

HOBGOBLIN

No. 2 - December 19, 1959

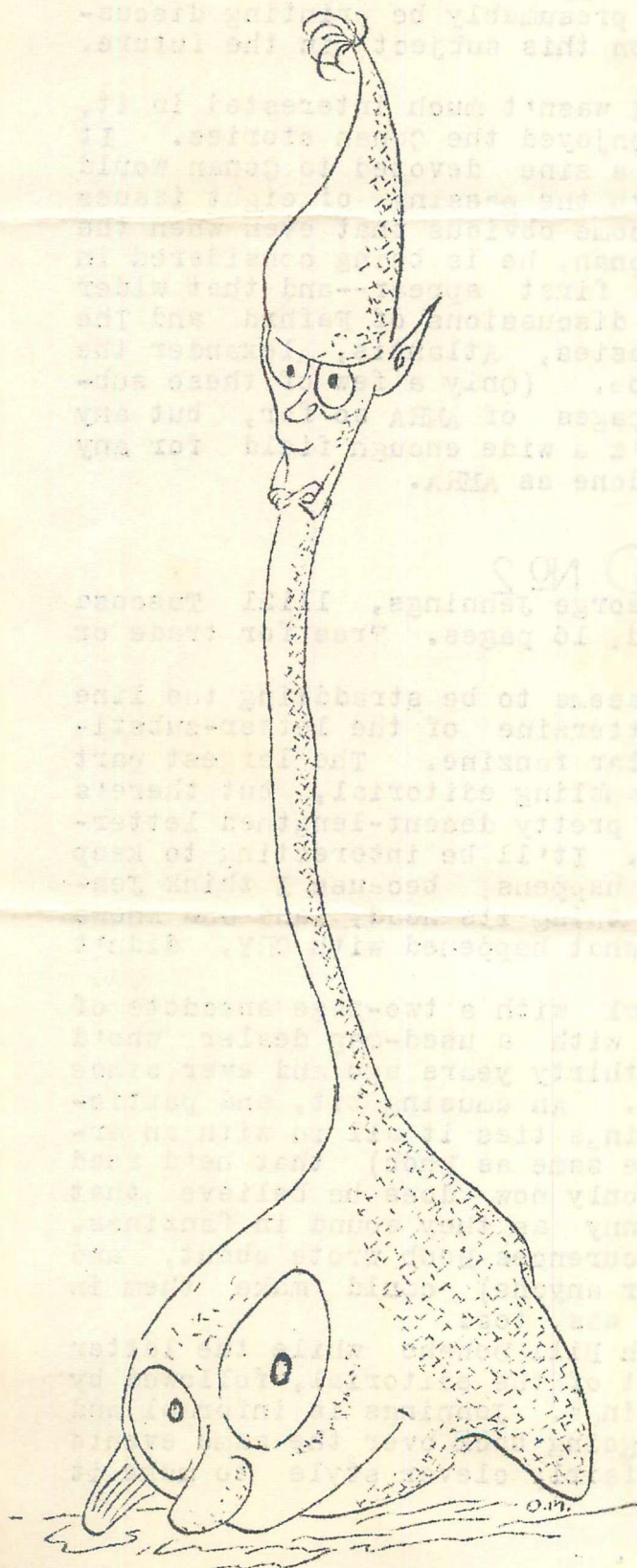
Published as a supplement to FANAC by Terry Carr, 70, Liberty St., #5, San Francisco 10, California. This is a letter-of-comment substitute, and the publication schedule is presumably biweekly. Heading by Denness Morton. Comment, fmz for comment, and heading artwork would be appreciated.

AMRA NO 3

Published by George Scithers, Box 682, Stanford, Calif., with an editorial staff that is "incomparably numerous". Dan Adkins (art ed) and Liz Wilson (text ed) get their names mentioned. Multilithed, 20 odd-sized pages ($7\frac{1}{2}$ " x $10\frac{1}{4}$ "?). 20¢ each, five for \$1.00.

This mag, dealing originally with the Conan mythos of Robert E. Howard and by extension with all examples of heroic fantasy, gets more fascinating with every issue, it seems. Its artwork, whether referred to in English or Typoese, has always drawn nice comments, and the art this issue is as notable as usual, particularly the work of Ray Capella and George Barr, who both seem to be catching on to the multilithography process and its techniques. Jim Cawthorn seems terribly out-of-proportion this issue, and the work of Juanita Coulson and Robert E. Gilbert suffers because Scithers had to trace it onto mats himself--as Ronel remarked to me months ago, when George traces a drawing it comes out looking too much like one of his own drawings. He does a better job with Juanita Coulson's work than with Gilbert's--frankly, Gilbert's cover is pretty disappointing.

The issue leads off with two poems by Fritz Leiber concerning The Gray Mouser--sense-of-wonder type stuff with a touch of humor that makes it even more appealing. L. Sprague de Camp follows with "Conan and Togetherness," a part of a running discussion on



Conan's attitude toward women, women's attitudes toward Conan, and relationships to Howard's own attitudes on men-women relationships--interesting stuff. W. H. Griffey irregularizes on the Conan mythos with a story, "Sons of Conan," bringing together all the sons fathered over the course of the Cimmerian's career and ending the story with Conan puzzling over what he should award them as their birthright, a knotty problem: "Three of you have kingdoms, two of you rule the seas, one is chief of a powerful tribe, two are high in the courts of foreign powers--what would you of me? What could be the birthright of such lads as you? Name it to me." And the question, apparently, is to be left up to the readers of AMRA, which will presumably be printing discussions and maybe a story or two on this subject in the future. This sort of thing can be fun.

When AMRA first started, I wasn't much interested in it, despite the fact that I'd always enjoyed the Conan stories. It was just that it seemed to me that a zine devoted to Conan would be too limited in scope. But with the passing of eight issues the quality has risen and it's become obvious that even when the zine is primarily concerned with Conan, he is being considered in a much wider scope than it might first appear--and that wider scope can encompass and involve discussions of Fafhrd and The Gray Mouser, Leigh Brackett's fantasies, Atlantis, Alexander the Great, and John W. Campbell Jr. too. (Only a few of these subjects have actually come into the pages of AMRA so far, but any of them could.) And I think that's a wide enough field for any fanzine--particularly any as well-done as AMRA.

Rating: 7.

NOMAD No 2

Published every three weeks by George Jennings, 11121 Tascosa Drive, Dallas, Texas. Mimeographed, 16 pages. Free for trade or comment, I think.

In its second issue NOMAD seems to be straddling the line between being a short-snorter chatterzine of the letter-substitute type and a full-fledged, regular fanzine. The largest part of the issue is still Jennings' rambling editorial, but there's also a column and an article and a pretty decent-lengthed letter-column with other people's bylines. It'll be interesting to keep an eye on this zine and see what happens, because I think Jennings is more or less giving the thing its head, and Ghu knows where it'll go. I mean, you saw what happened with CRY, didn't you?

Jennings opens the editorial with a two-page anecdote of a run-in he and Bob Stewart had with a used-mag dealer who'd read a copy of Amazing once about thirty years ago and ever since had Disapproved of science fiction. An amusing bit, and particularly amusing to me because Jennings ties it all in with an article by Bob Stewart (no, not the same as Bob) that he'd read several years ago and says that only now does he believe that things happen in real life as funny as they sound in fanzines. Pooh, George, I was in on the occurrences Bob wrote about, and they were much funnier than he (or anyone) could make them in print. And I'll bet your incident was, too.

A writeup of a visit with Bill Donaho while the latter was in Texas fills most of the rest of the editorial, followed by Donaho's own article on the happenings. Jennings is informal and readable, and Donaho, faced with going back over the same events (by request) is forced to adopt a fairly clever style to make it

all seem worthwhile. He manages it, but I still think Dill Donaho should never write about anything that isn't fantastically unbelievable in itself--surely enough fantastic things happen to him!

The lettercolumn is getting along fine already, thank you, with Rick Sneary's letter the best; I especially liked his calling the Faircon in '64 idea "compleetly gastly". Sneary is a lettercol editor's delight at any time--but then, when you can edit a lettercol as well as Jennings, and throw in your own comments as unobtrusively and interestingly as Jennings, you're just about bound to come up with a good lettercol in any case.

NOMAD is duplicated in green ink on green paper, which is not at all eyestraining and even quite attractive. The repro is excellent, the layout fine, the artwork and cartooning swell. (There's a particularly good caricature of Dill Donaho, done by Bhub Stewart.) In fact, within its limits, NOMAD doesn't have a bad thing about it.

Rating: 7.

DHOGS No 35 - 39

Published incredibly frequently (like two or three a week) by Ted Pauls, 1448 Meridene Drive, Baltimore 12, Maryland. Mimeographed, 2 pages per issue. Free to a select mailing list of 30 for comments--and it's kind of hard to get on that list, I gather.

This is a pure-and-simple letter-substitute, in the grand young tradition, and has caused me more puzzlement than any other fanzine I've ever received, maybe. Thing is, even though I doubt very much that I'll ever want to reread any of these issues, I still file every one of them carefully in my permanent fanzine collection while most of the fanzines I get go into a far less permanent pile. I don't know why I consider the zine worth keeping--sure, it's almost always interesting, but there's no meat to it and seldom anything of importance discussed in its pages. I mean, not only nothing of cosmic importance, but nothing even of fannish importance, usually. But I have a sneaking suspicion that I'm going to want to refer back to the zine at some time in the future--if for no other reason, then to figure out why I ever kept it in the first place.

No. 35 has a good letter from Sneary (see what I mean?) in one part of which he mentions a couple of the attachments that Forry Ackerman used to stick onto his FAPazine: "Ackerman once promised...that the next issue would contain the real dirt on Hollywood; and it did, a small package of dirt from Hollywood. He also promised a hand-engraved cover, and the next issue sported a 1¢ postage stamp." Another of the gags Forry used on that FAPazine (GLOM) was some "hot stuff from Hollywood!"--a bit of red pepper. The hand-engraved cover wasn't on GLOM, tho, Rick: it was on VOM #10. He was always doing stuff like that in VOM too, like for instance in #8 he previewed the next cover thusly: "The most sensational cover ever presented on any stf mag! We woud be laft at were we to tell U we woud present a spirit fotograf of WEINBAUM & LOVECRAFT--so see & decide for yourself!" The next cover had a small doodle of two ghosts, and the editorial said, "We, too, once had strong opinions about spiritualism--til we were fotografing some tadpoles one day & instead our film de-veloppt with these remarkable ectotypes--which have positively been identifiyd as WEINBAUM & LOVECRAFT!" Testimonials from such as Kuttner, Palmer, and Ralph Milne Farley spoofingly backed up

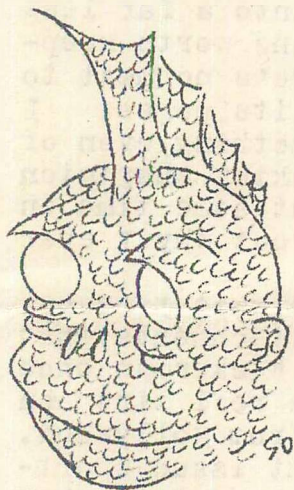
the contention. VOM was lots of fun. And incidentally, when Forry brought us up a mint copy of VOM #10 we were dismayed to find no $\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ stamp attached to the cover (it was $\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$, not 1¢), so we stuck one on ourselves. But the $\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ stamps being used today are different from those of 1940, Forry said, so now we have to wait till he can dig up a 1940 $\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ stamp for us till we'll really have a complete copy of that issue. (What?--leave the new $\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ stamp on? Good heavens, that would be like taping an Emsh cover onto an old Unknown!)

But to get back to DHOG...a few other clues to why I like the zine are the letters in various issues from Bob Pavlat, Phyllis Economou, and Bob Tucker, and the riders that come along at times, like George Jennings' EGO #2 (I think I'd like to see Jim Hitt's zine if he ever gets nerve to mail it out, George) and Pauls' own little extra things, like his SURPRISE SHEETS, in #1 of which he reprinted a terribly serious poem of Harry Warner's from a 1939 fanzine, prompting Harry to write in soon to say, "I took the surprise fairly well, all considered, and my doctor even says that I'll someday stop hating myself for having been such an irresponsible person in my wild youth. Back in those days I thought the Lovecraftian form of the sonnet was real stuff." And then there's SNARQUE #1, again from Pauls, in which he fumes about rumors following his publication of a rumor, and etc.

DHOG always seems like tempest-in-a-teapot stuff--but after all, isn't that part of the innate charm of fandom?

Rating: I give up.

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And another issue of Hobby comes to an end, just about. I do have a few more lines here, so I'd like to make a few comments in passing. Like, I meant to review and comment on CAMBER #11, which just came along from Alan Dodd, but maybe it's just as well I don't have room. I used to be quite fond of CAMBER when it was a mainstream English fanzine of the PLOY/TRIODE type, but of late Dodd has gone off on a kick of reviewing movies and quoting from newspapers and like that, with almost nothing else but a lettercol and nice artwork by such as Jim Cawthorn and Bill Harry. It's still fairly interesting--and you have to admit that Didd is at his best here--but it just doesn't have a bit of the spark it used to have. Oh well.

And I wanted to mention the fine big issue of Shaggy and its Christmas supplement. The latter has nice artwork and cartooning galore plus a very good li'l fannish story by Bjo, and Shaggy itself this issue has corrected everything I complained about recently (except that there's another terrible cover, this time by Dollens). With the bad points mostly gone and the natural excellences of Shaggy still in evidence--well, it's pretty fine, like.

John Berry's "The Goon Goes West" in CRY is going along wonderfully. There are some fine humorous portions, but I think the main excellence of the thing is the opportunity it gives us in print to know The Man Berry. He's never really written anything like this before.

And that ends the issue. Drawing above is by Dave Rike.

-- Terry Carr