Hog Wash! The good old government has his rocket, his plans (or most of them) and knows there are a lot of smart Martians up there just full of things that could make them millions... Is it logical that nothing be done? Hell, reading the papers we might have men on Mars about then, without any Martian fortune to go there for... The Home Folks would be saved whether they liked it or not. HGWells could get away with the idea that one man might keep a secret secret, but science doesn't work that way now...

And one other thing, why did they wait until they were almost out of fuel to come to Earth for a refill? Not very practical... And it is just such questions that louse up the story -- for me.

Rick Sneary

/// By golly, when Rick doesn't like a book, he sure doesn't like it! A comment or two... Buying the FM station might be easier than him getting the license from the FCC. As for the immediacy of the inventions and scientific progress, then I shudder mightily over Fail-Safe and just plain shudder at Seven Days in May and Advise and Consent, none of them science-fiction. But enough for now, we have a dilly of an excerpt or two from a letter by:

TOM DILLEY, 1590 Robinson Dr. N., St. Petersburg, Floria 33710.

Mr. Leiber's assertion that, at some point, "speculative science tended to dominate Lovecraft's fiction" stretches things only slightly more than would a statement such as "Dostoyevsky wrote supernatural horror stories, primarily", the latter statement arising, say, from some reader's being

appalled at some of the events in D's novels and refusing to believe that such events are possible in this world. Lovecraft's tales, nearly without exception, are fantasy, and the slight tang of stf-seeming flavor in many of the stories comes more from the well-cared-for realism of the background than from any "scientific" accountings for those things which could not be real.

I noticed the collection of spoofs throughout this issue, all centered around the uproarious theme of folding the 'zine. Now, from the Trimbles, Ellik, Lewis, etc., some slight weariness over putting out the SHAG would be understandable, but this Tolliver's got his NERVE (or some such title); he can't have seen enough issues to be tired of it all yet, let alone edited enough.

You trim off the SHAG, and we'll have SHAGGY, the LASFS and that whole fictitious-sounding list of names declared a hoax. By God, we'll expose the whole phony bit about the discovery of this "California" place; I never did believe any of that "gold" jazz, anyhow.

Yours very truly,
Tom

/// How business-like, that sign-off. Mebbe you do mean business about exposing the spoofish crew. But wait'll you find out the cosmic (impressive-sounding, wot?) spoof behind this issue of Shaggy! I mean, like Redd Boggs editing SHAGGY? But it's not that cosmic, he wouldn't let Marley L. Gastonhugh return... Speaking of spoofs, there follows an excerpt from a letter from:

BOB WILLIAMS, 420 South 4th Street, Elkhart, Indiana 46514.

"...Anyday now, I expect to see a reissue of the Gernsback Ralph 124C 41 Plus with spliced-in luridities wherein Ralph bubbles awe-struck and goshwow over the wonders of Alice 212B 423:

> Her hair spilled over the pillow, her bosom heaved as she reached for the lipole, a device that de-energized the wave components of the room-light generator and dephased their direction of travel, thereby dimming the room.
> "Now, Ralph, now...." she breathed--
> Ralph hastily unzipped his tuniform, a plastiskin disposable sanitary suit of clothing manufactured inexpensively and in great quantities for the citizens of the world in the year 2660, and threw it down the walldis, a chute for the disposal of refuse matter that fed directly from the apartment wall into an atomic incinerator.
> "Oh, Ralph, you have a plus tatooed on your chest! You're only the tenth man I've ever seen with a plus tatooed on his chest!"
> "But Alice, there are only ten men on the whole planet earth eligible to wear this sign!"
> "Well, what with it being so easy to go from one place to another in this modern day and age, I get around, I do. And I'm just crazy nuts for men with plus signs!" Etc. Etc."

/// What I want to know, how does the guy get home after he throws his suit down the incinerator? And do you suppose there is Fruedian significance about the plus sign? But then, wouldn't you be goshwow over a girl if her measurements were 212B 423? WOW! Well, on to the overseas branch in the person of:

CHARLES E. SMITH, 61, The Avenue, Ealing W. 13, London, England

"Ta for the copy of Shaggy which I received this morning - how's that for prompt service? I was quite staggered by the general appearence of the 'zine. I don't think I've ever seen a cleaner, nicer looking fanzine in my admittedly brief expereince of fanzines. This was, of course, enhanced by the often beautiful artwork featured in the issue. Especially the cover and the Zuber illo on page 23. Where did you get the Peake illustrations? I had heard that he did do illustrations but I'd never seen any of them.

I enjoyed the Berry story even if I can't find much to comment on in the story. I don't think it's one of his best. Still, the picture conjured up in my mind of Berry sitting on a bux with escaping mice (do you think they used a wooden horse?) all round him is a marvellous one. I couldn't find much to comment on with the Leiber article either, mainly because I've never been able to enjoy much of Lovecraft's stuff; too much of the unspeakable, unmentionable, undescribable (I used this word at Ella's once only to find her jump down my throat and correct it to 'indescribable", but it spoils the flow, yes?) unrecognizable, plain unsanitary - you get the picture I'm sure - horrors that his characters meet. Personally I'd sooner see Lovecraft writing about Leiber's works. Ah, well, you can't please everyone, unless you're publishing pronography and maybe not even then.

I'm afraid I've never been overfond of Heinlein even in his older stories. He has always struck me as a little flat and I've never managed to find myself moved in the way a Sturgeon story can do. Maybe that's unfair; they are obviously both trying to achieve different things but I can't help my prejudices and all that. When I think back to the intended sad and moving climax of "Gulf" where the two agents die in saving the future of the world, I just break up. And that crazy tombstone! Glad to see you linking all the stories since "Door Into Summer". It's struck me that in fact, Heinlein has been producing the same character in each story, simply varying the backgrounds slightly. Thus the hero of "The Glory Road" is simply an underprivileged Ricco of "Starship Trooper". A thought anway.

Two questions: Is Ellik going to have an English agent for his TAFF Report and is Fred Patten still publishing Salamander?"

//Charles would also like to receive fanzines. He sent money for old issues of Shaggy, as did others, and might send money for new issues of yours.

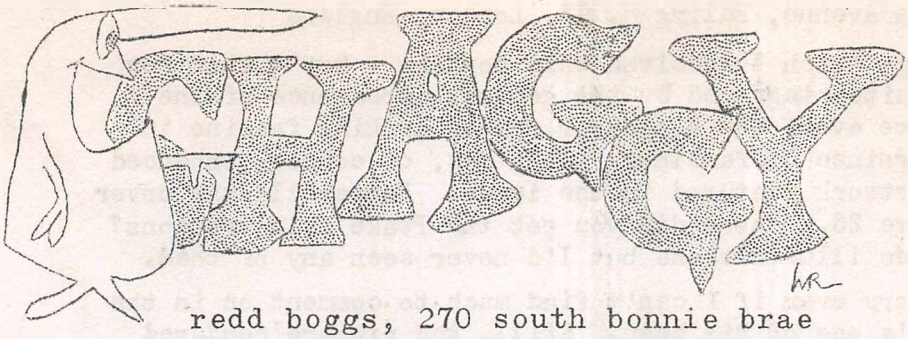
SID BIRCHBY, 40 Parrs Wood Ave., Didsbury, Manchester.20., drank a half-litre of dandelion wine and is sorry that Shaggy is folding. I'd be sorry if I drank a half litre of dandelion wine. He goes on to say "Your svelte, suave Shaggy leaves me frustrated instead of sated, like a night with a Lesbian." Well, Sid, it depends on your point of view but then you've been reading sex novels again. Almost everybody in L A writes them!

MARGARET GEMIGNANI, 67 Windemere Road, Rochester, New York 14610 thought Fritz Leiber did well on Lovecraft and liked Bjo's impressions of Las Vegas. You know, I guess we should've known there'd be a lady fan on Windemere...

And LOU POCHET of 124 Loyalhanna Ave., Latrobe, Penna. 15650 thinks well of Shaggy but little of his letter-writing ability. Be more cheerfuller next time you write, Lou, it might get printed. In fact, thanks to all you who wrote and please write again. More of you. Let's try for a 20-page lettercolumn next time. Hell, Redd might even give me 20 pages! What better show of confidence in the not-defunct Shaggy, wot?

This has been a 20-page lettercolumn in a hurry.

---Ed Cox



redd boggs, 270 south bonnie brae
los angeles, california, 90057

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Rosemary Hickey
3844 Broadway
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