

# EYES TRACKS

No

1



N-NO. WE DO N-NOT  
SELL SCIENCE  
FICTION.

VOYAGE  
IN  
HYPERSPACE

This is the first issue of EYE TRACKS consisting of 100 copies - if nothing goes wrong - of which 50 are produced for distribution in the 23rd mailing of OMPA (Winter 1960). Any-one else - particularly collector-type fans - are welcome to copies. If you would kindly get your plaintive letters of dire need in a neat line in the letter-box of George Locke, 85 Chelsea Gardens, Chelsea Bridge Road, London, S.W.1., your wishes will be answered.

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It came as a bit of a shock - and was only the first of several. I was quietly minding my own business, gazing at my navel at the bottom of the waiting list, when I received a card from Ron Bennett. It was, of course, a very nice card, but I should have realised there was something wrong when I saw nowhere on it VOTE FOR TAFF. Obviously there was a message of the deepest gravity buried within, and I quickly found it. It said: "You're in, Bhoj! Cash to Sandy, mags to me. Deadline 21st November."

This, as the editress of Orion would have put it, shook me rigid. It was only later that the soft, warm glow of contentment insinuated itself into my being, washing away the panic of a deadline a mere 9 days away, and telling me quietly that it would be all-right if I post-poned my effort until the following mailing. I was at the time in a state of acute inertia prefatory to gathering the momentum required to put out the second issue of Smoke.

So I didn't even try to put out something by then. But you'll be ~~amazed~~ glad to know that I'd been planning an OMPazine for several months now, and whilst I'd not expected to become one of the Chosen Few (own choice) before about next Summer, I'd decided to have a zine ready since I am liable to be called up very soon, and my position would be uncertain until I'd found myself a cushy niche in which to hide and continue fanatic.

This will, of course, be a very Serious and Constructive Fanzine, full of Deep Meanings and opportunities for broadening Mental Horizons and sensitising Faanish Features. How it'll develop, only Ghu knows, but its Purpose in Life is to give informing on old s-f and fantasy books accumulated by myself over the past few years, and, to give me a relatively easy number of titles to deal with in this and subsequent issues (just over a hundred) I've decided to limit myself to books not listed in Bleiler's Checklist of Fantastic Literature.

Whether or not this Purpose is fulfilled depends on several factors. The most important is, of course, the duplicator. This duplicator is my very own, and was acquired as follows.

It is my habit, in trying to expand my ~~library~~ accumulation, to spend Saturdays hunting round for books. On the particular Saturday in question - sometime in November - I had received an invitation to go over to Wing Clarke's parent's home in Welling to inspect his collection. I was supposed to be escorted to Welling from Inchmery at three pm, and early in the afternoon, I mounted on my bicycle and steered a somewhat dicey course through the back-streets of Victoria to get there. I stopped at a little junk stall in the market off Warwick Way, and sorted through the books on display, as I had plenty of time. I picked up a couple. One, entitled Avernus,

by Mary Bligh Bond, was an Atlantis yarn, of a mystical nature, and, if Alexandra Hall is to be believed - and what else but to believe implicitly a high official of the BSFA - limited to 500 copies. My copies doesn't show any signs of such limitation, and neither does the Checklist, but on her enthusiastic recommendation of a few months ago, it was purchased - and remains unread.

The other book was an expansive volume - large foolscap in area - of cartoons, published in 1915, called "Some 'Frightful' War Pictures". It consists of 24 of the fantastic productions of W Heath Robinson. Most of you know his work at least by repute, and this volume is Robinson at his best. Under such categories as 'Hague Convention Defied', we get The Tatcho Bomb, which, hurled by the fiendish Germans among the British trenches, encouraged hirsute growth in vast profusion in the unlikeliest places. We also get the Tommy-scaldler, being a squadron of kites dumping kettles of boiling water on the heads of the British, and numerous other inventions. Amongst 'British Patent (applied for) is a drilling frame for Raw Recruits, which I hope they have at the place I'll be carrying out my basic training almost anytime now. A fascinating book.

These two I placed tenderly in my bag, and continued towards Inchmery. I was cycling along the road towards Camberwell Green, when I passed a little hand-cart standing by the pavement. On it was what looked like a rotary duplicator. I stopped as fast as the lack of brakes would allow, survived the marathon walk back to the cart, and casually passed eye-tracks over the machine. It was a duplicator, all right, and appeared to possess most of the parts attributable to a 50 year old Gestetner Rotary Cyclostyle (no 6), with the exception of a feed tray. As I looked at it, the current owner emerged from places dark and secret, and sauntered over.

He was, I could see, a very noble-looking gentleman, of the class who inhabits the most socially-acceptable houses of East Lane and Bermondsey. Beneath the 7-day stubble, and nuzzling, no doubt, a 7-year itch, I could detect a certain fine-ness of breeding in his face, which was borne out by his words:

"It's a bargain, gov."

This was obviously an invitation to purchase, and, equally, an invitation to inspect. I was only too pleased to do this. My knowledge of duplicators is very slight, but I had had a little experience (Smoke 1) of handling Vine's old machine, which was very similar. So I turned the handle with a carefully calculated poise. I hoped to give the conflicting impressions of disinterest - to lower the price - and of Expert Knowledge - to satisfy my pride. I also flipped the two moving parts I used to flip on the Clerke model, and judged that as the machine felt different before and after the flipping, it was in working order. I stopped turning the handle and looked up.

The gentleman said: "Can git a very good price for it up the Lane tomorrow." Hoping the price wasn't one to leave me too far up the creek today, I nodded non-committedly.

"It's in perfect condition."

"Yes," I mumbled, and turned the handle again.

For a long time we stood in silence, summing each other up. At length, the war of nerves beat the man, and he said: "I'll take ten bob for it."

I nearly dropped dead on the spot. 10/- shillings. But you just don't get duplicators for 10/-. But my hand was already streaking for my pocket, as fast as any Wyatt Earp drawing against the 'fastest Gun Alive'. It snatched a handful of coins, sorted out ten bob's worth, and gave them to the gentleman. He looked somewhat shaken - this was probably the first time anybody had bought anything off him without trying to beat the price down.

A little later, as I was balancing the duplicator precariously on the saddle of the bike, he said, softly: "By the way - what is it?"

I looked at him for a moment, pityingly. I finally decided to keep him in blissful ignorance. If I'd told him, he'd have probably crawled home suffering from a severe guilt complex at having so shamefully inflicted trouble on a fellow human being, and put his head in the gas-oven. I bid him a cheery good-bye, and started to wheel the bike away.

I had two possible choices: To return home with my spoils, a distance of 2-3 miles, or to carry on to Inchmery, also a distance of 2-3 miles. While I felt rather guilty at dumping the thing like an unwanted child on these hospitable fans' doorstep, I felt that it would be best if Vin had a look at it, and, not thinking of the probability of being turned away, to stagger wearily back to Chelsea, I continued my journey, at a much reduced pace.

About a hundred yards later it became obvious that wheeling a bike with a considerable tonnage of scrap iron on the saddle was not the easiest thing in the world. I tried another system - sitting straddle the bike with the duper balanced on the cross-bar, and pushing myself in short bursts with my feet, like a kid on a scooter. After another couple of hundred yards, my feet were about to drop off, so I stopped to Think. I shifted the duper to every conceivable position, and ended up with it perched on the handlebars. It gradually dawned on me that if I could only hold it on the handlebars, I would be able to cycle along with it, using the pedals instead of the pavement kerb. I mounted the noble steed, and found that if I held the duplicator with the long axis pointing ahead of me, I could reach the drop handlebars with the tips of my fingers, so long, of course, as I rested my chin on the thing. I blessed my Neanderthal ancestry providing me with long arms.

With the upper part of my body thus arranged, I now tried to get my feet on the pedals without the bike falling over as soon as I left the ground. I managed it, somehow, and moved towards Inchmery at a reasonable pace. Luckily, there were no hills on the route, as I wouldn't have been able to stop if I started accelerating. I suppose I could have pushed the machine off the handlebars into my path if I had had to, but it would have been regarded by all True Fans as vandalism, and I think I would have died first.

Eventually, I arrived at Inchmery, grinning with a kind of triumph. To cut a long story short, which I should have cut short a couple of pages ago, it transpired that the machine was in excellent condition, requiring only a good cleaning and a new feed tray. Vin very kindly constructed me one - one of the thousand things I will always be grateful to him for - and a few days ago we tried it out.

It was a noble moment, full of Fannish significance. We could detect around us the spirits of all faens, past and present, and we knew they were ready to help if they could. Vine told me to select a suitable stencil from the pile of used App stencils. I fought down the eager, fluttering hordes, and selected one at random. It turned out to be the one which graced App 13 with Harry Warner's Payette article, and included an illo showing a bullet rebounding from a rather solid head. It was drawn by Atom, and represented, I suppose, nuclear bombardment. Vine nonchalantly slapped it on the screen, a way he has with stencils I wish I had, applied a judicial amount of ink. It was, of course, black. This duplicator was one thing Inchnery refused to take over. Vine then operated the appropriate controls, and passed a sheet of paper through.

It printed!

Highly elated, we ran off a number of copies, before discovering that it was sending the paper through crooked. We fiddled with the feed mechanism for a few minutes. It transpired that whatever we did, it persisted in this behaviour. Finally, our keen minds centred upon the poor, innocent little rubber things - shaped a bit like bicycle pedals - which grip the paper to send it through the rollers. One looked rather different to the other - it seemed to be covered with a sort of herd, cracked sheen, like varnish.

"Perished," said Vine. Which was reasonable, I suppose, considering the age of the machine. One face of the rubber didn't seem quite as perished as the others, so we turned the rubber around its axis until that particular face gripped the paper, and tried again. The amount of displacement wasn't so great - and at this point, we decided to call it a day. I had to transport some hi-fi equipment, or it may have been a tape recorder, over to Ella Parker's, for the musical enlightenment of the forthcoming Science-Fiction Club of London Christmas Party. I decided to take the duplicator home with me at the same time, figuring a few minor adjustments to the feed mechanism would suffice.

Well, always optimistic, that's me. I should have taken the pessimistic attitude, and taken the contraption round to Gestetner's for fixing. But the answer proved ridiculously simple, and I am grateful to Joy Clarke for Showing Me The Way, albeit sending me down the wrong side of the road.

The first thing I wanted to run off was my OMPazine, and I had a cover already prepared. At first, the machine persisted in its sabotaging, but by increasing the pressure of the feed 'feet' I can only think to call them, I managed to overcome this to some degree, and by aligning the paper in the tray at an angle, managed to obtain copies printed straight. I produced about 90 percent good copies to ten percent decidedly wayward specimens. This was reasonably satisfactory to all but the perfectionist in me. For a time I ignored this fiendish animal, but eventually succumbed to its insistent: "It's a waste.", and set about improving things.

Things immediately became worse. Every two sheets came through crumpled - a new development. I fiddled for hours, and was about to commit hari-kiri rather than inflict a crumpled OMPazine on you folks, when some words of Joy's came to me. "Try covering the rubber with rubber solution." It sounded like a logical solution, so I tried it, on the perished rubber.

When the goo had dried, I tried its gripping properties on some paper. It slid merrily over the surface. "You're not an ice-skater," I snarled. Then I thought: Suppose the rubber isn't perished, but had been covered by a coating of something, making it slippery. It would produce less grip, therefore sending its side of the paper through with less force than the other, therefore sending it in crooked.

Eureka!

If, of course, I was correct, and it was merely a coating which could be removed. If it was perished, I would have to buy a new one - and I doubted a three-bob sub from Peter Singleton to Smoke would cover it. However, as I began to scrape away, softening the material with benzene, I knew the problem was solved, and, as all stories should, this will finish on an upbeat. The poor, ailing rubber has now been cured, and its grip is as strong as it ever was.

Too strong for my hand.

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This business of collecting old books. It has its moments of Great Joy, when one Sings Out Loud to the Stars, but mostly, it consists of wandering round London in the drizzle to the accompaniment of a steady snuffle - not the most melodious of sounds. It was on one such excursion, in the City near the Old Bailey - purely a co-incidence - that I stumbled across Paternoster Row. Or what was left of it.

In the old days, before World War Two, Paternoster Row was the famed centre of the book trade, with many shops and publishers. Now, all that is left is a collection of holes, partly filled with rubble and weeds, and the only literature remaining is a little publication by one Patteux entitled 'Senior Service', a work of little merit fit only for smoking. A sad part of London, and it suddenly brought home to me exactly how much of England's literature has perished as a result of the war. When you consider the vast stocks wiped out by a single bomb, and the enormous book drives that went on during the war, it's a wonder there are any books left at all. Take Eastbourne for instance. Not a particularly massive town. But they managed to collect sufficient books to form a line along the sea-front for several miles. Closer to home, I remember reading in Roles' Rollings a few mailings back of Stapledon's first book, almost the entire printing of which was wiped out by fire in World War One.

Again, it's a wonder some books still survive, especially, like the first one on my list, those dating back a hundred years or more. I hope this is a sound reason for resurrecting some of the early fantasies and s-f stories. Since one of my purposes is to make this issue and subsequent ones a supplement to Bleiler's Checklist of Fantastic Literature, I've decided to use the same bibliographical system as used there. It goes something like this:

Author's name, title of book, publisher, place of publication, date of publication, number of pages, whether or not illustrated, any additional information, such as whether it is a limited edition, and, finally, my burblings. These burblings may end up by discussing almost anything, as I shall try to make them interesting, and a straight cataloguing of the salient points of plot interest tend to become very boring. I hope I succeed.

A LATE FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE: (John Pimplico, or, J & Leigh Hunt)  
The Rebellion of the Beasts: or, The Ass is Dead! Long Live The Ass! J & H.L.Hunt,  
London, 1825. 16s. Ill. (Second edition, this).

I'm London, myself - I have a tie to prove it - so I couldn't conceive of the product of any other, inferior University producing a work worth noting down in such detail as this. It was also typical that a simple 'The Rebellion of the Beasts' by 'John Pimplico' (if he be the perpetrator) never occurred to the gent. But I'm glad to say the unwieldiness of the title doesn't extend beyond the end of the introduction - er, sorry, it's called a dedication in this book.

It recounts the story of a young gentleman of scholastic leanings who meddles in Things Men Should not Meddle in. He obtains one or two ancient books and manuscripts by the simple expedient of absconding with them from a college library, and finds that while one of the 'titles' - "A Daintie and Cunnige Device to make Peese Porridge with Thryfte and Economie..." - is of little interest to one who eats meat, the other sends him. It was a manuscript translation from a work of Cornelius Agrippa, "De Bestiis." It includes a spell - which, of course, the hero tries out - and as the wording sets the tone of this delightful and surprisingly readable yarn, I'll quote it in full.

"Beasts can speak, and he that doubteth the fact may read this booke. In the first month of the year, at the first moment of the full moon, having taken a mouthful of persley, mint, and wormwood, stand on thy left foot, and say these words three times:"((Follow three asterisks - apparently the hero didn't believe in everybody having communion with the beasts))

"Thou must then make a mess of two inches of a tallow candle, the hair of an ass's tail, the tooth of a horse that is broken-winded ((!)), a half pound of witch-elms leaves, two she-snails, the parings of the toe-nails of a doctor of divinity, one drop of blood from a man learned in mathematics, three leaves of Aristotle's Ethics, and a pint of linseed oil. Of this potage thou must eat sparingly forty days at sun-rise; thou must say three oaths a day, and never go to prayers; and if thou then gettest by heart the following litany, and sayest it in the ear of a donkey, on a sabbath-morn, at three in the morning, the donkey will answer thee; and thou wilt be able to understand from that moment all beasts clean and unclean, all four-footed and two-footed animals, and all that swim under the waters, and all birds, and reptiles that creep on their belly, and all insects of the earth."

The hero gives no details of the litany, either, but instead spends some time informing us of how he obtained the ingredients. He then survives taking the potion, and at the appointed hour, sallies forth to speak with the donkey. It certainly isn't fandom they discuss. Before the animal has hardly had time to ascertain whether our hero is friends or no, it is telling him about the great rebellion brewing to rid the world of all mankind - tyrannous humanity. Our hero doesn't run off waving a mimeo-handle to denounce the creature to G.M.Carr. No, sir. Rather, he follows the whole sequence of events - the beasts' attempts to deliver an ultimatum to mankind, denial of same, the final over-coming of mankind - with interest. He is spared the holocaust by virtue of his attaining the level of the beasts - obviously he knew which side of the fence to fall. Mankind out of the way, the beasts look round at the now disorganised world, and decide, fairly enough, that something should be done about it. The Asses, who had led the rebellion, decide to handle the job, shouting "Liberty, Fraternity and Equality", whilst at the same time asserting that, of course, they are more equal than the others. For a while, they rule the world and all the beasts (rather as man had done, previously), and then there is a further uprising, this time against the asses...

The story has a rather familiar ring - wasn't it George Orwell, and his Animal Farm, in essence? I found it a very amusing and readable fantasy, which is a very unusual state of affairs for books as old as this. Most of these ancient fantasies tend to be heavily over-written, and packed with the deepest of philosophical observations. But, in addition, I noticed something else. Something I am quite unable to define...

It expressed itself as a feeling, a feeling that this book was a satire, a satire digging at events current to the author with malicious glee. A book, therefore, to place on the same shelf as 'Gulliver's Travels', although, of course, far inferior to that classic. Indefinable?

Undatable, if there is such a word. My back, when people still used to talk in a friendly manner at the Globe, before the Year of Feuding, I had a long chat with Vivian Wells about satires, and nursery rhymes, and things, and of cabbages and kings. Viv had made a study of such subjects, and had told me that most of the best-known nursery-rhymes, for instance, were cloaks for individuals who wanted to express dissatisfaction with the government, or the king, or the church, or of any Official Body. Nowadays somebody like Peter Sellers can take a rise out of the Prime Minister, and everybody curls up, and nothing more is said, but a mere century ago, you were liable to lose your head. I wish I could remember what Viv said about some of those rhymes. What, for instance, was the significance of the 'Four-and-twenty blackbirds', of Humpty-Dumpty, of "Rock-a-bye-baby in the tree-top." That last, by the way, seems to have been rather prophetic - rock-an'-roll at the top of the tree, those baby-faced singers, more kids, the sudden crash of their popularity - who today ever hears about Bill Haley and his Comets?

It's clear that to 'dig' the significance of these early satires one must have a detailed knowledge of the period during which they were written. And today, while the danger to one's head has largely been removed, and the satirists no longer have to glove their punches, the humour is still obscure, although plainly recognisable in purpose. In fifty years' time - what? Somebody will pick up a copy of The Best of Sellers, and play it through. And he'll come to the part where Peter, as Prime Minister, is saying: "...In conclusion, I have this to say." The poor fellow will wonder why the record stops there. No sound, no nothing.

Maybe, though, he won't wonder. Maybe a smile will cross his face, and he'll say to his wife: "Politicians haven't changed in fifty years." And perhaps that day, there will be a Humpty-dumpty sitting on a wall, or a fence. It's almost certain there will be. For the way the world is doesn't change basically from century to century, only the details; and the basic stupidities of the world are laid down in "The Rebellion of the Beasts". It is the basic satire which is important. The details form the flavour, and flavour is a fleeting quality.

ANONYMOUS: (S Middleton Fox). Our Own Pompeii. A Romance of To-morrow. Blackwood; Edinburgh & London; 1887. 2 Vols.

It's always delightful to come across a book subtitled: 'A Romance of Tomorrow' or something with a similar message. It also shows one of the knottier points jamming the works of a definition of fantasy. Does a story set in the future - the writer's future, not the reader's - automatically constitute a fantasy? Frequently, the answer is obviously 'yes'. But sometimes...

The setting up - as opposed to discovery - of utopias is one of the standard s-f plots. Many stories of the future are set in utopias which have developed slowly through time (and, incidentally, usually turn out otherwise). Others start as nuclei subsequent to the annihilation of most of the population and 'we aren't going to follow in the footsteps of our fathers'. A third group is illustrated by a bunch of ideal-



istic ladies and gentlemen with Broad Mental Horizons who decide the world has gone to the dogs instead of merely the sturdy few who try their luck at Stamford Bridge or White City, and troop off singing a brand new National Anthem to found a new race. The effect is usually spoilt in these stories by the whole crew behaving in such a supra-holy fashion that the New Race never gets to the second generation, but that is beside the point - the thought is there. Examples of such yarns are Freeland, by a chap called Hertzka, and the disorganised history of one Claude Degler.

Oops! My mistake. Freeland survived plenty of generations, and virtuosity and an abnormally high standard of moral conduct wasn't what wrecked the chances of the Cosmic Circle. I crave your pardon - but as this is being hacked straight onto stencil, it's too late to change it now. I hope somebody will remind me when December 31st 1960 comes round that my New Years' resolution will be to prepare careful drafts of everything before committing it to the mercies of an HMSO Gestetner stencil. But in the meantime - it provides an excellent excuse for my murdering the English language.

But the motives of the Founders - to get back to the subject - aren't always of the highest. 'Our New Pompeii' gives a hint of the subject matter of this book. The story concerns the efforts of a rather dissolute crowd of aristocrats who decide to found a pleasure city on the Riviera. The Scheme is, of course, a closed shop, and it is only the people concerned who build and fit out the place. Well, being what they are, and the era being what it was (Late Victorian), they succeed in their endeavours, and the new Pompeii is founded, and a highly successful and continuous orgy takes place.

And that about amounts to it. I fancy it was meant partly as a satire on Victorian high society - and, conceivably, Utopian stories of this pattern - but I didn't gather that from the writing. It reads like a light Victorian humour-piece which got rejected by every publisher except the one who's chief reader went blind suddenly and didn't let on because he wanted to keep out of the workhouse. The society ends as a result of a mighty plague which wipes out most of the population, a plague coming about from the Founders' forgetting to include reasonable toilet facilities in their itinerary.

Or was such a subject Not To Be Considered By Their Finely Cultured Minds?

But it says it is set in the future - and I have just found what a wonderful thing it is to sacrifice oneself - or a part of oneself - to a cause. Whether you think it counts as fantasy or not - and whether or not you have defined where the borderline for future fantasies lies - I know I've saved you the trouble of reading it.

Right. Quickly on to the next.

ARONIN. EBN. The Lost Tribe. Being the strange adventures of Raphael Drake in search of the Lost Tribes of Israel. The Simons Press, New York, 1934, 352. Ill.

Ah, much better. If there's one type of fantasy I'm a sucker for, it's a lost race yarn. There's nothing particularly spectacular about this one - it concerns itself with the search for and the finding of the Lost Tribes of Israel, like many before and after it - but it's a readable story, with the emphasis on adventure. This emphasis on adventure, to repeat myself, is symbolic of the Simon-pure Lost Race story (which may be why the Simons Press printed it. Ouch.) The trend was, presumably, started by Haggard, whose She, King Solomon's Mines, Ayesha, etc., are all classics of the genre, and enjoyed excellent sales. They certainly proved popular enough for maybe thousands of writers to try to follow in his footsteps. The most active period was, naturally, around the time Haggard was writing - 1880 - 1910. But most of the imitators, although some were very capable writers, got exactly nowhere in the public eye, even though their heroes covered every square yard of the earth. This state of affairs is quite general in fantastic literature. Only the really great writers - Wells, Verne, Haggard - ever sell to any degree. The rest maybe rake in sufficient royalties to buy a new ribbon

for their typewriters. It just seems fantasy in these old, old days never caught on.

"Things are different nowadays," I can hear some-one say.

I don't think so. S-F still isn't selling. Certain titles enjoy a slight success, like The Day of the Triffids, but they are few and far between. We can only hope a new Wells will show up, and perhaps he will. But one thing is certain - there will never be a new Haggard. The lost race story, with all its hidden, mountain-girdled valleys, mighty and ancient cities resplendent in the setting sun, and yes, even its beautiful princesses, died with the coming of flight and the exploration of those nasty lands huddling the Equator and shivering round the poles. To find them, one has to search through the second-hand bookshops, and expect to wait years before finding a particular title.

The Lost Tribe, as I said before, concerns itself with the old legend of the Lost Tribes. They bob up all over the place. The usual location is Africa, but they have been known to occur in all the countries of the middle and far East, and in this yarn, the heroes find them in Arctic regions - or, at least, the tribe of Dan. It was just as well there was only the one left - Mr Drake has a very tough time getting out of their hands. It seems, polite fellows, they wanted him to stay, so that he could listen to the Trumpet which would signify that God (no catch) had forgiven them. It also seems he has had enough of the cold climes of the north, for they inform him that he is very strong, and should survive the days of cold which come when the Sacred (or Holy, or Reverend, I forget which, and can't find the reference) Fire dies almost down to zero. So restless of them...

ASH. FENTON. The Black Opal. John F Shaw, London, ca 1912. 320. Ill. Kid's stuff. Kid's stuff by a fairly well-known writer of boys' adventure stories. Like the last, The Black Opal is a lost race story, but any further than that I'm afraid I can't go. I've not read the thing, and have no great wish to do so, in spite of it being sub-titled 'A Romance of Thrilling Adventure'. The illustrations seem to indicate mediaeval European survivors, possibly Spaniards, and include an old white man with a long beard, obviously highly mysterious and extremely wise, and gorillas acting as guards. The author has also had published two or three other lost race yarns and an interplanetary: "A Trip to Mars".

ASHBEE. C.R. The Building of Thelema. J.M.Dent, London, 1910. 361. Front. This is a horror. No, I don't mean it is a horror story, but rather that it is a ghastly book to try and classify. I guess if you dumped it in among the curios of the Utopian genre, you won't go far wrong. You probably wouldn't go too far wrong if you excluded it from the classification of 'fantastic', if you're one of those people who regard dream fantasies as mundane. I'm not.

The hero, a youngster from the East End of London, goes for a train ride - probably to Southend - and falls asleep. His dreams concern his wanderings in a strange land, where the inhabitants consist of the great Utopists of times gone by. All these are seekers of Utopia, and also the joint builders of Thelema, which is nothing more than the realisation of their dreams. Amongst the people he meets are Hythloday, of More's Utopia, Gulliver, of the famed travels, William Morris, the playwrights of the Hermiad Tavern, and many others.

I'm afraid, though, this is the best I can do towards describing this book. It is a very deep and philosophical work, and it proved too much for me. While not at all badly written, the last thing you could call it is entertainment, even though there have been heavier books.

THE AUTHOR OF "MEPHISTOPHELES IN LONDON": Eureka; A Prophecy of the Future. Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green and Longman; London, 1837. 3 Vols. Even at the risk of sounding redundant, I was prepared to shout 'Eureka!' when I found the first volume of this work on a shabby stall in Farringdon Road. Instead, I hunted frantically for the other two volumes. The fact remains that I only managed to secure two out of the three - vols 1 & 3 - and if you've ever read a serial in which one part is missing, you'll feel a little like me. I haunted the stall for weeks afterwards, hoping the odd volume would turn up, but it never did, and is probably as completely lost as the Necronomicon. It's also possible that some other book-hunter picked up vol 2 and hung onto it in the hope of later finding 1 & 3. It'll probably be years before I find another set - and when I do, it'll probably cost me the Earth.

I've not read the book, in consequence, but I've skimmed through it, and it appears to be a nautical yarn in essence, a story of voyage and discovery - but I fancy the 'discovery' would be better termed 'rediscovery', since part of the theme is concerned with the possible colonisation of Europe by the Australasians. One section I'm looking at now deals with the last days of the last Englishman, and there is a poetic description of a ruined, overgrown country which is apparently England. If that's what happened when the London Circle broke up...

The characters, by the way, have some of the quaintest names I've come across. The hero is one Oriel Porphyry, and his subsidiaries Tourniquet, Fortyfolios, etc. At least, they're an improvement on Zag, Scar, Zot and the others modern s-f writers like to lumber their futuristic people with.

Definitely an s-f fantasy, and one which will probably be quite worth reading. I'm still cursing the tendency of three-volume books to part company. As a matter of interest, there are quite a number of Victorian - and earlier - 'three-decker' science-fiction. Everybody has probably heard of the fabulously valuable Haggard three-deckers. There are several reasons why these and other three-deckers are very hard to find today. The first is that they were produced in relatively small editions - they take a lot of paper and binding. They were usually intended for the decoration of the libraries of the wealthy. The odd thing is - they got into libraries, alright - the rental libraries, where they were promptly mangled by the bob-a-nob readers. Most copies one comes across today are in very poor condition - and on top of that, it's odds on that somebody was offended by a paragraph of the book, and tore the page out. This happened to me with Fenimore Cooper's The Crater, where several pages had been torn out. When you consider that the booksellers automatically hike the price of three-deckers as high as the moon, it hardly seems worth while trying to find the things, and most of the books were reprinted almost immediately in one volume, which makes things easier for the prospective reader.

Indeed, the Checklist of Fantastic Literature indicates how rare three-deckers (and four, five and six-deckers) are by virtue of its mentioning very few. The classic s-f story which appeared in more than one volume is Percy Greg's rare - and, by all accounts, very good - interplanetary. This appeared in 1880 in 2 volumes, and is much sought after. Other s-f titles in such format I've myself found - excuse me if it sounds too much like gloating, but this is my Big Moment - are Edwin Lester Arnold's Phra the Phoenician, one of the most famous adventure stories on the 'Wandering Jew' theme, Arthur Hulp's Realms, story of a prehistoric civilisation in Europe, and Edward Meitland's By and By, with its electrical flying machines. These are in three, two and three volumes, respectively.

But I wish Eureka had been in one volume. Then I'd have been able to read it.

THE AUTHOR OF "MISS MOLLY": The Laws of Leflo. John Ouseley, 1911, London. 181.

The author says on the fly-leaf, presenting the book to a friend: "Do try and skim through it on the voyage when I'm sure the large print and brevity of the story will prove an attraction." I'll take her word for it - the book has an attraction. It's a fairly standard Utopia book, anyway, about the discovery of a little colony in the centre of Africa, set up by some idealists several centuries before, and whose main engagement, like that of many such civilisations, is of remaining unknown to the world at large. Amongst those who discover the little valley are a couple of dainty ladies, and 'dainty' is the operative word to use in describing this book. As I said, it's got big print.

BARLOW. J. SWINDELLS: A Mighty Empire. Ward Lock & Co, London, 1902. 311. Ill.

An excellent adventure story this. I thought, going by the title, it would turn out to be a lost race story, but while the general plot and character suggests the medium, it can only be classed as borderline from this respect. However, it is amply fantastic from other angles. The story concerns itself with the hunt for the various parts of a talisman called the Girdle of Isis, which endows the owner of the complete article with the power to rule the world. A mad scientist decides he is going to find the talisman, and, being cold and tired, invents a gadget to make him stronger than ten men and any three converted 97-pound weaklings put together. The strength inherent in a number of large dogs is transferred to the recipient by electrical means. He also employs Allan Blair to aid in the quest, and provides him with a similar dose of strength.

Thus fortified, they sally forth in search of the various pieces of the talisman, and find their way by stages to a dead, lost city in South America, where the great Goddess Isis is lying quiescent. The story ends with a tremendous fantastic scene right out of Merritt, and containing some merit itself. Sounds corny? Maybe, but when it was written, it was breaking fairly new ground. Listen to how the villain died...

"...On floated this flaming ball until it had made a complete circuit of the cave, then it rolled forward to the top of the statue.

Here it rested, opening gradually as it stood poised on the granite head, and in its heart there shone a gigantic eye ten times more full of life than any face could be. From side to side, it glared, then it fixed its gaze upon Juan Papadaka with an angry magnetic stare. As the fiery ball was opening there had appeared from out of the mist a pair of long, bony arms covered with pale, reddish hair; and though they were advancing upon the old man he was too terrified to move. Nearer and nearer they came, and at last they held him in their dreadful clutch. On they bore him, tossing him hither and thither as though he were a thing of sport. All at once a mist rose up around him and his captors, and when it had passed, he was lying a bleeding and shapeless mass upon the knees of the stone image, and the eye and the arms had disappeared..."

It goes on for some time after this, but this is enough to give you the general idea. The author has really let himself go in this scene - something I wish a few of our modern practitioners would do once in a while. All too rarely does an Alfred Bester come along, and all too often are the pages of the magazines filled with essays in philosophy or technology carrying only the bones of a story.

BARNEY. NATALIE CLIFFORD: The One Who Is Legion. Privately Subscribed by Eric Partridge, London, 1930. 160. Ill. Edition limited to 560 copies, of which 25 are numbered and signed. This is one of those oddities of the 1930s which properly belong in Paris

along with the group of works, full of Social Significance and Raw Life, characteristic of Henry Miller and his coterie. Especially his coterie. Miller could write. The One who Is Legion is highly Literary, where the capital merely saves the ink otherwise used up in tagging the word 'pseudo' in front. It is stuffed with passages of which the following is an example:

"Were we already so given over as to no longer be the centre of our own volition?

Had we reached so near the border-line that the slightest urge might deflect us - topple us over, leave us to the mercy of any madness?

If we were not to regain our supremacy and concentration, our diamond hardness free of the diamond's dark life of crystallisation - might we not at least keep a balance?

Pendulate between excesses until the hour strikes!"

Taken out of context, somebody will no doubt say. Of course, and I make no defence, on the contrary, I grant the presence of a definite flow of thought, albeit to my action-loving mind somewhat obscure. But the entire novel is written entirely in this style, even when action occurs. Ugh!

Anyway, as near as I could make out with my Insensitive Soul, the story concerns itself with the soul of a dead man, who, it seems, has led a particularly carefree life. Not exactly a soul - a being - an angel or sponsor as it is variously defined, who inhabits the old body, and who carries on with the man's broken life. This probably reads very badly, and can only be excused by a feeling I'm right out of my depth. Possibly, the author was, too.

When it came out, it was retailed at 21/-, a high price explainable not only by the limited printing but by a slight erotic content, as obscure as the rest of it. The publisher, incidently, brought out a long run of obscure books, mostly in limited editions, and are noted for producing the first editions of a couple of Neil Bell's s-f classics, under the pseudonym of Miles. Eric Partridge, otherwise the Scholartis Press - specialists in the off-beat, and a book.

BARR. JAMES: The Witchery of the Serpent. Gay and Bird, London, 1907. 315. One of the delights of these old books is the frequency with which illustrated bindings occur. It was the fashion from about 1890 to 1910, give or take a few years either way, and was a development of the previous fashion when bindings were covered with very ornate and intricate gold patterns. Somebody probably said: "Why not have a picture on the binding?" The development of the dust-wrapper as a gay, eye-catching advertisement was probably the cause of the downfall of this style - some of the earliest dust-wrappers, appearing about the turn of the century, are an exact copy of the design on the binding. Occasionally done in gold leaf, the binding illos, as I call them, were more usually in paint, frequently coloured, and some of them are really effective. Pallander's interplanetary Across the Zodiac (not to be confused with the space story of the same title by Percy Greg) is a perfect example, showing on the front cover a silver space-ship and a golden sun against a silver-starred black background, and on the spine, the same brave vessel poised above the burning maw of a volcano. This book was published when binding illos reached their peak; The Witchery of the Serpent when the dust-wrapper was gaining a stronger following. It still has a binding illo, but of inferior workmanship. It was, however, this illo, showing a young lady with a suitably surprised expression on her face gazing at the form of a vast sea-serpent, which made me pick up this book.

It isn't, however, particularly fantastic. The monster - about a hundred yards in length - comes ashore on the coast of Scotland to die. In its death throes it is discovered by the above-mentioned damsel, shortly after this, it vanishes, and the rest

of the book occupies itself with Victorian romance and drama and everybody who doesn't believe the thing exists. In the last few chapters, its body is washed ashore again, and thus the fantastical element in this book is maintained, the heroine having not dreamed the creature up. Strictly Bor completists - and on second thoughts, that cover illo is not a bad piece of art.

BELLOC. HILAIRE: A Change in the Cabinet. Methuen, London, 1909. 309. Except to register surprise that this well-known humorous political frolic of the future is not listed in the Bleiler Checklist, there's nothing to say. It went through two or three editions, which makes it even more surprising.

BENSON. STELLA: The Awakening. The Lantern Press (Gelber, Lilienthal, Inc.), San Francisco, 1925. 16 pages, one illo. Limited to 500 numbered copies. An oddment by a fairly well-known author who has written her share of fantasy, this little story may well have appeared subsequently in a collection of her's. It is the old, old story of those infinite and oft-storied beings, the gods. The gods who build and experiment, with worlds and with man and other creatures. It is told by one, in the carnation of an old, frail man - who likes his golf and his cup of tea in the evening. I wonder - how well known it is. Was it printed in a collection? can anyone tell me?

BLAKE. BERNARD CECIL: At The Change of the Moon. Greening, London, 1902. 155. Thoroughly crackpot. This is not surprising, though, when you consider that the stories presented in this little volume concern people wallowing in some degree of insanity. Thus, most are of little interest to the fantasy collector, with the exception of "Further North Than Abruzzi." They - the explorers - find an island near the north pole, inhabited by a race of giants. These giants would have wiped out the explorers, if it wasn't for the absence of a nose on Mrs de Hawtrey. These poor creatures of the frozen north were, it seems, subject to frost-bite, with the consequence that few of them possessed noses, along with fingers and toes...Ah, well, as I said, it's a crackpot book.

BRITTON. LIONEL: Spacetime Inn. G.P. Putnam's Sons, London, 1932. 103. The author of this play - first read at the House of Commons - is well-known for a Stapledonian saga of the future brought out by the same publishers a year or two previously: Brain. akin to the fantasies of John K Bangs, and to the previously described The Building of Theloma, it is another play, and deals with a young couple who are thrown from a motor-smash into another continuum and a place called Spacetime Inn, where they meet the Greats of our past. Shakespear, Bernard Shaw, Dr. Johnson, Karl Marx, Napoleon, Eve, and so forth.

BRUMM. CHARLES: Ahasuerus. T Werner Laurie, London, ca 1914. 382. I believe the author is no relation to George A. Birmingham... I've not read this story, so therefore can't give much idea of the plot - not that I feel I've succeeded with the other books I've been ploughing through these last few stencils. The main reason for this lapse is this. There are three hundred and eighty-two pages of very close print, and my penname is, of course, Bertha Bigprint. I'll always remember her from the ITMA shows of ten - fifteen years ago... Whoops, back to my reason for not reading this, not that it's all that important. It merely emphasises my laziness. As opposed to a word-count rivalling John Berry's American Trip account, it lacks the readability of our policeman.

(Brumm again... I can't seem to get away from Birmingham; must have been the Con.)  
The story may or may not be a future war story between Germany and England - a quick glance through the text suggests that it may be - but it indubitably is a story about that popular figure in fantastic literature - the Wadnering Jew. Here, he goes under what was believed to be his real name - Ahasuerus. The part he plays in this story I'm afraid I can't detail, except that at the end, he finds his salvation.

I was on about bindings a few titles back. As I said that The Witchery of the Serpent marked the decline in the fashion of illos painted on the binding, so I can say this book was in at the death of the more short-lived fashion of illos pasted on the binding. The 'painted' fashion lasted maybe forty years; this one not more than 10. It was indicative of the rise of the dustwrapper in the 1900s and 1910s, and was in the nature of a last experiment on the part of publishers before they decided that it was cheaper to just have a plain title on the binding. The book's attraction on the shelves now lay in the wrapper; it was about this time that books began to do away with interior illustrations, at least, on the popular novel level, and as these pasted cover-illos were invariably taken from one of the interior illos, they would naturally follow the interiors. The Charles Brumm title was a real die-hard - it contains no interior illos, but a small square, black and white portrait of a bearded gentleman on the binding. I presume the gentleman is meant to be Ahasuerus, but it may, of course, been the author.

In the business of book-binding, one often comes across the phenomenon of a book identical with its mates in every respect barring the colour of the title lettering. Those of you who've read Morse's bibliography of M.P. Shiel will see that that a copy of The Pale ape with yellow lettering is a first impression, whilst a copy with gold is a second, and a copy with black lettering a variant of the second impression which came about because the printer decided the gold was too expensive. Morse also mentions the possibility of a variant of the second impression existing with residues of the original yellow ink... All very confusing to the collector.

Now, seeing as I've just said that the pasted illos on the bindings were copies of the interiors, it is obvious that a publisher is going to print extra copies of the particular illo he proposes to use on his cover. But supposing he has the Mind of a Foned, like me, and slips up on the numbering. He finds he has too few illos for his books. However, suppose he has some extras from another illo? He'll automatically use them, and thus provide a scarce variant edition. I've not run across any instances of this phenomenon as yet, with a possible exception. The first edition of Wells' War in the Air is one of the easier Wells' firsts come obtain. I have, seen copies of this book with a coloured version of the frontispiece on the binding, and also copies of a black and white version of the same black and white frontispiece. What happened here? Did the publisher run out of his special coloured picture and have to make do with the black and whites? Or did the book prove so popular he ran off extra printings, and, again having no coloureds, use the b&w? The answer probably lies in one of the bibliographies of Wells.

BULL. ALBERT E: The Mystery of the Hidden City. The Federation Press, London, 1925. 156.

The Federation Press published a number of cheap pieces of hack-work about this time, and this is an excursion into the fantastic - to be specific, a lost race adventure. Pretty standard stuff, about a lost city found in South America, and containing the usual evil priests. The girl the hero marries is called Uralia - I can't remember off-hand, but it's odds on she was a princess.

BYRD. BOB: Ka-Zar, King of Fang and Claw. Wright and Brown, London, ca 1936. 252.

The 1½ spacing here usually indicates where bibliographic details stop and my rambling starts. It also, for this example only, indicates a space in time where I've had to go and start digging through a heap of OMPA back-mailings to find a POOKA. I was searching for a reference to Ka-Zar, a character in one of the pre-war pulps which I knew I'd seen somewhere in this interesting 'zine. Unfortunately, I haven't been able to find it but have instead remembered that this was the title of a jungle-adventure magazine of the period. Ka-Zar... I've never seen a copy, so haven't the faintest idea whether this book of Bob Byrd's is a reprint from the magazine, or what. I would say it is, because the story is a Tarzan-type thing, of no particular merit. Also, the publishers could almost be called Pulp Reprint Specialists, at least, before the war. They produced almost entirely rental library fiction, and much of it was, I know, reprinted from the American pulps. Jack Mann, alter ego of E. Charles Vivian, produced for Argosy and other mags a series of fantastic novels which are very well thought of amongst collectors, and which were published in book form by Wright and Brown. It is virtually impossible to obtain copies of these in good condition, and the same applies to W&B's other books. I've two copies of Ka-Zar, and when I tell you the best copy, the one gracing my shelves, has the dust-wraper pasted onto the inside front cover, various assorted scribblings and stamp marks and the binding in a sad state of disrepair, you'll know what I mean.

If anyone can tell me if I'm right, I'd be more than obliged. Mike Moorcock, maybe, or Don Ford?

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The end of the Bs is as good a place as any to stop. I'm not sure, looking at all the junk dumped onto stencil these last few pages, that I shouldn't have stopped at the beginning of the As. All I can hope is that somebody who reads this will be interested.

Talking of wills and things, I've been reading a few of the old GRUES recently, having borrowed them from the SFCL's library, and one of them bore a cartoon by Ray Nelson, depicting a line of creatures, each with a vulture sitting behind him, and entitled 'Waiting List'. It's probably puzzled many people why an AAA should be regarded as the place old fans go to die. In certain cases, it's true, but on the whole, from what I've seen of the publications sent through OMPA, and one or two of those through FAPA and SAPS, I also find it hard to believe. Publications like the Jules Verne memorial, Chuck Harris's London Con report, Veritas, Rot...to take a few at random.

...which leads onto the previous mailing - the 22nd. Like with the cold, cold books, I'm not sure what will transpire. All I hope is that everything worth bringing up will be brought up, and that everything will be worth it. If not, it'll still be brought up...

Hm. I'm still composing directly onto stencil, which I hope will be the recipient of any accusations...

ARCHIVE 14. I seem to have come in at the end of an era, and now that ARCHIVE appears to have sorted itself out, I've one less worry about how I'll find OMPA. I'm too simple for all these supplements, however supple you meant them to make your OMPA publishing.

Ah, yes, those were the days, only I can't go back so far with my memories, not unless I'm the reincarnation of the floral symbol of a mimeograph operation, or some



such. My earliest recollections from the radio - apart from ITMA - was of a serial they ran in two parts around 1950. It was adapted from The Hopkins Manuscript - recently reprinted in pocket-book form, though not under that title - and described the collision of the moon with the Earth. I always remember when episode 1 ended, I ran out into the garden - I lived in the country then - and studied the moon carefully. Sure enough, it was a lot bigger than it should be. I went to bed, but I did not sleep. It was only later that I learnt at school - quite by accident - that the moon always looks bigger when it's low on the horizon. Quite by accident, I say, as from that day I'd given up sleeping at night, finding it calmer on the nerves to sleep during school hours.

Wild Mink - which brings to mind one of the reasons why the Americans seem to be slowly losing their grip on their car industry. The mink used to be a purely American monopoly, but now the critturs seem to be bobbing up everywhere. There are quite a number of mink farms in Britain, and recently, some were started in the North-West Frontier region of India - or is it where no-one stands up - Pakistan? I believe the Hillman Minx is selling very well...

Thanks, Archie, for a most enjoyable magazine.

BLUNT 14 (Sanderson.) The BSFA seems to have been one of the perennial topics of conversation whenever two or more fans are in a slightly disgruntled mood. To be sure, ever since the BrumCon, there have been troubles, one after the other. First, a difficulty in getting a committee, then the unavoidable fading from the scene of Doc Weir and, to a lesser extent, Roberta Gray, with the one tangible result that Vector has suffered. Simultaneously, there has been the trouble in the London Circle, which, in so far as the LO and the BSFA were both involved in the forthcoming Easter Con, has not improved things. Finally, there is the not unjustified dissention with regard to the Con hotel and the prices adherent thereto...

It's not the time now to consider whether the BSFA is a success or a failure. Two or three months time will bring us the AGM, where with one fell blow we should be able to wipe out this uncomfortable year, and start afresh, with beanies oiled and zap-guns fully loaded. So long as they're only zap-guns.

DUFFE-5. (Ashworth.) Mescaline as a topic I imagine has about been burned out, but, as things seem to have been doing lately, I had a thought. It came when you said "Next time you want to be wide awake for anything special, get your doctor to give you a few tablets of Methedrine..." as you say, Mescaline is pretty hard to get hold of, and, besides, isn't used an awful lot for medical research purposes. Lysergic acid Diethylamide (LSD) is the substance on which concentration appears to be centred. In the development of drugs one can find several clear-cut stages: Bod discovers the drug has a certain effect, figures it may prove useful in the treatment of something. The lab does some work on it, on animals. When they decide it's reasonably promising, doesn't seem to do much harm to the animals, as far as they can determine, they send it off for clinical trial, usually at the hospitals. Incidentally, I wouldn't advise anyone with uncertain convictions to go in for medical research - the first person to take the new drug after the monkeys are through with it is the researcher. It's one of those unwritten laws - and very sensible, too. LSD has about reached the clinical trial stage; only one firm as far as I've been able to discover makes it, and at the hospital I'm working at at the moment (St. Bartholomews) it is only supplied on the prescription of one or two specialists. Mescaline I've yet to find reference to, which more or less means it is not being developed. Now then, the time will come when the trials are over, the manufacturers are satisfied that it's safe to be let loose on

the public, they buy a few minutes on the television, and advertise their product, if it's something they consider the public will go for. Specific cures for specific diseases usually remain in the minds of the doctors and pharmacists who have to make the prescriptions up. But something that's likely to buck you up, or make you slim and willowy (for an example of the latter, take Preludin), they will promote. LSD to me sounds eminently promotable. Now, harking back to Methedrine, we find it's only possible to obtain it on a doctor's prescription, as it's an amphetamine derivative covered by Schedule 4, which restricts the sale of certain drugs to a doctor's prescription. But several years ago, when it first came out, you could get it anywhere, without recourse to a doctor. A stink blew up, committees met, and they pushed the amphetamines - rightly so - onto the poisons lists. Currently, a similar stink is rising round Preludin, and I expect to see it restricted to prescription soon, if it has not already been so. To generalise, when a new type of drug is developed, it goes through a transitory period of relatively unrestricted sale. If this happens to LSD (I concentrate on LSD as it is the one being developed, and is substantially similar to Mescaline in action), for a few years everybody will be able to get it, and if there are any serious side-effects which didn't come out during the trials, people are going to suffer before the drug is restricted. It's a crazy state of affairs, but it exists today. Amphetamine was proved addictive in some cases by such a procession of events.

It worries me a little - the day LSD comes on the market. I only hope the manufacturers have the sense, or discover sufficient side-effects, to keep it out of the public grasp, and, better, its mind, and concentrate on making money out of bigger and better aspirins.

ERG 3. (Jeeves.) What a cover! It's one of the most effective covers I've seen for ages, and those comments on the effect of gravity on trousers and braces - delightful. Do the same figures apply if one wears a belt, or would a new set of equations have to be developed?

GRIFFIN 3 (Spencer). Your experience with an unfortunate concerned with the doings at a doughnut convention was absolutely hilarious - but it's only half the story. In one of my drunken stupors a short time ago, I remember dreaming about E.E. Smith, and his Skylark stories. (Or was it the Lensman series? It's been years since I read those classics.) It's pretty well-known that Doc is - or was, I believe he's retired - a doughnut technician of no mean abilities, and it had always been a surprise to me that he never used his knowledge of the field in his stories. Well, in my dream it came to me that he had - and the idea he used must have been <sup>found</sup> at such a roof-con as you describe. It came to me that his mighty space-ships had at times to travel through or at least into the fourth dimension. The precise method used, you may recall, was the 'Fourth-Dimensional Twist'. So he used a complicated machine instead of a mere thumb twist through a dough-nut, but the idea was basically the same... And who was it said that there were no erotic allusions in Doc's works? He was subtle.

A truly fascinating compendium of odds and ends...

ParaFANalia 4. (Burn). I wish I could think of something to say, beyond the fact that I liked it, particularly the John Berry piece. Wonder why fan dens are supposed to be always untidy? Even though all those I've seen are, shall we say, arranged in an extremely subtle manner, there's no reason why it should be the rule. After all, my place is very tidy. Whilst I cut this stencil, I can see my stapler ready on my bookshelves - ready for action. Sorry, just forgot, that's Ella Parker's stapler...

Getting to the bottom of the stencil. Hold your breath while I whip out another from the box. Won't take mere'n a...

...fortnight to find one.

Wish you'd printed the Magic Stylus complete, though...

S.FAN'S CHILD. (Rattigan). What can one say that hasn't already been said quite adequately in Archie Mercer's post-mailing? Leaving aside the question of the desirability in a presumably free organisation of any restriction of freedom of speech, and allowing my infinitely simple and uninvolved mind to digest the thought that we elect an Official Editor to pronounce judgement on any material <sup>which is</sup> in doubtful taste, libellous, etc., can I ask you whether it's your honest view that the 'present unhappy state of affairs within fandom' will be improved by your proposed clause?

I'm afraid it's not mine. Suppose one member of OMPA has 'it in for' another member. Suppose this second fan, either within OMPA or outside it, writes something about, say, a high public servant, and this is capable of being taken as being 'libellous'. The first fan would have the right, if he felt inclined - and he would feel inclined - under the constitution to have the second fan thrown out of OMPA. At least, this is how I read the proposed insertion. But then, I'm not a semanticist, and am missing the true meaning of the clause. In my opinion, with fandom, and, especially, fandom 'close to home', in the state it's in, such a clause would cause endless trouble, and would smother OMPA. I've only just joined, and want to enjoy myself.

WILD FUMBLES. (Young et al). Much enjoyed the con reports - or should it be 'cons report'? The AAS Convention sounds very interesting - but is the Gay Time so rampant as at s-f cons and doughnut conventions?

FANMARK GREETING CARDS. Were a sheer delight.

.....which about does for the mailing comments, in more sense than one. The magazines I could think of nothing to say about - the lucky ones - I also enjoyed on the whole, as I have those countless mailings I bought off Sandy the past few months. Some wonderful reading there, and I consider myself lucky to have had the opportunity to read them. Some of the items which have stuck in my memory are the Jules Verne Memorial volume, the Berry Veritas and The Thomson Saga, the Chuck Harris Lonconfidential, Thru N. Ireland with Knife Fork and Spoon...and many more.

Myself, I'm very worried about how all this nonsense on my part will go over. I just hope I haven't made any mistakes, and that my stencil-composing has left the zine in a reasonably grammatical state...

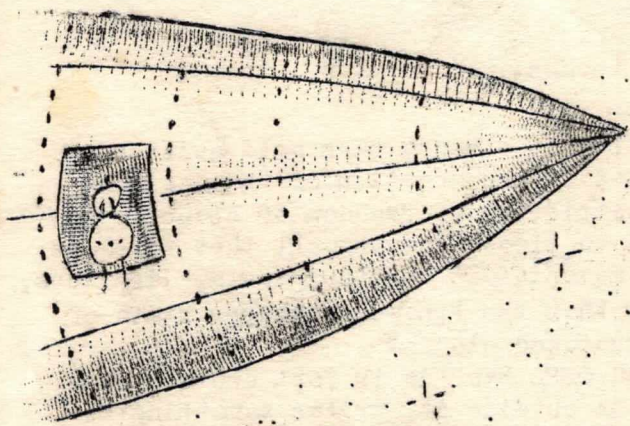
By the time this sees the light of day and the censure of OMPA, it's probably I shall be crawling through a ditch, or pounding a well-worn parade ground just a little closer to Australia. The next few words will probably sound reminiscent of the words of every other fan to be called up, but I've every intention to keep producing material whilst in the forces. The trade I'm in, and which I hope to carry on with in the forces, ensures a pretty cushy life after the initial basic training, so I've fairly high hopes of being able to maintain my activity in OMPA, and maybe even bring out SMOKE once in a while.

At this point, I've run off four pages of EYE-TRACKS. Perhaps I should have left more space at the bottom of this page to describe the trials and tribulations involved in pages 5 - 19, but it's occurred to me that if anything goes wrong, the mag. will display the details in all their glory, and if I manage to overcome them, again it will be self-explanatory. Page twenty might have some doodles. Might not.

AT THE MERCY OF THE ROYAL AND ANCIENT.

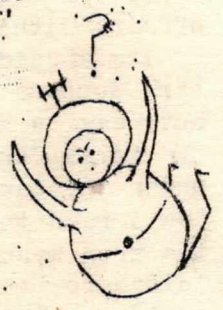
All the best & TTFN,

George

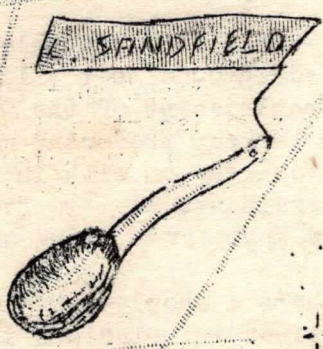


NORTHLIGHT  
I AM ARTICLE BY  
JOE FAN  
DEAR ALAN,  
MANY THANKS  
FOR YOUR  
MAGAZINE.  
YOURS,  
JOE.

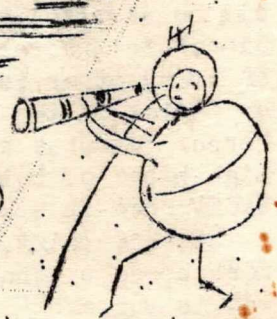
"I RESERVE THE RIGHT  
TO MAKE ANY LETTER  
INTO AN ARTICLE"



THEY'RE PLAYING  
OUR TUNE!



ONE LUNK  
OR TWO?



BUT I SAWED  
IT HOURS  
AGO!

