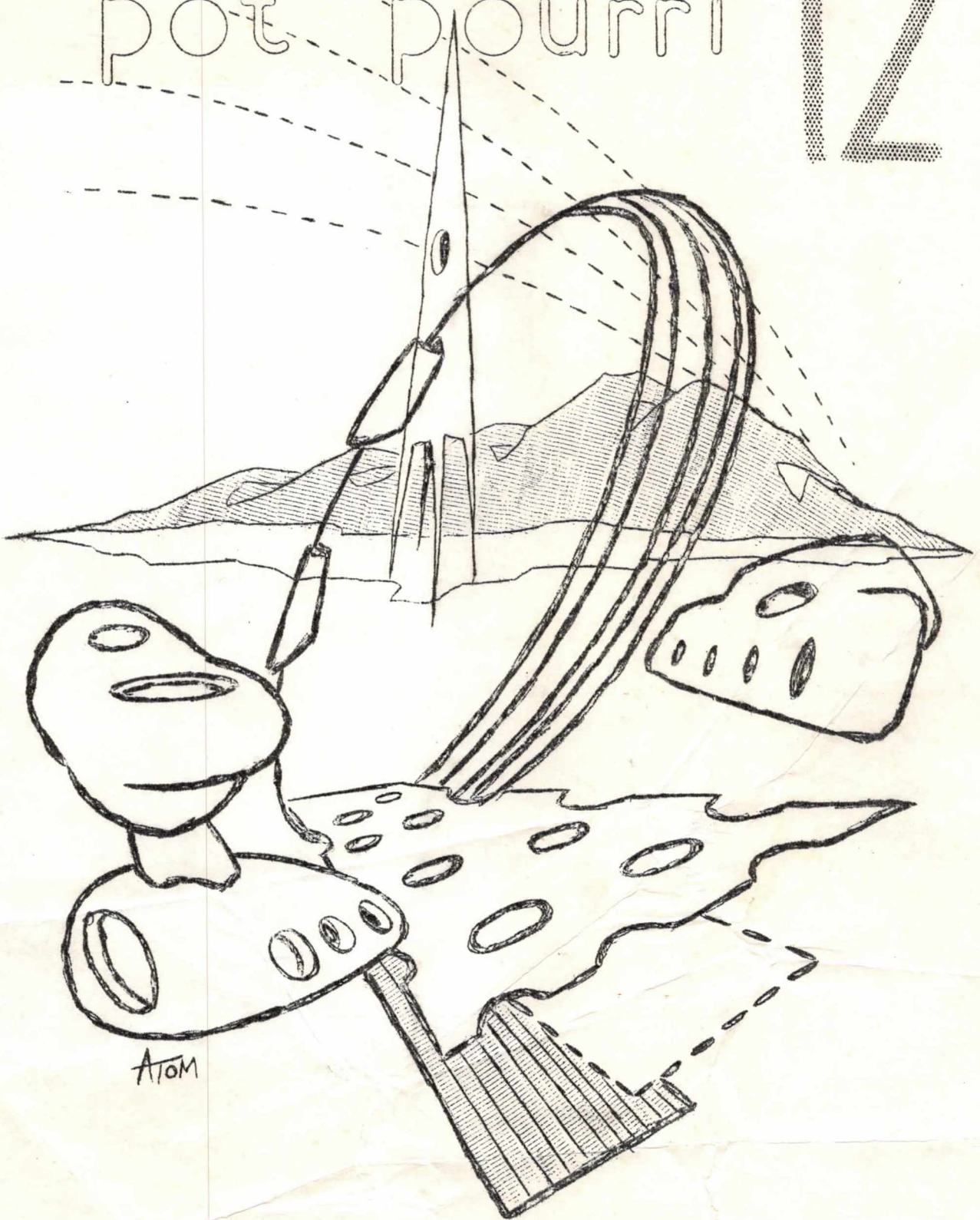


pot pourri

12



ATOM

Manderino

It seems to me that I'm maybe flogging these American humour books to death, but I've still quite a lot of them to wade through, and I'm sure that each one will bring to my mind a mass of questions. On another page I've given my comments on RALLY ROUND THE FLAG, BOYS, but since I've stencilled those particular pages I've read THE INSOLENT CHARIOTS, by John Keats.

This brings forth, from my side of the Atlantic, a totally new and frightening aspect of the American character. Like the Americans I met whilst over in the States last year led me to classify most Americans as being shrewd and business-like. This THE INSOLENT CHARIOTS has radically shaken this impression.

Keats book deals with the American motor industry, which is collectively classified as 'Detroit'. The book has the assertion on the front cover that it is 'funny enough to crack a rib', and yet, although there is a slight touch of humour in the writing, it seems to me that the author is down in the depths of frustration, and the rare jolts of pure humour are inserted to try and keep his peace of mind!

You were all kind enough to go into detail about my Indian problems, and I'd very much like you to carry on and give me the facts about the purchase of motor cars in America. Because this is what Keats asserts :-

He says that American cars, throughout the years, have been designed with one important factor in mind. To keep up the cost of second hand cars. It is pointed out that in this way, the vastly important motor industry, and its consequent employment connections, can carry on without any ill effect. If the price of the mass of second hand cars was cheap, these would be purchased, and the factories would have to deplete their labour force. It is said that every American considers a car a necessity, and family men are quite prepared to let their families go short of essentials as long as they possess a car. Another strange thing is that the design of cars is planned so that each successive year the cost is much higher, the mileage is much lower, the bare comfort of the car is made even more austere, and the very slightest alteration is made to fin or bumper to give the excuse of it being a new model.

Well, this is business, I suppose, and the comments on this are perchance not so important as the next relation :-

Mr. Keats draws a morbid picture of the administration of the major car manufacturers. It is explained in great detail that whoever loses money, the manufacturers ensure that it isn't them. When their accountants work out the wholesale prices of their products, they include in the price the tax they estimate they will have to pay to the Tax man! This amount is passed on to the purchaser.

The most amazing thing is that the car dealers are puppets. They have to adhere to every whim of the manufacturers' representatives. Keats claims that dealers are almost forced (by subtle blackmail) to falsify their accounts so that they have to pay more tax than they rightfully should...this means of course

that the manufacturers pay less, although they have already ensured that the maximum tax they are likely to pay has already been secured at no cost to themselves.

Car builders organise big shows, at which the district car dealers have to attend. The car dealers have to give 'voluntary' donations for those shows, and pay their own expenses. The dealers are also sent more high price cars than they can possibly sell. They must take those cars from the builders, otherwise they will not get a supply of the ones they can sell. The dealers therefore sell these high-priced cars at a loss, and put the amount they have lost on to the price of the ordinary cars.The dealers, not being suckers, also put the cost of their donations to the car shows and their attendant expenses on the price of the cars.

In other words, the poor individual who purchases a car pays not only the cost of the car, but also the manufacturers tax, the dealers losses on other deals, hire purchase charges and 'packing'...a term used to describe pushing up the price of the car in relation to the financial status of the poor critter who is buying it.

Tell me, fellow SAPSites, is this a true picture of the American car industry. Most of you have got cars. I'm not trying to pry into your financial affairs, but I would really appreciate a few details of similar experiences you might have heard about or actually come into contact with.

Huh ?

.....

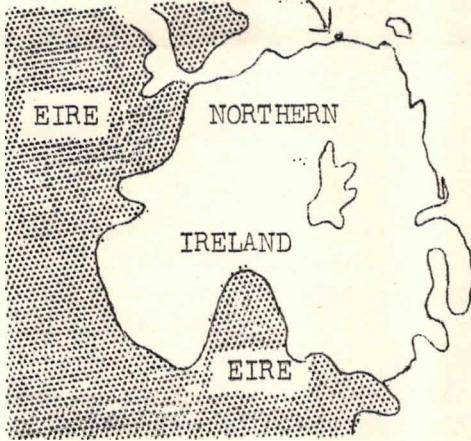
A word about this issue of POT POURRI. Last year, if you recall, I was ill during the period when I should have been bashing away at my first anniversary, so I've gone out of my way to make this second anniversary something extra special. A foto sheet, a photograph, and some off-beat material, in fact, here are the complete contents :-

Front Cover by ATOM.....	and it's a dilly, isn't it ?
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PILLAR POLL REPORT. This should really be in the Mailing Komment section, I suppose, but I must confess I've never been too happy about such polls in a limited circle of friends, and I'd rather make my point here so that you'll all read it. The thing is, folks, I feel so damn sorry for the people who come at the bottom of the polls. Like, we're all in it for the enjoyment, not to have our pleasures tabulated every year. I've obviously no personal gripe against the poll, indeed, I thrilled at the egoboo, but we don't all enter our fanatic at the same level. I mean, I'm at writing and publishing all the time, every night for six years or more. Other fans only write maybe a few pages a year, and most of that in mailing comments. That's the way I feel, and that's why I didn't vote. I must say I thought Wally Weber did a good job with the calculations.....see you in October !!!!!!!



GIANTS CAUSEWAY



In Northern Ireland we possess a unique geological feature. Nowhere else in the whole world has anything so grand or majestic been seen of this type. I refer to the Giant's Causeway. You may possibly have heard of it. There is almost certain to be a reference to it in any large geological work. I visited it last Wednesday, the 20th of April 1960, and as soon as I saw the utter magnificence of it, I knew you of SAPS would like to hear all about it. I was lucky to have a professional photographer with me at the time, and the resultant picture below shows but one of the smallest aspects of this natural marvel. More about that later.

The heading on the left there cunningly includes a map of Northern Ireland, and you'll note that the Giant's Causeway is at the northern tip of County Antrim.

On this Wednesday, my party (three other policemen) parked our car and paid the statutory sixpence fee for this privilege. We passed through a gate, and were confronted with a large bay. Our path led to the right, a couple of hundred feet above the roaring breakers of the Atlantic below. After a walk of about four hundred yards we turned at the headland and found ourselves confronted with another bay. But the sun was shining, and the sea air crinkled our nostrils, and we walked another few hundred yards. Then we saw our first signs of this natural marvel. Twenty yards in front of us we could see this strange structure....a little jutting finger of rock, composed entirely of hexagonal sections, something like a crazy mixed up honey comb.

One thing spoiled our rush forward to this superb sight. A large iron-wrought fence barred our way, and the only way past was to part with the filthy lucre. I stood discreetly in the background whilst someone else paid, and during the quarter hour whilst the others made up their mind who was going to pay for me, I pondered on the excellent psychological situation of that kiosk. You were only confronted with a demand for entrance money after you'd walked so far, and the natural indignation at this abrupt and unexpected financial setback was tempered with the realisation that you'd come so far, the goods just lay round the corner, and, after all, it was only one shilling and sixpence.

We edged our way through the turnstile, and glanced round us. Yet another bay...a large one. We continued on our way eastwards. The seawards view was just wonderful. The Atlantic was blue, and below us the white wave-tops gently edged their way to the rock-strewn sand.

Halfway round this bay is the Giant's Organ. On the photograph herabouts I have my hand on High C ! The Giant's Organ is officially described as being ' about 120 feet long, consisting of 60 columns, of which those at the centre are forty feet high, but those on the sides are the lower.' In other words, these large vertical hexagonal columns rather resemble a mundane church organ when looked at from the front. The Giant's Organ is a good name for it, but I must confess I expected to see a phallic symbol.

After the photography session, we staggered along, and, after a short pause to watch the antics of an uninhibited male and female on a grassy bank below, who thought they were unobservable, we reached the end of the bay, turned a corner, and golly gee, yet another bay, and this one even wider...it must have been a mile to the other extremity of it.

We decided not to go any further. There was no need. For we could see the strange beauty of the Causeway from our vantage point facing the centre of the bay. It was composed of thousands of stone columns. The somewhat obscure official phraseology of this phenomena tells us that it is composed of 'columnar Basalt Lava-flows and Tuffs, the higher flows beautifully Columnar in their lower portions.'

In between these massive columns were layers of red stone which could be broken off in sections, rather like hardened corflu! Imagine the scene as we stood on the end of the vast bay, looking at it from left to right. At the bottom, the sea crashed against a rocky shore. The sea was azure blue, the formations of waves approaching the shore all white-crested. From the shore the columns rose vertically, indisposed with layers of red stone and, greenery cluttered about everywhere. The sky above was the purest blue, and the whole superb panorama of nature at its ultimate was rudely spoiled by the white condensation trail of a jet-plane in the stratosphere!

For the purists, allow me to quote a paragraph from the official record :-

'The summit is covered with a thin grassy sod, under which lies a natural basaltic rock having generally a hard surface somewhat cracked and shivered. At the depth of ten or twelve feet from the summit this rock begins to assume a columnar tendency and forms a range of many pillars of basalt, which stand perpendicular to the horizon, presenting in the sharp face of the promontory the appearance of a magnificent gallery or colonnade upwards of sixty feet in height. This colonnade is supported on a solid basis of coarse, black, irregular rock, nearly sixty feet thick. Under this great bed of stone stands a second range of pillars between 40 and 50 feet high, less gross, more sharply defined than those of the upper storey. This lower range is borne on a layer of red ochre stone, which serves as a relief to show it to greater advantage.'

We just sat there and lapped up this technicolour dream and smoked. It made us realise how puny man is when compared with nature, and yet the con trails above seemed somehow to disprove this.

On the return march we stopped once more to check on the couple on the grassy bank. If I knew that man's name he would get my nomination for Sportsman of the Year, without question.

The great question is, how did this phenomena emerge? What caused it? The strange thing is that, on the Scottish coastline at Mull, Staffa and Skye there are similar structure, but they are small and insignificant when compared with the north Antrim coastline. And, as the crow flies, they are almost opposite the Northern Irish coast. My research in geological literature reveals that a thousand square miles between Antrim and Scotland was a chalk basin which was filled with lava from volcano outpourings. However, there is no trace of any volcano in the area for some considerable distance. This proves nothing, as, eons ago, volcano's came and went (for want of better phraseology.) It happened somehow...many square miles of hexagonal columns, between 15 and 28 inches in diameter. Let me quote again from official sources :

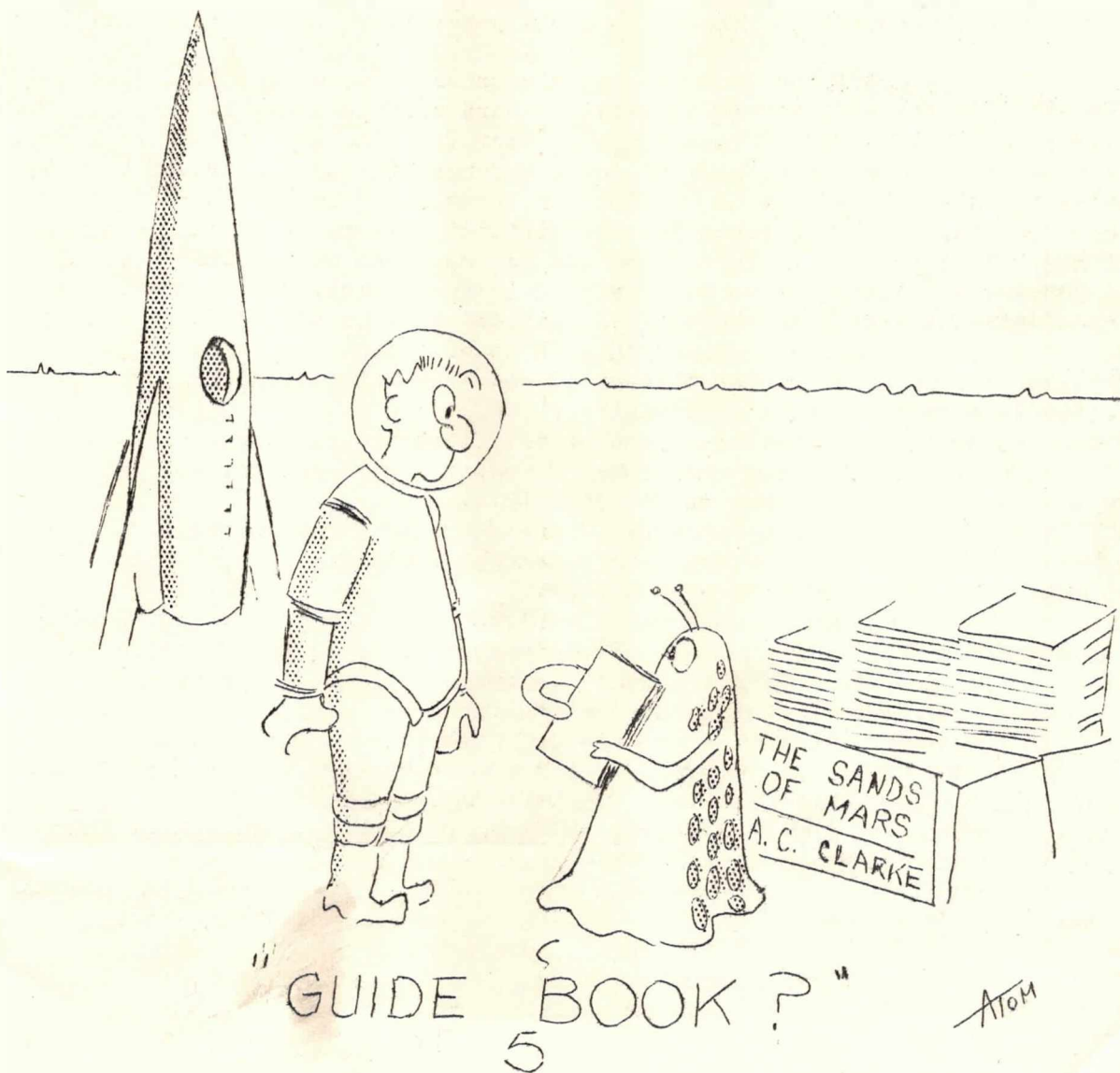
'The Causeway comprises of over 74,000 distinct and perfect

columns, besides many that are broken and scattered about in its vicinity. The columns consist of prisms of equal dimensions through their whole height, which ranges from 15 to 36 feet, with diameter of from 15 to 28 inches., and varying in their sides from three to nine, although the greater number are pentagons and hexagons. Each of the pillars is perfectly distinct, and almost invariably differs in size, number of sides, and points of articulation from the adjacent columns, to which, however, it is so close that in some cases not even water can pass between them. Almost every column is composed of several pieces, the joints of which are articulated with the greatest exactness and in strictly horizontal direction. Generally the upper part of the section is concave and the lower convex, but this arrangement is often reversed. In a few of the columns no joints are visible; in others, three, four or more can be traced.'

I think the photograph this can all be seen quite clearly, and I must stress once again the the photo depicts probably the most insignificant section of the basalt.

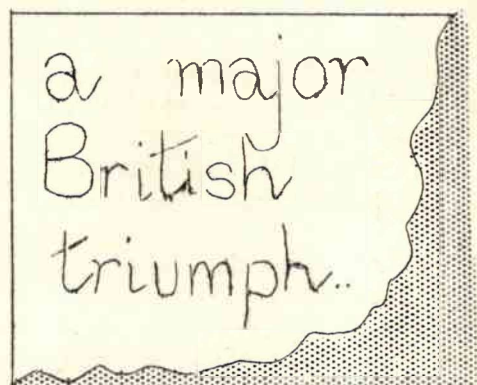
If any of you ever come to Northern Ireland, be sure to put this location on your itinerary. Let me know if you're going, I'll join you.

It's superb, honest !!!



AVIATION ODDITIES

2.



In this age of slashing speed and discovery, today's news is tomorrow's yawn. Today, in point of fact, is Thursday the 7th of April 1960, and the date is memorable to the aerophile (or will be) because Britain once again has led the world with an aeronautical achievement. It is even more interesting because the aircraft concerned, the Short S.C.1, was designed and built about one mile from where I live. Short Brothers and Harland (George Charters, the Sage of Irish Fandom, works there) commenced construction of the S.C.1 in 1957. The S.C. stands for 'Strange Contraption.

What happened today ? Well, for the first time in the world, a jet-plane switched from forward flight, hovered, returned to forward flight, and landed conventionally. In other words, we have now proved that it is possible to build an orthodox-type jet-plane which can operate from little more than a football field. It can take off vertically, switch

to forward flight, hover where necessary, and return to forward flight at will. Certainly it has been done for many years by helicopter, but not by a jet-plane without rotors.

The Short S.C.1 has five engines, four of which are used to lift the aeroplane vertically off the ground. Of course, many test flights with the craft tethered were made in Belfast before the S.C. 1 was taken to the Royal Aircraft Establishment in Bedford, England.

Of course, many countries have experimented with such craft, including of course the United States. But most of these experimental craft have been merely devices to rise vertically from the ground. This has been the main objective. I recall an aircraft called the 'Flying Bedstead', or, as it was officially termed, the Thrust Measuring Rig. This was in effect a Rolls Royce Nene jet engine mounted, facing downwards, on a metal frame, with the pilot sitting on top. It was a British craft, and the Short S.C.1 has been built with the data obtained from the Flying Bedstead.

It is unfortunate that the British aircraft industry does not have sufficient money to furnish such ideas. Take the Short S.C.1. It was built at the request of the Ministry of Supply. It was all done on a shoe-string budget. It is miraculous that the craft works at all. American aircraft firms get vast sums of money for research. British firms do not. Some of them have to make a gigantic gamble. They produce military designs and even build them in the pious hope that the government will take an interest. Many of Britain's most famous warplanes were started as private ventures.

In theory, the Short S.C.1 gives Great Britain a great advantage for military and civil purposes. We lead the world at the moment. Now is the time for the British Government to step in, tell the British aircraft industry that money is no object, If that was so, in a very few years Britain could produce a hundred-seat jet-plane capable of taking off from the centre of a city. It could produce a supersonic jet troop transport which could land a hundred troops in the middle of a jungle.

6

But I'll tell you what will happen. The seed is in tonight's newspaper, together with the blurb about the Short S.C.1. The newspaper says 'The Western German Government is particularly interested in the developments.' On the television tonight it stated that 'Britain might produce a military version in co-operation with NATO'.

We on this side of the Atlantic have produced the first working prototype. The government should step in now and ask for speedy designs to their specifications.

There's no chance, I'm very much afraid. America might offer several million dollars to assist further experimental work. I have no doubt whatsoever that America will produce the first operational vertical take-off airliner, and Russia won't be far behind. We in Great Britain always get the bright ideas, and whilst the powers-that-be worry about a couple of million pounds, other countries snap up the patents.

I have no doubt whatsoever that Shorts and Harland and other aircraft companies in Britain have designs already, waiting for a kind word from the government. There is the faintest ray of hope that somewhere, amidst the morass of red tape, there is a far-sighted man with sufficient power at his elbow to give the go-ahead for the construction of a vertical take-off jet airliner in Britain. A slight chance.

Do you know that way back in 1947 Britain had an actual aircraft built to experiment with supersonic flight? Flights were planned for over 1,000 m.p.h....and some blasted idiotic moron asserted that it wasn't cricket to risk pilots lives. The whole idea was scrapped. Instead, fifteen million pounds was spent on an abortive scheme to grow ground nuts in Africa.

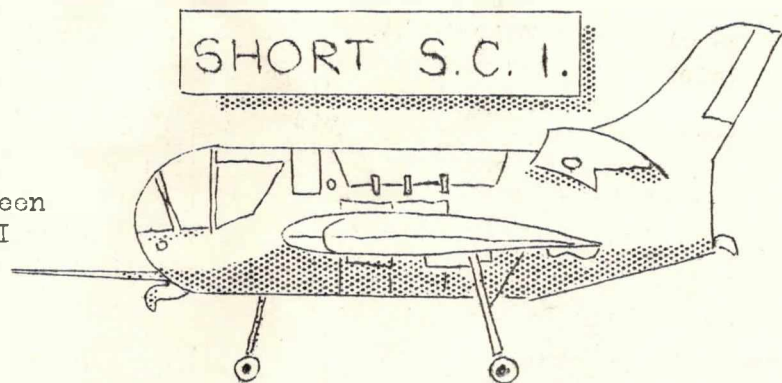
You see, I've spent over twenty years studying aircraft, and I know what Britain has suffered from dolts and blockheads. Way back in the early 1930's some genius suggested experimental work should be undertaken to construct rockets. An imbecile the government chose as an adviser duly advised that such missiles could not be used in modern warfare. The government instructed the de Havilland aircraft company that their private venture twin-engined day bomber and reconnaissance aircraft would be useless as it was constructed almost entirely of wood. de Havilland went on and built a prototype as a private venture...the result, the World War II Mosquito, which, when it first appeared, was faster than the fastest German fighter, and it was a bomber.

The stage is set once more. A superb British achievement. An aeroplane which possesses the long sought after ability of taking off vertically, flying forward or hovering at will.

Britain can lead the world now. For many years we could hold a monopoly of vertical take-off civilian airliners. The world would queue up to buy them. If, from a British point of view I seem pessimistic, believe me, I have a right to be.

Time will tell, but I haven't much reason to cheer. I've been through it all before.

John Berry. 1960



Here, as I promised, is chapter six of my mighty science fiction novel THE MIND STEALERS, written way back when I was a dewy-eyed neo fan. I've played fair with you. I haven't altered one word, although, on re-reading, there is much I would alter. I don't want to bore you with a resume of the plot so far, I just want to give you this chapter to bring you back to morbid reality. These things have a habit of smouldering. Word would get round that 'Berry has written a superb science fiction story'. I want to nip this in the bud. Have the salts handy, and don't read this after a heavy meal :-

The Mind Stealers

CHAPTER 6

The publishers address on the magazine was 414 A, Charleton Street, Manchester.

Tyson and Wainright arrived at the main Manchester heliport just after mid-day. They hired a turbo-taxi, and were driven to Charleton Street. It was a small dusty street in a grimy neighbourhood.

Tyson paid the driver, and sniffed distastefully before stepping over the threshold of number 414 A. They entered the office, and an anaemic looking girl of about thirty, with long straggling hair, was sitting biting her nails in front of an old fashioned typewriter. The girl looked at them with watery eyes.

Tyson decided against showing her his N.S. badge, in case the shock was too much. Instead, he gave her a gentle smile.

"Do you still print STRANGE ADVENTURE STORIES, dear?" he asked, pushing his hat back.

The girl opened her mouth, revealing yellow teeth.

"No," she said. "Our present publications are called TRUE STORIES OF PASSION."

Tyson was tempted to ask if she wrote the stories, but instead he winked at Wainright, who was screwing up his nose at a strange smell which persisted in the dank atmosphere.

"Well, the fact is," said Tyson patiently, "we are the British representatives of an American firm which specialise in buying old pulp magazines. They particularly want number 26, volume two, dated 26th March 1977. We presume that your firm would keep copies of their old publications. I might add that I am permitted to pay quite a substantial amount if an intact copy can be found."

She looked rather blankly from one to the other.

"You'd best see Mr. Rogers," she said slowly. "He's working at the back of the building. Maybe he can help you."

Tyson peeled off W\$5, and pushed them over to the girl, who blushed slightly but nevertheless gathered up the scarlet notes with alacrity.

The two operatives opened a paint-starved door, and found themselves in a printing room. The scene which met their eyes wasn't exactly one

of dynamic commercialism. Two youths and an old man were slowly stacking fanzines in a corner, and another grime-covered youth was emersed in the interior mechanism of a primitive printing press.

Hurredly, Tyson and his friend vacated the depressing scene and continued their quest for Mr. Rogers. They found themselves in a long room smelling of moth balls. The room was lined with magazines of all shapes and sizes, and in all imaginable conditions.

An old man, with flowing white hair, and wearing dark glasses, was sitting at a desk constructed of wooden boxes. He looked at them and gave a toothless grin.

"Yes, sirs," he croaked.

Now that they were getting so close to the important clue, they both began to breathe slightly faster. Wainright stood to one side and pretended to examine some magazines, whilst Tyson did the talking.

"Are you the owner of this du- er- this place?" asked Tyson.

The old man nodded, his scrawny neck and hollow cheeks making him look like an old goat.

Tyson explained his quest.

"Oh yes, yes, I do have a copy," the old man replied slyly, "but I am afraid I couldn't sell it. It would spoil my collection. In this room I have a copy of every magazine my father and I have published. I have been in this business for forty years, you know."

Tyson sighed. He recognised the technique. He pulled out his wallet. For a second, he was tempted to flash his N.S. badge, but again he declined; he realised that there were certain shocks which senility could not stand. Instead, he thumbed through a stack of W\$, letting the old man see the denominations. The old man's hands fluttered in front of him like mating butterflies. Slowly, Tyson counted out ten W\$10 notes. A thin hand stretched out, thumb running over fingers. Tyson dropped the notes in the twitching palm.

The old man got to his feet and hobbled across the room. He searched amongst the bookshelves, occasionally blowing clouds of dust from the covers. Eventually, he pulled out a pulp magazine, caressed it lovingly, then hobbled back and thrust it into Tyson's hands.

"That has spoiled my collection," the old man moaned.

But Tyson wasn't listening. With thumping heart, he turned over the pages. He felt Wainright's hot breath on his neck. A great deal depended on what the next few seconds would reveal. The important page was intact. They both read the part which was missing from the previous copy.

"Jeeze," cried Tyson in amazement.

"My God," said Wainright.

Tyson fumbled for cigarettes. They both inhaled. Wainright's hands were shaking.

"This is it," breathed Tyson.

They read and re-read the bottom half of the page.

It was an advertisement.

It said :-

Professor Malcolm Pettigrew, late of Yale Telepathy College, U.S.A, is at present in London for the World Telepathy Conference. He has instructed us to ask for your help in a new series of experiments he is conducting. Briefly, if you or any of your blood relations have ever experienced any outstanding example of telepathy, E.S.P, second sight, etc, please write to the address given below, giving all relevant details. Professor Pettigrew assures us that he

will personally answer all letters, and will later forward a copy of his conclusions. All correspondence will be treated in the strictest confidence. The Professor stresses that the successful result of the experiments will depend entirely upon everyone co-operating to their fullest. Please write to Box 2163, The Evening Observer, Fleet Street, London.

Tyson looked at the doctor. They were both white.

"This is fantastic, Hal," said Tyson.

"I know," answered Wainright. "The implications are enormous. I am certain that providing this advert was inserted for the purpose we think, we are dealing with something dark, something vast in scope and organisation, something which I honestly think to be beyond the limits of every country....er...no, Mark, my imagination is not running away with me. But I want time to work things out. That old vultures ears are flapping like elephants. Close your mouth and lets get out of here." Tyson closed his mouth.

"I say, Hal," he said in awe, "if you're thinking what I'm thinking...I need a long drink. But I haven't finished with this old faggot yet. Hey, Dad."

The old man looked at him.

"Any more business, gents?" he croaked.

"I suppose you have a good filing system, you keep all your old correspondence."

"I do."

"Well, suppose you trot off and see if you can find anything dealing with this advert," demanded Tyson. He needed that drink.

Probably spurred on by the thought of more W\$, the old man trotted off as directed. This time he took rather longer., but in less than fifteen minutes he was back with a crumpled square of paper. He handed it to Tyson and waited expectantly.

"Half a sec, Pop, let's see what it's worth," smiled Tyson.

He examined it. It was a letter from the Evening Observer merely stating that a cheque for ten pounds, fifteen shillings and sixpence was enclosed as payment due for the insertion of the advert in Strange Adventure Stories Number 26. Tyson put the letter carefully in his pocket. Looking at the gnarled fingers being rubbed together, Tyson half regretted his earlier extravagance. But after all, it would go down on the expense account.... He peeled off five more crisp W\$10. Leaving the old man counting his loot, they left the building. They both breathed deeply, filling their lungs with fresh air. They telephoned a turbo-taxi, had a good meal and a few drinks at the recently opened COMMUNAL FEEDING CENTRE in Manchester, caught the 3.30 pm helicopter, and were in Tyson's office in London before six o'clock.

After a couple of drinks from Tyson's office bottle, the doctor announced his intention of returning his apartment to find a theory to fit the facts. Tyson was glad of this, because he had a few jobs to do which he did not want Wainright to know about. He had been thinking about the doctor a great deal, and had arrived at a certain conclusion. But he decided to let their relationship continue whilst it was a benefit.

Tyson called Janet in.

She stood in front of him.

"Come and sit here, dear," he grinned. "I've been neglecting you lately."

She blushed, but came and sat in the chair beside him.

"Mr. Patterson called today, and asked you to let him know if you had discovered anything," she reported.

Tyson smiled, and patted her knee experimentally.

"Telephone him tomorrow, dear, and tell him that Mr. Tyson has got a certain lead, and will let him have a written report within forty eight hours. Now, anything else?"

"Oh yes, Mr. Tyson -"

"Call me Mark."

"Oh yes, Mark. The owners of this building say that the rent is six months in arrears."

Tyson grinned, and pinched her cheek softly. She sighed. Tyson edged his chair nearer to hers.

He wrote out a cheque for the amount due, and handed it to her.

"Anything else?"

The girl shook her head. Tyson reached across and held her hands, and pulled her to his knees. She didn't protest. Tyson gave her a hungry kiss.

"You've been drinking, Mark," she reproved about five minutes later.

Tyson loosened his tie. This girl had something. It was a great pity that this case was taking up so much of his time; he thought he could really get somewhere. She showed no signs of wanting to be released., but as much as her nearness affected him, there was work to be done. For all he knew, the fate of nations might depend upon him- or so Wainright had intimated, but he thought that Wainright, amongst other things, was a bit of a romantic. That advert; it was queer, all the same.....

"What are you thinking about, Mark?" she asked. There was the suggestion of a pout about her lips. Her lips were about an inch from his.

Tyson and the girl clinched for another ten minutes. Perhaps the work could wait until tomorrow. He could take her to a little hotel he knew, where the food was very good, where the tables were dimly illuminated, where Amazonian wine was served iced, and that wine certainly did the trick. Janet was a very attractive girl, and his experience told him that- but dammit, this Patterson case was interesting. To think that all these years, all over the world, it was possible that an organisation had been working to one end, to put girls into contact with men who were telepathic to a degree, or whose blood relations were. What was the idea behind it, thought Tysonwhere did the women and children vanish to?

"Oh Mark, you aren't thinking about me at all," said Janet. This time she really did pout.

"I was, honestly dear," exclaimed Tyson. "I was thinking that perhaps- oh know, you wouldn't understand. I forgot you are engaged."

"No, no, tell me what you were thinking," she breathed, her lips red and moist - oh blast.

"One of these nights I'm going to give you a good time," he promised, "but tonight I have a lot of work to do. But you can go home now. To show what I think of you, here is W\$50. Go and buy yourself one of those shimmering dresses that are so popular. Don't wear it in this office, though. I might not be able to control myself."

She threw her arms round his neck, kissed him with enthusiasm, and ran from the office.

Some girl, thought Tyson.....

He signed a few letters that she had left in his IN tray. Then he wrote out a message which he sent to the radio operator at N.S.H.Q. for transmission to America. Although he didn't want Fleming to know his progress, the messages he had sent would not convey much to him, if he read the drafts.

His next job was to type out a report to the Brigadier. He wrote as little as he could about his progress so far, but he set it all out so excellently that he covered several sheets of paper, using the old technique of writing a lot about a little, an essential ability to the successful private investigator.

Finally, he finished the bottle of whiskey, locked the outer office door, and slept on the divan in his office. He thought it would be rather a good idea to get Janet to work late one night....but the Patterson job had to be concluded first. He was soon asleep.

.....
A continual buzzing noise came from the outer office door. He yawned, got up, and opened it. A black uniformed N.S. serviceman was standing there, and said,

"First Captain Tyson?"

Tyson gave a sleepy nod, and the N.S. man saluted, and handed over a sealed envelope.

"Thanks," yawned Tyson, and closed the door. He went back to his desk and ripped open the envelope.

The cablegram stated :- REF.YALE TELEPATHY COLLEGE - REGRET NO SUCH INSTITUTION. DETAILED ENQUIRIES FAIL TO TRACE ANY PERSON KNOWN AS PROFESSOR MALCOLM PETTIGREW.ABI.OFF 194 to NS.LONDON

Tyson returned to the divan, but he didn't sleep.

He began to get a few new ideas about the business, and he didn't like them one little bit....

END OF CHAPTER SIX.

MEMO

Read a good science fiction story the other day by John Wyndham, called THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS. You've probably read it years ago, so I don't want to use up valuable space by reviewing it. However, just in case you don't recall one classic paragraph, I'd like to reprint it. Through one of his characters he gives his opinions of American science fiction plots :-

'Naturally, in America it is all rather bigger and better. Something descends, and something comes out of it. Within ten minutes, owing no doubt to the excellent communications in that country, there is a coast-to-coast panic, and all highways out of the cities are crammed, in all the lanes, by the fleeing populace - except in Washington. There, by contrast, enormous crowds stretching as far as the eye can reach, stand grave and silent, white-faced but trusting, with their eyes upon the White House, while somewhere in the Catskills a hitherto ignored professor and his daughter, with their rugged young assistant strive like demented midwives to assist in the birth of the dea ex laboratoria which will save the world at the last moment minus one.'

END OF QUOTE.

I have carefully refrained from writing a Goonstory in POT POURRI, because besides having desecrated quite a number of mundane fanzines, the Goon has a fanzine all of his own, the sixteenth issue of which is pending. RET-RIBUTION, of course. But I'm sure SAPS readers would like to hear of the strange goings-on when the Goon met Squink Blog in Seattle.



The Sucker

I was bloated up with potato crisps (the Americans called them something different...chips, or something, but the Americans have that perchant for mixing things up. Do you know they even have their electric light switches up-side-down?) and sitting quite happily on a Busby sofa, trying to stop a hound from tearing the sole off my shoe, when a strange character walked in without knocking.

The Busby's seemed to be in awe of this unique apparition (his shirt was made out of an old Bowery curtain, and his trousers had presumably been purchased third hand from a garage attendant who had some sort of phobia regarding detergents !), whom they introduced as Squink Blog.

Whilst I stuffed more crisps in my mouth, Blog regaled us with stories of his exploits, and it soon developed into a boasting match, because, knowing that my RET circulation was under a hundred, I thought mebbe Blog hadn't heard of some of my capers.

As the evening wore on, I began to get more and more disgruntled with Blog. Whilst I have always maintained that a high I.Q. number is not essential for the investigator (I mean, I've frankly admitted that mine isn't, and you've only got to look at my record to see I am successful) Blog's thesis was that the higher the I.Q. ratage, the more psychological the approach to a given problem, and therefore the more intellectual deductions, instead of blind luck, which he intimated was the main reason for some of my more memorable coups.

I had my plonker automatic half drawn when Buz nervously raised a hand and suggested we should find out whose technique was the best by both participating in a problem which he would lay before us.

I said this was a good idea, and tried to catch Buz's eye to make sure he'd back me up instead of being impartial, but he seemed to sort of avoid my gaze.

"We'll go down town to a meeting of the Nameless Ones tonight, and I'll arrange an investigation for you there," said Buz, after a great deal of thought.

.....

That night, a group of bewildered Nameless Ones huddled in front of Buz downstairs in the kitchen where sugarless coffee was always brewed after Nameless meetings, so I was led to believe. Amongst those present were Wally Gonser, Jim Webbert, Hubbard Green, Walt Webber, Blotto Otto, Buz and Elinor Busby and myself. Blog was there too.

"Fellow Nameless ones and the Goon," said Buz rather importantly, "to-night you are to witness a titanic battle of wits between the Goon and Squink Blog. For your information I must tell you that both of these two individuals are rather mysterious characters, and both pride themselves on their ability as operators. It seems, from a conversation which took place between them today, that both regard their own particular methods as being the most useful in the art of investigation. Blog favours psychology, and a perception of human nature and its psychiatric frailties, and the Goon seems to work on a combination of the Law of Averages and a computation of Marilyn Monroes vital statistics divided by 22 over 7."

There were a series of sharp intakes of breath at this announcement as Buz continued.

"And so I have prepared a problem for them. This is what I am going to do. I have a number of envelopes in my pocket. Inside one envelope is a paper with a cross on it. I know which envelope it is in. Now in the centre of this table I shall place this small plaster statue of a left handed gnome with its head missing. The Goon and Blog can examine this room in privacy for ten seconds. This will stop them from using any subterfuge for the successful denouement. Then I shall hand the envelopes round. I shall then switch the lights off for two minutes, during which time the person whose paper had a cross on it will remove the decapitated gnome from the table and hide it, or throw it away or keep it as a souvenir. The two operatives will then carry out an on the spot investigation, and then inform me who the person was who removed the gnome. For the purposes of interrogation which might ensue as a result of these two gentlemen's investigations, the person who took the gnome can lie, but the rest of us must tell the truth. After one hour, I shall inform Blog and the Goon that they must write down the name of the guilty party, and to save the possibility of either of them taking a wild guess, they must explain to me, again in privacy, what led them to their conclusion. To commemorate this fantastic battle of wits, I am presenting a small solid silver egg cup to the investigator who gives the correct solution with a resume of the clues which led to the conclusion. Any questions?"

I wiped a bead of sweat off my brow, and sucked the end of my fountain pen, which I always do when confronted by a problem of such magnitude.

Buz told us all to leave the room, then, outside in the corridor he let Blog in alone for ten seconds, and then I nipped in. Ten seconds was just long enough.

.....

I must say that Blog was unnecessarily flamboyant as he pursued his quarry. With the sweet scent of success in his twitching nostrils he reminded me so very much of a bloodhound torn between the desire to follow the scent of a bitch or the strong odour of a shambling convict two fields away. He questioned evryone. Sometimes he cajoled...sometimes he pleaded.... sometimes he sobbed, but withall he gave the impression of making his act last for the allotted hour. Quite frankly, I didn't get a chance to question anyone at all until Buz spotted my frustration, and told Blog to lay off whilst I made a few verbal investigations.

The Nameless Ones sat looking at me, with bored expressions, but I soon made 'em sit up.

"Right," I said. "When I snap my fingers I want you all to show me by practical demonstration, the way a spiral staircase spirals."

Several pairs of eyes oscilated wildly, and jerking hands tried to show what I had requested.

"Thank you," I said. "Two more questions. The first...I want you all to put your thumbs in your ears, waggle your fingers ostontatiously, and scream at the tops of your voices..'WHO ? ME ?"

Elinor Busby was carried away, sobbing quietly, but it wasn't her, so it didn't matter.

"Finally," I hissed, "I want you all to chant...'BLOG IS AN IDIOT."

Several of the Nameless Ones did so with much enthusiasm.

Then Buz asked us to write down the name of the fan who had taken the gnome. I wrote down Wally Gonscr. I couldn't see what Blog wrote, but there wasn't any hesitation on his part.

Buz slunk to a corner and opened the notes. He looked at both of them, then staggered backwards to the security of a chair with its back to the wall.

He called me over first, and asked me how I'd known. I was correct, he said, but how the heck had I done it ?

"Like this, Buz," I grinned. "It's my own private invention to aid the detection of crime, be it fannish or mundane. Here is my fountain pen. At the top of it, in a secret compartment which can be opened by pressure here---so--- is a small quantity of Malacite Green. This is an extremely powerful dye which, when deposited on an object, remains for over twenty four hours on the fingers of the person who picks up the object. It will not wash off. In this case, when I asked for the spiral staircase biz, all I had to do was watch for green fingers. The other two questions or requests were to bluff Blog as regards my apparant technique. I hope Elinor soon recovers, by the way."

Busby tried to control the twitch at the corner of his mouth, and he opened his hands, and I could see that the palms wore sweaty. He tried to talk, and finally managed a feeble croak.

"Th-thanks, Goon. Over here, Blog."

Blog swaggored over, spoke five words slowly to Buz, and then bent down as Buz dropped in a dead faint at his feet.

.....

I was stopping with the Busby's at the time, and he finally managed to build up sufficient strength to drive back to 2852 14th Avenue West. Both he and Elinor were silent. I attributed this fact to my sheer genius. I mean, I hadn't let them down. No one but a genius could have worked out such a crafty ploy.

Buz poured out extra generous shares of home brew, which he lashed with the entire contents of a hip flask.

Later, I was tired. I could see that they didn't want to extol my intellectual prowess in front of my, them being kind and modest, so I made my excuse to retire.

I made a great show of undressing by banging suitcases and suchlike, and then I switched off the light, and loapt on the bed hard so that it would creak. Then I tiptoed to the door to overhear my egoboo. 'He's a genius, that Goon' was how they would start, I know.....so I listened.

"He's a genius, that Blog," I heard Buz say to Elinor. "The Goon used a powder called Malacite Green, which left a dye on the fingers of Gonscr. Blog said he know it was Gonscr, that's what he wrote on his note. I see it all now, quite plainly. From what Blog told me, just five words, I deduce the Goon sucked his fountain pen whilst I was telling them the problem. You see, all Blog said to me was...'The Goon had green lips.' Yes, that Blog, he's a genius....."

R. PHOTO SHEET.

TOP LEFT OPPOSITE.

If you've read KLAUS HARMONY in this issue, you'll have noted that Klaus Eylmann, of Hamburg, stayed at my house for a week in August 1959. Bob Shaw called during this period, and this photograph, taken by Colin Berry shows, from left to right, Klaus Eylmann, Bob Shaw and John Berry.

TOP RIGHT OPPOSITE.

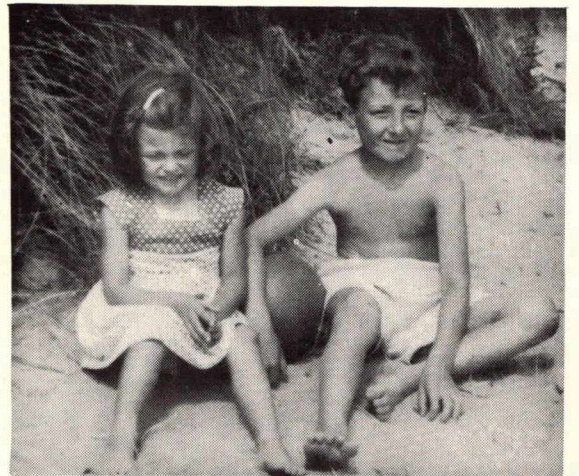
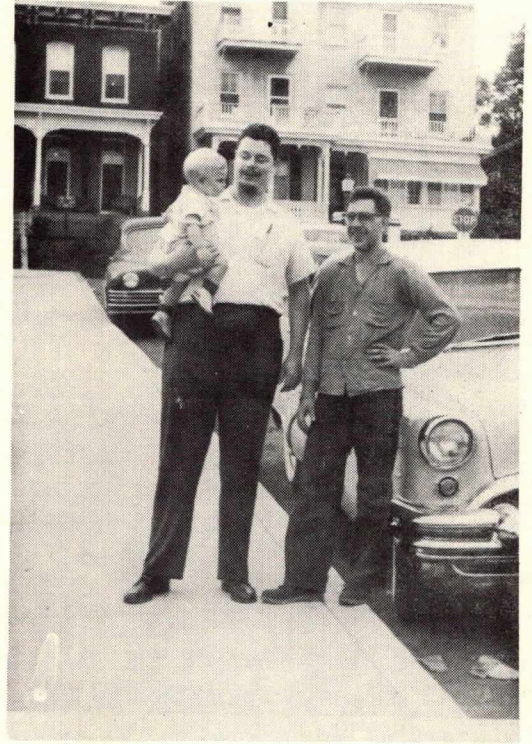
I have to confess that I cannot recall where I took it, save that it was during the first couple of days of my weeks driving tour of Eastern America with Dick Eney. (August 1959.) Dick has in his right arm Butch Young, small son of Jean Young, who had just popped away for a moment when I snapped the shutter. On Dick's left is fan Larry Stark, a very nice chap, as you'll know if you've read THE GOON GOES WEST.

BOTTOM LEFT OPPOSITE.

One of the classic pictures I took during my tour of America in 1959. One interesting feature of it is the fact that I took it during a dust storm in North Dakota, near a place called Blanchard, actually, but I'm sure you've never heard of it! On the left is Professor B.R. Toskey, Ph.D; his head inclined against the red hot blast. In the middle Wrai Ballard, on his home ground, quite unconcerned about it all. In between Wrai and the fan on the right is a dog. The fan on the right is Wally Weber, also inclining his head modestly.

BOTTOM RIGHT OPPOSITE.

I've mentioned my children quite a lot in many of my stories, so I've included here a picture of them both taken in the shadow of the Mountains of Mourne in County Down, in June 1959. Kathleen is on the left. She is six years and two months today, the 20th of May 1960. Colin is on the right. He will be ten years old next July.



BOOK REVIEW. In trying to compile a small library of books devoted to humour, I've purchased several British paper-back reprints of so-called American classics. I've discovered the hard way that the more blatant the blurbs on the back cover, the less humorous the story really is. This, I suppose, is basic psychology. For instance, YOU'RE STEPPING ON MY CLOAK AND DAGGER, which I reviewed in a previous issue, was stuck in a quiet corner of my favourite bookshop, and only by one of those happy shafts of fate did I discover it. (I like to think it discovered me.)

UP THE POLE

The other day I spotted a book plastered with blurbs. I'll quote some....'a bubbling, bawdy- and frighteningly believable account''mirth-quaking'...'Wildly ridiculous'...'scandalously funny''The Funniest Book of the Year''The rib-splitting best-seller that rocket two continents.' I've just quoted those verbatim, so I'm being factual and not relying on my memory.

The book is RALLY ROUND THE FLAG, BOYS, by Max Shulman. When I read YOU'RE STEPPING ON MY CLOAK AND DAGGER, I literally wept with laughter. I grinned, smiled, chortled, luffed out loud and nearly had hysterics. With Shulman's book the most it evinced was a slow rise of the side of the mouth. Sure, the humour is mebbe more subtle., but hows about 'rib-splitting' and 'scandalously funny'?

I am by no means a literary critic, I am only putting forward my point of view. You all know that I am a pure amateur, but I have dabbled in humour to a great degree, and having written so much I feel I have some sort of feeling about humour. I've found I can make people laugh with what I write. I don't know how or where I got the 'gift' (and I use that word with reservation) but I have it, and throwing all modesty overboard, I reckon I can put humour into some sort of grades. Mr. Shulman's work doesn't rate all that high.

One or two episodes are classics of their kind. For instance, one of the main characters, Second Lieutenant Guido di Maggio, takes a course lasting thirteen weeks, on the firing of the Nike. Mr. Shulman describes quite nicely the terrible mental torment di Maggio undergoes during the course, and then, as a sort of passing out test, di Maggio puts this thirteen weeks concentrated work into practise. He fires a missile, and all he does is press a button. This is the time I gave a wry grin.

Sex plays an important part in the narrative. It is tastefully put...insofar as you can mention masturbation and be tasteful ! One of the characters is a man with three children who thinks his wife puts civic duties before him, and he spends dirty weekends with another mans wife.....

"Angela, I want to go to bed with you", he said holding her.

"So do I, darling," she answered. "Oh, so do I."

She kissed him fiercely, her mouth wild, her nails digging.....and so it goes on for half a page until we come to the telling line..' "Don't be

frightened," said Angela, working on his buttons."Don't worry about a thing."

This probably explains why the book rocked two continents.

The book skilfully works to the climax. The Nike outfit is built in a town (Putnam's Landing) against the wishes of the local inhabitants. The Colonel assures a group of civic leaders that the Nike cannot be fired by accident. Meanwhile, lots of little cogs are slipping into place. A firework display is held nearby, and the climax comes when a Nike is fired.

Now comes the let-down. Mr Shulman has spent, let me see, 181 pages, mucking about with peoples private lives. Some of his characters are superbly sketched, you really get to know them (Oscar Hoffa, for example, a TV executive..." Important writers ! Remember when NBC tried to beef up their Sunday plays with important writers? Plays by Robert Sherwood-Thornton Wilder-Ferenc Molnar. Important enough for you?...So what happened ? I'll tell you what: forty million people nearly broke off their dials turning back to Ed Sullivan to watch a dog fart The Star Spangled Banner !") but for all that, after the climax, the accidental firing of the Nike, on page 181, MrShulman gives us an EPILOGUE which purports to right all the wrongs, to fix everyone up quite happily. Well, this tasks takes six pages, but if you're easily satisfied its adequate. I got the impression, and I'm sure I'm wrong, because two continets couldn't be, that Mr Shulman spent 181 pages incleverly constructing his climax,irrespective of what sort of confusion had to be cleared up in the EPILOGUE.

Of course, sex is always a good salesman.

Mr Shulman gives us the works. He gives us an insight into the worries of a father concerning his teenage daughter who has suddenly become aware of boys. We get a glimpse of this girls thoughts, and her ability to defend herself against 'groping'. We are given the information that '87 per cent of arthritis patients first suffer the symptoms in the hand they used to masturbate with.' Lashings of adultery are slipped in for good measure, as also are the intimate details regardings a wifes response to her husbands demands. I consider that true humour can get along without any such incentive to theroadership. I purchased the book simply to read humour. If I'd wanted to read about sex, I would have chosen any of the countless paperbacks on display which catered for that aspect of literature.

Even sex can be written about in good taste and in such a skilled manner so as to leave the reader with a picture which is reliant on his or her interpretation of a given situation. I have a book BED MANNERS by Hopton and Belloil which really is hilariously funny, and a choir boy could read it without blushing. But back to RALLY ROUND THE FLAG,BOYS !

The story is, of course, eminently readable, and I suppose my criticisms are bitty. I hate to think that the story rocked two continents (it doesn't specify which two) because of the rather laboured sexual bias. A British newspaper, the Daily Mirror, writes 'Smooth, polished mickey-taking. Every word is pointed and sinks home'. I don't quite agree. Mickey-taking is there O.K, But every word is pointed and sinks home ? I can't agree. I was seduced into buying the paperback because of the front cover blurb 'rib-splitting'. I did not even snigger, and I consider I have a hair-trigger response to humour.

I think Mr Shulman would make a good job of the biography of Doctor Kinsey !!!

My lecture in the last issue on Canasta brought me some considerable correspondence, containing many suggestions, but I have decided to ignore them and continue with the series, as I originally promised!

I have called this lecture THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CANASTA, and I must warn you here and now that it is written for the advanced Canasta player, although it will be a crumb of comfort to know that if you assimilated all the information I included in the last lecture, there is the slightest chance that you will be able to understand the complicated rituals and ploys I am about to discuss.

You see, I have studied Canasta for a number of years, more especially the subtle aspect of it in all its many forms, and although I have lost a lot of my hair and have been threatened with divorce, I have learned my lessons the hard way, and fooling in a somewhat philosophical mood I have made up my mind to let you profit by my hardships in the pursuance of this fascinating way of life.

It has become apparent to me that if you play Canasta, you have got to be prepared to take a chance, and, accordingly, you must be prepared to lose the particular play. You see, playing Partner Canasta, you sometimes have partners who, whilst not exactly certifiable, do some damn funny things. One of my own partners made this telling observation the other day! Honest, you cannot realise how humiliating it is to have your partner, at the start of a game, put down about ten of his or her cards to make an initial mold of fifty. This puts you in a spot. Admittedly you have opened, and the one course for you to take is to try and let your partner pick up the bundle to re-stack her hand (ladies usually make this faux pas). The point is that unless your partner picked up the pile before making such an ostentatious display of molding, he or she will only have a couple of cards in her hand. Whilst dealing with this problem you've got to take into account what the opposition will do. There is quite a good chance that they will seal the pack with a joker or a wild two. I would certainly do this if the situation were reversed. But the damage is done. Your partner, whilst having molded, has left herself destitute of cards. And as I said, problem, got some back to her.

I still bear the scar on my right wrist where an opposing player trod on my arm whilst I was passing some under the table, so, regretfully, I must ask you not to do this vile unsporting thing, unless you manage to attract your opposing players on to some fictitious incident (like a slipping shoulder strap) in order to do the dirty deed. But even then you must be careful. One night, I recall, I was slipping cards to my partner under the table all night, and it wasn't until the game was over that I discovered I'd been passing 'em to an opposing player. The game is hard enough without making such a frightful handicap.

I must presume, however, that the readership to which this is aimed is too high-minded to stoop to such crafty ploys, and bearing this in mind, I mean

◆ THE ♣ PSYCHOLOGY ♠ OF ♥ CANASTA

to detail a proper counter ploy or series of counter ploys to ensure that, if the wind is in the right direction, your partner may pick up the pack.

Let me give you the situation once more. Your partner has melded in a flamboyant and unnecessary manner, leaving herself with two cards. You and your other two opposing players still hold the original thirteen cards (In my circle we deal thirteen cards...most groups deal eleven...we're different you see.)

The Law of Averages should ensure that you have at least one black three in your hand. Students who digested my last lecture will realise that a black three is a stop card, and the pack cannot be picked up. The opposing player on your left will grunt and pick up a card. He will not meld, because if he did, he knows that, because the pack is sealed, when your turn comes you will perforce put on the pack one of the cards with which he has melded, because the chance of him having two more of a kind in his or her hand is remote. I've picked up the pack often when I've had four of a kind in my hand, and I've put down two and a wild card to meld, holding the other two in the hope that the opposing player will assume that I am nekkid of what I melded with.

Your partner, white of face because of your scowl, nervously picks up a card from the deck, looks at it, turns whiter still, closes her eyes, shuffles the three cards she has and puts one down without looking at it. Making a mental note to make certain she plays for the opposition next time, you watch for the leer on the features of the player on her left. He will quite possibly pick up the pack, but remember, as his side has not melded, he must put down the original fifty meld plus two cards (not wild ones) of what was just previously put down. This may not be immediately possible. So, he cannot pick up. But he smirks as he puts down a black three. This is just what you want. You pick up. There is a slight chance it is a black three, but you cannot always be that lucky, so you smirk even if you have no reason to and you put down a wild card. The player on your left picks up. He wants the pack but you sit back and by your demeanour you demonstrate (as I said, even if it's not the case) that he has no chance whatever of picking up the pack from you. He puts down a black three. Your partner, shaking visibly, picks up from the deck. She goes beserk. She puts down an ace. The player next in line flushes with frustration. He has only one ace, so he takes his card. Now he is up the creek. He has no black threes left, he knows that you have thirteen cards, some of which will be pairs. He either has to seal the pack or take a chance. Hell, it's only a game, he seals the pack. You bluff. You have only a joker left. The next time round the nail-biting starts. You pick up from the pack, another ace, and with a wry grin and a shy smile, as if you wish to apologize, you slap down the joker. The player next to you winces. He picks up, and he starts to worry. There is a slight chance that your partner has a pair, but the chance that she has two of what is on the table is remote (especially the shocking way she is playing,) so he puts face up on the reject pile something with which she melded with. Your partner picks up. She trembles and looks at you. Her lips try to phrase something. You don't know what the hell she's dribbling about, and it isn't good card manners to make signs, so you sniff and look away, at the same time letting your left eye twitch. This is most important. By your manner you've shown that you don't approve of your partners desire for help, and you don't overly care, because you've got the game over control. In fact, you have. You've four pairs, no wild cards, and the opposing player on your right cannot afford to keep wasting wild cards, especially as, by your actions, you've shown you can seal the pack all night. You definitely can't but he thinks you can, or why

did you flip down the joker ? He throws down a five, of which you have a pair. You pick up the bundle. That is the ploy. Because now you have all the black three that are going, and the wild cards too, which means for the next half dozen turns the player on your left cannot pick up. The opposition will now meld, they have to, because there is no point in trying to wait until the reject pack builds up again. This time, you seal the pack, and they worry. And all this time your partner has been picking up cards, and she's bound to have garnered a pair. There is a fifty fifty chance that the player on her left will pick up, but as each hand goes by there is more of a chance that your partner will pick up, and even more chance that you will. If this is so, once again you freeze the man next to you with black threes and what he has on the table, and you seal the pack with abandon. Eventually your partner will be able to pick up and expand her hand. This happens all the time. Not with my partner it doesn't, but it does to everyone else in a similar predicament.

I've developed a really spiffing ploy which amazes my partner and the opposition too.

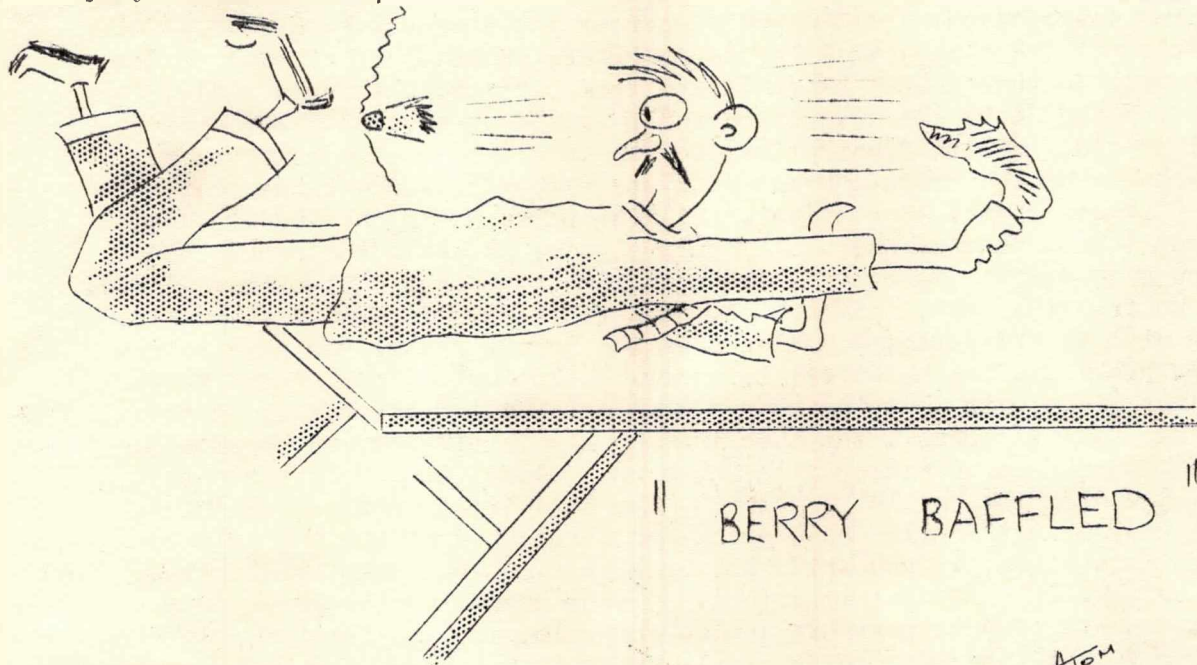
Take the initial situation. Your partner is cardless, and the pack is sealed. I've let the pack build up really high and then I've deliberately given the pack to the opposition.

With shouts of triumph they pick it up and build up perhaps several canasta's, but when that game has finished you have a score of perhaps 400, and they have possibly over 3,000. This means that when the cards are dealt again, you still have 50 meld, and they have 120. If you seal the pack again, they need 140 meld to pick up the pile.

Then, of course, there's always SNAP.

John Berry
1960.

(More revealing admissions of the high lights of my career as a Canasta player next issue.)



" BERRY BAFFLED "

Atom

YOU
TOO

CAN HAVE A BODY LIKE MINE.

I may not know more than the average man about the machinations of international politics, but, as I've said quite often before, I claim more than just a passing acquaintance with aviation matters. I feel that with my specialized knowledge it is my duty to point out a few little known matters relating to the Lockheed U-2, which has been the direct cause of the failure of the Summit Meeting on 18th May 1960, which is today !!!

It is not my intention to comment on the ethics or wiseness of the American Secret Service undertaking such missions. I'd like, rather, to examine the situation from the aerophiles point of view.

Ever since the beginning of 1958 I've kept a file on the Lockheed U-2. From those days it has always been known in aviation circles as a 'mystery' aircraft. And in 1958 (if not before) the Russians knew of the purpose of the U-2. They know without doubt that it was a special high-altitude design specifically planned for reconnaissance over their territory!

The Russian aviation publication SOVETSKAYA AVIATSIYA stated in mid-1958 '((the U-2)) lacks all identification markings indicating its missions'...and...' has been accepted by the United States Strategic Air Command and has made repeated flights from the American base at Wiesbaden, West Germany.'

A contemporary British publication, also commenting on the official American designation of the aeroplane as being for 'weather observation' contented itself with the acid remark that 'we're having very high weather for the time of year.'

The U-2 was shot down over Sverdlovsk on Sunday 1st of May 1960, although the Russians did not start the cat and mouse game until the following Thursday. Now Sverdlovsk is a hell of a way from the Turkish frontier where the American State Department announced that 'a weather reconnaissance plane was missing on a flight from Adana, Turkey'. An American 'spokesman' offered the theory that 'the pilot may have blacked out through lack of oxygen and accidentally flown over Russian Territory.'

Russia must have sniggered up its sleeve at this explanation, and with very clever psychology they then gave the (alleged) details of the flight, which, it said, actually began from an air base in Pakistan. Photographs of poisoned pins, silenced revolvers, gold coins, rings, watches, photographs of Russian bases supposed to have been taken by the pilot, Francis Garry Powers, etc, flooded the worlds press.

The official American reaction was to make a statement including the following observations:-

'insofar as the authorities in Washington are concerned there was no authorization for the flight. Nevertheless it appears that a flight over Soviet Territory took place by an unarmed civilian aeroplane.'

Although this announcement had the effect of making President Eisenhower seem to have no control over affairs, it must also be remembered that the policy was the orthodox one taken by a government when one of its nationals became involved in spying. The trouble was, it should not have been so orthodox. That played into the Russians hands. If the statement had been to the effect that 'in accordance with the accepted principals of S.A.C. and the

American Secret Service, a reconnaissance plane is missing from a flight over Russia, where it was photographing military targets! This would have been the truth, and it would not have made the fatal mistake of asserting by the ambiguous phrasology that Eisenhower was not in control. This was obvious fodder for the Russians. 'So. The President has no control over secret service flights over Russia...therefore...he has no control over the H-bomb...his generals have instead.'

There should have been no hedging, after being caught fair and square. Every country with any self respect tries to find out all it can about a potential enemy. Just before the 1939-45 war, a new British aeroplane flew all over Germany, giving demonstration flights to German officials, and all the time secret films were being taken of German aerodromes. The Russian Fleet paid a visit to a British port a few years ago, and the British Secret Service engaged a famous frogman, Buster Crabbe, to swim under the Russian vessels to spy on design, etc. Crabbe's body was fished up a year later. Look at the Russian spy rings which have been uncovered in America.

Personally, I think the Americans were correct in their activities, but nevertheless the strategic planning was bad. There are certain aspects of the shooting down of the U-2 which baffle me. For example, why was no arrangement made to destroy the aeroplane in the event of it being shot down. I.e., an ejection seat arrangement which would have automatically ensured the destruction of the plane and the damning evidence. But if the ejection seat was not used, it is most difficult to understand a pilot parachuting down 12 miles and being alive. It is elementary to suggest that there must have been a fool-proof device to ensure the destruction of the U-2, why did it not function? If there was no such device, the whole question of flights so far inside Russia take on an absolute idiotic state of affairs!

My knowledge leads me to assume that the U-2 was shot down by a missile homing on the heat from its engines. To fire such a missile you've got to have correct radar bearings. Now the British V bombers carry electronic devices which have the effect of clouding the enemies radar screens so that readings are impossible. Although it was initially a British invention, the Americans have superb radar, why no comparable device on the U-2?

I have my own theory, and I haven't heard anyone else broach it. This is it... the Russians have been aware for years of the U-2 flights over Iron Curtain territory, and although they could have shot down U-2's before, with great foresight they deliberately chose to shoot one down just before the Summit Meeting. And the result (when you read this) will be history.

You may not know that similar flights are being carried out over Red China by the Martin RB-57D. This aeroplane is a variant of the British English Electric Canberra, built under licence in America by Martin. The RB-57D has extra long wings, as has the U-2.

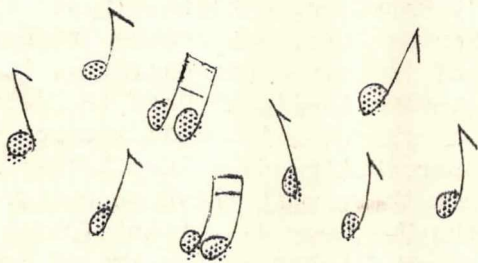
The U-2 episode, and the resultant mis-handling of it by the American authorities, has done considerable harm to American prestige, and it has to be admitted that the Russians handling of the situation was masterly! The Russians were able to claim that the Americans directly caused the downfall of the Summit Meetings., although of course America could never have held up her head again internationally if Eisenhower had apologized. To sum up, in my view, the Americans did the correct thing but did it inefficiently, and when they were called to task, bungled the explanation very badly. It would have been better to say nothing, instead of making stupid statements about 'the pilot blacked out through lack of oxygen.'

I wonder what the situation will be when you read this towards the end of July???

John Berry.1960.

KLAUS

HARMONY



The postcard had merely told me to be at York Road Railway Station, Belfast, at 9.20 pm on Friday 14th August 1959. The writing wasn't all that clear, but embroidered round the edges of the postcard were pert messages scrawled by Don Allen and Jim Cawthorne which entreated me to 'feed Klaus well' and announced the fact that 'he's a GOOD man.'

Klaus Eylmann, the Hamburg fan, had written to me a few months earlier and mentioned the possibility of his doing a fan tour of England. He had written that he might visit Belfast if time and money permitted, and this missive was his introduction card.

The card had only arrived that morning, and my wife had telephoned to my office. One minor complication was that my wife's brother, Terry, aged 20, was staying at our house, and a bit of nifty bed-swapping was indicated. When I arrived home at 5.30 pm, Diane, my wife, also said

she'd invited Terry's girl friend, Norma, to stay the weekend, too. We had a discussion and concluded that we'd have the whole lot at the house, it was too late to defer Norma's visit.

I telephoned to Leslie McConnell, my brother in law, and arranged for him to pick me up, and we'd go to the railway station and meet the train, which had come from the port of Larnoe, where the passenger boat from Scotland had berthed.

A chalked message on a board at the station announced that due to heavy gales, the boat train would be one hour late. Well, what's one hour more or less at a cold and lonely windswept station? It passed quickly, took about an hour, I should say.

The train puffed in just about on schedule, and a mass of travellers got off and rushed for the turnstile. I nudged McConnell, and we approached a well dressed young man standing nearby.

"Excuse me," I said, "are you Klaus?"

He looked at me and fluttered his eyebrows.

"No," he simpered, "I'm Thethil."

We hurriedly moved onwards, and there - yes - THERE WAS KLAUS EYLMANN.

In one of my previous publications I've mentioned the mystic force which guides us fans together. I mean, how did I know it was Klaus?

Admittedly he was blond headed - and the German race is famed for that fine physical attribute, isn't it?

And, too, I must admit he was tall, near about six foot three inches. He wore pointed shoes, a short white raincoat, a bewildered expression on his face, and bore a copy of NOVA in his right hand. Yet, quite modestly, I must admit that, beside those subtle hints, I KNEW IT WAS KLAUS.

We shook hands, and Klaus's opening remark was :- "I expected your moustache to be much bigger!"

We took him to the car, and drove to my house.

Whilst my wife prepared a meal for Klaus ("I'm so hungry") he struck up an animated conversation with Terry about jazz - all facets of it - Dixieland, traditional, mainstream, off beat, etc. I sat brooding in a corner, because I knew nothing about jazz, save that it was a hell of a noise. This was to be remedied.

After the meal, Terry turned on the wireless and tuned to A.F.N., (The American Forces Network in Europe.) and other continental stations, and bursts of jazz burst forth. In an endeavour to show who had the most detailed knowledge, Klaus and Terry tested each other with shrewd questions - identifying orchestras and vocalists, and seeing who could do so the quickest. At 3.30.am I honestly became bored with the whole thing. It transpires that several German stations broadcast jazz in the early hours of the morning, and they seem to work to a schedule - one station closes down every half hour. So, every half hour, the German National Anthem burst forth. It seemed to me that, in deference to our guest, it was the Thing to leap upwards and stand rigidly to attention. The first time the stirring tune 'Deutschland Uber Alles' was heard, we all cast surreptitious glances at each other, but Klaus lay stretched out on the rug, telling Terry about the time he saw Harry James.

I don't know what time we went to bed, but dawn was breaking, and I had to go to my office for three hours on Saturday morning.

.....

I spent a miserable morning at the office. Fingerprints, which normally absorb all my interests during working hours, looked like evil faces which came in and out of focus as I tried to keep my eyes open.

I arrived home at one pm, and the first thing I saw was Klaus, with shirt tails flapping, dribbling a football across the lawn. Terry's eyes were bulging like goose eggs, and Colin, aged nine, an avid football fan, looked as though he was hypnotized.

Terry panted over to me.

"This Klaus, he's a natural," he said in awe. I rather fancy my prowess as a footballer, so I flung off my coat, opened my shirt, and trotted on to the pitch.....weeeelll, when I saw pitch, I mean a few square yards of brown grass constituting the back garden.

Right enough, Klaus could handle a ball. His long legs gave him an advantage, and he could pass a ball with uncanny accuracy. During the week he was at my house 'MON DEBRIS', he became a great favourite with the young boys in the locality, and it became a ritual every night...an hour long football match, with Klaus as the star.

But back to the sequence of events.....

On Saturday afternoon, I took Klaus to Stormont, the Northern Ireland Houses of Parliament.

The building is very imposing, and is set in an estate of lawn, flower gardens and woods. A tree-lined drive, three quarters of a mile long leads to Stormont, and Klaus was very impressed with the architecture and its setting, and took numerous photographs.

After tea, we watched TV. I had already told Klaus about Jim Hardie, the Wells Fargo Special Agent, and he watched this with, I thought, a rather sardonic humour. His big moment was DRUMBEAT. A half hour TV programme for rock and roll enthusiasts. Klaus became absorbed with the antics of rock and roll singers Vinve Eager and Adam Faith (Klaus called him Adam Face) and roared with laughter at the Faith Gimmick, a grim expression and the right hand permanently raised like a submarine periscope. It was at this juncture that Klaus used the word 'ostentatious' - he'd copied it from me - and it rapidly became the Eylmann password. Everything was ostentatious !

Klaus also laughed quite a lot at the Tommy Trinder show, which normally I find quite nauseating, although, possibly because Klaus liked it, I found myself grinning too.

When TV closed down, we introduced Klaus to the subtle arts of Canasta. My particular group of friends play it all the time. I explained the rules to Klaus, and the rules are initially complicated, but he caught on very quickly, and we played for some hours, to the accompaniment of jazz on steam radio.

Once again we retired to bed after 3 am.....

.....
Sunday was a lovely day, hot sunshine and very little cloud. I'd already told Klaus about the superb scenery of County Down, and the magnificent beaches, just made for swimming and sunbathing, so we all decided to go to Helen's Bay, on the Irish Sea coast, about six miles from Belfast. I explained to Klaus quite frankly that I recognised it was my fannish duty as a host to take him to all the nice resorts in Northern Ireland, but that I was due to go to America in a few days, and, consequently, I could only spend a small amount of money entertaining him. Obviously, he understood this ('Of course, it is quite clear. So!') which was really gentlemanly of him, because some visitors might have been peeved at such a frank statement of policy.

Just before we were due to leave for Helen's Bay, I heard the phut-phut of a motor cycle outside, and who should appear but Bob Shaw. We rushed outside and Colin took a photograph of Bob, Klaus and myself. We had to rush away, but not before Bob promised to come up and see us the following Wednesday, with Sadie....

.....
Helen's Bay is the only beach in Northern Ireland where payment has to be made for admission. Never was money spent on such miserable fare. Since it became nationalized, the place has gone to the dogs!

We reached a grassy bank overlooking the sea, and my wife spent half an hour picking up lumps of glass from broken bottles before we could form a base camp. The beach was about fifteen feet in width, and between it and the sea was a barrier of slimy green rocks. I sent my son Colin on an expedition to find a way through the barrier to the sea, and an hour later he returned with the unhappy news that we could only get to the sea via a helicopter! Klaus muttered something about 'ostentatious'. Then he stood up, stripped down to his bathing costume, and, amidst a hush from the other suffering visitors, he walked down to the beach. Honestly, he was quietly magnificent. Other people had spent hours trying to find a way through the rock barrier, but with his typical Germanic thoroughness, Klaus had analyzed the problem and came up with the only solution, which was staggering in its implications. He simply hopped from rock to rock. One or two people clapped as he gradually negotiated the hazard, and I stuck my chest out and swaggered about, letting everyone know he was with me.

When he was a speck in the distance, Klaus reached the sea. He strode further and further out, and eventually launched himself into the brine.

Soon everyone was hopping seawards over the rocks, including Colin and Diane.

Klaus was the first one to return, and he was hobbling. This I took to be pure physical exertion and exhaustion after so many sleepless nights, but Klaus held up his feet and I saw that the soles had been gashed by the sharp rocks. Inside half an hour the beach resembled a miniature Lourdes!

Everyone was staggering about, limping, cursing wildly, and looking at the Berry Group. Cries of 'Elastoplast', 'Dettol', 'bandages' and in one case 'tournequet' rent the air, and Klaus admitted it was 'ostentatious'. Colin was a sufferer. I thought what was left of his big toe was never going to stop bleeding. Before the mob became violent, I suggested we return home in case it should start to rain.

Back in 'MON DEBRIS' we had tea, and turned on TV. I spoke in glowing terms of Jimmy Edwards, and what a superb comedian he was. The programme 'Music for Jim' nearly killed Klaus. Admittedly Jimmy Edwards struck a new peak of genius, but there is no doubt that Klaus was favourably impressed. As for me, I was prostrate on the floor, trying to catch my breath, and I rate the show the funniest thing I've ever seen on TV, even better than Victor Borge.

We switched off TV, and tuned to Luxemburg for the Top Twenty, and after that came jazz and more jazz. Terry and Klaus bullied my little radio into producing the most horrible noises. I staggered to my feet and bont towards the door, muttering 'bed, bed, for Ghod's sake, beosed', but they barred my way with such telling vocal suggestions as, "hey, here comes Short Stop" or " wait until you hear Dizzy."

The slaughter was merciless. I began to ponder. What was there about jazz which meant so much to these young men.

Was I missing something ???

.....
Another unfortunate outcome of my potential American Trip was the fact that I didn't have any leave to spare. Consequently I had to go to my office on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, although I did manage to wangle one days leave for Thursday.

I left for the office on Monday morning before Klaus got up, but I left piles of prozines for him to read, and gave him the freedom of my piles of fanzines, including the latest SAPS mailing.

When I arrived home that night, Klaus was playing football in the back garden with all the youths of the street. At tea, he asked me a question which is often asked, and which makos a full-blooded Irish male swell with pride. I, of course, am English, but nevertheless, I felt a surge of elation shoot through me.

Klaus said :- "What was the funny thing Guinness? I saw a picture of a man holding a vale on his little finger !"

Klaus was of course referring to the Guinness advertisements which abound (and rightly so) in Northern Ireland. Guinness is black velvet.... a superb drink, rich and black and frothy and so nourishing. It is even possible to get it on the National Health, although, personally, so far, I haven't been successful. By 'vale' Klaus of course meant 'whale', but I could see he was absorbed with the ostentation of the advertisement, so I nipped out on my bike and purchased several bottles. I was away for about twenty minutes, and when I returned, I could sense a tenseness in the atmosphere between Klaus and my wife, Diane. Diane told me later, when Klaus had gone to bed, that he had tuned into Radio Luxemburg for some jazz, but instead he got a programme which was anti-German in nature. Diane said she was ironing in the kitchen, and wasn't really listening, until Klaus came in and told her about the programme. Fortunately, Klaus retained his sense of proportion, and seemingly dismissed the incident from his mind.

Back to Guinness. I poured Klaus a drink and his eyes glistened as the jet black brew frothed in the glass, and the unusual aroma titilated his nostrils. He lifted the glass with a prayer in his eyes, and smiled weakly as he savoured a mouthful. He said he liked it, but it took him about half an

to drain the glass.

Meanwhile, Michael, a university student who lives next door, staggered in with his record player and a stack of records, which, to my horror, I discovered were 90 per cent jazz.

Klaus was thrilled. He expressed his keeness at Chris Barber and Humphrey Lyttleton, and, as the records followed each other with monotonous regularity, he displayed an encyclopaedic knowledge of British jazz bands. He explained, for example, that Lonnie Donnagan once played in Chris Barber's band. I cropt to the pile of records and tried to abstract one of the few classical ones. I successfully retrieved a Wagner Lohengrin and the overture Donna Diana, but I didn't get a chance to play them. Terry came in at 11.p.m, and Klaus told Terry of the joys in store, and, Suffering Catfish, they played the whole lot over again, just for Terry's benefit. I felt at this juncture that I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Then, in the nick of time, Diane came in with tea. They took their eyes off the record player for an instant, and with a yell of triumph I skilfully dropped my classical redord on the spindle, and those superb Wagnarian chords gradually restored me to some smeblonce of sanity. Honestly, if I ever hear the names Bunk Johnston, Oscar Peterson, Dizzy Gillespie, Spiko Jones, Chris Barber, Humph, and all the rest, I shall do a double flip with dihedral, regardless of where I am or who I am with !

On Tuesday, my father-in-law came up, presumably to give Klaus the onco-over. Now, in Northern Ireland, Diane's father is a sort of important man. He is an Alderman of Belfast, a Justice of the Peace, and, most important of all, a Member of Parliament in Northern Ireland.

After the preliminary introductions were over, I saw that Klaus was talking earnestly to my father-in-law, and gesticulating wildly. A few moments later Mr.Oliver nodded vigorously, and said :-

"If the Helen's Bay beach is as bad as all that, I shall certainly ask a question in Parliament."

He meant it, too, and I am certain that when the new session of Parliament starts, the question will be duly tabled.

Who knows what benefit Klaus has done to the future tourist trade in Northern Ireland ? It is most probable that for generations to come, visitors to Helen's Bay will bask in the superb surroundings, unaware that they owe it all to a young German fan whose lofty mind saw the greater significance of the supposedly mundane.

Tuesday night gave me an opportunity to talk to Klaus about fanatic. He told me all about NOVA, and about several original ideas he had formulated, novel fannish ideas, which, of course, I cannot divulge. He told me all about German Fandom, and how it had originated, and what course he thought it would take in the future. He bemoaned the fact that German Fandom has so far produced no humourists, or really faanish fan-fiction writers. I don't think he should unduly worry. For Klaus himself has the essential fannish spirit, his sense of humour, ranging from the sublime to the witty, is the equal of some fans I know who are noted humourists, and remember please that all Klaus's repartee was delivered in, to him, a foreign language.

For instance, he made many brilliant quips, and here is one good example. We were playing Canasta, and Terry, trying to build up a psychological bloc, persisted in turning over his reject card vecerrryyy slowly. Klaus said eventually :-

"Terry, make it snappy."

You card players will get the inner significance of that cunning remark.

Bob and Sadie Shaw made their appearance on cue on Wednesday night. From the start I could see Klaus was awe-struck at the chubby visage of this Great Humourist, this Paragon Of Budgerigar Enthusiasts, this Fantastic Typewriter Salesman. For Bob and Sadie, in great fannish form, gave with the scintillating patter. I am sure that Klaus could understand very little of the repartee (even though his grasp of the English language is remarkable) because, with parry and thrust, Bob and Sadie got me going, and I near blow my diaphragm inside out with helpless laughter. I cannot recall any of the witticisms, because such superb conversation is only made for a solo performance, but I think, through it all, Klaus saw a vital spark of the fannish traditions formulated by Irish Fandom - the intellectual skill of word play, delivered with the speed of lightening, and designed to prepare the breeding ground for puns of the most complicated order....

I managed to obtain one days leave on Thursday, the day Klaus had to depart on his long journey home. We got up at about 11.am, and after breakfast settled down to watch the Cricket Test Match on TV, England-v-India. Klaus had never seen a cricket match, and I tried my best to explain 'silly mid on' and 'maiden over' and all the other somewhat peculiar jargon associated with the game. Klaus was impressed with the speed of pace of famous fast bowler Freddy Trueman. Anxious to boost this cricketer, I explained that Trueman often bowled 'bumpers', and frequently injured batsmen by dislocating fingers, or actually knocking them unconscious.

Klaus was highly indignant. He winced as the ball whizzed past an Indian's ear.

"He'd be disqualified in Germany for doing that," hissed Klaus.

In the afternoon, we had a miniature cricket match in the back garden - Klaus, myself, Colin, and a couple of neighbouring boys. We had to bring in a special 'out in gardens' rule to try and control Klaus's simulated six hits. He played the game so enthusiastically, with gleaming eyes (even though he didn't understand the rules) that we omitted to order him out when he stepped on his wickets, or was plumb lbw, or was stumped. Indeed, he soon caught on to the elementary fact that if the ball shattered his wicket, he couldn't bat anymore. Therefore he applied his keen brain to formulating schemes to avoid this disaster. He stood in front of his wickets so that the bowler couldn't see them. I bowled spin to counteract this ploy. Klaus then took the unprecedented step of actually sitting on his wickets.

But time - the dreaded enemy of good fun and happiness- the mysterious fourth dimension - clicked inexorably onwards. The time came for Klaus to leave MON DEBRIS - he said cheerio to my family, and I took him to the railway station, there to catch the boat-train to Stranraer.

I waited until the train steamed out of the station. I stood for a moment looking after it - then I found myself back in the mundane existence that seems to wrap itself like a blanket round a fan when a fellow fannish spirit departs. I'm sure that Klaus will go far in fandom. He has the right ideas and the energy and enthusiasm to carry them out. He told me he was keen to join SAPS, and I see he is currently tenth on the waiting list.

One thing is certain, Klaus will be long remembered in my household. Every time I see Adam Faith on TV...or play football with boys in the garden...or pass Helen's Bay....or hear a blasted jazz record...I can see him in my room, up to his eyeballs in fanzines, reading them, and learning something extra about the art of fan pubbing at the turn of each page.

Then, of course, there is that word 'ostentatious'.....

THE SCALPEL

Mailing Comments.

Sorry for my lapse last mailing...but I'm here again with a bottle of corflu on my left and a vast pile of SAPSazines on my right, rarin' to go :-
WARHOON. Neat, Richard, but neat.

I am impressed with your ability to bring in references to various fanzines in the course of your dialogue. By that, I mean that I am in envy of your ability to add a touch of documentation which has the effect of making this reader at least respect your technique of not only reading a wide variety of fanzines but being able to quote fanzine, number and writer, seemingly at will. It seems to me that you have a considerable number of fannish quotes on tap in some subtle group of grey cells, and the pertinent one clicks into place when you come across a situation which possibly requires an authoritative comment by someone who knows to sway the discussion. You are my nomination for FANCY III !

SPACEWARP. Glad you liked the fighter pilot joke, Art. I've told it so often now that I tell it with such superb oral skill that I had a man faint with laughter last week. Probably because I fell flat on my face when I gave a visual impression of him landing on the Japanese aircraft carrier after his coup ! I read the F.Towner Laney article about fanzine publishing with some considerable interest, because I've just written a comparable piece which should be published by the time you read this in Lynn Hickman's 10th Anniversary JD. Of course, mine hasn't the stature of this classic, but one point irritates me somewhat. Actually, Robert Silverberg said the same thing about 18 months ago. What Laney and Silverberg suggest is that 'if a serious story is worth a damn it will be published somewhere professionally.' I find this attitude quite mercenary. It asserts that anything of quality is to be sold immediately. I recall that when I was ill in bed in May 1959 I tore asunder, by pure logic, a story by Silverberg. I wrote a several page condemnation of what purported to be professional science fiction writing by Silverberg, and sent it to Walt Cole, for THE COLE FAX. It wasn't published. You will also recall in an early POT POURRI that I dissected a Silverberg story, and I recall you all echoed my criticism. As most of you know, science fiction of cruddish quality is invariably present in the monthlies...which disproves Laney's point without further comment.

SPY RAY OF SAPS. Thank you, Dick, for all the trouble you went to in spending two whole stencils giving me a veritable pot pourri of Indian Lore ! I was muchly interested.

SPECIFICALLY. Shorts Circuit was all too true, boy. Did you ever read my companion piece HOUNDED in OBLIQUE way back ? Re your comments on listening to King John, a BBC recording, you know of course that we never have breaks for blurbs, adverts, station breaks, just the goodies all the time. When I was in America I only heard the radio a couple of times, and I was appalled at the frequent interruptions, as I am also peeved at ITV, which struck our innocent ears at the end of last year. The good ol' BBC, both on

radio and TV, just gives uninterrupted pleasure on a rather high cultural scale. The Westerns on BBC TV are Laramie, Jim Hardie and Bronco Lane. On ITV (between the detergent adverts) we get Rawhide, Cheyenne, Gun Law and Maverick. For the children, BBC show The Lone Ranger, Range Rider and Champion. ITV do not show any cowboy films to children. I don't know what the heck started me on this train of confusion, but I'm right, aren't I ??? Laramie is more cultural than Gun Law. (Three jeers for Chester.)

WHO KILLED SCIENCE FICTION ? Maybe once or twice a decade there appears a fannish publication which really can only be called sensational. This literary work of art by the Kemps, from every point of view, is probably the greatest thing ever to have been in an apa. That is a studied statement. Komp gives Bob Leman the egoboo for the idea, which is the height of sportsmanship, because from that one short notion, Earl and Nancy Kemp have produced a collectors item which will be keenly sought after for many years to come. I'm just sitting here, my fingers trembling over the typer keys, trying to say something which is sufficiently descriptive enough to express my admiration for a really sterling work of art. Yep, art too...the EMSH cover exactly captures the whole tempo of the publication. I'd like to shake you both by the hand. Lynn Hickman wrote and told me about all the work you'd put into it at one glorious session. I'd like to give you my congrats in neon lights. The pub is superb, clever, eminently readable and interesting, the pinnacle of neatness, magnificently reproduced and bears that rare fannish stamp of utter CLASS. No one is getting my copy, no matter what inducement is offered.

FLABBERGASTING This FOG and EGO INDEX biz was made for me. I'm a sucker for this kind of thing, Tosk. I quite often come across personal quizzes in magazines (usually woman's magazines....Iread 'em, surely, Tosk, and all those cute bra adverts) which tell you if you're suffering from an inferiority complex, or if you're considerate, or oversexed (that was a dilly...after discovering my category, I went on a bromide course) and I always do them. Actually, I also invented a new type of EGOBOO CHART, which is comparable to your FOG and EGO affairs. Heck, I don't know whether...er... OK, since you coerce me, I'll give you the rough lowdown of its functions. What I tried to do was to invent a system whereby the material in a fanzine by Willis or Bloch or Tucker, etc, could be compared for egoboo purposes with material by a neofan, or one of that ilk. I was fed up, you see, Tosk, by reading fanzine reviewers who always said 'Bloch was superb' (as he undoubtedly was) and 'Smithson was terrible.' What they did was compare Smithson with Bloch. The Berry Egoboo Chart was designed so that the two literary works by the master, Bloch, and by the apprentice, Smithson (that latter name is ficticious, by the way) could be rated to a common scale, and therefore the neofan stood quite a good chance of getting as high a rating as Bloch if the article, considering his lack of experience, was worthy of the rating. Look, the rest of you, this is just going to take pages, and I know Toskey'll read it, because he'll never forgive himself if he doesn't, but you don't have to, not unless you've got a spite against yourself. Now then, Tosk. To work. I just haven't the space and the stencils to spare to draw the full Berry Egoboo Chart (henceforth called the BEC for short) because it's big. What I want you to comment on is the principle of it. Close your eyes and imagine a damn big chart. Now open them again so that you'll know what to do when you have imagined the chart. Across the top of the chart, from left to write, is printed ten categories of fan. The first column on the left is NEOFAN. The second column, a NEOFAN IN FANDOM OVER SIX MONTHS... thirdly NEOFAN IN FANDOM OVER TWELVE MONTHS..fourthly FAN, fifthly EXPERIENCED

FAN, sixth, NEO BNF, seventh BNF, eighth BNF IN FANDOM MORE THAN SEVEN YEARS, ninth TOP CLASS BNF, and tenth, VILE PRO. Right, Tosk. Now down the left hand side of the chart are tabulated many aspects of writing ability, as many as you like, such as ORIGINALITY OF SUBJECT MATTER, STRENGTH OF PLOT, MAINTAINANCE OF INTEREST, AUTHENTICITY OF CHARACTERIZATION, EFFECTIVE CLIMAX, NARRATIVE, DESCRIPTIVE POWERS, HUMOUR CONTENT, BALANCE, PROSE, CONVERSATIONS, OVERALL GENERAL ASSESSMENT, etc. Now then, here comes the mathematical part. As you progress up the fannish scale of experience, you have a handicap of one or more points. The first column, NEOFAN, has no handicap, the second group is handicapped one point, the third two, until the vile pro is handicapped nine points. Some of the categories, for instance, NARRATIVE, AUTHENTICITY OF CHARACTERIZATION, etc, which are the products of experience and skill are the cause of a more severe handicap to the higher rates of BNFdom. Now this is how the BEC works. You first of all read the article or story, you read it clearly, so as to be in a position to evaluate it. When you have finished it, you select eight or more of the pertinent literary categories (I mean, if it was sercon you wouldn't include the HUMOUR category, etc) and jot down the seperate percentages you would give the work. Then you select the group to which the author belongs, and subtract the handicap from each total..add up the resultant figures and divide by eight. Your answer should be the percentage value of the story or article based on a FANNISH STANDARD SCALE. In active service conditions, if the BEC was used, a fanzine reviewer would first of all give a percentage figure which would conform to the FANNISH STANDARD SCALE, and then (and this is the part I dream about with sheer delight, as it is the climax of the BEC) give another percentage figure which conforms to the total it is possible for the fan in his particular group to get. In other words, instead of 'Bloch is superb' and 'Smithson is cruddy' the BEC system gives a percentage figure which is to a standard covering everyone in fandom, from neo to Bob Tucker, and at the same time the second BEC percentage shows the fan, no matter which category he is in, what standard he is in in his own experience group. Trouble is, Tosk, the same as with FOG and EGO INDICES. You've got to start counting and calculating and using slide rules and erasers and aspirins, and why do all that when you can just as easily say 'superb' or 'cruddy'. Whhhooooosssshhhhhhhhhhhhh.

Hay Hooooo....I'm afraid these mailing comments will have to be cut drastically short...there's two reasons. First of all, Diane has decided that our living room will have to be re-decorated. She has a point, it hasn't been done for years. Now, it is payday on Wednesday next, when she'll get the wallpaper and stuff, and the walls and ceilings need plastering...soooooo...we have to get the room ready for the plasterers on Monday. Tonite is Saturday...soooooo....tomorrow I have to strip the old wallpaper off, and before that cram all the furniture in the spare room, where all my fannish equipment is, including the duper....soooooo...tomorrow morning will be the last time I can duper for as long as it takes me to decorate...soooooo...it usually takes me a helluva time, and by the time I have finished the second reason will assert itself, which is this :- the deadline will have passed, by which time I have to get the bundle of PP's en route via surface mail to Dick Eney, our new OE. I had planned to take up enough pages to make this PP a fifty pager, and whilst I can scheme and plan to counter ordinary things, when Diane decides to decorate, fannish things have to be temporarily set to one side. Therefore, much against my will, I have, let me see, two lines below and one page more to conclude this PP. Remarks will therefore be short but nevertheless studied. Well, this is the last line, so I'll bash away on the next page..turn over ???

PORQUE Attractive, the red illo's are just nice.....OUTSIDERS Well up to standard, agree with you that Wally Weber doesn't give us enough of his own particular brand of humour...KRAML welcome to the club, Jim. I always thought KRAML was a sort of toffee (a candy ?)...SPELEOBEM Don't be so hard on my pal Tosk, Bruce. Um, thanks for explaining to Enoy re my punch line re Epsom in a recent PP. You know, a lot of aspects of my stories are missed over, I'm sure of it. I put in lots of comments and allusions I'm positive folks trip over 'em. An example was in THIS GOON FOR HIRE, where there is a refence to numbers on the wall in George Charters room. The numbers referred to the number of times his name appeared in a fanzine, and the figure changed from 447 (or sumphin similar) to 451. I craftily brought in a suggestion that it might have something to do with women, and I put in the line 'He sure knows some hot numbers.' I've met no one so far who realised that I was working on 451, the title of Ray Bradbury's book FARENHEIT 451.....BRONC clever cover, deah...IGNATZ uh hu...FENDENIZEN, Elinor, I do so wish I had the space to give you a lecture on the merits of the BBC and ITV. Briefly, we pay four pounds (\$11) licence fee per year, and this covers both channells. ITV caters for limited intelligence (mayher, rapo, arson, murdor, grand larceny, etc) and the BBC gives with orchestral concerts, opera, tennis, horse shows, art, history, travel, and dancing girls and humour. I spend too much time watching TV...RAGNAROK I'M certainly not mad at Terry. Years ago I avowed publicly he was a great writer, I have great admiration for him, so there goes one more myth...BOG It's the spirit what counts, bhoy, you got in the mailing, that's the main thing. Hope you and Pat will be verrry happy...& Give us some of your own inimitable illo's, Karen...OFFSHOOT more congrats....HERE THERE BE SAPS I'm behind you with this BEST OF SAPS deal. Like you said, OMPA is doing it, why not us ???...RETRO Buz, I'm all mixed up about MC's, still. Sometimes I think they are the last word, other times I rebel because I like to just read the SAPSzines, and not have to start butchering them with ticks. Like, I'm unsettled. I was all set for about ten pages of 'em, until I got my ORDERS...YESTERDAY THE FUTURE Superb front cover illo...NEMATODE The British Government has just decided that land-based rockots are no use... they've even announced that the THOR bases on the east coast of England are no use, the only answer is the POLARIS system, ie, rockots fired from submarines, as opposed to static firings. We're trying to buy the POLARIS...WHEN THE GHODS WOULD SUP Because of you, I'm staying up until about 3 am each morning swotting up info about aeroplanes from my vast library. I'm all thrilled, like...WWR, Wally, you keeool no...PSILO yeeees...POOR DICK'S ALMANAK Read and digested, son. Interesting...VONSET Sheer concentrated fax...MAINEYAK Hi, Ed...TOSKEY COMPENDIUM Bruce Polz thinks I was sarcastic when I egobooized you other mighty COMPENDIUM, but I was not indeed. Man, I like these stories. The Leslie cover, though primitive, has impact...THE BALLARD CHRONICLES..like, CRIKEY...SAPLING Chapter Six of The Mind Stealers is pubbed herewith mainly for you...MHO*DJEE No,, I didn't attend the LONCON and therefore didn't get to meet Wally until I came to America...GIM TREE Delightful, breezy, makes the mailing.....look, folks, I'm really as sorry as heck that I've got to finish here. It seems so churlish to give you only a couple of words each, and I started off it great form. But what has to be, etc. Just to let the nystified know that this is POT POURRI 12, fresh from the ink-stained fingers of John Berry, 31, Campbell Park Avenue, Belmont, Belfast 4, Northern Ireland. Goodbye to all of you, it's just great to be a SAP. isn't it ??? Give a slice of carrot to Nobby and Lisa from me, then I shall be happy.....MAY 1960.