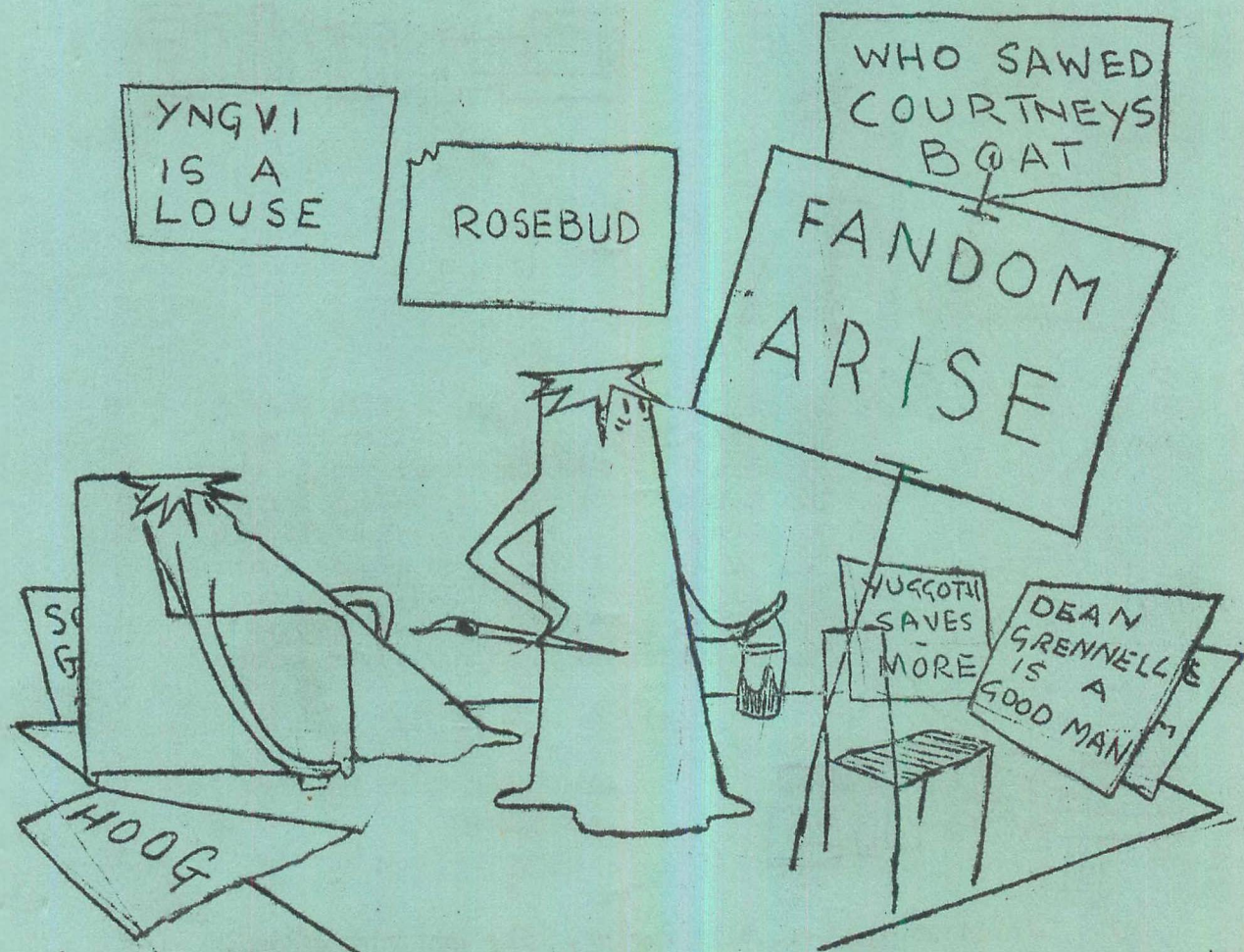
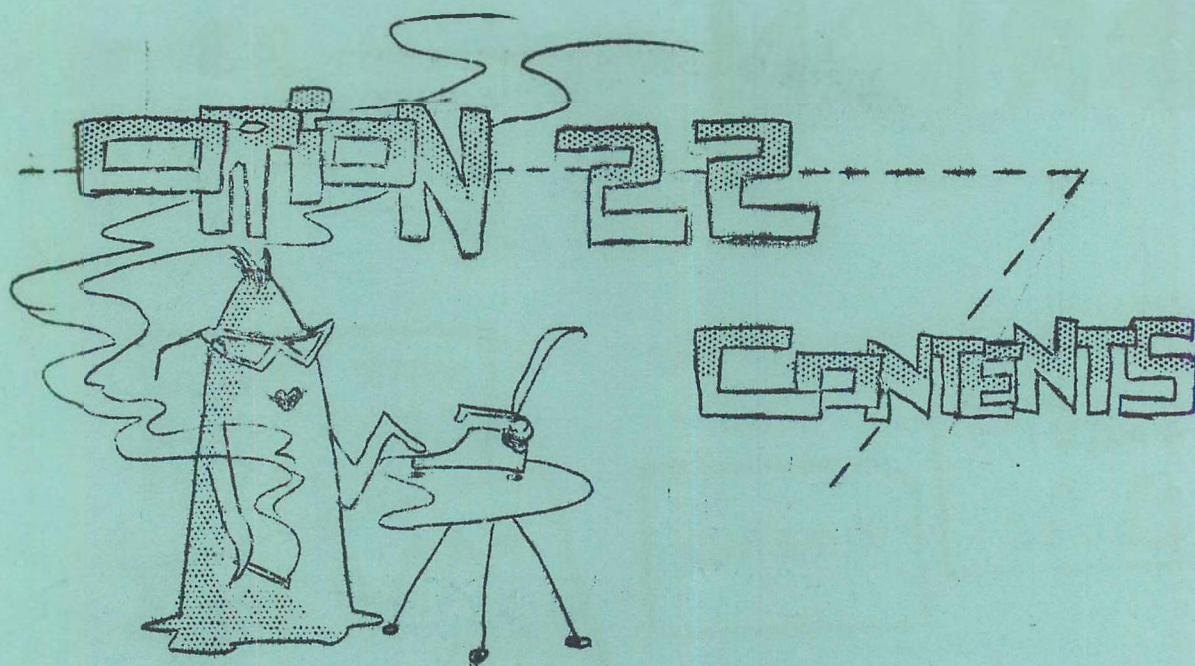


ORION



Atom

"SOMEHOW IT DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE
THE SAME PUNCH AS YOUR EARLIER WORKS"



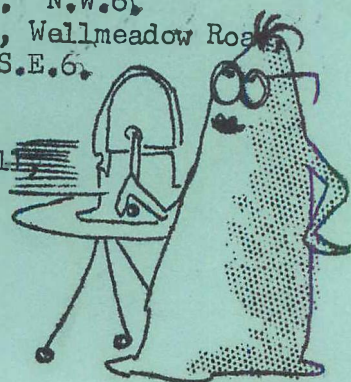
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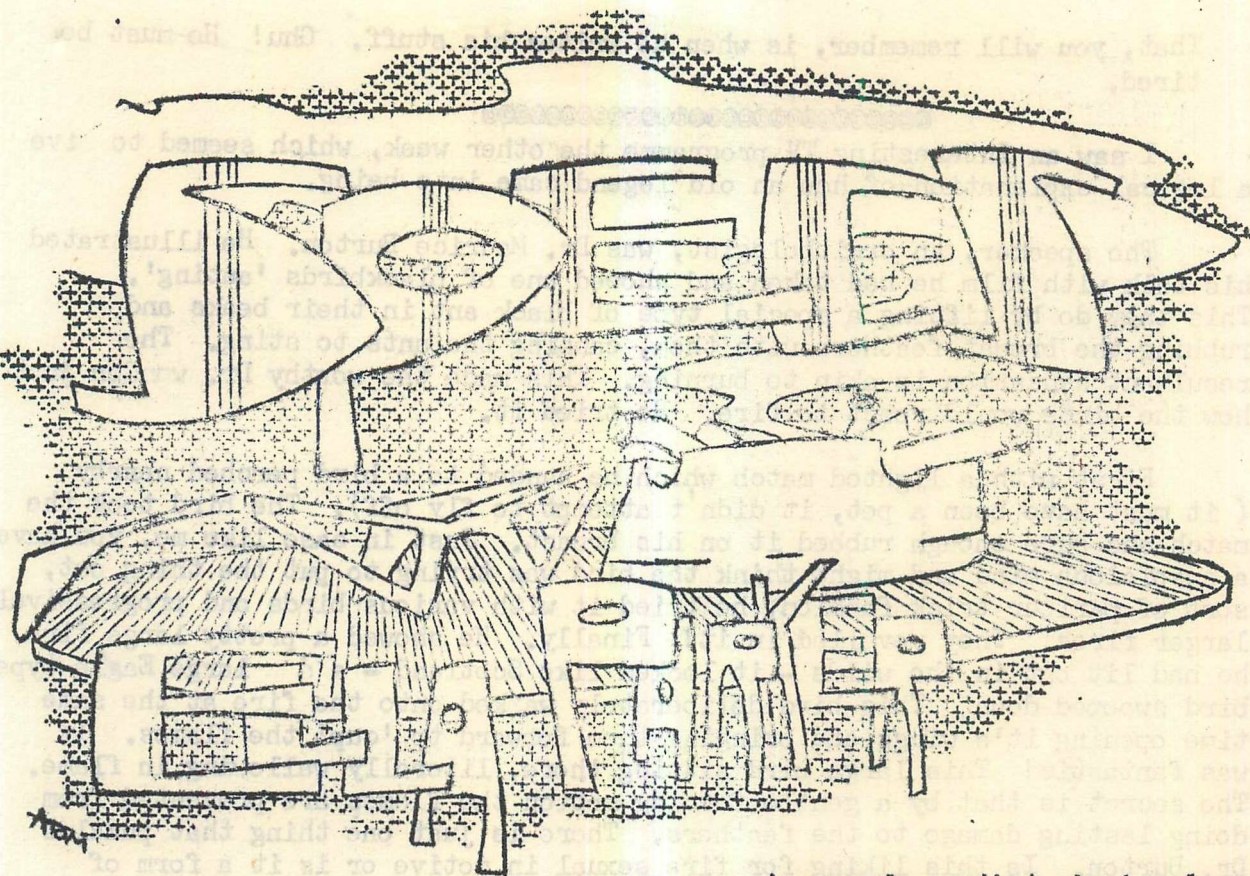
Price:- 1/- or 15p

CREDITS

You think we're heiresses or something?

Producer.....Ella Parker, 151, Canterbury Road,
West Kilburn, London. N.W.6.
Stage Manageress.....Robertta Wild, 204, Wellmeadow Road,
Catford, London. S.E.6.
Decor.....ATQM.
Special Effects.....Eddie.
The Ghost that walked on Friday...Sandra Hall
41, Northend House, FitzJames Ave. S.14.





This issue of ORION is coming to you in the good old fannish way. LATE. If you won't accept my attendance at two cons in the space of seven weeks as good and sufficient reason, then I have no excuse.

We have a mixture of prideful boasting and apologies for you. First with pride, we introduce to you our American Rep. Betty Kujawa. We don't have any USubs yet that I know of, but we were ever optimists. Betty's address is on the back cover. To continue with pride. We are grateful to all of you for your encouraging and, in a lot of cases, your complimentary letters. Many of you realised the difficulties with which Bobbie had been beset. Things you will agree, look much

improved now that she has bought a new duplicator. Which leads me onto the apologies without any awkward pauses.

Bobbie also attended the same two cons as I did. Result, it may even be as a consequence, she has in running off, transposed two pages of HKBulmer's article, that is pp5 & 6. Never mind. It couldn't have happened to a nicer person. I'm smiling. Ken and Pamela are at this minute, while you're reading this, sunning themselves in Italy (who said SF doesn't pay?). Enjoy yourselves, you two, it will be over too soon.

We regret the absence of Paul this time. Apparently the lad, or do I mean Dad?, hasn't had time for much sleep lately.

6

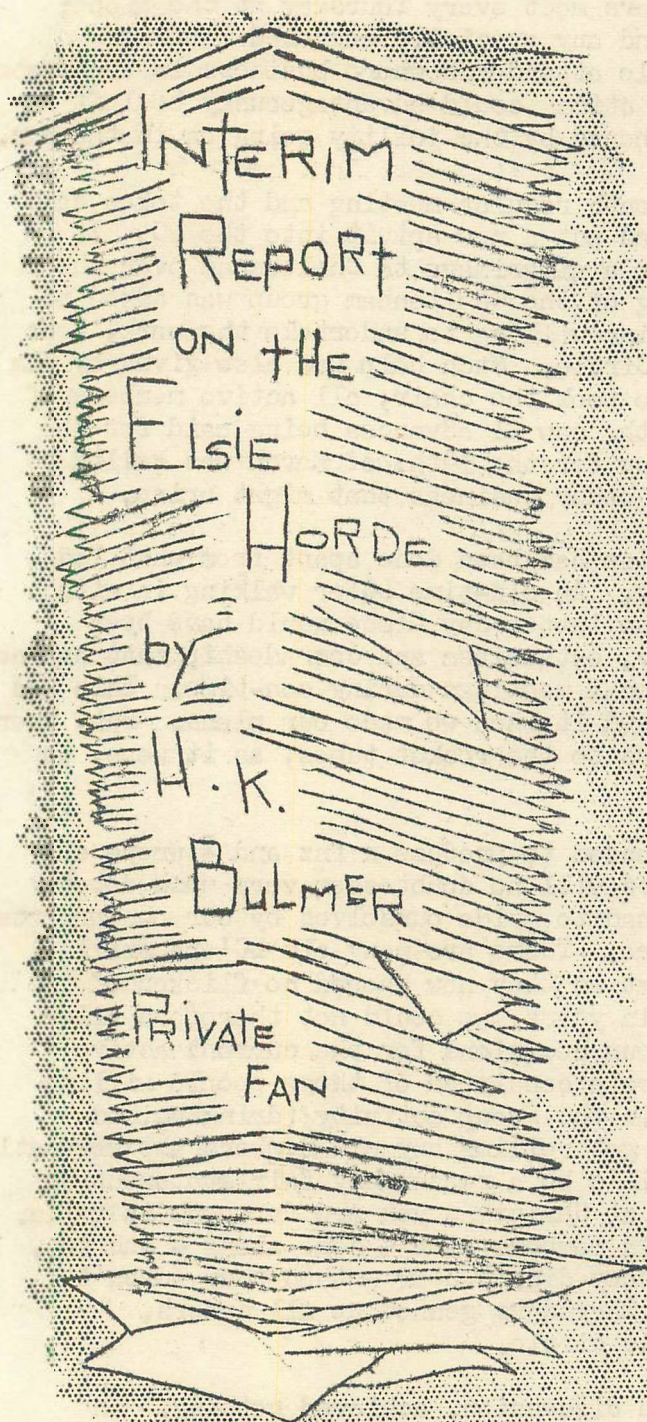
At the meeting on January 1st. we were pleased to see a good turnout: here it should be emphasised that members meet every Thursday at the Globe; only the first Thursday in the month and any specially convened meetings are the official ones, which most people attend and where business is transacted. Ted and I decided that the officers question could advantageously be left until later, this decision was strengthened by the jollity going on in the Bar.

These two measures (the once a month regular meeting and the token cash sub), seemed to be the catalyst that had put a new spirit into the LC. It was decided that the Circle should make a pilgrimage to Cheltenham over the Whitsun holidays. Sandra Hall, wotting of the Cheltenham group was asked to arrange this. She agreed and then, being willing to undertake the work, took over the position of secretary to the Circle. Much help was also given by Jim and Dorothy Ratigan and Rog Rogers, who took the chair, all active members of the S.E.L.F.C. The meeting of March 5th. saw £1 advances being paid for the Cheltenham affair, and a special meeting for the 19th. of March was called to discuss the Cheltenham journey and any other business that might arise.

Now, at this point, if nothing else had been done apart from what Ted and I had done, I would have been happy. An old-time LC'er walking in with the sad knowledge of the grimness of the latter-day Globe would have been astonished at the atmosphere of jollity, enthusiasm and comradeship that had not been seen in years, apart from exceptional meetings during con-time. This was THE GLOBE, very much as we had visualised it when we made our plans. But, there was more. Having once put our shoulders to the rocket tubes, as it were, we had to blast on, more or less.

Ivor Mayne announced that he intended to produce a fnz and I wrote a piece about the LC which when it appears will no doubt seem very much dated. One basic assumption existed, that we had to guide ourselves by our own progress; follow up a success; write off a failure. There are many old LC'ers still living in London. We had to assume that as they now showed no flicker of interest and hadn't been to the Globe in years, we could not therefore allow the sentimental thought of them cloud our decisions for the current active members. As of 18-12-58 the London Circle consisted of those people willing to come up once a month and take part in the group activity (drinking and talking mainly). We knew that once we got rolling any old members who were still interested would come along; although it'd be a reasonably fair statement to say that if you don't attend the Globe at Christmas you are far gone in gafia. There are exceptions, of course. If old members didn't come along - and too, if they were so far out of touch that they didn't hear - then they weren't interested. Scouts out on intervening Thursdays genned up all comers. We were after an active and enthusiastic circle.

The meeting of 19-3-59 after much discussion, achieved nothing. In agreement with an expressed point of view it was decided that the meeting should not conclude any business as all the membership had not been circulated. This was fair enough and Vinz Clarke was instructed to send out a note to all members telling them that a meeting was called for 8-30 pm. on 2nd April, 1959. This he did with his usual efficiency.



In VECTOR 3 I mentioned briefly the formation, for the first time in its long and distinguished career as an anarchistic mob, of an official London Circle on the 18th December, 1958. Through unforeseen circumstances VECTOR 4 went to bed before my column reached Terry, so Ella has very kindly allowed me this space to report on the latest developments. Since the first meeting of the new LC, the wheels have been rolling.

The London Circle came into existence in 1946 and was the first sf group to form in Great Britain after the war. Since that date great things have been achieved; but some of the momentum has gone and the wheels have slowed. Not wishing to see an institution that had given us a great deal of pleasure die, Ted Tubb and I, together with Pamela and other freely given help, put into effect a scheme which we had talked over for the best part of a year.

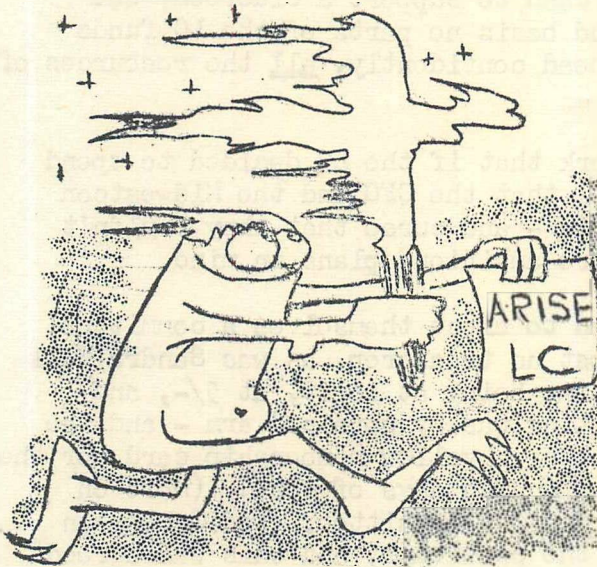
We had talked over privately for most of 1958 the disease attacking London sf enthusiasts, so that when the meeting of 18th December, 1958 attracted the usual large Christmas gathering, which we had anticipated, we were ready. I stood up and announced that from now on the London Circle would meet officially on the first Thursday in every month, but stressed that the usual Thursday gathering would still continue. The idea was obvious; to bring together friends on a night they knew they would meet without the chance that the meeting would be poorly attended. Ted Tubb then called for a shilling a head. Enthusiasm was by this time mounting headily and the silver made a lively ringing on the bar table.

Just then, as it were to finalise the plans, Charlie Duncombe, long time treasurer, walked in after a prolonged absence caused through personal reasons I won't go in to here. He was welcomed back rather like the Prodigal and was immediately requested to take charge of the cash collected.

You are all probably aware of Parkinson's Law. Well. The fannish law that I have long supported is, that one or two bods will get things done; committees yak and create failures. I am well aware that committees could run smoothly (and in rare instances have), but the sad fact is that in fandom they seldom do. One well known example of this elementary fannish law, was the way Vinç and I started the Off Trail Magazine Publishing Assoc. We put this through ourselves and made a success of it from the word go. Similar, though less drastic methods had now been followed by Ted Tubb and I in rejuvenating the LC.

I looked forward to 2nd April with mixed feelings.

The appeal for attendance brought out about another half dozen bods, and now we could say, quite definitely - word used as intended - that these people were the London Circle.



To shift back in time to get the perspective right; Vinç had issued a leaflet called 'MOVE' on 6th August, 1958, stating that he was looking for a club room and that he wanted help. I believe that this help was pretty niggardly; I know Pamela offered our old sitting room suite, and we contributed 10/- cash, plus 2/6d or so subs, we also promised an immediate £5 on the day the room was found. Vinç had stated that he, Sandy Sanderson and Joy Clarke intended to dictate all policy for six months, and it does just occur to me that this strong dictatorial and I think, justifiable attitude was not appreciated generally. From that day to this no smell of a clubroom has materialised.

In addition, money was involved. Ah, sweet scent of filthy lucre! From it's first convention after the war, the London Circle had built up a steadily growing circle fund. I always refer to this as the LC war-chest. London held cons in 1957; 53, 52, 51, 49, 48, 47 and 38. The first two in time and the last were not held under the auspices of the LC - the rest were. The London fen put their hands into their pockets - at that time slender purses were de rigueur - and money accrued from donations and con proceeds, although no regular subscriptions were ever taken. In addition to this, money flowed in when Vinç and Joy organised one Cytricon, although I understand that most of this money was obtained on the assumption that it was going to be used for the Worldcon.

The LC war-chest, held by Charlie, had been spent from time to time in various ways. A £5 float went on entertainment at the Manchester con in 1954 - surely a worthy object for club funds in moderation? A leaflet was produced when the Elsie Horde had to defend themselves against traducers. There was a ballet. And preliminary expenses of various Loncons. Things like that. All this money, around £35 was lost at the 15th World Convention,

held in London. ~~Far be it from me at this moment to lay blame where it is~~ surely deserved - (blush you guilty!), but the LC cash had gone down the drain. Although the LC thought this a pretty poor show, ~~officially they did nothing;~~ it had been used and lost, and that was that. However, Don Ford and a Midwestcon rallied round and collected £27-10-0d which was sent to Ted Carnell. He passed this cash to Sandy Sanderson, acting accountant for the World Convention. The meeting of 2nd April, 1959 at the Globe, decided overwhelmingly, that Sandy should hand this cash over to the LC Treasurer, Charlie Duncombe.

It is sad to have to report that some newer members of the LC now believe that this money should be used, at once, to 'do something'. Of course, having lost it once, and having it returned by a miracle, we will take good care to safeguard it now, and we shall carry on in a rational way, allocating the cash as and where it will do the most good. One good scheme much promoted, is to use some of the LC cash to support a clubroom; But until this clubroom is settled on a sound basis no parts of the LC funds should be lost to it. Once we can go ahead confidently, all the resources of the new LC will be behind the project.

Here it might be pertinent to remark that if the LC decided to spend this £27-10-0d on a monster beano, I feel that the CFG and the Midwestcon would fully understand and appreciate this - and curse that they couldn't be there! It so happens that we have more ambitious plans in mind.

This 2nd April meeting also decided to elect themselves a committee. Charlie Duncombe was confirmed in his post as treasurer, as was Sandra Hall secretary. Subs had been set, for the time being at least, at 5/-, and yellow membership cards were issued. Voting was by upraised arm - and the hand that topped the arm had to be clutching a yellow membership card for the vote to be counted. Ah me, for the fine fannish days of yore! (more on that later). Seven members were needed for the committee. Ted Tubb then stood and said that Vinz ought to be on the committee, and this was agreed to. It was proposed that we ought to have a Publicity Officer, and Peter Taylor's name was put forward. Arthur Thomson then proposed Joy Clarke. On a show of hands, 22-23 voted for Peter, and 12-13 voted for Joy. This left two places on the committee yet to be filled (I'd been bunged on somewhere along the line), four names came up. Jim Ratigan, Ella Parker, Rog Rogers and Ted Tubb. When the waving arms had been disentangled, Ella and Ted were on. I declined the job of chairman and Ted was nobbled for that position.

This little cameo has been given to indicate the truly democratic way the LC is now being run. The seven members of the committee then went into a huddle and I introduced George Locke as the man willing to undertake editorship of the Official news sheet. This ought to be out soon after Whitsun.

Harking back to the bracketed comment earlier: this current officialdom - however reckless of procedural rules it may be - is a sign of less fannish times than of yore. Still, as Ted and I pointed out when we began this rejuvenation of the London Circle, the LC had sunk to it's past low level of apathy on a steady diet of anarchism. We can but try a drop of systematic oil in the wheels; we've nothing to lose.

The Blood Bank No 2

A BSA

Birmingham

CONVENTION

Report

By

Brian Jordan

Even on Good Friday morning, it hadn't really sunk in that I was actually going to a con. But then, it was such a miserable wet morning it didn't seem possible that anything at all wonderful could happen.

After an uneventful journey to Manchester, I met Alan Rispin. We hurried across the city to get our connection to Birmingham. This turned out to be a diesel train, something I'd been wanting to see for quite some time. Once inside, though, my interest turned to disgust, as I found that it was just like a bus on rails, with a temperature which made it like hell.

As we travelled along, there was still no sign of the expected excitement, other than a horrifying apathy towards food - and that was probably due to Alan's case falling on my head.

We reached Birmingham only about an hour late, and wandered off the station. We found the hotel without much trouble, but we were amazed to see it was lit by candles! I thot maybe Vin/ Clarke had come after all, but the porter said it was because they wore having the mains changed.

No doubt from water to bheer. The register revealed that no-one had arrived before us, so after unloading our baggage, we went out to find food.

Returning stuffed with dingy chips (bought at an even dingier shop), we found the register bore the mark of Ken Slater. We could see into the lounge from our vantage point at the receptionist's desk. While we were trying to decide which of the few people there was Ken (it was later that he dyed his moustache green), Ivor Mayne and George Locke came up to us and introduced themselves, then taking us to the hotel dining-room they identified for us the rest of the London contingent, they were - Bobbie Wild, Peter's West and Taylor, Sandra Hall and Ella Parker. Service in the dining-room was terrible, Ella took to muttering imprecations when they wouldn't serve her with whiskey.

After helping Ella upstairs with her luggage, I wandered into the lounge with Ivor and Alan. We had just located Ken Slater, Alan Burns and Ken McIntyre, when we saw coming towards us a Tall, Ghodlike youth. One single aspect of His features dominated all else - His EYES. They held a 'far look', of great power and wisdom, this alone made Him as a Ghod. We gazed reverently at Him. He spoke. "Er....are you all.... uh..fans?" Yes. This was Jhim Linwood, Lord of Sherwood. For some unknown reason we took him to show to Ella. We had a sub-sub-room party, drank liberally of her whiskey, and chattered about things fannish (serconfannish, that is.).

Later in the afternoon, Ron Bennett, Jhim, Ivor, George, Alan and I went in search of food. We found a snack-bar, which had a restaurant above. Ron, Ivor and George took to the restaurant, but soon joined us in the snack-bar, mumbling something about high prices. Back in the hotel lounge, we sat chatting and meeting people (drinking too, natch), got our lapel badges and programme books - the latter wonderfully duplicated by Norman Shorrocks. Oh, and we played a funny fannish game called 'Giving MONEY to Bennett'. Like I didn't win tho'.

..... We got quite a shock, when we found that a rumour which had been going round, proved to be true - the bar was to close early, in spite of previous promises that drink would be available most of the night. Because of this, there was a period of hanging around, waiting for the outside supplies which Pete Taylor was smuggling in. Pete looks rather strange with several £'s worth of drink under his coat. We had all been told the number of Pete's room and that there was to be a party there. Eventually we reached it, way up at the top of the hotel, surrounded (roomwise) by mundane types. The hotel was large and rambling, so the manager had naively spread us all through it. Slowly a party began to take shape as people filed in. Some of the folk around were, Pete (of course), Ron Bennett, Dave Cohen, Arthur(Doc) Wier, (who saved the evening by producing a corkscrew in a moment of great need), and more, but more.

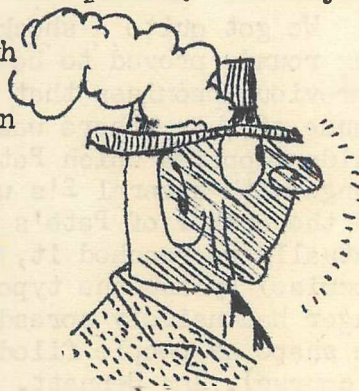
Around midnight, the mundane types made themselves heard, their mouth-piece being the manager, so, we moved down into more fannish territory, Ella's room. More folk flowed in, likewise the drink.... flashbulbs popped....people chattered....still more folk came...the room got hazier....I eventually got me a chair and almost went to sleep. I staggered 'home' (fortunately only next door), as early as 2-30; thanx to the vast quantities of gin Alan had been surreptitiously pouring into the Cyprus wine I'd determined to stick to (he confessed this next day). I dunno what he'd been drinking though, he had been dragged out long before.

Saturday morning I was up early, ate a cautious breakfast, and collected Alan for a wander round the town to look at some of the shops. Back to the hotel, where Ella lured us away from the impending OMPA meeting by mentioning food. On our way to the restaurant, we spotted Archie Mercer, standing in the middle of a rush-hour crowd crying: "Please, can't anyone tell me how to get to the OMPA meeting?" We hustled him away from the approaching policeman, and directed him to the hotel. Before reaching the restaurant - which was the same one Ron and a crowd of us had used the evening before, Alan and I, under the disbelieving eyes of Ella, bought ourselves some carrots, she was even more disbelieving when, discovering we were too early for a cooked meal, we sat and ate with evident relish rolls and butter with raw carrots.

Back at the hotel AGAIN, we found that Archie had reached OMPA safely, but was now hungry: after his voyage, so, off with him to find real food. Archie stood us, George, Alan, and me an excellent meal (NO - each), only we had to make do without cutlery.

In the early afternoon, there was a short preliminary meeting; Ken Slater was introduced as Guest of Honour. This was followed by a game of '20 questions', which was rather dead, in spite of the valiant efforts of quizmasters Terry Jeeves and John Roles. Next there came the Tea-Drinking Contest (barbaric affair), which was won by Pete Davies, a newfan from Stourbridge, who drank 111 cups of the poison. A Martyr!

After a decent interval for tea and a wash the programme continued with Ron giving an illustrated talk on his TAFF trip to the Solacon last year. This was followed by a short play from the London group. The play was hopeless, but it was redeemed in part by the wonderful sight of Brian Burgess as Monster, wearing tin-foil boots, and green makeup on his face. Afterwards he made a tour of the public bar, much to the consternation of the customers.



.....
 "Oooh, I don't know what he was here for - I think he was collecting for charity". (Barmaid).

Then came the auction. Bob Richardson officiated, and did well, in spite of rather reserved bidding. There was to be a fancy-dress party, but it died. The clearest memory I have of that evening is wandering round the corridors with Jhim and Alan, drinking the milk we had invested in, mindful of the night before....chasing Bobbie Wild and Sandra Hall into a bathroom....drying up when confronted with a mike. Most of the evening was jumbled. We, Alan and I found Bobbie on the verge of collapse, from malnutrition, she claimed. We saved her life by feeding her some of the milk we had bought earlier. Unfortunately, she went into a trance, and wandered off muttering, "Omighod, MILK at a con!" We followed her and Sandra to a party in Bob Richardson's room, where she collapsed again. This time, I revived her with a packet of biscuits I found in my pockets. After a while, everyone went down into the conhall. People there, were spread too thinly for much to be going on, so, Jhim, Alan, Ivor, Archie and I went up to the top floor, and down the fire-escape onto the roof. We wandered round drinking brandy and gin, but couldn't find any skylights to drop the bottles through. We found an open door which led to the second floor. Back inside, we stood in an empty room for about an hour discussing religion and like that, mostly like that. The night ended for Alan and me, sitting in Ken Slater's room, sleepily sipping whiskey and listening to Ken and the Shorrocks's discussing cyclic changes in dance music....and so to bed.

Sunday morning, ~~most~~ everyone spent chattering in the lounge, and passing round photos of the '58' Cytricon. A few of us went collecting hotel stationery, and found some photographic slicks, we loaned them to Norman Wansborough - they were never seen again.

The BSFA business meeting was the first thing on the official programme for the day. Eric Bentcliffe and Terry Jeeves put down their burdens for a well earned rest. Arthur (Doc) Wier, of Cheltenham was voted in as Secretary, Archie remains as Treasurer. The new Editor of VECTOR is Bobbie Wild with Sandra Hall as helper. Bob Richardson, who had the thankless task as ConSecretary, gave out the glad news that the con had been a financial success. There was a short discussion for votes to be taken on the consite for '60'. The only suggestion put forward, was Ron's for Harrogate. The question was left open.

After a break for lunch, Doc Wier gave an interesting talk on Atlantis. This was followed by a tape talk given by some of the Cheltenham O to their local IFL group, on stf. About then, I helped judge the artwork competition with Eric Jones, Ella and Norman Shorrocks. First place was gained by Terry Jeeves, second by Eddie Jones, and entry under the enigmatic signature of R.E.D. took third, this later turned out to be Bob Richardson himself. Ron announced the results of his TAFF raffle for four prozine cover paintings. We were content by now to settle down and listen to a replay of the tape epic 'Last and First Fen' - which hadn't lost anything for being heard a second time. Then things broke up for another meal.

In the evening there was more programme. All that hadn't been auctioned off earlier was now to be knocked down to any who would put in a bid. Ron sold a painting for the TAFF funds at least six times, if not oftener, netting around £4 on it. Later there was a looong and wonderful

film show, courtesy of MAD Productions, the Cheltenham O, Norman Shorrocks and Ted Carnell. It was good.

A party was planned for Ella's room, but was diverted to that of Terry Jeeve's, as some mundane types had moved in across from Ella. The party didn't suffer though, I enjoyed it. Alan fell under the bed and went to sleep....Burgess called with a bottle of milk....Jack Wilson and Ken MacIntyre fought bitterly over a seat, compromised by sharing it....Archie was fascinated by my permanently miserable expression....Alan woke up and began reading prozines....and on..and on.

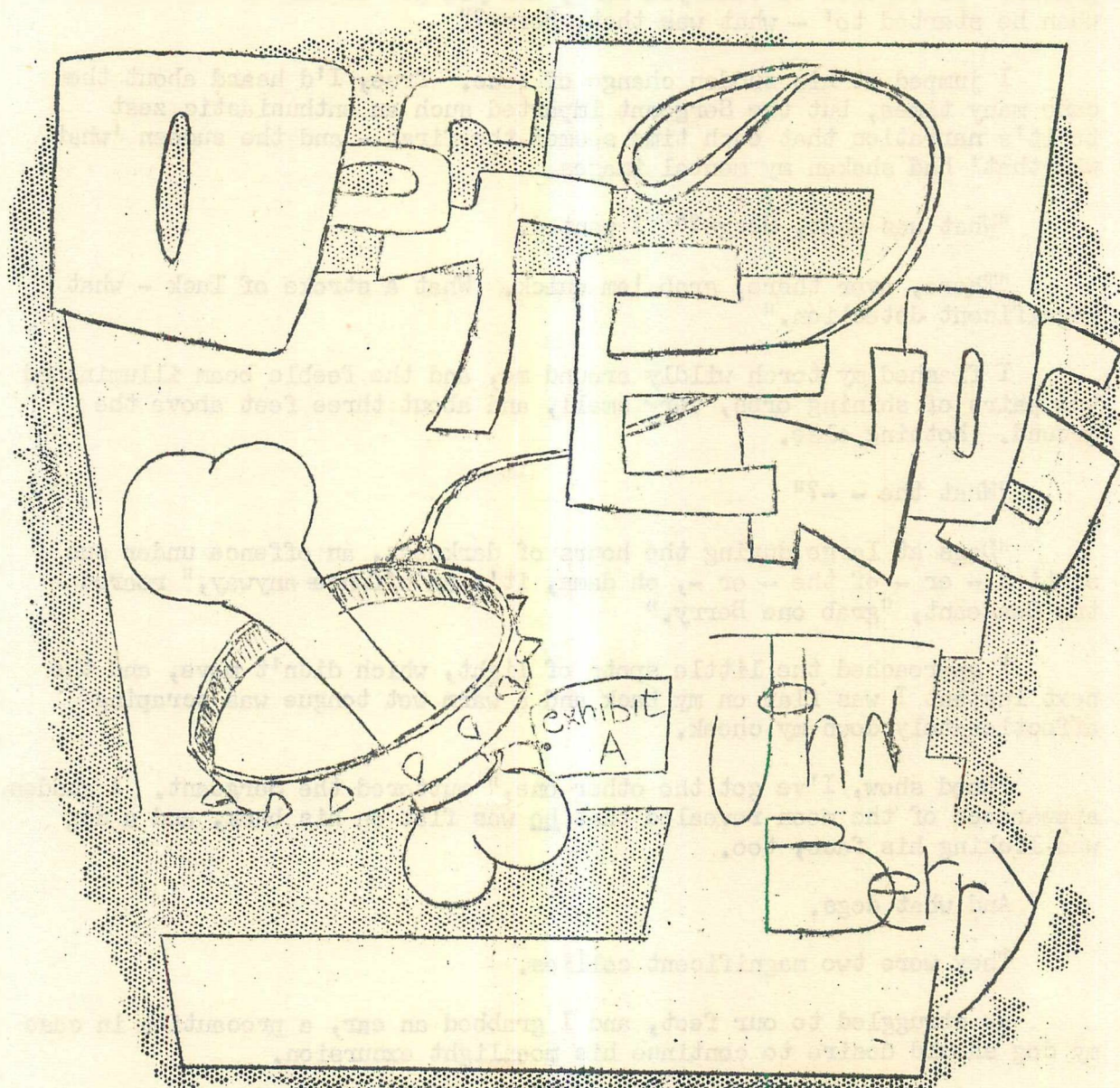
At the insistence of Ina Shorrocks, we all moved down to the conhall, and drifted. I sat a while with Bobbie and Archie, helping Bobbie to try and explain the difference between the various breeds of apples to Archie. Mention of apples brought on Bobbie's illness again and Alan had to revive her with a meat pie. A while later, Alan and I took to the corridors with George Locke. On the way out of the conhall we passed a solitary policeman (Berry?) on his way in; he must have felt the need of company. Upstairs, we found Ivor slumped in a corridor, and carted him to his room, we found later, he'd been sampling Norman Shorrocks' artistry with bottle and glass. It was just after this we met Pete Taylor, searching for somewhere to kip (he had checked out the morning before). We wandered for ages, trying to find someone who would have him. We saw Sandra Hall, and after a chase Pete begged her to take him in for the night, but she wouldn't. Disheartened, we trudged off....what was fandom coming to, that no-one would even loan a destitute fan a night's floorspace? Then we heard footsteps. We covered round a corner, thinking it was the porter. George Locke peered out, and suddenly shouted: "It's Bennett!" We all dashed into the corridor after him, but Ron jabbed his spurs mercilessly into Cecil, they pelted into their room and slammed the door. "Ron, let me in, please," moaned Pete, beating his head against the door, but all we heard, was the sound of a bed being hastily dragged across the room up to the door. Bennett is a hard hard fan. Finally, Pete kipped(slept) in George's room. Back in the conhall, nothing was happening, so, off to bed once more.

Monday, I was wakened by George, who wanted help in smuggling Pete out of the hotel. We were baffled at first, but solved the problem by simply surrounding him with Barry Hall, and walking them out en masse.

The last memorable event of the con was listening to Brian Burgess telling of his continental love-life. Mighod!

The con was not exactly like I'd expected it to be, some things were more so, some less. But, it levelled out at a wonderful time (there Archie, now you know!), likewise the memories (in spite of a few fused banks). Just one strange thing - fans came from all over the country, but, apart from Ella and Norman Wansborough, no-one seemed to have a noticeable accent.... or was that the drink?

"Harrogate in '60!"



The moon played peekaboo with the clouds as the Sergeant and I strolled along the high-hedged country lane. It was 3-30 a.m., and we were on one of our rare early morning patrols -- rare, because although our schedule from headquarters detailed at least one a week, the Sergeant preferred to think of them as annual events. He was busy telling me in great detail about one of his greatest cases:-

"-- and so I said to her, 'Look here, dear, I know you are only fourteen years old, but imagine I'm your father -- now then, after choir practice he offered to take you home, and you got as far as the avenue when he started to' -- what was that, Berry?"

I jumped at his sudden change of tone. True, I'd heard about the case many times, but the Sergeant imparted such an enthusiastic zest to it's narration that each time seemed the first -- and the sudden 'what was that' had shaken my mental images.

"What was what, Serge?" I panted.

"There, over there, grab 'em quick. What a stroke of luck -- what magnificent detection."

I flashed my torch wildly around me, and the feeble beam illuminated two pairs of shining orbs, very small, and about three feet above the ground. Nothing else.

"What the --?"

"Dogs at large during the hours of darkness, an offence under sub section -- er -- of the -- er --, oh damn, it's an offence anyway," roared the Sergeant, "grab one Berry."

I approached the little spots of light, which didn't move, and the next instant I was flat on my back and a warm wet tongue was scraping affectionately down my cheek.

"Good show, I've got the other one," muttered the Sergeant. A sudden appearance of the moon revealed that he was flat on his back, and a dog was licking his face, too.

And what dogs.

They were two magnificent collies.

We struggled to our feet, and I grabbed an ear, a precaution in case my dog should desire to continue his moonlight excursion.

"It's a good job we've only a mile and a half to go to reach the station," panted the Sergeant. He was carrying his collie, and the dog, judging from the wagging tail, was extremely delighted at this unusual mode of transportation.

Eventually we arrived at the station. The duty orderly let us in he gazed with awe at our splendid captures.

I must use a paragraph or two to describe the two hounds. I swear they would've had a walkover at Crufts. Their eyes were moist, and had an almost human appeal in them. The hairy fur was black and reddish brown, with pure white under the neck and body, their great bushy tails wagged

Like pendulums as they looked at us. Their heads were held to one side, as if waiting impatiently for the Sergeant's next move.

"It's definitely an offence for dogs to be at large in the dark - isn't it?" asked the Sergeant. He went over to the bookcase and pulled out a manual of law, which he always proudly claimed he'd had for 25 years, but which, judging from the virgin white appearance of the pages, he could have purchased that morning.

After a busy twenty minute search amongst the statutes, a grin broke across his face as he found the pertinent section.

"Ho ho," he chortled, "~~that~~ a superb piece of criminal detection, it is an offence."

"So alright," I acknowledged, "but who do they belong to?"

The Sergeant's face fell. He looked down at the dogs, who wagged their tails afresh. For a moment I honestly thought he was going to ask them who was their master.

"We could let them out tomorrow and follow them home," the Sergeant said thoughtfully.

"We're at the Petty Sessions tomorrow giving evidence in that case of the schoolgirls carrying each other on the cross bars of their pedal cycles," I said, "and in any case, these dogs might live miles away."

The Sergeant nodded gloomily. Suddenly he snapped his fingers. He turned to the duty constable, a new young policeman, just out of training school, who was, we supposed, mentally deficient, because he did fantastic things like studying law and polishing his handcuffs and such.

"Fortesque," said the Sergeant, "take these dogs into the barrack yard early in the morning, and cut a small portion of hair off them, just enough for the owner to notice, and let them free. We'll soon discover who they belong to by making a few enquiries, and maybe the owner will even contact us."

Fortesque looked amazed at this request, as I admit I did, but it seemed a good idea.

I was more interested in getting home to bed.

@@

I was scheduled for duty at 3.p.m. the following afternoon, so at ten minutes to four I walked into the station.

The Sergeant was sitting on a chair, his eyes glazed with horror.

"What's wrong Sergeant?" I asked, "you look as if you've just

discovered your Queen-bee has been having an affair with a wasp."

"Much worse," replied the Sergeant. "I've just had a telephone message from Squire Trelawney's head steward. He wants to see me immediately - says its about the mutilation of the Squire's dogs."

I sat down beside the Sergeant and gulped.

'Mutilation' was the word he used....?

"Better come with me, Berry," said the Sergeant apprehensively, and we got our bikes out of the shed, mounted them and cycled slowly through the village and up the elm-lined half mile drive to the Squire's mansion. We propped our bikes against a five-barred gate, then walked round the side of the mansion, to the steward's house behind it.

Mr. Grimble, the steward, was waiting for us. His hands were on his hips and he looked really aggressive, even in his plus fours.

"You've gone too far, Sergeant," said Grimble through his teeth, "and you won't get out of it this time."

I knew what he meant. He'd caught the Sergeant's youngest son up a pear tree in the Squire's orchard, and the Sergeant had managed to convince the Squire, when asked to explain, that the boy had been searching for a Lesser Spotted Hairy Kavunkle, a fruit parasite, which the Sergeant wanted to write about in an article for 'THE COUNTRYMAN'. The Squire, bewildered, had accepted the explanation. But mutilated dogs.....?

"Get out of what?" grunted the Sergeant.

"Look," said Grimble dramatically. He waved a hand in the direction of the daisy-covered lawn in front of his house.

We looked.

The two collie dogs were lying in a thoughtful pose. Their fore-paws were thrust forward, and their heads were rested on their paws, they gave the impression of being extremely embarrassed. Their eyes looked at the Sergeant, and the expression therein was one of obvious reproach.

"They look alright," argued the Sergeant.

"Here boys," shouted Grimble, and the boys slowly got to their feet and reluctantly shuffled over to us.

The Sergeant literally swooned.

"No - o - o - o," he sobbed, and staggered backwards, to lean against the trunk of an old oak tree. He covered his eyes, as if blinded by the brilliance of them Pearly Gates.

"Move over, Sergeant," I coughed.

How can mere words describe the appearance of those unfortunate canines.

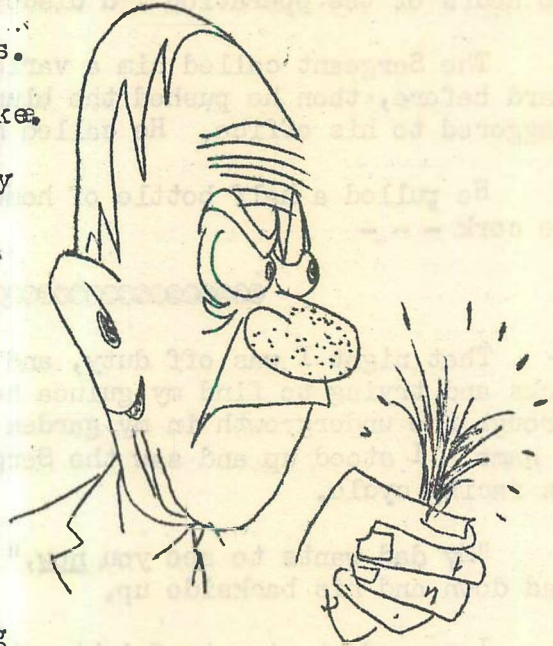
You all know what collies are like. Handsome beasts with long flowing hair hanging down their sides, and big bushy tails.

These two dogs looked fantastic.

Their heads and bodies were undoubtedly 100% collie. But their tails.

THEIR TAILS!!!

You've seen a greyhound's tail, haven't you, or a whippet's? These collies had identical waggors. NOT A HAIR WAS ON THEM.....just long thin lengths of skin and bone.



The dogs themselves trotted over to us, looked the Sergeant squarely in the eye, looked sorrowfully at the remains of their tails, and staggered away to the seclusion and privacy of the nearest barn, there to hide their shameful extremities and ponder long and thoughtfully on the new trend of human self-expressionistic art.

"I went to the police station to report this outrage," thundered Grumble, "and there, in the station yard, I saw the evidence lying there for all to see....hairs, which erstwhile adorned these dogs tails, lying in the dust and dirt. How dare you, sah?"

The Sergeant winced. A bee settled on his ear about to whisper something urgent to him, but the Sergeant flicked it away without a word of thanks. This was a bad sign. I could see he was taking his difficult position extremely badly. In fact, I didn't feel too good myself. I'd helped to catch 'em in the first place!

"Ah ha, I see the Squire's Rolls Royce approaching," sneered Grumble, "wait until he sees this....he only purchased them last week, you know, and their pedigrees are a mile long. Wait until...."

But we tiptoed out of earshot, and remounting our cycles took the path through the woods, which eventually brought us onto the road near the station. We propped our bikes against the front hedge, and supported each other up the crazy paving path to the doorway.

Fortesque answered our feeble knock.

"I've found out who the dogs belong to, Sergeant," he said breezily, "that was a brilliant idea of yours, cutting hair off the dogs. Within two hours of the operation I'd discovered they were owned by...."

The Sergeant called him a variety of names, seven of which I'd never heard before, then he pushed the blushing constable out of his way and staggered to his office. He called me in after him and slammed the door.

He pulled a half bottle of home brew from a cabinet and pulled out the cork - - -

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That night I was off duty, and spent an interesting hour feeding my ducks and trying to find my guinea hens. I was stalking one of them through the undergrowth in my garden when I heard a familiar voice shouting my name. I stood up and saw the Sergeant's son, the pear tree one, astride his racing cycle.

"My dad wants to see you now," he shouted, and shot away with his head down and his backside up.

I yawned, trying to frighten that little glow of apprehension that tried to assert itself. I threw on an old Harris Tweed jacket, and walked across the fields to the station, a fifteen minute walk.

I went across the station yard, and into the Sergeant's office.

"Take your pick, John," he beamed. 'John', he'd called me - he was obviously in very good form. I followed his finger and saw two brace of pheasant on the table.



"We call - -," I said, and looking at him looking at me out of the corner of our eyes, I selected the smallest pair.

"Who sent 'em?" I asked.

"Squire's wife, Lady Trelawney," he grinned.

"Do you know what happened when the Squire got out of his car and saw the dogs. He thought he'd got the D.T's. He raced into the mansion to get succour from his wife, and he swore off drink for good. When the steward told him how the dogs tails had become clean-shaven, he was so relieved he hadn't got

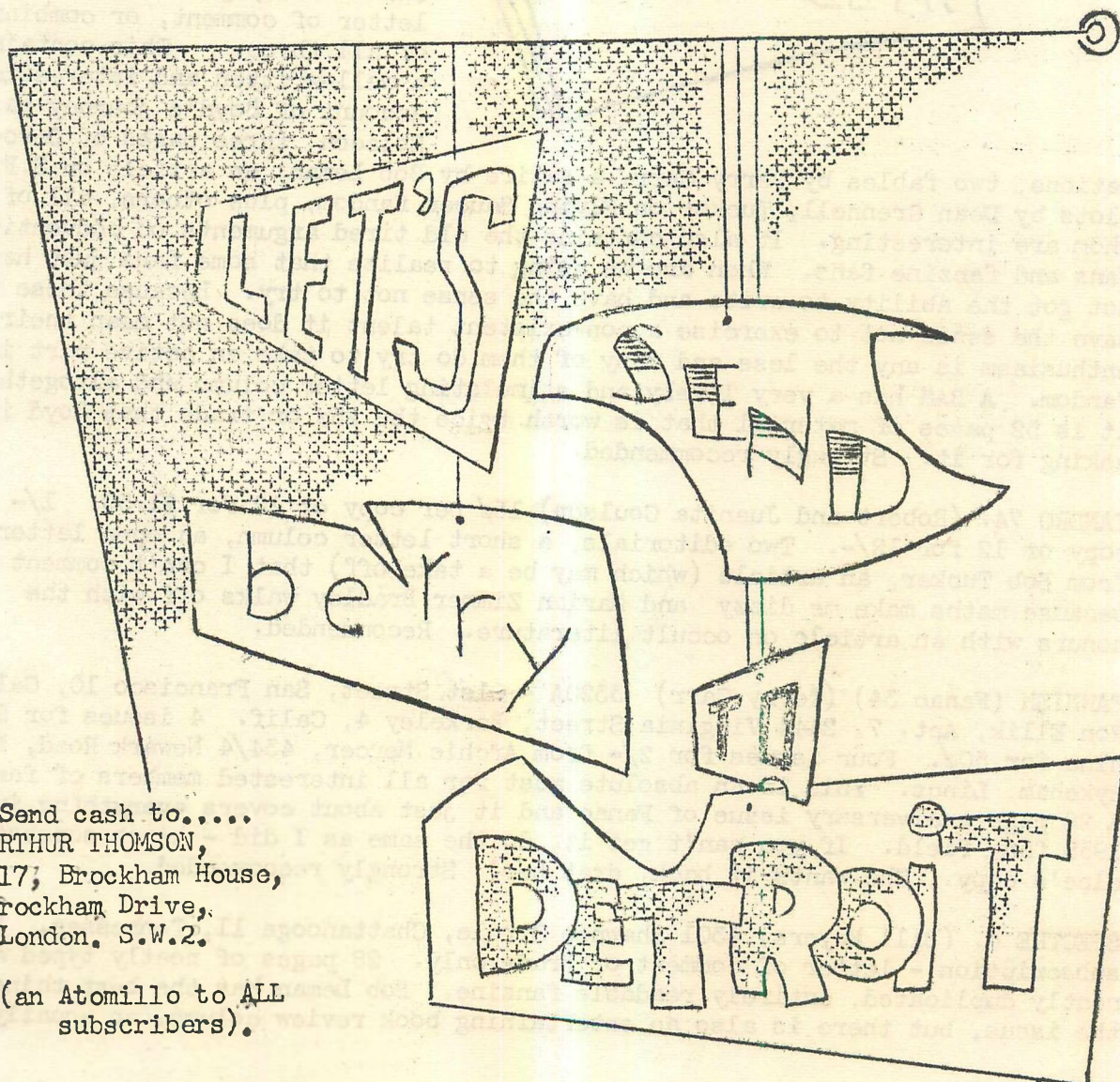
the D.T's. that he told Grimbles not to pursue the matter. Lady Trelawney sent me these birds as a gesture of her delight that the incident has stopped her husband from drinking - and he did drink, didn't he. Remember how we caught him asleep at the wheel of his car, drunk as a lord. Lucky we got him home before Fortesque found him. That reminds me - I must do something about this Fortesque - - -!"

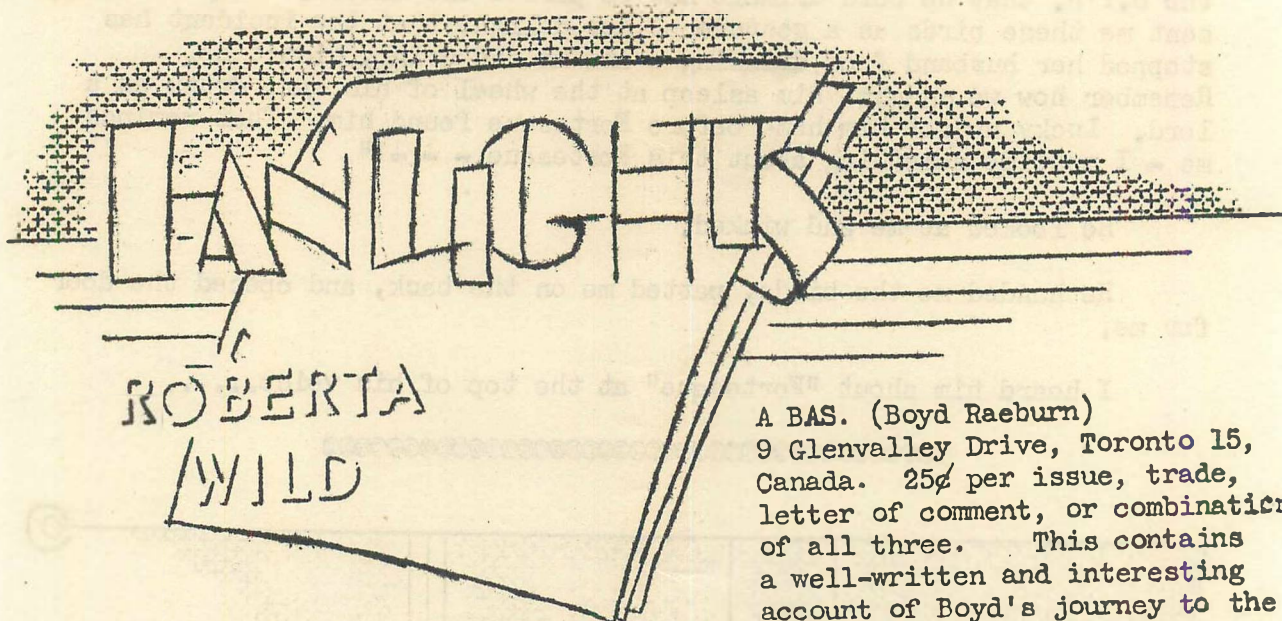
He looked at me and winked.

He handed me the birds, patted me on the back, and opened the door for me.

I heard him shout "Fortesque" at the top of his voice.....

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A BAS. (Boyd Raeburn)
9 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 15,
Canada. 25¢ per issue, trade,
letter of comment, or combination
of all three. This contains
a well-written and interesting
account of Boyd's journey to the
Solacon, three pages of Dero-

gations, two fables by Terry Carr, a satire by Bob Leman, an article on S.F.
plots by Dean Grennell, Tucker on Flying Saucer fandom, plus others, all of
whom are interesting. It also contains the old tired arguments on convention
fans and fanzine fans. When are we going to realize that some fans just have
not got the ability to write and have the sense not to try. Because these fans
have the sense not to exercise a non-existent talent it does not mean their
enthusiasm is any the less and many of them do try to take an active part in
fandom. A BAS has a very lively and stimulating letter column and altogether
it is 52 pages of material that is worth twice the 25¢ or trade that Boyd is
asking for it. Strongly recommended.

YANDRO 74. (Robert and Juanita Coulson) 15¢ per copy or 12 for \$1.50. 1/- per
copy or 12 for 12/-. Two editorials, a short letter column, an open letter
from Bob Tucker, an article (which may be a take off) that I can't comment on
because maths make me dizzy and Marian Zimmer Bradley walks off with the
honours with an article on occult literature. Recommended.

FANNISH (Fanac 34) (Terry Carr) 3320A - 21st Street, San Francisco 10, Calif.
Ron Ellik, Apt. 7 2444 Virginia Street, Berkeley 4, Calif. 4 issues for 25¢,
nine for 50¢. Four issues for 2/- from Archie Mercer, 434/4 Newark Road, North
Hykeham, Lincs. This is an absolute must for all interested members of fandom.
A 28 page anniversary issue of Fanac and it just about covers everything in the
1958 fan field. If you can't get it, do the same as I did - pinch somebody
else's copy. She wants it back, drat her! Strongly recommended.

SPECTRE 4. (Bill Meyers) 4301 Shawnee Circle, Chattanooga 11, Tennessee. No
subscription - letter of comment or trade only. 28 pages of neatly typed and
neatly duplicated, entirely readable fanzine. Bob Leman has the best thing in
the issue, but there is also an entertaining book review column, an equally

entertaining fanzine review column, a story on future fandom by Terry Carr and a letter column that mostly discusses jazz. It's worth getting so push off a letter or your own zine. Highly recommended.

NORTHLIGHT 5. (Alan Burns). Goldspink House, Goldspink Lane, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 2, Northumberland. No sub yet, but can be obtained for a letter of comment, an article or trade. Like the duplicating this issue is somewhat patchy. (I know, but when I was running off Orion 21 the damned duper broke down on me). The best thing in the issue is a story by Alan Dodd, there are reasonable contributions from Ken MacIntyre and Laurance Sandfield, and the worst piece is two pages of so-called film reviews by a fan called Vowen M. Clark. He talks about "The Fly" but anyone who has neither read the story nor seen the film will be none the wiser. We are also told we are no doubt interested in "a pleasingly sexual offering titled 'Call Girls'". The reviewer seems to have made the usual error that fans do nothing but sit around and drool morbidly about sex. On the contrary, 99.9 per cent of them are refreshingly normal. Not a bad zine, but plenty of room for improvement

GYRE 3 & 4. (Steve Tolliver) 909 S. Madison, Pasadena, California. No price listed but Steve will exchange for letters or material. No. 3 consists of two pages and No. 4 of four pages, mostly taken up with a rather dull story, but Steve shows a nice sense of humour and if you lot send him material he can publish a bigger zine.

HYPHEN 22. (Walt Willis) 170, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland. 15¢ or 1/- per copy, or copies of present sf promags or pocket books. Again Bob Leman steals the honours with his take off on Charles Fort. William Temple on Arthur C. Clarke, Bob Shaw on crossing the Irish Sea, Vince Clarke in stitches, and a ten-page letter column complete an issue which, though good, seems to lack the debonair atmosphere we have come to expect of Hyphen. Recommended.

QUIXOTIC 2. (Don Durward) 6033 Garth Avenue, Los Angeles 56, California. 10¢ or 6 copies for 50¢. The Californian boys are certainly turning out the zines these days. This ish has an editorial in which Don keeps on apologising for his typing and spelling errors - don't let it get you down, boy, you'll improve with practise. There is also a neat little story by Terry Carr, an article on S.F. plots about a devastated world by Harry Warner Jr., a fan story by the incomparable Berry, good fanzine review column by Lichtman and a short lettercol. Multum in parvo, as it were. Get the zine - Don is worth encouraging.

RETRIBUTION 12. (John Berry) 31 Campbell Park Avenue, Belmont, Belfast, N.I. If John has put a price in here I can't find it, but as far as I can recall it is 1/-, 15¢ or trade. Atom is back this time with several illos, but Berry himself has done quite a bit, and Eddie Jones is also represented. There is not so much of the zine given over to the Goon this time, but Anglo and American fandom are well represented by such names as Mercer, Sokol, Leman, self, Dottie Hansen, anon. and other names will be found in the letter column. Oh, heck, GET this zine! By the way, I may as well take this opportunity to scotch a rumour. Word has been getting round that John Berry intends to leave Anglo-fandom and concentrate on the American scene. He intends to do nothing of the sort. RET will continue to flourish and both sides of the pond will be hearing from him and about him. So exit rumour, painted full of tongues.

PSI-PHI 2 (Bob Lichtman) 6137 S. Croft Avenue, Los Angeles, 56, California. It would help if I could find the copy that Bob was kind enough to send me, but can honestly say that he looks like fulfilling the promise he showed in the first issue of his magazine. Recommended.

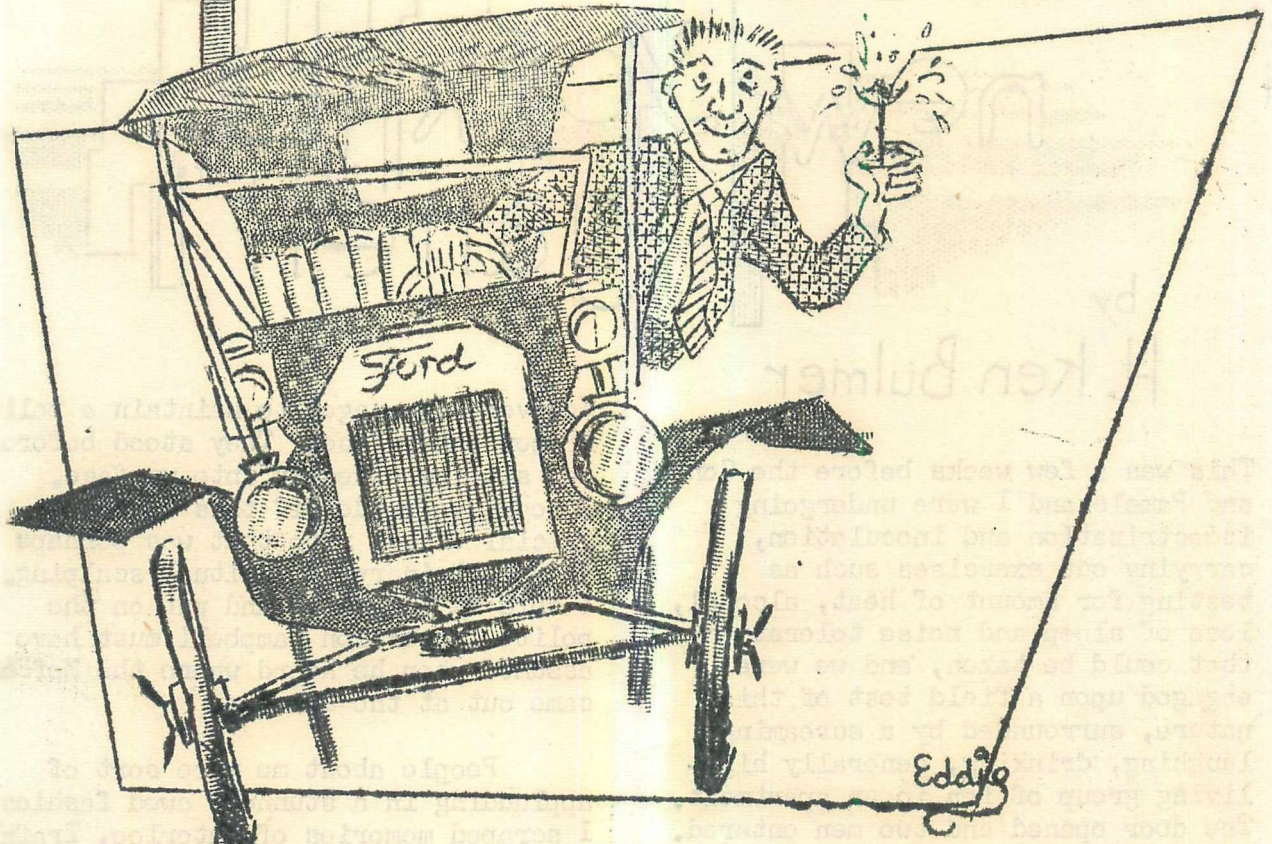
APORRHETA (H.P. "Sandy" Sanderson) "Inchmerry", 236 Queen's Road, New Cross, London, S.E.14. 1/6d (20¢), 6 for 8/- (£1), 12 for 15/- (£2), contribution or one for one trade. Sandy has had to ask for subscribers and when you read his reason for doing so I don't think any of you will quibble. Nos. 9 and 10 are issued together and Ron Bennett, with a couple of beautiful take-offs, the last two parts of Berry's serial, a story by George Locke, Joy's L'il Pitcher column and Atom's superb illoing go to make up the neatest, best laid out and one of the most interesting current British fanzines. The only thing that spoils it is Sandy's tendency to "crow". On page 21 of No. 10 he boasts of a trump card he produced concerning the gift of money sent from America to the London Circle and how he pulled something off in the teeth of "strong opposition". What was actually said was "No, you can't have the money - you will only fritter it away on drink." If this had been the case how come the LC had £33 to loan to the Worldcon in the first place? And Sandy was never the Treasurer of the Worldcon Committee or the London Circle - he was voted as Cost Accountant of the Worldcon Committee at its 16th meeting. And an excellent job he made of it, too. It was also very good of him to look after the gift from America until such time as the vague amorphous mass known as the London Circle welded itself into a cohesive whole, but it gave him no right to tell the London Circle they could not have the money and they made that plain at the first Thursday of the month meeting, when it was voted that the money be held by the Treasurer. Furthermore, the dues paying member he was talking about was not a member of the LC until after the original £33 was in the kitty and neither was Sandy until 1957 - and I wasn't myself until the latter half of 1955. But this aside, his zine is worth what he is asking for it - more, in fact - and I strongly recommend any fan who is not on his mailing list to send him a sub, a long-term one if possible, as he says this makes bookkeeping easier.

PROFANITY (Bruce Pelz) 4010 Leona Street, Tampa 9, Florida. Introductory issue for 15¢, after which, if you want to continue receiving this zine, you must write, trade or contribute. And it's worth getting! There are two verse parodies after the style of archy and mehitabel called Ichabodings and No. 2 of these should be learned by heart by one or two fen. There is also the music to the "Green Hills of Earth" composed by Heinlein and Pelz, a very good story by John Berry, a fanzine review column by Bob Coulson, a meeting with one or two well known monsters by Alan Dodd, a good book review column by Al Andrews, who is also responsible for the satire "Shamblow". This is good, but the footnotes are funnier. This is the eighth issue and I see from the lettercol that the readers have been commenting in the improved repro. The copy I have here is very clear throughout and Bruce also mentions that he has overcome the repro difficulties. This is a good thing as it would have been a pity if anything in this issue had been difficult to read, it's good. Strongly recommended.

SKYRACK. (Ron Bennett), 7 Southway, Arthur's Avenue, Harrogate, Yorks. You can get this for 6d. a time, if you want to be kept au fait with the fan field. It is a fannish newszine, which is a good thing and here's hoping it does not fade away as Contact did.

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Taff tales 2 —

new York
garrett

by
H. Ken Bulmer

This was a few weeks before the Com and Pamela and I were undergoing indoctrination and inoculation, carrying out exercises such as testing for amount of heat, alcohol, loss of sleep and noise toleration that could be taken, and we were engaged upon a field test of this nature, surrounded by a screaming, laughing, drinking, generally high-living group of fen in an apartment. The door opened and two men entered.

There was a slight, foetus-like pause.

I stared quizzically at the two newcomers. One was large, rubicund, shaven-headed, round and red faced, filled with an alarming energy. The other was small, thin faced, dark-haired and filled with an alarming energy.

They clasped their arms around each other's shoulders - quite a job for the smaller but he did it, nonetheless, and advanced upon me, singing. What they were singing made no sense to me. That may have been because they were using different keys, weren't quite in time, weren't quite sure of the words - and the tune was a little shaky, too.

However, I managed to maintain a politely frozen poker face. They stood before me, singing directly into my face. I began to wonder if this was some special tribal rite that was perhaps the preliminary to a ritual scalping. I held my composure and put on the polite expression Campbell must have assumed when he heard where the Moff&SF came out at the Solacon.

People about me were sort of applauding in a stunned, awed fashion; I scraped memories of Waterloo, Trafalgar, Minden and Balaclava to set against Bunker Hill and Saratoga.

The song sputtered to a close. Both men were sweating with the fierce energy they had put into it and their faces were fixed in tight grins while their eyes searched mine with a febrile, expectant hunger. The last words of the song, literally shouted so that they should penetrate the stuffed cotton-wool in my head, were: "For he is an Englishman!" No doubt William Schwank would have admitted some familiarity with the words; but it is highly unlikely that Sir Arthur would have cared to own acquaintance with the music.

I realised with a sincere and stupifying sense of grateful shock, that these two were paying me - and my country - a compliment.

I managed to garble out some sort of embarrassed reply; and said that I'd never heard the song before. This was, more or less, true. Not the way they had sung it, anyway.

And these two fine flowers of our rebelled colonists?

Randall Garrett and Harlan Ellison.

The large crop-headed mass of energy was Randall Garrett, he had but lately left the U.S. Marines. That, alone, should tell you a great deal. Of Harlan, more later; this cameo will be devoted to Randy. At that time he was battering his way into Astounding and the first Robert Randall stories -- Bob Silverberg and Randy Garrett -- were rolling from their combined brains. Ye Gods! When I think of that fantastic summer in New York -- I believe I am right in saying that nothing like it had hit the li'l ole metropolis in years, -- I am immediately whisked back into one of the most adventurous -- in special terms -- most enjoyable and most hectic periods of my life. For, you see, Pamela and I lived in New York. We didn't just pass through on a visit centering round a special affair. But back to Randy.

After this first meeting we met the incredible bouncing bundle of energy many times. Pick out a few high spots. One, in particular, remains burning brightly at the altar of memory -- all right, then, I'll write this the way I want; you wanna read fannish writing, flick the page, bub! One evening after a full evening's entertainment Pamela and I wound up with Randy and he decided that we ought to go out on the town. We, weak-willed, agreed. A taxi was forthwith hailed and we sped downtown to the residence of Katherine Maclean. This lady is well known to AST readers. There was a chance that she would have a free evening and Randy was all for hitting the high spots. He'd just been paid, not ollessdee but slashed-through essas by good ole JWC and the money was burning a hole in his pocket.

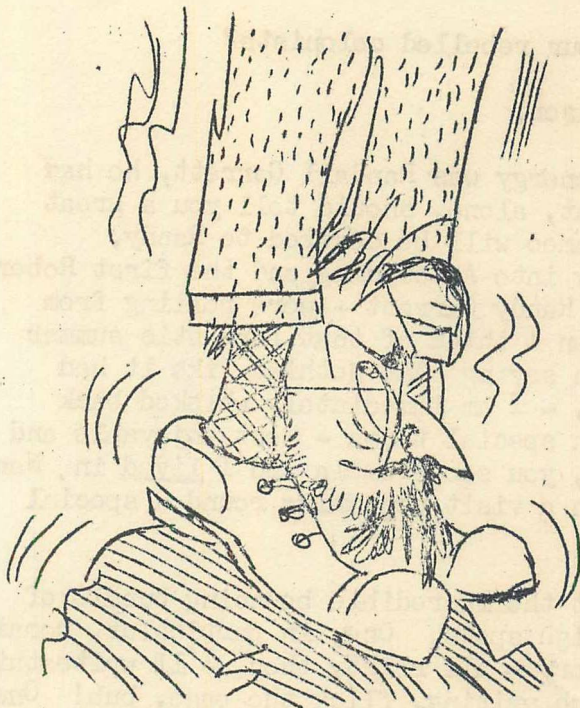
We arrived downtown, paid off the cab and walked a short distance through side streets that, we were informed, were habitually filled with just the sort of hoods that the American 'B' picture industry portray so faithfully. I held Pamela's hand.

Later on, going to a meeting of the Hydra Club, we were reliably genned up on the official price-list for jobs. It went something like this: One beating up: 10 dollars. One broken leg: 15 dollars. A hospital case: 20 dollars. And so on, all neatly price-tagged, until there was something like: 'One Chicago overcoat -- check current pricelist.'

We arrived at a small block, about six storeys or so high. Everything seemed in darkness and repeated bell-ringing produced nothing. I brushed off a furtive offer of a 'smart razor job, guaranteed messy' thinking of various friends who would undoubtedly benefit from a little expenditure on my part, and asked Randy what next?

Well -- you've seen films of the US Marines landing on Pacific Islands and wallowing about in Korea? Randy was fully up to scratch and showed himself worthy of the silver star they gave him. He would have left the Seventh

Cavalry still sweeping out the stables.



Up the side of the building - a midget for New York but a towering giant if set down here - ran a fire escape. Ahah! But the end of the fire escape was a goodly distance from the ground. The Yalu River's a good way from Peoria; but the boys got there just the same.

Randy gave me no time to argue. I had no time, even, to call on Anjou, my imaginary diplodocus. The next instant I was staggering about the sidewalk, with Randy Garrett - all fifty stone of him - perched on my shoulders.

"Stand still till I get a grip!" He shouted in the Tone Of Command.

"If I stand still I'll be driven into the paving", I gritted out. The force of Randy's fists on my head prevented me from parting my jaws; so I gritted it out. I managed to weave back to the iron railings and steadied myself. Then an Atlas ICBM took off from my shoulders. (Note that cunning dragging in of Atlas without the tired old mythological stuff?) I almost went to my knees; but the Garrett was airborne!

With a sirening wail the fire escape descended under his weight. He was up over the rail and then - truly - he went up those treads like a cat. Well - for a big bulky man he moved in the best traditions of big bulky men in fiction - fast. Then we heard him hammering on a window. He yodelled a bit, too. I'd already suggested that Katy Maclean might not want to see us; but the Marines had over-ruled all that shy nonsense.

Some time later the window opened and Randy disappeared inside. Now - here I must be honest in my memoirs - I can't recall if Pamela and I went up via the front door and inside stairs or if we nipped up the fire escape. It is of little moment; we entered the Katy Maclean apartment.

Well! This was a garrett - to which Garrett had brought us, and I refrain from any other comment except for a casual flick of the eyebrows in the direction of the wheels of IF, - and to do it justice would need an extended novel a la Trilby.

One long narrow room with a small window was literally covered in pictures. Pieces of hacked about plaster and suchlike stood about. A couple of divans looked as though Elinor Glyn had just gone out. Piles of books and papers - well, they're standard equipment for all sf folk. Pots of paint and brushes were kicked underfoot. Empty frames, canvasses, stretchers, paint - and pictures. A busted fridge to keep ours at Dave Kyle's company. Empty coffee cups and fag ends. A sort of bivouac in the centre of a painter's garrett studio - if you follow.

Katy had rented the place from a painter who was returning the following day and Katy and her typewriter were seeking alternative accommodation. Here is no place to go into all this; - even if I could recall half the arrangements that went on in NY at that time - and so we pass on to the search for liquor, the cajoling, and finally the sallying forth into the NY night. We had quite a ball that night, too, winding up back home - Dave Kyle's place where we were living on our own - somewhere around 4 am.

And another spot. Tom Lehrer was all the rage then, and Pamela and I brought back his record (a gift from Dick Wilson) which went the rounds over here, being tape-recorded by many fans until the BBC caught on a number of years later and did a Third Programme on him; with most of the best bits cut out.

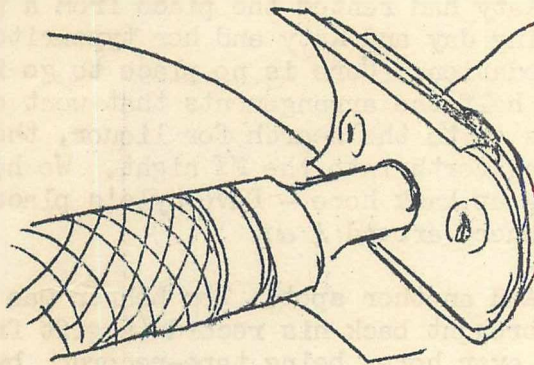
Randy fits in here only as a sort of flashlight picture that the memory picks up and hangs on to. We were riding through the NY night, en route to another party, in Larry Shaw's car (ah, Larry Shaw's car!) and Randy was in the back seat singing Tom Lehrer's songs at the top of his voice. We all joined in at the bits we remembered. Especially the 'ility' part; which is supremely wonderful.

If you don't know Tom Lehrer then grab the record; it's worth it. We first heard it at Dick Ellington's; when we were talking to him and a gang including Dan Curran, Bill Donaho, Art Saha and like that.

Randy always seemed a little put out by my beard. When I told him, truthfully, that I'd grown it to prevent worry about shaving on journeys and therefore not looking respectable, he took the moral to heart. Some time later a whole gaggle of the lads grew beards, Bob Silverberg, Harlan Ellison, Ted White. We had an appointment, arranged by Randy, with Arthur Clarke. Larry Shaw drove us down to the hotel. Randy was the only fan in NY who knew that Arthur was in town; having had the information direct from the West coast. The idea was to greet Arthur, and then shock him by showing him two other Londoners. (I know Arthur kums from *Zummerzett*; but the idea was there). Well, we met Arthur, who was pleased, I think, to see familiar faces. Pamela and I hung about down below and then jumped out on Mike Wilson and scared the living daylights out of him. We all had a good meal, during which a good deal of 'smoke-filled room' activity was done in arranging with Arthur to be Guest of Honour at the New York con for the following year.

Then Randy went along to the drug store in the hotel and bought a razor and blades in a plastic case. This he wanted to present to me. I explained as politely as I could that by this time I was attached to the beard; and, anyway, if I started shaving now I'd have to keep it up. (As, circa 1959, I jolly well have, curse it!) He was most hurt that I'd refused his offer to clean me up; but it all passed off well enough. He left the razor in Larry's car. A letter I had from Larry reasonably recently informed me that he was using the razor himself, as he'd gone away for a weekend and forgotten his own - and discovered the Garrett/Bulmer razor lying in the crevice of the upholstery! So everything has its uses.

Randy Garrett and a glass of alcohol went hand in hand, if you follow; the amount of liquid he stowed away was matched only by the amount that seeped through his skin when he was engaged - as he usually was - in doing something extraordinarily energetic. He and Bob Silverberg thrashed the faces off their typewriters, turning out material which they rushed off hot-foot to



Campbell; then the whole NY fannish community hung about biting it's collective fingernails waiting for The Decision. If 'Nay' gloom and despair struck all. If 'Yea' - well, on one of the very first occasions of this nature I had an appointment with Randy to discuss a story that had been cooked up by a gang of us during one session. I went uptown to the block where fans lived in various apartments - Bob Silverberg, Ron Smith, Harlan Ellison, - and where Randy Garrett bunked down on any convenient floorspace.

I waited, passing the time of day with Harlan who was busily fanning instead of writing pro stuff - just as I am now, squanderer of time! - and, eventually, gave up. Randy was missing for three days.

There was a knock on one of the apartment doors; it was opened - and Randy stood in the doorway, for only an instant, and then pitched forward full length onto his face.

Quite a guy.

Perhaps the latest news we have of him merely fills out the character portrait we have. He has taken up religion in a big way, becoming an Anglican, and religiously attends all services. He refused to attend the con because he would have to leave the US and his church. The fact that the Anglicans started here didn't, apparently, enter the calculations.

Why should Randy join an English church? I think it was part of the Gilbert and Sullivan and like that mania that was around NY. I wouldn't like you to imagine it was me - I am not Church of England. But whatever it was, I feel convinced that Randy is sincere and genuine about it; he doesn't do things by halves.

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This is not a commercial for cigarettes or tobacco of any kind. There is news of a new fanzine to be called as above.

If you would like to see the FIRST issue, and/or have a contribution you would like to submit. Write to the editor and publisher....George Locke,

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The GNVIVIAL Convention

by
NOR
MAYNE

The convention really should have started on Thursday evening. I was expecting it to anyway, so I got down to the Globe early.

There was only the usual crowd. We left the Globe early, and as is usual more fannish things were done and said outside the Globe than in.

First of all, we trekked down to the 'Black and White' milk bar, in Fleet St. The people here seemed to have met with fen before, because they made no attempt to serve us. Eventually I suppose I went to sleep in front of the counter, because I suddenly glanced round just in time to see the last of the fen disappearing out of the door, while I was still standing there like a dummy, bearing a vacant expression and a saucer with two doughnuts on it. I put this down and tried to pretend I'd never touched them in the first place, while I backed hastily out. I dunno. Perhaps they were all zombies or something.

When I got outside, Bobbie Wild, Ella Parker, Daphne Buckmaster and Sandra Hall were going down the road in one direction, while George Locke, Pete Taylor, Ron Buckmaster, Sandy Sandfield and Peter West were going off in the other. I couldn't quite make it out, but since two of the others were dragging Pete Taylor, who was shouting "I wanna go with the wimmen", I gathered there had been some segregation. We climbed on a bus, and Sandy explained that 'the wimmen' were going in Ron's car and we would all meet up at Charing Cross. We brightened the

journey up with remarks like, "is that your car Ron? The tall thin one? The tall thin one with three wheels?"

There was no sign of the girls when we reached Charing Cross, so we stogged around while Pete Taylor told some jokes that wouldn't do much to help Anglo-French relations. Ron went off into the park and came back with a bunch of daffodils. Pete said, "don't tell me they've started growing them with elastic bands round them?" Ron stood there holding his flowers, trying to look coy. Pete then stopped two policemen and asked them if they'd seen a car full of women, while the rest of us walked on and pretended we didn't know him. At last we all met up and descended on Forte's snack bar for a fannish supper. Ron gravely presented his daffodils to Daphne. Ella took one and stuck it in her hair. She took it out afterwards and began to scratch her head with it, claimed it helped her to think. Oh well, it takes all sorts to make a world, I suppose.

Strangely enough, Friday morning dawned bright and clear. I needn't have worried though. It started to rain before I left home, it was a typical Good Friday, in other words.

Bobbie and I met at the station so we walked on to where we were supposed to meet Ella, who was already there. A few minutes later George turned up, he and I went to get tea while Ella and Bobbie looked for the others. We'd just paid for the four cups when Bobbie told us Sandra and Peter West had arrived. She took the tea we'd already brought and George and I went back for two more cups. We just got back with those, to be met with the news that Pete Taylor had just stumbled - half asleep - out of a taxi....back for more tea!

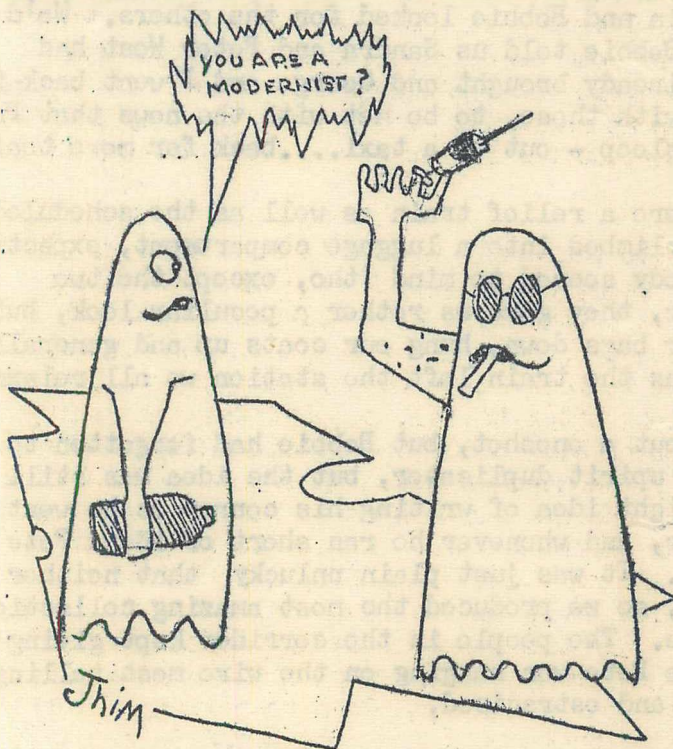
On the platform we found there a relief train as well as the scheduled one. They were both full, so we climbed into a luggage compartment, expecting to be hauled out any minute. Nobody seemed to mind 'tho, except the two cyclists who were already in there, they gave us rather a peculiar look, but didn't say anything. We slung our bags down, hung our coats up and generally made ourselves to home. As soon as the train left the station we all relaxed.

Sonebody suggested putting out a oneshot, but Bobbie had forgotten to bring her duplicator. It isn't a spirit duplicator, but the idea was still scotched. Then George had the bright idea of writing his conrep as he went along. He borrowed Sandra's typer, and whenever he ran short of ideas Pete Taylor or I took over for a spell. It was just plain unlucky that neither George or I was used to the typer, so we produced the most amazing collection of typos you ever saw in your life. The people in the corridor kept giving us funny looks. Maybe it was because Pete was hanging on the wire mesh telling them what it mean't to be a leper and ostracised,

The journey to Birmingham didn't seem to take too long. On seeing Birmingham we almost wished it had taken longer. Still, there was really nothing else to do but face up to it. We took a taxi to the Imperial Hotel, the driver cheerfully told us we could have walked it quicker, then took us round a maze of side streets to prove it, I could see I was going to love Birmingham.

When we reached the hotel it was lit by candlelight! I thought the staff had arranged a specially ghoulish welcome for the fen, but the explanation was just a simple, mundane power cut. We signed in - in the semi-dark - and then went to the dining room to eat. We eventually reached a compromise between what we wanted and what the staff were still prepared to serve, while we were waiting - and waiting - and waiting for our food, George and I decided to go out and see who else had arrived. The receptionist snatched the register away from us saying it was private. I think the receptionists were just about the worst people on the staff, the others were a Ghodawful shower too. Two suspicious looking characters approached us, I thought for a moment they were two of the Birmingham toughs you hear so much about, but they introduced themselves as Brian Jordan and Alan Rispin.

Things were looking up. After all, this is what you come to conventions for, to meet people, and here I was meeting people. Brian and Alan had already eaten - fish and chips - but, they came in to help us wait for ours. After we'd eaten - yes, we did, eventually, we all went up to dump our things in our rooms and freshen up. George and I got back downstairs to find a whole crowd in the lobby. Terry Jeeves, Ron Bennett, Norman and Ina Shorrocks and Archie Mercer....see, people! Well, fen anyway.



We ducked back upstairs to tell Ella who had arrived. By this time of course, I felt the con had really started and I was on top of the world. When I got to Ella's room I was brought down to earth with a bang. Jhim Linwood was there! Yecchh! I collapsed in a stricken heap on the bed. Brian Jordan passed me a whisky bottle - empty, lucky for him I didn't have the strength to throw it at him. We sat around for a while trying to persuade Ella that Jazz-Type Music is a Good Thing. Somehow I don't think we quite got through to her. Oh well.

The crowd of us went back down stairs and settled round a small table. Jhim and I wanted to talk about things generally since our last meeting had been some time ago. This was the first time we'd met Brian Jordan, so we all had a lot to talk about. In a way, it

was just like the Globe, with the younger fen sitting on their own around a table and all the other fen talking round another. Later our little group broke up and Jhim and I spoke to Norman Shorrocks and Ron Bennett. Ron, of course, was selling subscriptions to PLOY and The FanDirectory. No old mags this time, but he's got a new racket in TAFF. I hope nobody was stupid enough not to give money to a nogood character like Bennett.

When Ron had made enough money we invited him to eat. On reaching the street we saw Normal George shambling along in front of us, so we all turned sharp left. We watched him disappear down the hill into the sunset. In the restaurant Brian, Alan and Jhim went downstairs for a snack, Ron, George and I went upstairs for a meal. Unfortunately, we couldn't afford anything we wanted, so went back downstairs to join the others. On the way back to the Imp Ron suggested to me that we should go and see 'Pal Joey', but it wasn't showing anywhere. Obviously Birmingham is a town without a sense of fannish tradition. (That's a subtle esoteric joke. So esoteric, only Sid Birchby can understand it!).

When the bar opened all the fen gathered round it - natch! Norman Shorrocks was distributing copies of the programme, a very well produced book of 40 odd pages, and I do mean odd! Someone rashly mentioned to Pete Taylor that nothing much seemed to be happening so he decided to hold a party. He dragged me out with him to help him get the bottles back to the hotel. Getting them back was okay, it was getting them IN that was the trouble. The staff weren't particularly friendly - you've gathered? - and we hated to think what they'd do if we walked in with 29's worth of booze. While Pete stayed outside to look after the other stuff, I stuck one bottle into my pocket and two others under my coat. I walked straight through the lobby and upstairs to Pete's room. I'm sure that both the hotel staff and fen gave me some peculiar looks, but I didn't dare look round to see. After leaving the stuff in Pete's room, I found Ina and told her the mess we were in. Ina came out and helped carry some more in and then Joan and Paul Hammett drove up and agreed to smuggle the rest through for us in their cases.

The Hammett's would turn up aporadically throughout the con, and then disappear about five minutes later, muttering something about having to join the Aldermaston march.

After all that I never got to the party in Pete's room anyhow. I found myself in Bob Richardson's room, along with Norman and Ina, Peter West and Sandra Hall. Quite a lot of the time Pete was there too. We sat around and talked, then listened to a tape Bob had made for Norman. Eventually we decided it was time to look in on Pete's party, but, there was nobody in his room. It wasn't long after twelve, so obviously the party hadn't finished yet. Ina did one of her celebrated reccies and located the party in Ella's room. Apparently the manager had come round to Pete's room complaining of the noise, so they had all moved down to more fannish territory. It was quite a party too. Norman Shorrocks and I managed to wedge Ron in between the washstand and the wall and started explaining to him why he was Penelope Fandergaste. Then Ron got free, and started explaining to us why he wasn't Penelope Fandergaste. Then the three of us and Ardhie Mercer went downstairs to get coffee. The talk now was of fannish matters generally, and pretty soon everybody from the party had come down to join us. I think it was about 4-30 when that session broke up and people moved on to start playing brag etc. Me? I went to bed!

Saturday morning I had breakfast with Arthur (Doc) Weir, Alan Rispin and Normal George. Doc gave us some interesting information about various psychical phenomena. He obviously hadn't met NGW before. Still, he must have got some idea of what he was up against when NGW interrupted him with,

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"I think what this country needs is a National Lottery."

After the dining room staff had finally condescended to serve us, Alan and I went to look for Brian. We found him talking to Jhim, so the four of us went out to look at Birmingham. Jhim had apparently got there early on Friday and had nosed round a lot already, he took us along to have a look at a Communist bookshop. We had a good browse round in there. I asked the bookseller if he sold 'Freedom', but he didn't blow his top. Matter of fact, he looked as if he'd never heard of it. Foiled there, we went down the road to a religious shop, where I enquired about books by Henry Miller. This drew a complete blank too. We looked quickly into Smith's to see if there were any cheap records, but we met Archie coming up from the record dept and he told us there weren't any. Jhim and I decided to skip back to the Imp for the OMPA meeting.

This was pretty well the same as last year's OMPA meeting. Everyone else just sprawled around in armchairs listening to Ron talk. That isn't mean't as a crack at Ron either, it's mean't as one at everybody else. Near the end of the meeting Ina looked in to break the glad news that Burgess had just arrived. This was enough to drive Jhim and I straight out of the hotel and into a jazz record shop that Jhim had located. We browsed around here, and I was surprised to see such a good selection of records, even one or two American L.P's. Birmingham was surprisingly well stocked with book and record shops. After we left there Jhim and I wandered vaguely Impwards looking for something to eat. We met Barry Hall, but we weren't that hungry. At the hotel the first session of the con was being held in the Connaught Room. Terry Jeeves as Chairman welcomed us, then introduced Ken Slater as Guest of Honour. Ken spoke for a few moments on the BSFA, then the programme started. Like most fen at conventions I had promised myself that I wouldn't attend anything on the official programme, but somebody had obviously tipped them off, and they forestalled me by arranging a practically all-fannish programme. Damned good it was too.

The first thing was a Science Fiction 20 questions, in which several volunteers from the audience were called on to guess various unlikely items. I wonder what diabolically fiendish mind thought them up. The panel members all did very well, I thought, despite the efforts of quiz-masters Jeeves and Roles to confuse them.

I wanted to talk to John Roles about the loan of his hat for a play which some of us from the London Circle were doing. Unfortunately, he was involved in the tea-drinking contest, and when he withdrew it was hurriedly, he dashed off somewhere, I can't think where. Brian, Jhim, Alan and I went out to eat.

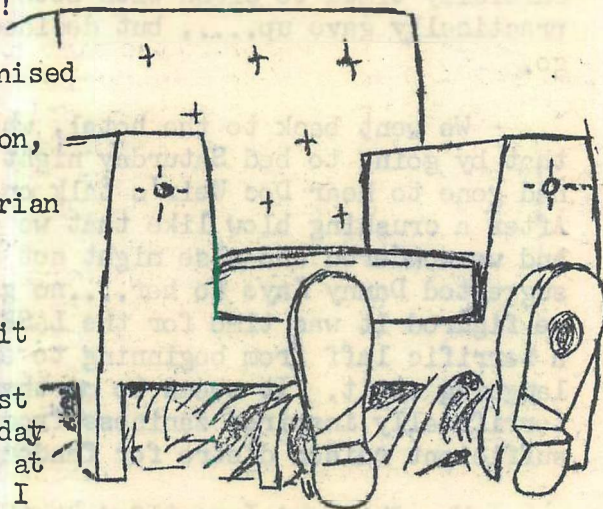
When we got back Ron was just getting ready to give his talk on the TAFF trip he had enjoyed so much. I saw John in the hall and we went up to his room to get the hat. As he said, it wasn't really the sort of hat a reporter would wear, but still, you can't have everything. We got back just as Ron was starting his talk. This and the slides with it, made things very interesting. The slides were projected in a most unfannish manner, i.e. right way up, and in the right order. Apart from this they were a wow,

especially when Ron showed one of the White House, just to prove it was against the law to stop and photograph the White House.

After this came our play, no doubt this would have been enjoyed much more both by me and the audience, if I hadn't been in it, but still.... I still want to see a photo of what I looked like in Pete Taylor's coat and John's hat. It was a play in two scenes. We cut most of the first one out, and didn't do most of the second, but, what was left seemed to go down okay. Ella, George and I weren't taking any chances though, we stayed behind the screen and disclaimed all responsibility. Not even Terry Jeeves could bully or coax us out.

We came out for the auction. I bought one or two American pb's, there wasn't much else I wanted. George bought some old fanzines I'd have liked, but not at those prices. There was a copy of Salinger's "Catcher in the Rye" too, but just as I started bidding Jhim shouted out that it was the best book ever written, thank you, Jhim!

That was the end of the organised programme for Saturday. I somehow got mixed up in a brag game with Ron, Phil Rogers and George Locke. I left this to join Jhim, Alan and Brian on their miniature Roofcon. We looked around for a cat, but we couldn't find one, and anyhow I wasn't really sure which skylight it should be. We thought of dropping bottles down chimneys, but Alan lost them. Oh well. The rest of Saturday night went the way Saturday nights at conventions usually do. At least, I suppose it did. The only part I can really remember is when I went to bed and Jhim went to sleep on the floor of my room. I still don't know why he pulled the chair over his head. Perhaps to shut out the sight of me.



When I got up in the morning - well, later in the morning, I went downstairs and tried to join the others for breakfast but one of the waiters - waiters? Hell, we were the ones who had to wait - told me I couldn't sit at that table because it was only meant for three. Jhim, Alan and Brian immediately got up and moved to a table for four. The waiter stood and glared. He probably took longer to serve us but, we were so used to sitting around having to wait for food that any extra delay wasn't noticeable. Jhim ordered a cup of tea. Brian suggested that Jhim should ask for a refund on his money since he wasn't having breakfast. Since Jhim hadn't paid any money in the first place I didn't think it was really such a good idea.

After breakfast we went for a wander round the hotel, finding some parts of it we hadn't seen before. The place was an absolute maze. You could

spend hours wandering round finding new corridors and rooms. By the time we had found out just where we were in the hotel, it was time to trek back to the Conhall for the BSFA AGM. (I love initials, don't you?). I take it this meeting will be reported in full in VECTOR, so there's no need for any great detail here. Of course, some ORION readers may not be BSFA members and therefore won't get VECTOR, but let's not bother about them, shall we? Arthur (Doc) Weir was elected Secretary, Archie Mercer remained as Treasurer for another year (I always knew Achee was a hero), and Bobbie Wild was elected to the post of Publications Officer, to be aided by Sandra Hall. New Worlds was voted best British Prozone, ASF the best American. Triode best British Fanzine. No decision was reached in the consite for 1960. It was decided that the recent SF movies have all been so horrible it was impossible to pick out the worst.

So much for the AGM. See VECTOR for further details.

After this Jhim and I went to lunch and then to some cinema or other to see what time "Secret Life of Walter Mitty" started. It had been carefully timed to clash with both the afternoon and evening sessions. We practically gave up...., but decided that if Ella would come with us, we'd go.

We went back to the hotel, where we met Ina Shorrocks who told us that by going to bed Saturday night we'd missed a talk on jazz. When Ina had gone to hear Doc Weir's talk on Atlantis we quietly blew our tops. After a crushing blow like that we didn't feel up to the Atlantis talk, and we wondered who else might not be there. Ella was in her room, so we suggested Danny Kaye to her....no go. We stayed there talking fandom 'til we figured it was time for the LASFAS tape "Last and First Fan". This was a terrific laugh from beginning to end, Jhim and I were killing ourselves laughing at it. It seems to me that as long as fandom can produce such terrifically inspired zaniness from its own background then that's a sufficient *raison d'être* for fandom.

We, Jhim and I went for another meal, but we made sure we got back in time for the auction. This was supposed to be all the rubbish they couldn't sell at the first one. Maybe it's just me....but all the things I wanted came up at this auction. A painting by a well known Fan fetched the most, chiefly because it was returned for resale so often. Ron who was holding a TAFF auction, was really having trouble finding new ways of describing it, he was really stuck for words....! And when Ron's stuck for words! I think he was holding it upside down when he finally sold it.

Now we were ready for the film-show. We saw Cheltenham's film "The Test", which was very well received. I don't want to sound snobbish, but because it was so acceptable to a SF oriented crowd I think it will be largely lost to the general public, just as commercial sf movies seem so....to people who read sf. We'll see, anyhow. We also saw some fannish movies which I'd seen before at the Worldcon, they were definitely worth seeing again. Some of the cracks were fabulous. I think the one I enjoyed most was the one that described John Roles as a "student of Oriental pornography".

Jhim had to leave just before the end of the films. There was supposed to have been a party in Ella's room, but I kept hearing different accounts of where it had been moved to, I decided to stay in the Conhall and talk to Norman about jazz. After this I talked to Eric Jones for a while, then, when people started trickling in from Ella's party I went to bed. At least, my story is that I went to bed, Brian and Alan swear they found me lying in the corridor and put me to bed. I just don't believe it.

At breakfast on Monday we must have looked more like a ~~Zombie's~~ Gathering than a Science Fiction Convention. Dave Cohen said that he must look pretty fit in comparison with the rest of us, Norman Shorrocks lurched in and when he sat down promptly went into an Alan Burns type-trance. After breakfast Brian and I went out to buy shopping bags to pack some of our stuff in. Then we started on the job...of saying good-bye to everyone. I know I said good-bye to Pete Taylor at least six times....and he lives in London! We all gathered in the visitors lounge until people slowly drifted off. I got talking to Norman Shorrocks again 'til the LASFAS crowd drifted off to eat. Finally. There was just Archie and the London crowd left.

That was the end of the con. Somehow I just don't know how to sum it all up. It was fun, of course, tremendous fun, and I wished it didn't have to end, just yet anyhow. Norman Shorrocks, Bob Richardson, as con secretary and everyone else did a terrific job with it, and they even managed to make a profit too! All the same I felt there was something lacking. I've just realised what it was: where were all the BNF's? I know that fandom needs new blood, and you could have called ~~this~~ the Bloodcon since there were so many new faces there, but where were the BNF's apart from those who had to be there because of their positions on the concommittee or the BSFA? It's no good new people coming into fandom if all the old guard are going to drop out. Fen have said that what fandom needs is to get the old-time ~~fen~~ back into the fold. Perhaps then the new blood might feel more desire to STAY in fandom once having found it.

On which philosophical note, and not before time, I quit.

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