



1121

number 1121

any number of other...
of which...
interest. This...

December

1961

Worlds Gone Hence
The Wandering Ghu
The Oneshot Session
The Cover was drawn by William Rotsler.

paraFANalia

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With this issue, The Wandering Ghu is seen safely to the shores of England, a story is re-printed from IPSO FACTO the quarterly magazine of the International Publishers' Speculative Organisation, and the result of a oneshot session is placed before the readers' sickened gaze. The reprinted story, which follows immediately after this page, was written around the subject set for the third IPSO mailing: "If you were offered a one-way trip into history - just you, no gadgets - would you take it?"

number nine 

Many apologies are offered for the poor typing and disgraceful reproduction, both of which are the outcome of hasty publishing and lack of interest. This stencil, the last one cut, finished 2nd. December, 1961.

Happy Christmas.

Worlds Gone Hence

While we can pray
For light of day
And hope in future tense,
We'll wish to see,
Yes, you and me,
The Worlds Gone Hence from Human **S**ense.

Some called him Odd John, but that was an old joke and really dated back to someone else in our club. This John was just an ordinary bloke: no strange tastes, no odd habits. In fact, at times he could be irritatingly over-normal. He was thin and tallish and had wavy black hair. He had a wife and owned a dog and was paying the mortgage on a house out towards the suburbs of town. He was popular in the club, with that dependable kind of friendship that other members liked and sometimes even had the sense to appreciate. We sometimes held meetings at his place and once he even threw a Christmas party for us all. Just the once, never again, for one of the young out-of-town fans tried to take his wife in the back room and not even Passive John (some member tagged him that when he refused to be dragged into club political skirmishing) would stand for that. He threw a fist at the youngster. Unfortunately the youngster tried to hit him back and was thenceforth drummed out of fandom.

Life's like that sometimes.

Not that John was the straight-laced sort. He let his hair down with the rest of us when he felt inclined and was actually the spearhead (though no-one seemed to notice) of a movement to put some humour into our club fanzine. And he wasn't narrow-minded either - as was proved when one of the fans in the group tried to proposition him. John just thanked the fellow for the intended compliment but declined the offer and suggested that there might be more comfort in the arms of the Secretary of the club, who at that time was a middle-aged spinster, and now of course the young man and the spinster are married and have a child, a dog, and a large collection of sci-fantasy in their house in the suburbs.

Ah yes, life was good then in our group. Always busy with something: the club fanzine, a local conference, projects of various sorts, and lots of group activity such as parties, movie shows, and simply fixing the clubroom.

Actually, we were fixing the clubroom up even in the last days of the club. Someone had a bright idea for a really goshwow project for decorating the room.. I

don't know how it started but we all found ourselves working on what we grandly termed a "Future History Chart". Rather like the one Bob Heilein uses for his books, but much bigger and with lots more detail. Actually, the reason for its size was supposed to be that we had a blank wall in the clubroom and required something to fill it. Wallpaper didn't seem available, and distemper wasn't considered 'U', and nothing else looked sufficiently stenic to the members. So, someone suggested we do our own decorating by drawing a chart on the wall.

It used to be hilarious at times at our weekly meetings, as we discussed what could be added to the History of the Future. Naturally we'd gab a while, and drink about an urn of tea, but when all the usual club-type business was done we would listen to the latest additions that were to be made to the Chart and discuss these as a club. The rule was that the whole club had to vote for an event or object for it to be added to the Chart. Great fun: we sat there and chunterred on about inventions that were yet to be invented and events that were yet to happen (if ever). We passed law, in our little way, on the future of mankind.

This was where John was important to the club. He seemed to have a natural grasp of the factors which might bear some influence upon the future course of history and this was often a great help to the committee whose task it was to draw up the Chart. Often he would find himself in the middle of a discussion about just what could happen in the future, and this wasn't because of any effort on his own part. It was simply that the other members felt that he would always have worthwhile opinions on just about any ideas they might suggest. In actual fact, John was rather reluctant to find himself involved in these affairs. On many occasions he would enter a discussions almost against his own wishes - drawn in by some other member of the group or perhaps by a particularly fuggheaded suggestion by one of the committee. And, you know, when John explained his side of these arguments I for one had to agree with him. He seemed to have an infallible instinct for future events.

There were times of course when no-one would agree with his ideas and then he'd argue for a while before realising his position. Then he'd look somewhat fed-up and shrug and let them go their way. It wasn't until the discussion of the time machine that he finally let loose with a few bitter and sarcastic cracks - behavior that wasn't like John at all. But it became apparent that John was upset over something, and this was causing him to show short shrift with anything that didn't agree with him. Some of the club members were quite surprised at this sudden change in John, and it was soon quite obvious that he was rapidly becoming our most un-popular member. And once or twice he even missed meetings.

It wasn't until one time when I decided to skip a meeting that I began to that I began to find out what had gone wrong with our erstwhile Anchor-man.

The years contain
All Man's domain,
Un-notised save in absence:
For when they're gone
We'll look and long
For Worlds Gone Hence from Human Sense.

I was in a bar in the centre of town, just warming up a little before going to see a new play. I wasn't drinking heavily; just enough to put me in a good mood for the play. In fact, I'd only been in the bar a few minutes before the commotion started at the back. I was startled to hear a lot of shouting, someone yelling at the bartender, asking for a drink. I looked around, feeling that there was something familiar in the voice of the drunk.

I didn't recognise him at first. This was mainly because I just didn't think of him as anything other than a member of the ski club, but partly I suppose because he wasn't the person I would expect to find boozing in a pub. But, there he was, and he had quite a load on.

Another bartender appeared and the two apron-clad strongmen hoisted John and began to frog-march him to the exit. I jumped up from my stool and stopped them. They weren't anxious to interrupt their duty, but when I explained that I was a friend of the drunk they draped him over my shoulder and curtly suggested I try to get him home.

John was burbling some unhappy song about 'worlds gone hence from human sense' as I pushed him into a taxi and gave the driver John's address. In the back of the car I tried to sober John up a little, but he was far too boozy to be interested in clearing his head.

After an embarrassing ride - we had to stop once to let John out while he vomited - we arrived before his home. I paid the cabby and half-carried half-pushed John towards the front door. The door was open. I staggered with John into the hallway and across it into the lounge. John was beginning to wake up in a bewildered panic, so I dropped him into a chair and headed for the kitchen. Mentally, I crossed out my chances of attending the theatre that night.

I tore some bread from a loaf and filled a glass with water and went back to John. He was still sitting up, and his eyes were open now. He accepted the bread and gnawed on it when I told him to. I held the glass to his mouth and he sipped some water. I left him chewing and looked around for the heater, plugged it in and placed it so the warm air was directed to John's face. Quite soon, he began to come round.

"What the hell John?" I asked. "How long've you been boozing?"

He painfully focused his eyes on my nose. "Uh." he ground out, an empty smile on his face. His eyes slid out of focus again. "Few days..." He dropped the glass and the water splashed over the rug, narrowly missing the bars of the heater. "Ooooh" he yelled, and his lungs gasped with laughter. Suddenly he stopped and looked at me. "I'm a damn fool." he said.

"Maybe." I picked up the glass and returned to the kitchen. This time I put a Seltzer tablet in the water. "Why?" I asked as I sat down.

"Oh, lots of things... Where'd you find me?"

"In a bar."

"Of course. Why were you looking for me?"

"I wasn't. I was skipping a club night to go to the theatre. You made a noise in the bar and the barmen threw you out. I just caught you before you hit the pavement."

He smiled for a minute, but stayed mute. I gave him the water and asked "Why?" again.

"Lost my job." He drained the glass and gave it back to me. A mighty belch burst from his throat and then he settled back into the chair and closed his eyes. "Forget me. Please leave now and let me disappear."

I laughed shortly and his eyes popped open in puzzlement. "Oh, come off it John, what's a little drunk? Sober up and we'll get you a job easily enough. You're not letting a little thing like getting sacked get you down are you?" I grinned at him, but he'd closed his eyes again. I slapped his arm and stood up. "I'll get some more bread."

He didn't move and I began to turn away but he suddenly started talking.

"When I said I'd lost my job I meant to say that I'd left it."

I sat down again. I began to feel a little foolish and for the first time I sensed that John's problem was more than just a long binge and its inevitable hangover.

"Then what made you go boozing?"

He almost smiled. "Well, problems that should have been solved a long time ago just caught me and suddenly I felt I needed oblivion." He cocked an eye at me. "And if that soundstoo pat, blame nature, not me."

"What problems, John?" I asked, still feeling silly. But I considered John to be a friend and even if it meant my seeming stupid I wanted to help him.

Again, he almost smiled. His eyes snapped open and he looked quietly at me. "If you had a chance," he whispered. "To make a trip back into history - just you, no super gadgets and no chance of return - to any place you chose, would you take it?" He grinned and closed his eyes. "Don't answer too quickly."

My jaw snapped shut. "Look John, I'm trying to help you. This isn't the time for jokes."

"Jokes he says!" he snickered. "Go on, you're a science fiction fan aren't you? You think about these things don't you? What would you say if I offered you a free one-way trip to Babylon in its heyday?"

"I'd tell you to go to hell!"

He chuckled. "You'd be wise to do that." He paused. "I wish I'd been so wise."

He looked round at me. "Oh yes, this isn't a lush burbling or a madman raving his fantasies. I took a one-way trip."

"Oh, hell's bells John, I'm trying to help you. If you don't stop being so damn stupid about things I'll get out and leave you to yourself." I stood up.

"No, don't go. I am by myself."

"You sleep where until your wife gets home from the meeting. She'll help you."

"But I am alone. She left me last week."

"Oh." I sat down again. "Before the binge?"

"The binge? Yes, before. It's a miracle she didn't leave long ago. You see, she wanted children. How could I have children? She wanted success; and every time I seemed to be getting too successful, somehow something went wrong. Everytime I try to do something it gets stopped. She'd be pregnant a few weeks. Then a miscarriage. I'd start a business; a shoe-shop, foundry, newspaper, coach-house, timber-yard; anything. Then for no reason I could find, people would take away their financial backing and I'd hit bottom again." He looked round at me and grinned savagely. "Old Man Time doesn't like his sons to cheat their birthright."

To say I was astonished would be to understate my feelings. I was pushed, numbed, angered, and completely bewildered. Dependable John, Time Traveller. Somehow I couldn't accept such an idea. And yet... somehow I knew John wasn't lying, or raving. There was fire in his expression, but it was the fire of a flickering rebellion, not that of an insane mind. My own jellied brain tried to grasp the idea, but found it difficult.

"But.. you're from the future." My feeling of stupidity strengthened.

"I was from the future." He said. "You see, I went back quite a long way."

I struggled out a one-syllable question that might have come from a drowning man.

"You didn't think I came back to this time, did you?" He chuckled quietly. "No I've been living from your past for a long time now. And I've begun to feel that it's been too long." He thumped his chest. "Today, I'm as fit as the day I left my time. I was thirty-eight then, and now after all these many years I'm just as old physically. But mentally I'm the oldest man in the world, Abraham had nothing on me." He snorted again and looked at me. "I'm thirsty. Fill that glass again would you?"

I went out to the kitchen, my mind whirling within a maze of half-formed glimpses of ideas. I quickly filled the glass and returned to the room, where John was still slumped in his chair. I handed him the glass.

"Didn't you ever try to.. to end it?" I asked.

"End it? Hawh! When you don't exist in a place how can you leave it? I can no more kill myself than I can travel back to the time I left. Don't you think I've tried? Nine lives - I've got a million!" He sobered again. "I've tried to kill myself several times. Not too many. Suicide isn't something you try too often."

I still felt something was missing, that John hadn't told me the full story yet. "Why did you come... go back?" I asked.

He looked at me, and sat up. "What would you do if someone offered you a chance to take a one-way trip back? Seriously?" He grinned. "Oh yes, I forgot; you'd tell them to go to hell. ...I didn't. I said yes." He relaxed again, and sipped from the glass in his hand. "But I've learned one thing. Taking a trip in time isn't just fun. You find there's no place for you in a world already gone by. History, like prophesy, must needs be enjoyed vicariously. But don't you worry about me. I'll disappear, and - let's be honest - nobody would believe you if you repeated this story." His tone lightened. "I think I'll try suicide again."

"Now John, look, there must be something we could do. You can go on living, and eventually you'll be back where this began and you could tell that inventor to go to hell."

"Your theory." he grinned. "No, somehow I feel that wouldn't work; since I do remember being a boy I must have been born sometime. How could two of me live at the same time?"

"Well, what'll happen when you do get back to the beginning? Back to your own time?"

"I'll be interested to find out." He said dryly. "I can't imagine that I'll go 'poof' and disappear, and I can't really see myself going through all this again." He stretched lazily and put the glass on the floor. "Nice water, the water of this time. I'll be able to finish that after a few more burps." And he belched again.

There came the noise of a car pulling up outside and I heard footsteps on the verandah. I got to my feet. I looked at John, slumped tiredly in his chair. "See who it is." he said, and I went to the door.

I stopped as I opened the door, and turned round. "Uh, John."

He looked listlessly at me.

"When did you go back?"

"When? Almost two thousand years ago. Quite soon, really."

I closed the door behind me and crossed the hall. I opened the front door, still trying to puzzle over this bizarre problem.

I didn't recognise his wife at first. Then, "Rachel!"

She stood still, looking at me. "Is John back?"

"Yes. Come in."

"He's alright? Not still..."

"He's sober. But he seems...."

There was a shout from the lounge. I pushed at the door and rushed in. John was slumped over the heater. I grabbed him, pulled him into the chair. His left hand was badly burned, and the front of his coat was blackened. I felt his right wrist for a pulse but could detect nothing, and had to pull the water-glass away from his fingers. I heard a moan behind me.

"Sit down Rachel, in the hall! I'll call a doctor." But I knew it was useless, I knew that this was the suicide John had been talking of. And now the problem was clearer to me. I went into the hall and rang the doctor, trying to comfort Rachel as she quietly sobbed with long quiet shudders. She turned to me suddenly, "I'm afraid, I'm afraid." She moaned. "Help me."

"There," I whispered. "You'll be alright."

"But John... I killed him. I left him and he died."

"No, he knew what he was doing." I put her hands between mine to try to replace some of the warmth that seemed to have left her. "Rachel, why did you come back tonight?"

Her mouth worked and her hands were rigid in mine. "I found.. This morning.. The doctor said I'd pregnant." I kissed her, because I knew what I had to do, and no kid of mine was going time travelling.

I'll search always
To find the days
Now past, from whence I come.
Then once again
All Time for men
With sight will be their cherished home.

Part
Three
of

the
Wandering
GHU

.....
New readers: In paraFANalias 4, 5, and 6, it was revealed that Bruce Burn was simply the secret identity for the Wandering Ghu, and in -FAN- #6 the Spirit of Trufandom damned Bruce to wander the paths of Fandom for two thousand beers. -FAN- #7 presented the grim story behind the first few delicious beers, which were drunk while Bruce travelled aboard the T.V. Castel Felice on his way to England from New Zealand. -FAN- #8 continued the hoppy tale, and now -FAN- #9 presents part three, which may or may not be the final episode and which might transport the casual reader from Aden to dear old Blighty.
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Fifth Week Busy days and nights this week as we mounted the Ship's concert, 17 - 23 August. took a day-long side trip to Cairo, and - at the end of the week - landed at Naples.

The first night of the concert was really quite a shambles. The night before there had been an attempt to organise a dress rehearsal and it had degenerated into chaos. We started rehearsing shortly after midnight, and continued through the darkness until two or three o'clock in the morning, by which time everybody was fed up with the whole deal, and really only half of the show had been rehearsed. Consequently, on the first night no-one was any too sure how long the programme was to last or even if half the items were worth presenting.

Jim Wallace, the compere, introduced the show and then on danced a frolicking party of idiots doing a sort of can-can and generally yelling their heads off. Both Noleen and Pat were among them as they jumped from foot to foot and swung their skirts up high. The audience got quite a kick out of it all and noisily demanded more of the same. They got it, with the dancers wearily trying to look gay and not tired or breathless.

Then Jim ran on again, made a joke or two and suddenly called fro Bruce and Philip to come on and do 'My Old Man'. On we marched, dressed in sailor's uniforms, marching deadpan across the front of the Verandah Bar. Suddenly Philip, who was in front, stopped, and lo and behold there was the microphone, in the

middle of the floor instead of up on the bandstand where we had expected to find it. Hah. Well, the band carried on playing our marching song for a while, then came to a staggering halt, much as we had done. The pianist, not quite knowing what to do, paused for a moment. The moment grew a little longer, so Philip and I tried to gloss over it all by looking goonishly at the mike and pretending we didn't know what it was.

Then the music began -- and passed the cue. Desperate by this time, I let out something of a strangled 'OOOHh - oh...' and waited for Philip and the band to join in. Pretty quickly they did so and we began a rushed (the band played too fast) and garbled (Philip forgot his lines, so I slipped in a gag to give him time to have a look at the typed copy of the song he held in one hand) version of an incredibly gauche song I'd put together, called 'My Old Man's a Bosun'. It went like this:

Oh - oh, My Old Man's a Bosun,
He wears a Bosun's stripe;
He wears Bell-bottom trousers,
And he blows a Bosun's pipe!

One day he went back a-a-aft,
The Admiral for to meet
But 'e blew so 'ard the Admiral slipped:
Now 'es the best rear in the fleet!

One day they swung the life-boats
To see if they would float,
But padding all the liquor of one
They found a Bosun's coat!

Oooh - oh, etc.

Last week the Captain said to Dad
"We're running low on wine.
Please check the liquor stores me lad;
But first replenish mine!"

So they searched the little ~~ship~~^(to find)
A mixture fit to drink,
And ended with this potion:
Bilge water and red ink!

Oooh - oh, etc.

(Slightly slower:)

Then the crew did gather round them
To drink each of this draught:

(Spoken:)

'Corse the Navy ended in the red,
'n' now Dad's the Bosun of a Ras-sa-aast!

Suddenly, the hall was full of noise, and I began to think of leaping over-board. Then Jim grabbed the mike and yelling something about us doing the whole thing over again, grabbed my arm. I looked at Philip, who looked blankly back, and then we trudged back to the mike and did the whole thing again, but without any mistakes.

That noise began again, so we finally chickened out and ran for the stairs that led down to the open area at the front of A-deck that served as a communal dressing-room. The next item followed us on, then a couple of others. Then, while a girl pianist gave with a very skilfull banging of "A Revolutionary Etude" by Chopin, I slipped out of my blues and into a white coat, hiawathas, and a stethoscope. The image of a Doctor. And Italian doctor, no less. Then, right at the last moment I rushed back upstairs and walked into the floodlights with Maureen Adams, a girl from Nelson who had been pressed into taking the part of the Nurse in our skit about the Ship's Hospendale. Hoo-haw; this was the sketch in which I took the mickey out of the Ship's Doctor, and so I really went to town on it by leering at the pretty girl who came to have her pulse

taken, throwing a fit when a patient with a broken foot objected to being kept standing while I cleaned my nails with the stethoscope, and eventually prescribed Epsom salts as a cure for the same broken foot. All good fun to play in and the audience loved every minute of it. No matter what I did, they laughed, and it got to the stage where I thought that all the audience had been to the Hespendale and knew what the place was like. ...Then came the interval, during which the ship's orchestra played interestingly enough to keep the audience from disappearing to its various cabins.

The second half of the show opened with a selection of popular songs played by the passengers orchestra - a collection of musicians of varied leanings who were travelling to Europe, some on grants and others on their uppers. To follow this, the erstwhile Bosun's son teamed up with Max Somethingorother for a ship-board version of the old music-hall sketch of the two Girl Guides of somewhat precocious natures. Then Mike and John Powers played the Waikato-trained piano accordians, and were quickly followed by some rather tatty work with short pois, by Dot, Hilda, and Julie, three New Zealand girls.

Then came the turn of Mrs. Smith, who went on and on with a long monologue of the 'lower Saam' variety, and then mistook the yawns of the audience for loud applause and continued in the same merry vein with a seemingly endless song about a mother in Suzzecks who knew how to rare 'em. She left the stage amid deafening applause, and then there was a slight pause as the lights began to dim.

Darkness, and a few titters from the back seats. Then a scream cut the dense air and several yelling savages leaped into the centre of the floor. The haka had begun, and the lights came on again.

The first night, when we did the haka, some Aussies in the front row looked really scared, and on the second night, one of my fellow-shriekers left the main line-up of the haka and advanced threateningly upon the Captain of the ship, who was lolling grossly in his chair in the front row. Don, the out-winger, stood over the Captain, screaming his own head off and threatening to remove the Captains. He stuck his tongue out, rolling his eyes like mad. The Captain began to look a little worried so Don grabbed the front of his shirt and lifted him out of his chair! Quite a feat, for the Captain was built like an orange.

After the first night, the whole cast was given a dinner at which we all were served several glasses of wine and a whole lot of food far superior to the stuff we had to eat for the rest of the voyage. Perhaps the Captain's presence had something to do with this. The affair gradually generated into an all night party of course, and it was much later in the following day that I eventually found my way to my bunk and collapsed upon it, thoroughly exhausted but quite content with the thought that the evening had been a success.

The second night of the show proceeded much as the first, except that a new sketch was added to the programme. Afterwards, the cast was too tired to hold another all-nighter, so I got to bed early -- which was just as well, as we all had to muster outside the Purser's office at six the next morning in order to be taken ashore at Suez. Breakfast was to be served at 5.30, and so I was up and about and ready to face unknown adventures by five o'clock: a little tired perhaps, but more worried about what was going on in the sinuses in my head. I had woken up with a slight ache behind my eyes, and I was anxious about how I might react to the heat of the coming bus-ride to Cairo.

So there I stood, waiting in the empty dining rooms at 5.30 in the morning, wondering why no-one else seemed interested in getting up so early. I stopped a passing steward and was politely informed that the ship had missed the convoy through the Suez canal, and so would cruise slowly towards Suez during the day! Chaa! I went back to bed, and stayed there most of the day, except for brief moments when I would emerge to eat or to take a few photographs of my ship-mates.

Cairo
18 - 8 - 60. Next day I again rose early, and so did about three hundred other people, all eager to go ashore and dig for the Lost Treasure of the Pharaohs. Breakfast, and then a long wait while my passport was stamped, and eventually a whole mob of us were allowed to stumble down some steps and into the open deck of a small launch. Not all of us, just thirty or so. The rest of the brave three hundred were carried in a similar small vessel, and in one large launch - and not one of us reached the gnat-infested shore unbaptised. I was in the first boat, and so leaped ashore and bagged the best coach before anybody else had a chance. Philip Wincop had more or less organised a party of forty of us all to travel in the same bus, and he stood outside this bus, holding a large sign above his head that read simply 'US'. This was also part of a carefully calculated move to stop any trigger-happy natives from thinking we were a bunch of invading Pommies.

Soon we were roaring along a fairly good road that crossed miles and miles of brown sands. The first camel was sighted about ten miles outside of Suez, and our first look at the conditions in which the poor people of these old countries live came at about the same time. We had all been rather impressed by the new buildings that were to be seen around the port of Suez, and it was quite a shock to see their antithesis in the clay-brick hovels on the outskirts of the town, and to glimpse in passing some small and filthy-looking caves in which some of the people had to live.

About halfway to Cairo we noticed a large fort-like building to the right of the road. It's formidable dun-coloured battlements stood out staunchly against the roasting fawn sands. But there were no flags to be seen, and little activity could be observed, so we asked our driver what it was. He said something about a monastery, but I still like to believe that it might be after all a last outpost of the Foreign Legion or something, grimly determined to protect the Empire from the Horde.

Suprisingly soon, we began to dodge our way through the streets of Cairo itself, weaving through a mess of barrows, drays, horses, oxen, and thousands of Arabs. These people are so stubborn that many just refused to move aside for the bus, and the driver risked homicide at every corner. Sit-down saviors, please note. We swung through one of the partly rebuilt areas of Cairo, where Nasser has begun to modernise the city. Some of the buildings were particularly beautiful, and the bus came to a stop near one of the most striking: the Nile-Hilton, another of Conrad Hilton's hotels built right on the banks of the Nile river. I took a couple of shots of the Nile-Hilton and of the prayer-tower that stood some way in the distance, then followed the mob into the National Museum nearby.

Naturally, what we all wanted to see were Mummies and Idols, and lots of Gold and the drogoman assigned to us certainly gave us our eyeful of these things. He also showed us the four sarcophagoses of the King Tut-ankh-amon. These four huge boxes, fitting one inside the other, were designed to substitute for a small house in which a King would normally be buried. The glass cases around this exhibit were filled with chariots, ornaments, toys, and numerous walking sticks that had been the Kings while he was alive (incidentally, one interesting point is that the Egyptian Kings used their walking-sticks upside-down to present day methods: and an image of a defeated enemy was carved to the curved end so the King could always be seen to be making his enemies bite the dust.).

One of the most interesting exhibits was that of a number of small doll-like mummies. These, the guide said, represented the number of servants the King had possessed. Personally, I'd take a guess and suggest that they more probably represented the spirits of people who died either when the tomb was being built or during the ceremonies of the burial. Just a guess, of course, but immolation of a King's servants is a common practice amongst ancestor worshippers.

From the museum we went to see some shops, and by the eager way in which our dragoman ushered us about, I suspect he gets a drop from most of the touristy shops in Cairo. One shop featured trinkets and leather goods. The most beautiful stones I've ever seen were collected as necklaces and brooches and rings and securely set out beneath thick glass; diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and all, but most appealing were some Opals with their creamy blues and streaks of yellow-gold. For sensational effect, however, my eyes were taken by the Alexandrian Stone rings. The glowing colour of these almost translucent stones changes according to the intensity and the colour of the light thrown upon them. The price was something like six or eight pounds for each finger-nail-sized rock.

Some people bought pieces of embroidered silks, and others bought articles made of leather. Me, I bought a leather riding crop that concealed the wicked steel of a rapier-like dagger. This I later swapped for a similar crop that lacked the steel spike. I made a profit on the deal too, since Dave McIvor bought me a couple of beers to seal the bargain.

In another shop, I and four or five others were shown into a conopied room reminiscent of the Arabian Nights. A most fascinating odour filled the room, and the reason for it was soon revealed to us. According to the owner/salesman, the perfumes from this place formed the basis to most of the big name perfumes of France. Nobody was very convinced, not even when he offered us a pint of the stuff for a couple of quid Sterling, and so nobody bought anything. We just sniffed appreciatively, and said thanks. The dragoman warned us that we would never have a chance like this again to buy such materials so cheaply, but we proved immovable. Our guide looked downcast.

We all climbed back into the bus and the driver took us through a maze of back streets (or so they seemed) and up the side of a hill until we reached the forecourt of the Mohamed Ali Mosque, a great Turkish-style of Mosque that, according to our dragoman, was built by the Grandfather of King Farouk. As the dragoman put it, each monarch of Egypt used to be expected to build a palace to himself for his own burial - a practice that dates back, one supposes, to the times of the pharaohs. I'm not sure that Grandad Farouk is entombed in his building, though. From the forecourt, the Mosque is very impressive, bearing a huge domed roof that reaches to perhaps two hundred feet above the visitors' shoe-less feet. Three tall and slim towers reach about three hundred feet into the blue sky above it and the whole effect is that this pile of granite and marble is far more permanent than any of its surroundings - city and rock both.

Inside, a guide told us in hushed words the story behind the Mosque, but I was far too busy trying to take a couple of photographs in the very dim hall, and didn't hear much of what he said. I did understand that the Moslem prayers are supposed to be called from the tallest tower each noon, and that the monks were supposed to call their own prayers from the top of a very richly built red, green, and gold staircase that rose to a height of perhaps twenty feet towards the back of the hall. To say the hall was impressive doesn't quite tell just how astonished I was to gaze from the red carpet that covered the huge floor up at the high-domed ceiling with its many windows - all showing bright coloured glass - and variously attractive patterns in rich gold, yellows, browns, reds, and dark greens.

Standing outside the Mosque, on a slight rise, there was another building of impressive design. And from the garden between the two I gazed at the panorama. I took the usual touristy photographs of the city as it spread out below the hill, showing the whole place from hovels to Hilton, from the pebble houses in the heart of the city to the pyramid on the horizon twenty miles away.

We climbed once more into the bus and went back through the city. While crossing the Nile, which runs through the city, someone said something about Moses, and our dragoman pointed to a rough patch of ground a short way upstream. "Tzere," he said, "Tzatz where Mozez was bohrn." So we all dropped our jaws, and a few among us dutifully clicked their camera shutters. We sped on through the city and along a motorway. Presently we were parked outside the Mena House Hotel, where we were to have lunch. It was with some feeling of awe that I entered the building, for right across the road from it, about a hundred or two yards away, looked the Pyramid of Cheops, like a rocky and craggy cliff.

Lunch was find, though light. A glass of beer and two more of Val's Codeines and gradually my eyes stopped aching so much. (I took about eight codeines that day; without them I just wouldn't have made it.) After a short and refreshing wash, I went out into the sunshine. Everybody was standing around taking photographs of everybody standing around taking photographs of everybody etc.. Uh, well, I took a photograph and then tried a short walk on some nice green grass around the side of the hotel. There was a miniature golf course all set up there, with all sorts of trick tunnels and windmills and so on, but by the time I'd found someone to get me a golf-club and a ball, I saw my party leaving the Hotel for the Compound over the road. The groundsman, who had just found a golf-stick, trotted after me as I stepped lively to join my friends. I smiled and grinned and shook my head and he cursed me roundly as I in the unfomfortable security of ignorance pretended I thought he was saying what a lovely day it was.

In the Compound I mounded a Camel. I could have sat upon a horse or leaped into a surrey, but I've always had a yen to be an Egyptian explorer and so I mounted a Camel. I am now an expert when it comes to mounting Camels and feel sure that I have the makings of a Valentino or an Eddy where racing the durned things is concerned. And I have bowed legs to prove it. It cost me something like five shillings in tips to my camel-driver, but it was well worth it. I raced everybody up the hill to the Pyramid, yelling something like "Sluggabug" and kicking the poor beast in the ribs. The driver ran after me, calling out all sorts of wild words which were probably insulting, and urging the camel to greater speed. Weeee!

I paused at the top of the hill, and my driver caught up. He said he'd take a picture of me, so I cautiously gave him my camera. Just then, Lyn (the judo practitioner) caught me up, so the driver insisted upon us being in the picture together. (Turned out a rather good shot too). Going downhill to where the Sphinx sits poker faced, I almost fell over the neck of my mount. When camels walk they give an unsettling wobbling from side to side, and when they walk downhill they also wobble from front to back. And they drop their heads, so that you feel as if you're sitting on the edge of a precipice. Not very comfortable, or even safe, but it was good fun, so I got mine galloping again and risked my neck.

The Sphinx blindly grinned at my activity as the camel knelt on his front legs and I tumbled to the ground. I felt distinctly de Milleion as I photographed the camel and its proud owner posing before the Sphinx and one of the pyramids. The Sphinx itself was in very bad condition. It's inscrutable smile that supposedly looks out upon the desert of mans' future is so inscrutable you can barely discern it from the other windworn marks upon the head of this pile of carved rock. One thing that surprised me was that the Sphinx actually sits in a huge trench dug out of the sand. I suppose we all know that the Sphinx was discovered because the head stuck through the sand that had buried the body, but somehow I had forgotten that all that sand had to be shovelled away. So it was with a feeling of something being wrong that I looked down at the Sphinx. But he was implacable. He just sat there, paws extended. I climbed over a fence and took an excellent shot of the

Sphinx, with the Great Pyramid looming up in the background. Unfortunately, this shot got double-exposed with a shot of the volcanic island of Stromboli that I took as we steamed past the coast of Italy, a few days later, so I now have a striking shot of a camel walking down the side of a volcano.

At the foot of the dune of sand that washes away from the of the Sphinx there is a Pepsi-Cola stand, and it was here that Sinbad (our guide: the name I gave him after he called me Popeye) told me of the days when he had fought in the first world war. Sinbad spoke English very well, and I suspect he must have had a pretty fair education, as had the other dragoman whose name I forget, but who had a pretty impressive Doctorate of Egyptology (whatever that is) after his name (whatever that is).

Both men worked as a team to give us quite an enjoyable trip, and on the journey from Cairo to Port Said we passed my fez around for them and gave them something like a four pound tip. The driver got a quid or two for himself too, in another hat.

The journey to Port Said was quite interesting, though most of the time we travelled too quickly to really look at the scenery that whisked past the windows of the bus. Bullocks and carts, muddy streams, naked kids splashing in brown pools, fowls and cattle crossing the road, mud huts and mothers suckling babies in the evening sun, the sky blushing red and gold, dark living trees rushing past the windows, the roar of the engine, black phantoms etched against the lightened horizon, many cars speeding to whence we had departed. Night and singing company aboard the coach.

We stopped for a late snack at a place called Ismallia, near the Timsah Lake, and then our excellent driver took us the rest of the way in his very comfortable Mercedes bus. Most of the way back, once the sun was out of sight, we all sang ourselves silly. A few of us, travelling in this bus, had taken part in the haka on both nights of the concert and consequently had little voice left at all, but we all squeezed some sort of sound through our throats, finally ending with a good old traditional Kiwi type song, "Now Is The Hour", which we lustily sang for the driver as we trooped out of the door and onto the quayside. He laughed and sang too, and accepted his tip with grinning gratitude, but must have thought us all pretty mad as we evaporated into the gloomy lauches and went back to the end of a month of easy living.

Naples 21/22-8-60. Naples was a melancholy port for most of us. We'd come to know some other people on board pretty well, and now some of these friends were to leave the ship, and probably we'd never see them again. And of course, those about to leave the ship felt sorry that the month of carefree idleness was over. Their's was the awkward task of landing in a foreign country, of being tossed quite suddenly into a very strange environment, and perhaps to start hitch-hiking immediately for other, even stranger, places. There were some tearful scenes as the boat left Naples the afternoon of the the second day there.

But, we arrived at Naples some time in the afternoon of a Sunday and the city peacefully slumbered under a fleecy-blue sky. We landed at the quay about nine p.m., after sitting watching seagulls all afternoon. First people ashore were the crew and stewards, followed by any passengers who wished to permanently dis-embark that evening. Then, about ten-thirty or so, the rest of the passengers were allowed to put their feet upon the wharves of Naples. Once again I'd teamed up with Dave and Russell McIvor, and we decided to look around whatever we could find in Naples this late in the evening. Not that there was much in our price range. About half a mile from the wharves was a sort of buffet-supermarket. Most folks seemed to go there, so we three did too. Had some ice-cream there, a

meat-pie, and later some rather tasteless beer. We wandered along one of the roads that leads into the town business area. Men kept on pestering us with sales talk about night clubs and girls, but we doggedly plodded on until one bloke who'd followed us nearly all the way along the street mentioned cooled beer. We asked him to take us to his night-club.

Five minutes later we were standing outside a place called the Cactus Club. We went through the door and down some stairs, and then into a small and stuffy dive. There were only one or two men in there, the other occupants being women, who sprawled on most of the available chairs. A big fat ugly woman stood behind a bar and grinned when she saw us, but we moved on to a table beside the small dance-floor. It was dark, and the air was full of smoke, but I could feel the speculative eyes of the occupants of other tables rest briefly upon us as we ordered two bottles of beer and three glasses. The waiter brought the beer and glasses, but I declined any of the stuff when I saw how small the bottles were. The waiter was ruffled, and departed in a huff with Dave's money, and our guide to La Dolce Vita kept on spitting on the floor and talking about the women in the room. He tried to bum a cigarette from one of us, and Dave eventually gave him one. The waiter had disappeared with the change, but I saw him in a distant murky corner so yelled at him for the money. He dawdled over to us, acted very apologetic and handed Dave some cash, then vanished once more. We counted the change, worked out how much it equalled in Australian terms, and began yelling for the Manager. Our shifty guide began to look worried, and told us to buy some more grog, but just then some other blokes from the ship walked into the dive, and joined in our noise-making. The Manager came rushing into the scene, then shot out and dragged back the waiter, who grudgingly produced our change, then had enough nerve left to ask for a tip. We left in disgust.

Back on the ship people milled aimlessly around the decks, trying to find something to do or say that would make a proper break to the friendships into which they had drifted over the past few weeks. Pretty soon, I got tired of it all and went to bed.

Woke up next morning just in time to rush a slice of toast into my gullet before staggering ashore to catch the coach to Pompei. The ride took us through a good deal of Naples, then along a fast road around the foot of Vesuvius. We stopped briefly at a Cameo factory and gawked at some of the excellent work being done there. There was one bracelet that took my eye; it seemed to have been carved from a shell rather like paua shell. Which would be an incredible achievement because of the extreme brittleness of these shells. The prices of the goodies were very reasonable, but most of us were pretty well bust, so buying wasn't very brisk. We all climbed back into the coach and continued on our way to the disinterred city of Pompei.

Along the road were small farms (or large gardens), each one full of plants and containing some of the dirtiest hovels I've ever seen. Things off the road seemed pretty damp, and this lent a brilliant greenness to the countryside. The road itself was a fair-dinkum motorway, and had a two-way carriage that wound across the countryside at the foot of Vesuvius, sometimes above the level of the surrounding land, sometimes scooping through a channel dug into the ground. Traffic was heavy, and the majority seemed to consist of large coaches like our own.

All going to or coming from Pompei.

Which is where we eventually stopped.

Before me, as I stood outside of the coach, was a wall and what looked like the entrance to a large garden. I followed the mob inside. Looking back at the wall, I could see that its bricks were old - old enough to look like lumps of rock piled up around the garden. In one corner of this huge entrance-way was an

arrangement of scaffolds where some extensive repair work was going on.

At the far end of the forecourt I passed through a turnstile and tramped on with the mob. Up a slightly rocky rise, and suddenly I realised that this was Pompei. Old rocks and stone, with mortar between the blocks, a roughly cobbled path and on either side a sidewalk, roofless dwellings with gaping doorways, tufts of grass in temples, columns short and stout and supporting only air, a long lane that wobbled its way downhill away from the market. Yes, this was Pompei.

Along some narrow (where there was still a sidewalk) roads there were the worn-out grooves of the chariot wheels and at crossroads and junctions large blocks of stone still stood to protect the feet of the pedestrian from the mud of a Roman thoroughfare. A two-lane roadway stretched from the Forum, past the Baths, and formed a junction with the Strada di Nola, a main thoroughfare. The Forum, of course, was just a ruined market-place, with grass growing in patches in various places. Columns still stood in places along the side, and some of them supported large chunks of battered masonry. But most of the remains were simply hefty walls and mounds of brick and solid butchers tables (the stone under-table). In the baths there was some well-preserved statuary and an expanse of mosaic work.

Nearby, the Casa di Pansa revealed to me the structure of an old Roman house. The centre patio surrounded by a verandah was paved and some plants were growing up the verandah supports; the roof of the building had either stood out under the weight of ashes or . . . been rebuilt. The guide split the party into two and us men followed him into a small chamber upon the walls of which were one or two crude and faded sketches of coital positions. 'Ha-ha' we all laughed, but none of us were too sure whether this should be treated as an interesting aspect of a 'decadent' civilisations moral laxity, or as lavatory-wall scrawlings. But they were nothing to get excited about in either case.

Adjoining the Casa di Pansa is a modern cafe, of course.

Through the Temple of Apollo, from which Vesuvius could be clearly seen (it could be seen from almost anywhere in Pompei), and back to the Museum we trekked. Out of the sun for a while, we gawked and admired and stood astonished before cases filled with artifacts from the buried city, pieces of jewelery that had somehow escaped the burning ash, the agonised form of a petrified dog that had been caught out in the rain of volcanic ash. The form of a man who had been attempting to run showed how unexpected the eruption of Vesuvius had been. An incredible and disturbing experience, this, to stand in a silently windswept city and look upon its record of achievements. People had worn the sidewalk here; the wheels of carts and chariots had grazed that rut in the alley; here is where orgies once took place and here people knelt and made offerings to gods. This was a home with children chasing their shadows in the front door and out the back; here a baker rolled his bread or a butcher wrung a chickens neck; fashions of clothes were devised in that cell-like house and over there, behind the pock-marked archway, is where soldiers quartered.

Halfway round in 40 days
24 - 28 August, 1960.

In the afternoon of the 22nd the Castel Felice slowly left Naples. Some people cried but most seemed ready for this logical splitting of friendly ties that had sometimes grown healthy and strong with fellow travellers. Margaret cried, and big fat Val cried, and lovely Gloria hopefully waved a tear moistened hand from the end of the quay. Others on the quay, waving to a mass of friends, looked happy but lost; regretting the times to come when an intense friendship would not be present. For life on a passenger ship is full of nothing but the balance of

of friendships. One owns no more than another, and the sign of wealth is to buy the other fellows drinks. Names, jobs, titles, possessions, what are these when the weeks ahead of you are as assured as the weeks ahead of the next man? Land is a hazy memory and a cloudy dream and all that is sure is that sunburn can be sore, that dinner on fridays features fish, that the girl in cabin 341 seems to have in mind what you have in mind, that oh blimey it's time to do some laundry, or that somehow the days seem to be getting shorter - the trip is almost ended.

I felt tired during the last days of the trip. Just as one can grow weary of a humdrum working life, so too one can feel boredom creeping in upon a liesurely comfortable existence. And with half of one's company lost, to whom does one turn for companionship? When everybody's mind is working on the problem of saying goodbye, it is not possible to form new friendships. An impatience developes. The trip will end soon.

So, I sat on my hands for a few days, watching the people around me. Keeping back my own reactions to the quiet last days. For the ship seemed empty of life now - half-empty and ready for a second ladfall the Felice spread her wake over the quiet Mediteranean.

We passed Gibraltar at night, and the next day began to head north along the coast of Portugal. Nothing couldbe seen of the land beyond the dun-brown cliffs and the suggestion of mauve hills further inland. During the day, eyes anticipated the course of the ship with close studies of the map of European sea lanes posted on the board in the Verandah bar. At night, dances proved quiet in the bar and with colder weather few lovers ventured onto the decks.

We began packing, squeezing into suitcases the purchases of half-a-dozen cities. Estimating customs duties on cameras, tape-recorders, radios, silks, and baubles from tax-free countries. Locking into boxes the happiness of dances and parties caught in monochrome memories. Southampton is two days away.

Addresses are exchanged, but this is politeness. Few will be used, since people grow apart on land where unlimited outlets are available for friendship. Passion is held back, and shallow smiles show thoughts racing ahead to wharves where brief goodbyes might be said. One more day and in England I will be.

Tomorrow. Excitement spreads and goodbyes are said three times, for tomorrow we leave the ship. A circut of the deck is dangerous now. Stay indoors, in the warm. In the cabins, in the bars. To say goodbye to friends just once is enough; say it again too soon and boredom covers all your thoughts. But as you pack your clothes, or as you raise your glass, you think "Ah, what a happy trip it was. Friends, favours, foods, and fools; what else should there be in life?"

Tomorrow. Tomorrow dawns and England is in sight...but rain obscures more detail. There it is, the land to which we're headed; half-hidden in the mist. Is it green or grey, rough or smooth, flat or steep? Are there people there, standing on a cliff and waving, thinking of a long sea trip? Do they wonder where we're from? Or do they, like us, wonder where we're bound?

Can they see us through the mist?

The ONE SHOT SESSION

If the following piece of fantasy reads a little dis-jointed, it's probably because it was written by six different people, and great amounts of time separate the various sections. For those readers who like one-shots this will be almost enjoyable; for those who feel otherwise I can only offer my deepest apologies for having the effrontery to publish such nonsense.

by: Jimmy Groves,
Pat Kearney,
Arthur Thomson,
Albert J. Hoch,
Alan Rispin,
& Bruce Burn

BURN:

He crashed the stylus into the oak table and fled from the room. Into the rain he sped, spraying puddles of water from his pounding feet as they struck the soft earth of the garden. "Confound the comments!" he cried, and his voice screamed hoarsely from his anger-tightened throat. The winds roared with his words and swept them away and out of hearing, as he stumbled among weeds that sprang from flower-beds. He tripped and fell. He rose, then tripped again, still crying, "Stay away, Vaecor - my fanzine's not for you!" The wind kept him bowed to earth and sodden drops of rain cleared the sweat of fear from his shoulders. With the weight of a thousand tired men he fell, suddenly, face down into the mud and only the mire that had been soil stopped his final defiance from utterance.

RISPIN:

Vaecor stood over him as he writhed in the morass that had been the garden. "But it's mine now, MINE!" he screamed at the struggling fan, his high pitched keening voice whipping aloft on the howling gale. Agonised movement contorted the fan lying half buried in louthesome putrescence beneath the high attic window. Vaecor hauled him to his feet and marched him back to the low, solidly built outhouse where he had been interred.

"I want those comments for the deadline, and I'm not going to have you stop me getting them!...Either them or your skin to wrap the bundles in!"

HOCH:

The rain thundered into the garden. Gushets of water poured down the tree trunks and furious drippings fell from every quivering leaf. The eaves of the buildings groaned and hissed with the sheets of water that rushed off them. The pool grew. Its foul putrescence made turgid by the intrushing waters, it began to cover its own banks like some loathsome and quivering amoeba.

Pausing in his torment of the hapless fan, Vaecor looked about him; the dim light gleaming on his scaly skins. "Look you!" he cried, shaking the pitiful fan in his claw. "This whole planet opposes my wishes and yet I'll still publish the fanzine and the opinions in it will be my own!"

"You fiend!" gasped the fan, sagging limply in the inhuman grasp of the giant alien. "You know the effect of your alien viewpoint upon young fan. You know the moral chaos that whill inevitably result."

"You weakling," keened the alien, "of course I know the moral chaos that will result, but I also am aware of the maturity that will eventually emerge and that all your society will benefit. You have been an unknowing tool of the forces of corruption and degeneracy that have held this planet in thrall for centuries!"

The rain poured on the young fan's face like a cleansing force. He gasped palely into the gloom. "You're lying! There are no such forces!" There was a note of desperation in his voice, for the huge alien's voice had cut savagely at his confidence and an icy doubt chilled his very soul.

THOMSON:

Cold, rain soaked, the fan lay in the mire and mud; beaten. The alien laughed in savage triumph above him. The fan twisted and pressed his face hopelessly into the ground but even in the depths of his despair hope was born anew in his breast. Deep in the inner-most recesses of his brain was born the germ of an idea, a wild pulsating thrill of discovery of an old, old adage 'If you can't beat 'em --- join 'em... Then beat 'em.' He raised a suddenly enlightened face to the alien. "I have seen the light!" he cried. "I believe, I believe. Master.." He rose to his knees and grovelled in front of the alien. Clutching the taloned feet he abased himself.

The alien gazed down at the writhing fan, and a strange look came to his evil features. "You mean, you mean?" "Yes," cried the fan, "I shall be your disciple...forever."

A look of wonderment crossed the features of the alien....."My first convert," he murmured, "my very first." He stretched down a taloned hand. "Rise." he said.

KEARNEY:

The fan clambered out of the muck, and with the alien he walked off into the darkness which had swallowed all sight of his house.

"Well, as you have now seen the light, as you so archaically put it, we had better get down to some concentrated publishing." The alien smiled to himself, and the fan plotted. "We had better rearrange that last lot of material into a supplement." the fan said. "The main issue will contain letters. I suggest that perhaps we could have...." the fan broke off, as he saw an ugly look cross the alien's features.

"I organise the planning of the next issue." the alien growled.

"But I was only...." The fan's voice faltered as he realised that he had better keep on good terms with the alien until the hour came for him to strike out for his ultimate goal.

They reached the back door of the house, and stepped in. The alien quickly changed into the guise of a cat and followed the fan upstairs and into the factory. The duplicator gleamed in the gloom, and reams of paper were stacked at one end of the room.

The light clicked on and Queen Victoria seated herself at the typer. "I'm going to comment." the alien said through her compressed lips as the Great Lady placed a stencil in the machine.

The fan blinked, shrugged his shoulders, and slowly began dismantling the rollers of the duper.

"Here, what are you at?" said the alien.

"Er... I'm cleaning off the coloured ink I was using last week."

Suddenly a thought crossed his mind. The Alien wouldn't ask a question like that if he knew anything about dupers. Therefore it was a reasonable

assumption that he didn't know anything about dupers. Ahaha. His weak point!!

GROVES:

He smiled to himself. If the alien really didn't know anything about dupers then he could use that fact to overcome him. Hastily he prepared to execute this master plan.

"I'm going to prepare the duper for some very high quality duping." he said to the alien. "Grab hold of this handle and when I say 'go' turn it and keep turning until I say 'stop'."

With that the fan clambered onto the duper drum and took a firm hold. "Go!" he said.

The alien began to turn the handle, slowly at first then increasing in speed until his arm and the handle was a blur.

Into the tray set to receive the output there piled up duplicate upon duplicate of the fan. Rapidly they climbed out of the tray and surrounded the alien. When there were about 200 of him the fan said "Stop", let go of the drum and sprang to the floor. The alien turned round slowly and surveyed the crowd of fans that surrounded him. Slowly they closed in upon him and forced him to the floor. As one, they lifted his monstrous body and carried it into the garden, where they placed him beside the putrescent pool and trampled him into the ground.

When it was all over they turned to face one another and said, "Goshwow."

FINIS.

Don't call me vulgar. Being vulgar is so common nowadays....§....After Friday, the best day is Saturday....§....It's not that I'm a Tory; it's just that I like the status quo....§....He's a much maligned person, but then he's pretty malignant....

I was going to quote letters in this issue, but it seems that readers of -FAN- haven't been excited enough by the contents to actually bestir themselves to comment, and so I won't quote from the sparse lettercol that has accumulated since the sixth issue, wherein the last lettercol appeared. Infact, comment has been so passive for the last few issues of paraFANalia, that I think it might be a good idea to suspend publication for a while and just lose myself in the apas (OMPA & IPSO). This is not a new idea with me, of course; I'm always giving up my gen-(sort-of)-zine and deciding to die happy in an apa, and always somehow finding myself putting out just one more issue of the zine you're holding in your trembling hands.

But I think any future issues of paraFANalia will be much as this one is. Full of my own material, and probably boring as blazes to all but the handful of faithful readers who have read all my publications. Call it a personal magazine, and infrequent at that. Outside of OMPA the circulation will be small, but will of course include that handful of faithful readers mentioned above: Len Moffatt, Roger Horrocks, Mervyn Barrett, and perhaps Victor Smethurst.

Which explains why this is YOUR last copy of paraFANalia.