

HYPHEN

NO. 31

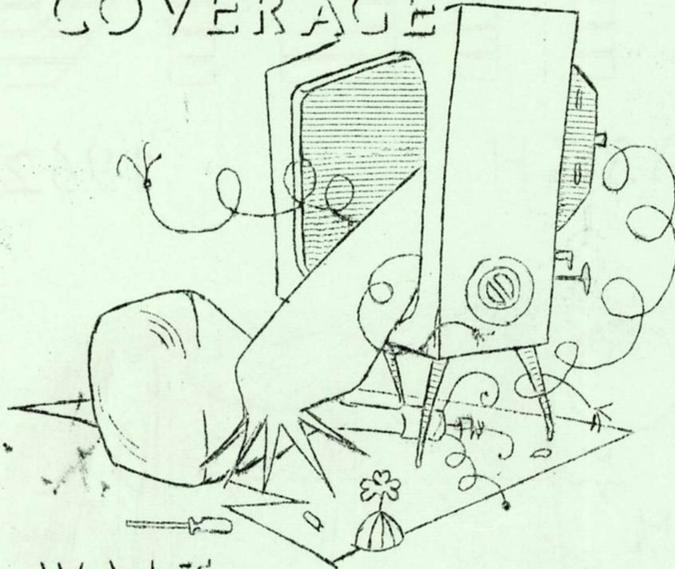
MARCH

1962



"what would 'Fugghead of the Year' be?"

INSIDE COVERAGE



WALT
WILLIS

ON THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT KIPPURE, to the south of Dublin, stands the new Telefish Eir-eann television transmitter, hurling a complex Celtic waveform over the misty bogs. To the north, however, it dashes itself in impotent fury against the heather-covered and efficiently grounded Mourne Mountains. My faint vestige has then to fight its way round the Slieve Croob massif and over the rolling Castlereagh Hills, so that by the time it reaches the Upper Newtownards Road in Belfast no sane person would expect it to excite even the most susceptible cathode ray tube. Who then is this harassed figure shouting to the sky about television serials and arguing with an angry negress?

Yeah, it was me. I know I should have been cutting stencils and writing letters, but I had found that this new tv station was running two programmes I had been faunching to see for years... Twilight Zone and World Championship Golf. The combination was irresistible, so I'd ordered this great 17-element aerial, overhauled my three television sets (I used to have four, but I'm trying to give them up), and was now supervising the erection of the aerial by two builder's labourers. The negress? well, that was a bit unfortunate. You see I told the workmen to feed the download down the disused attic chimney, and their first attempt had precipitated an avalanche of soot into the living room, where Madeline had happened to be polishing the mantelpiece.

I explained contritely that they must have tried the wrong chimney, the workmen sidled away saying something about getting rods to clear a birds' nest. Madeline gave me a black look, for which she was peculiarly well fitted at the moment, and went back in to clean up. Half an hour later she had finished and the workmen were back on the roof. A cry of triumph, and I knew the birds' nest was gone. But there was another cry, nearer and more anguished. A great black wall of darkness was billowing out from the living room, closely followed by Madeline. It's a good thing she has a forgiving nature, or there'd be only one of us at the Chicon.

(Ctd. inside back cover)

Walt Willis & Ian McAlay, 170 Upper Newtownards Rd., Belfast 4, N. Ireland. Associate Bob Shaw, 26 Beechgrove Gdns., Belfast 6. Art Arthur Thomson, 17 Broadham House, Brockham Drive, London SW2. Co-founder Chuck Harris. Complicity shared by James & Peggy White, George Charters, Sadie Shaw & Madeline Willis. Material help by John Berry

1/- or 15¢ per copy, 7 for \$1.00. US money welcome.

the
fester
on
the
fringe

PART IV

JAMES
WHITE

THIS LAST WHILE BACK, to use a colourless local idiom, increasing amounts of Romance and gooey sentiment have been emanating from certain members of Irish Fandom which has caused all the femme fans in the area to go all dreamy-eyed and drooly. I refer to the odd coincidence that at the end of July the Shaws are expecting a little stranger, that at the end of July Peggy and I are expecting a little stranger, and, also at the end of July, Dr. Ian R. McAulay is getting married. All this when taken in conjunction with the recent marriage of that prominent ex-fan and one-time sex-fiend Charles Randolph Harris -- well maybe not so one-time; in a recent letter he stated that Sue and he were both working in order to furnish their house, and that they intended to carry on -- is having an effect on our sensitive fannish souls. The fact that Ian intends taking over Trinity College, Dublin and a sub-assembly line of Guinness's Brewery for the reception -- Ian is an old boy of both establishments -- is making certain of the male members drool, too. And on Saturday nights, while Ian is slurping up Peggy's lemon meringue pie, his eyes get a soft distant look -- like two badly fried eggs -- and he gives us little snippets of information about his Olivia. His Olivia is a smasher. We know this, having met her once. His Olivia knits him jerseys, knits his car seat covers, can cook, even likes beer

All this romance in the air is beginning to affect even my hardened professional soul, and it seems fitting that at this point I should return to my memoirs and the romantic sloppy episodes of my life. After all, I can get those flying boots both off and on now without having to get through 2,000 words worth of conflict.

We left our hero having just become engaged to the heroine after surviving food poisoning, diabetes and the publication of his photo in "New Worlds." To anyone who has been engaged I need not describe the joy of the months which followed, and to those who have not been engaged I'm afraid

I'm not allowed to. It was a very warm summer and Peggy taught me to play tennis. But trained as I was in the vicious school of ghoodminton, it was pure reflex with me that when I hit the ball at all I whacked it completely out of the court. Me being blessed, in this instance, with astigmatism, Peggy had to go looking for the lost balls. After a couple of weeks of this she developed green thumbs, fingers and knee-caps together with an aversion to playing tennis with me. We didn't quarrel about it, of course, it was simply the conflict of two mutually alien and incomprehensible ideologies, best illustrated perhaps by my habit of butting the ball with my head when she served and claiming the point as a "Face."

It was during this glorious summer that I attended the first and only convention, the Supermancon, which I did not enjoy. I'm not quite sure why this was so. All the necessary ingredients for a successful con were there; the people I liked, the smoke-filled rooms, the uncooperative night manager to give that heady sense of urgency and danger to the parties. there was even the ship canal for throwing beer bottles into. But somehow that con never got off the ground for me. There seemed to be an air of tension overhanging everything. Operation Armageddon, the widespread, cruelly funny and not very secret plot of the London Circle to wreck the Manchester Convention was part of the reason. Everybody thought that the London fans were too sportsmanlike ever to actually put Armageddon into operation, but nobody was sure that they wouldn't, or that a rowdy element might not go ahead with it in the face of general disapproval. Looking back on it I think the trouble was that I went through that convention feeling like a policeman on a beat where rioting was likely to break out at any minute.

During these months I was doing very well professionally, selling everything I wrote and churning out stories at the fantastic rate of one every three or four months. "Outrider" was the high-spot, it being the first story of mine which Good Ole Ted flogged to Sweden for me -- egoboo I couldn't even read . . ! -- and at practically the same time used the topicality of the first sputnik going up to sell it as a seven-part serial to the Glasgow Daily Record. The low spot was "Dynasty of One", a short-short which I was convinced was a perfect little gem. Horrible Ole Ted said it was vague and incomprehensible and not the slightest bit memorable -- at least in the way I meant -- and the only reason he was accepting it was because Science-Fantasy was desperately short of material and the next issue had a 2,500-word hole that he had to plug somehow. Sometimes Good/Horrible Ole Ted can accept a story in such a way that one would much rather it had bounced, especially stories which he thinks are not quite up to standard. This acceptance of what I had thought to be my greatest work might have wrecked my writing career, or warped my sense of wonder, at least, if he hadn't softened the blow by devoting a couple of paras to gentle, fatherly advice regarding my approaching nuptials in which he used the word "mug" three times and "don't" at the beginning of every sentence.

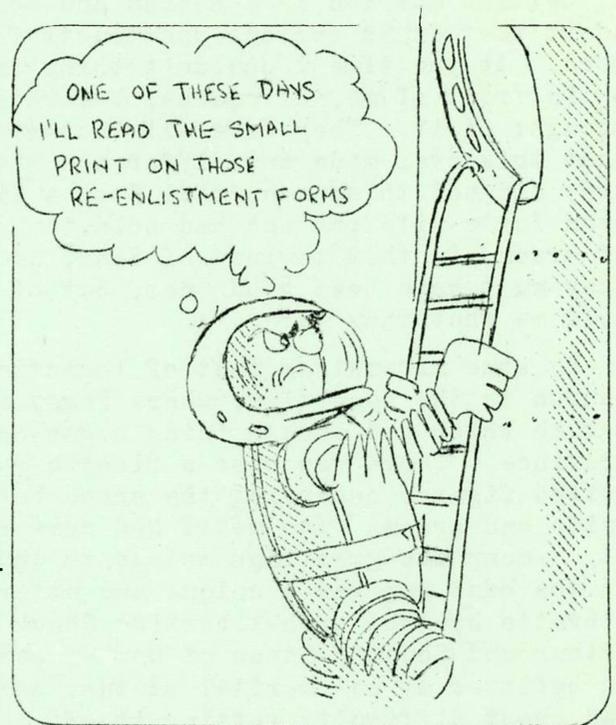
On the night before the wedding itself I felt strangely disturbed. I was a couple of thousand words into a story called "Question of Cruelty" and really should have been working on that, me being shortly to be married and all and having the responsibilities of a breadwinner to shoulder.

But somehow I couldn't concentrate on being a breadwinner without thinking of being married first, and so after a couple of hours of getting up and sitting down again I took the May 1955 ASF to bed and tried to read myself to sleep.

I didn't remember what a single story was about after finishing the magazine, which was very unusual for ASF, in 1955 . . .

The morning of the wedding dawned bright and sunny, although with certain cloud formations present which indicated that it wouldn't stay that way for more than a few hours. I arrived at the church early and drove slowly round the district five times before getting out, so as not to seem impatient. All of Irish Fandom was there with the exception of poor old George, who had taken ill just before I arrived and had had to go home. His heart, we all thought, and his poor, aged, enfeebled body -- maybe it was just as well, the excitement might have been too much for him. Walter was looking very smart in a suit I'd flogged him one day when he'd been silly enough to come into the shop with money on him, and I almost didn't recognise Bob without his green velvet smoking jacket. The girls looked stunning. It's funny how girls seem to look more beautiful than you've ever seen them before at weddings, even when the wedding isn't theirs. Seeing the direction of my gaze, my best man reminded me that this was the last chance I had of whistling at pretty girls in earnest and I'd better make the most of it. But I don't hold with people whistling in church, and anyway, these were my friends best wives and I wouldn't whistle at them in earnest in any case.

Then somehow I was kneeling in the front left-hand pew with the best man, and Irish Fandom was filling the second and warming the back of my neck with its collective breath. But not enough, because I was shaking and at any moment my teeth threatened to chatter out loud. There was a little flurry of activity on the right side of the aisle and out of the corner of my eye I saw a blur of pale blue, pink and black as Peggy, her bridesmaid and her father arrived -- they were blurs because the people who make spectacles do not make provision for their users looking out of the corners of their eyes. I did try to look at Peggy directly, but my best man kicked my ankle to remind me that this was unlucky. Then the pew behind Peggy began to fill with her friends and relatives and her mother began whispering last-minute misdirections, the altar bell rang and the priest, looking stern and benign, was motioning us to come forward.



Getting married is a sacred and solemn thing, and even the wheels of If admit that it is serious constructivism in the best possible sense of the word. At the time I couldn't think of anything other than what was going on in front of me, of course, but later I wondered what the gang had really thought of it. They were all Protestants of varying shades of black -- not that this ever made any difference with us -- and I wondered if perhaps they did not think a nuptial Mass a little on the vulgar ostentatious side, even for a vile pro who had sold to Astounding. I'm sure there were lots of cracks in that pewload of fans, and considering the people who were there they must have been good ones, but at no time since then have any of them told me what they were.

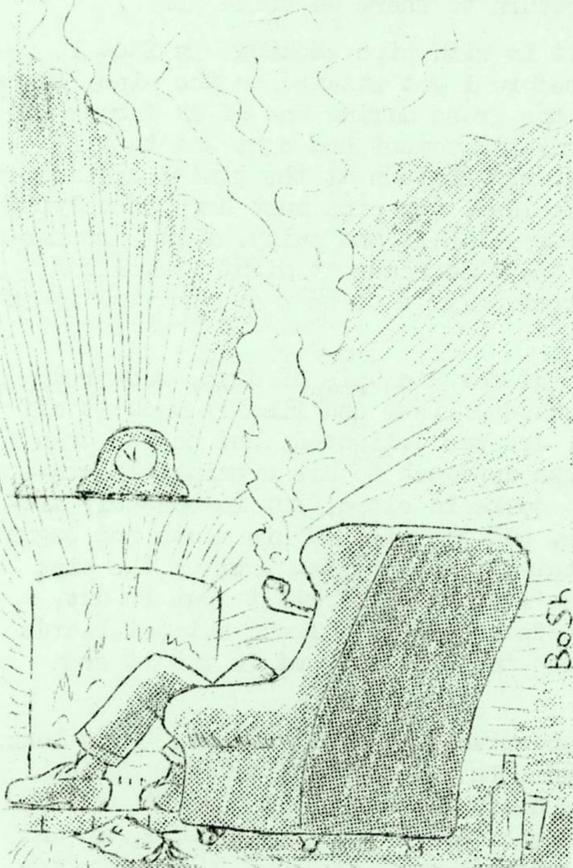
By some miraculous feat of logistics everybody was transferred from the church to the reception, where Peggy and I took the places of honour before a cake which had enough icing sugar on it to lay out every diabetic in the province. There was also a plastic model spaceship containing two space-suited figures occupying the space between the conventional figures of the bride and groom. The model had come from Rick Sneary, and I've still got it. Among the greetings telegrams and a demand for water rates belonging to the best man was a unique and utterly priceless Atom portfolio, with libretto by that arch-libertine Chuch Harris, which had as its theme Arthur and Chuck's ideas of how my wedding and honeymoon should go. This, as befitted my new marital status, was strictly X-certificate stuff and I had great difficulty getting it off the best man, who wanted to read out and show the juicy bits to the assemblage. I've still got that, too, and Peggy and I look over it occasionally in artificial light so that there will be no danger of the drawings fading. Bob had made a speech. He hadn't been given any prior notification about this, which was very unfair I realise now, but he made a very fine speech anyway -- dry, insulting and chock full of egoboo for me. There were other speeches, too, including a short one by me. This was the only part of the reception which I did not enjoy. Then people began to break up and percolate, and Peggy and I went around to say a quick good-bye to everyone, us having a plane to catch.

This took about an hour and a half and I can't remember what anyone said or was doing, except that the piano was being abused constantly, that the hard stuff was flowing in a satisfactory manner and that the cases of beer were being shamelessly ignored. But then just before we went to change and clear the coal and empty cans from our suitcases we noticed John Berry keeping them company, assisted by Peggy's father. When we left for the plane half an hour later they were sitting on an empty case, which between them they had rendered that way, discussing their respective capacities for holding beer. It gave me a little lump in my throat to see the way these two fine people, the fan and the normal denizen of the mundane world, were united in the common cause of making those three cases of beer feel wanted.

As a meteorologist in those days I was pretty good, and sure enough a storm blew up just as the plane for London was taking off. All during the trip we kept blundering in and out of thunderheads and the plane travelled up and down more than it did sideways, and hardly seemed to move forward at all. But we had a very nice, understanding hostess. When the bumps and

(Ctd. at foot of p.10)

THE MERRY MERRY PAEON OF PIPES



SO MANY PEOPLE ask me to teach them how to smoke a pipe properly that I am surprised correspondence schools don't run courses on the subject. (Of course, that's the trouble with these postal colleges---all they ever do is teach you to be the foreman of the machine shop. I've seen it all in those strip cartoon advertisements. No matter what subject you write in to them about, you end up foreman of the machine shop.) When I get a request of this nature I help the bloke to eliminate his most obvious faults in things like rubbing out the tobacco and filling the bowl to the proper consistency; and if he is really a keen pupil we go ⁿ to the more subtle and abstruse points of pipe-smoking theory, such as the advantages of putting the right end into your mouth and of sucking instead of blowing. I do all this, but my heart forewarns me (I listen to the auricle) that it is useless---unless the pupil has had the proper conditioning from childhood he will never be a pipe smoker.

It helps a lot if you come from a pipe smoking family, although in this respect I wasn't particularly fortunate. None of my relatives would thank you for a cigarette, but not because they dislike cigarettes---they are just rude. But in spite of the fact that my father didn't smoke a pipe, he was instrumental in giving me the necessary conditioning. When I was a small boy, during the mid-Thirties, my greatest pleasure on a winter evening was to clear the table and settle down to a couple of hours of drawing pictures on clean white paper. I had a huge bundle of coloured pencils which I kept in large tobacco tins obtained by my father from a shopkeeper pal. Even to this day when I smell the aroma of fresh St. Bruno I am suddenly back in my mother's kitchen with a big fire sputtering and whistling in the grate and the rain lashing harmlessly on the window-panes. Another powerful influence was my father's choice of reading material. The only magazines he took were *The Gamekeeper* and *Wide World* (later on he tried to take *Field and Stream* as well, but was caught on and nearly jailed), both of which carried several pages of pipe advertisements. The pipes were always shown split longitudinally, revealing fascinating details of things like juice traps, filters, smoke cooling surfaces and so on. These ads were the first things I turned to, and I sat there inhaling the sweet heavy perfume of

St. Bruno which wafted ceilingwards from my pencil-box, gloating over the dismembered pipes and promising myself that I would grow up to be a pipe smoker.

Perhaps I shouldn't have attempted that soppy sentimental passage, but I am maudlin myself after Stout, 'Saki', Graves and that great French novelist, Barsac--with perhaps a little dash of Max Brandy. The course of the narrative seems to have suffered a sharp strain and perhaps has even become disjointed so, with the customary 'Meanwhile, back at the wrench', we will return to where we broke off.

An artist must suffer for his art, and so it is with pipe smoking. In fact I went through some harrowing experiences even before I got started on the pipe. There was the occasion when I found a pipe lying in the grass during one of my forays at the bottom of our garden. At first I thought my big moment had come and that I should immediately start smoking, but as I was only sixteen at the time I decided there would be too much parental opposition. Besides, the pipe must have been lying there in the damp for years because the bowl was all soft and pulpy. Then I remembered that another youth called Joe who was in the same class at night school had announced importantly, a couple of evenings previously, that he was going to "go on to the pipe".

I brought my find into the house, dried it out for a couple of days, restored its shine by repeated applications of ex-blood shoe polish, and finally took it off to school and sold it to Joe for half a crown. Joe was delighted; and he was even happier when the teacher---who used a man-to-man approach to his evening classes---gave him a fill. It was against regulations to smoke in class, but immediately afterwards Joe, surrounded by a crowd of admirers, put the pipe in his mouth and began the process of lighting it. As soon as the match got near it the bowl of the pipe burst into greenish flames and, in spite of Joe's frantic efforts to put it out, practically consumed itself in the course of a few seconds. I found out afterwards that, by some pyrotechnical miracle, the tobacco that Joe had put in wasn't even scorched.

I'll say this for Joe---he didn't hit me, and didn't even ask for his money back. (Strangely enough some years later I went to work in a structural drawing office where the selfsame Joe had once worked, but he had left and gone to Canada. A couple of years after that he returned briefly while on his way to Scotland, Spain and South America, building bridges in each place. He offered all his former workmates jobs in his team but, even though he remembered me all right, he didn't offer me a job. I didn't really want to go to South America anyway, but I did think he might have offered. After all, how was I to know the pipe would practically blow up when he lit it?)

And then there was the case of Harry. Harry took up the pipe on my advice because he was getting a bit fat and I had assured him that he would eat for less if he smoked. Harry was grateful for the suggestion because he was no good at diets. Somebody had once told him to cut out salt, but he couldn't believe that ordinary sodium chloride would be fattening---he took the story with a pinch of salt. Harry puffed away happily for a week or so, then one summer evening tragedy struck and I had the harrowing experience of seeing my protegee almost pained by his lightweight Dunhill brier.

Anyone who has smoked an elegant 3/4 ounce Dunhill might scoff at the idea that it could inflict any damage on a slightly overweight adult male, and I would have agreed with them until this fateful evening. One can appreciate that, in the hands of an expert, a Petersen rough-cut could inflict a nasty flesh wound, and in the dark I would hate to encounter a thug armed with a full size Ropp natural cherry-

wood---but a Dunhill!

Harry and I were queuing to get our coats at the end of one of the local dances. He had just ignited a heaped-up bowl and was standing with the pipe clamped in his front teeth when a scuffle developed in the line and a man in front of us was shoved backwards with great force. Harry's Dunhill was driven straight down his throat and he received a double injury; the mouthpiece almost sheared off his tonsils, and the tip of his nose was charred medium-rare through being jammed into the bowl. The St. John's ambulance men who were in attendance all agreed it was the most interesting case they had ever encountered, but this was no consolation for Harry. He gave up pipe-smoking and got as fat as a pig.

The most dangerous incident of all took place only a few weeks ago. Somebody had told me that blocks of firewood could be purchased cheaply in the Crumlin Road Prison and I decided to go up there one Saturday morning and give it a try. I parked my motor outside the massive wooden gate and gave a gentle knock on one of the panels; already I was beginning to regret that I hadn't spent the morning over a couple of pints and pies in Hannigan's bar.

A sort of outsize letter box sprang open and a voice from the inner darkness said, "Phwat d'ye want?"

"I want to buy some blocks."

There was a long pause, during which I could feel eye tracks being laid all over me, then the voice said suspiciously, "Who told ye ye could get blocks in here?"

"Can you not get them?" I cried thankfully, backing away. "I must have been mis-
info...."

"Stand where you are," the voice commanded and there came a sound of locks turning. I glanced up at the machine gun towers on either side and decided against making a break for it. Gradually the great doors swung open and a policeman said, "Right, bring your car in."

I drove in only to encounter another exactly similar gateway about thirty feet behind the first. Then the outer gate closed, trapping me, and the other policeman appeared and demanded proof of my identity. When this formality was cleared up and my name written in a book, one of the officers got into the car beside me, the inner gate opened and I was directed to the office where wood sales were conducted. Here things were a bit different. A genial old boy in civilian clothes ushered me into an ancient, cluttered room which was poisonously overheated by an open gas fire.

"I'm glad to see you," he told me. "You're my first customer for days. I don't know why we don't get more business in here---I expect it's because we're not allowed to advertise. Would you like a cup of tea?"

Overcome by this show of friendliness after my reception in front office, I nodded. He spoke a few words over the phone and about a minute later a brown-suited convict came trotting in carrying a metal tray, in the centre of which was a single mug of tea covered with a white napkin. I took the mug, the convict thanked me profusely and jog-trotted out again. The genial old boy beamed as I drank the tea and suddenly the whole atmosphere of the place seemed different. I relaxed. They liked me in Crumlin.

When I finally got round to the wood yard a cheery red-faced officer took my sales docket. "The boys will be glad to see you," he said. "You're the first customer today."

"They will?" I faltered.

"Yes. The boys wouldn't like a Saturday morning to go by with no customers."

The proverbial icy feeling began to develop in the pit of my stomach. There was something going on here. Something...sinister? The officer crooked his finger and a large doleful youth came trotting over from the working party which was 'hegging' logs in the yard.

"Henry," the officer said, "here's a man wants two bags of blocks. Fill up his car."

Henry's face split into a broad grin and he set to happily carrying handfuls of wood over and chucking them into sacks. As he worked the officer waxed philosophical. "Ah Henry," he boomed. "Ye chopped these logs yourself, sweating in the heat of the summer with your shirt off. Ye didn't think ye'd be back here in the middle of the winter to sell them again. Did ye?"

Henry became positively ecstatic under this barrage, and I grew more and more uneasy. My dacket was only for two bags but there was the equivalent of at least five bags in the car before Henry was satisfied.

"What d'ye think of the weather?" the officer said suddenly. I stared at him for a few seconds trying to think up an answer when there came a cry of anguish from the general direction of Henry. I swung round and discovered that he had emptied the ash tray of my car---and then it all dawned on me. Customers for wood represented a source of cigarette ends to the inmates. **BUT I SMOKE A PIPE!**

In the centre of Henry's outstretched palm was a small heap of pipe ash, two apple cores and a partly chewed caramel which had been dumped on the quiet by my little daughter. It was a black, sticky, disgusting mess and, judging by the look of horror on Henry's face, he had just arrived at approximately the same conclusion. Other convicts gathered round muttering 'rhubarb-rhubarb'. The mob, as the saying goes, was turning ugly.

Somehow the officer got me back out into the street, but he acted as though he didn't think I was worth saving. When it dawned on me that I was free again my nerves were so shot that I just had to have a smoke.

So I bought myself five cigarettes.

THE FESTER ON THE FRINGE (Ctd. from p.6)

shaking grew so bad that the deeper layers of confetti were dislodged from Peggy's hair, she smiled knowingly and insisted that we didn't need the paper bags she was distributing, that we weren't airsick at all and that it was just the excitement of the day that tended to unsettle us. She was very persuasive and we believed her, because we were able to return the bags in mint condition.

A lot of other people on the plane must have been more sceptical, however, or maybe they had much more exciting weddings than we did.

"But apart from that, Ted, what do you think of people who collect toy elephants?"

The Secret life of Melvin Snurdley

by

GEORGE
SPENCER

"Oh,damn!" JWC Jr slammed down the phone and turned slowly to the knot of fen crowding around him. They were anxious; he was pale. "It's no use. Emsh can't do the cover either. Nobody can do it in time to meet that 48 hour deadline." He shook his head in despair. They all shook their heads in despair. They knew what it would mean. It meant that ANALOG would be late now. Very, very late. JWC Jr looked down at the story clutched in his hand. "It was just too soon for them, and too difficult. They couldn't do it, not any of them. Not Emsh, not Freas, not Van Dongen, not . . ." His voice trailed off as the faces turned toward the figure striding down the hall in their direction. The name passed from lip to lip with the speed of lightning. "Snurdley" was the name, and it was said in awed, reverent tones. They parted to make way for him. Snurdley strode up to JWC Jr.

"Trouble, John?" He smiled that famous smile of gentleness and understanding. "Perhaps I can help."

"Snurdley, if only you could!" His eyes were pleading now, like those of a rabbit caught in a trap. "You're our last hope now."

"Come along." Snurdley led the way, walking with that quick, sure step for which he was famous. He led them down the corridor toward the banquet hall. On the way, he lifted a cardboard advertiser for the Starlight Ballroom from the desk and carried it into the banquet room, where the hotel staff was still cleaning up. He placed the cardboard on a chair, then sat in another and proceeded to read the story, scanning the pages with rapid yet masterful comprehension. The group waited tensely. What man could read that fast? And how could he possibly beat the deadline? Snurdley looked up and smiled.

"Well?" said JWC Jr, clenching and unclenching his fists. "Can you help me?"

"There, there," said Snurdley, reassuringly. "Of course I can. Since we have no paints, I'm afraid I shall have to improvise." A buzz of amazement passed through the assemblage. With quick, sure strokes he proceeded to paint over the sign for the Starlight Ballroom, using leftovers from the dinner plates instead of paints. In place of brushes, he used only his fingers. The crowd looked on as the exquisite cover of catsup, gravy, and thousand island dressing took shape. The crowd, much larger now, milled about murmuring "genius" and "magnificent." Soon Snurdley arose and handed over the finished work. JWC Jr clutched it, tears in his eyes. "Never have I seen such a thing! Snurdley, you're incredible! You're the finest artist I've ever..."

"Hey, mac! Watch where you're going!"

Melvin looked behind him just in time to see a picture crashing to the floor. He bent over and fumbled with it, trying to straighten out the bent corner. The fat fellow who had shouted at him came over.

"What the hell do you think you're doing? This is an Emsh, and it's going into the auction. Now look what you've done. You even cracked the plastic covering."

"I ... I'm sorry about that." Snurdley tried to edge away, vaguely aware that people were staring at him. He made his way out into the hall and tried to blend into a group of people standing there. They were listening to a bearded fan talking about his copy of the FANCYCLOPEDIA II.

"It'll be a while before there's a new edition of this, unless someone's willing to spend the next two years on nothing else!" There was a ripple of laughter, and the group drifted on down the hall. . . .

"Good Ghu, Snurdley! How did you ever do it?" Dick Eney stood there in the doorway, watching Melvin bolt together another copy of the FANCYCLOPEDIA III. Snurdley looked up and smiled.

"Oh, I put in a few Saturday evenings on it," he said. Actually, he'd done it over a weekend. But when someone publishes 3,000 copies of a 681-page fanzine, he has to be modest enough to pretend that it took him a while. "The credit really belongs to you, Dick. Your little effort was the inspiration for it all." He tried to make light of the word "little". After all, there was no point in hurting any feelings.

"Good grief!" It was Bill Donaho at the head of a large crowd of fan, all of whose eyes were popping. They were all crowding into Snurdley's room, thumbing through copies of the gargantuan publication. "I never saw a fanzine this big!" Behind him was Ellison, who was awed into a strange silence. Melvin gently coughed, and they all snapped to attention to catch his words.

"Of course," he said, "the rest will be out within a month. This is just the 'A' section ..."

"Say, buddy. You dropped something."

"How's that?" said Melvin, bringing the fan into focus.

"You dropped your fanzine." He picked up the copy of Melvin's six-page fanzine. "You publish this?" Melvin nodded assent and motioned for the fan to keep it. It was the first copy he had given away at the con, even though

he'd been there three days already. That left only 98 more copies to go.

"You ..." He swallowed. "You like it?"

The fan looked embarrassed. "It shows plenty of ...well, promise." He squinted at the cover. "What's the title?"

"SPACE CONTORTIONS. Combined with INTRAGALACTIC DIGEST, that is. I guess that copy didn't come out very well." He laughed, but the laugh came out sounding strange.

"Nice bem there, though."

"Uh ... That's a self-portrait. I guess I don't turn out too well in purple ink, do I? Those faded streaks across the picture cut out the best part, around the nose. I can draw noses pretty well, but of course that's what didn't come out. Uh, look. Would you care to give out some of these for me?"

The fan looked at his watch, then rushed off, mumbling something about having to attend a meeting. Melvin shrugged and sat down on a sofa. He picked up a TAFF ballot form which someone had left in the chair beside him.

"Here's another batch of telegrams, Melv," said Ted White, ripping them open and placing them on the mountain of other telegrams and letters from England. "This is the third one this week from Willis, and here's the fourth from Mercer. They're all pleading for you not to turn down this year's TAFF race. Look at those letters!" He pushed on the pile so that the top section slid through the doorway and into the next room. "You've just got to go. No other candidates ever get any votes but you!"

Snurdley looked up and smiled. "Really, Ted, I must give someone else a chance. I've won the last ten TAFF races from this side. I should give someone else a chance to go over."

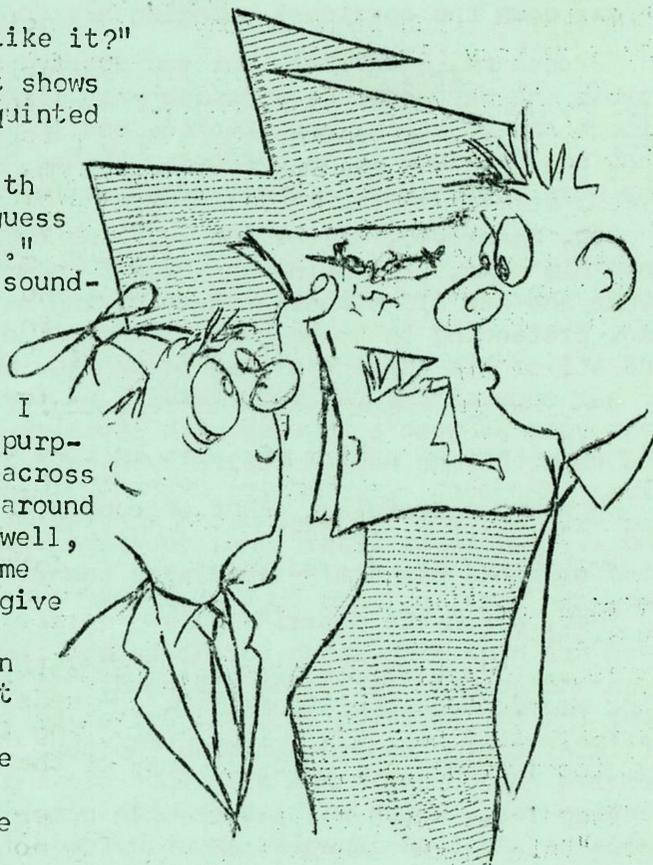
"But compared to you, who IS there? We've entered BNF's, pros, editors, anybody who's anybody, but we were just going through the motions. Even the people who nominated the other candidates wound up voting for you! Now Mercer tells me that there's a movement afoot to abolish the TAFF contest from that side of the Atlantic, and just let you go to Britain every year!"

"Well, of course, if ..." Snurdley tried to look humble. "If they really want me, perhaps"

"Hey, don't mangle that TAFF form!"

"Uh?" Melvin looked up.

"I wondered where I'd left my voting form." The fan was frowning at him. "It's already filled out. Do you mind?"



"No ... Of course not." He handed over the form, then watched the fan disappear down the corridor, swinging his door key in one hand. ...

"Excuse me, beautiful, but you dropped something." He glided, pantherlike, across the deep carpet, swooping with lithe grace to pick up the key. She was blonde and beautiful and stacked, and she hurried back to him. He could tell that she had done it on purpose. It had happened to him a thousand times. Why were they always blonde and beautiful and stacked?

"Oh, thank you, Mister, uh ..." He could see she was pretending not to know his name, pretending she hadn't been devouring him with her eyes ever since she saw him standing there giving a few pointers to Horace Gold on editing, pretending that she hadn't read all of his fanzines and all of his novels and all of his short stories, pretending that his picture on the dust jacket of her copy of THE MARTIAN INVADERS -- the one that won the Pulitzer Prize last year -- wasn't covered with lipstick from her kisses. He smiled at her and knew that he had another plaything. "It's Mr. Snurdley, isn't it?"

He bowed gracefully. "But of course." He held up the key. "Shall we go and ... see if it fits?" Her doe-like eyes blinked assent and her trembling hand clutched his arm as they went toward the elevators.

"Hey, watch the doors!" Melvin quickly stepped back, but not in time to keep his hand from being caught in the closing elevator doors. He forced them open and quickly extracted his hand. He glanced around and saw several fens near the bar smirking at him. Out of the corner of his eye he saw a hotel official coming toward him with the obvious intention of making a few critical remarks about people who walk into closing elevator doors. He rushed into the meeting room, which was packed with people. Melvin suddenly realised that while he had been lounging about outside, the business meeting had already started. All the seats were taken, so he stood along the wall and tried to look inconspicuous.

"Where's Snurdley?" cried DeCamp, looking in despair at the front row of fen. "This is sheer chaos! How can we start without Snurdley?" He banged the gavel as close to the microphone as he dared, but it seemed to have gone dead. People continued to mill about, adding their private conversations to the total roar, above which no single voice could be heard. Then the word came, and everyone knew: "He's here. Snurdley's here!" They all hurried to find seats as Snurdley strode to the front of the room. A sudden silence fell over the gathering. Then wild applause burst forth from all present. Those in back shouted "Bravo!" for their favourite fan. Snurdley stopped on his way up the aisle to do a rapid repair job on the microphone cable -- he could fix anything -- then continued on up to his special seat. It was the one they always put aside for him, facing the audience so that all would have a chance to see and admire. He stood up there and gazed benevolently down upon them as the flashbulbs popped. Then he made that slight motion of the right hand for which they had been waiting. They could begin. They all smiled for they knew, fan and pro alike, that everything would go smoothly now. Snurdley gracefully seated himself upon his regal

"What the devil!?!!" Snurdley looked up at the thin youth in the sports shirt who was looking down at him. He looked around, and saw all the people in the business meeting looking at him. He realised he was sitting in one of the big pots full of sand used by the hotel as cigarette butt jars. He

jumped up, brushing the sand off the seat of his pants and pulling the cigar butts out of his back pocket. He mumbled something and rushed from the room. As he left, he heard some character saying something about the "wrong kind of butt". He rushed to the elevators, determined to pack his bags and go home. He got into the elevator with two other fen who were also going down. He knew his face was red, but he tried to keep from showing he was excited. He saw that one fan had a bag full of bottles.

"Laying in booze for the blast this evening?" asked the pther.

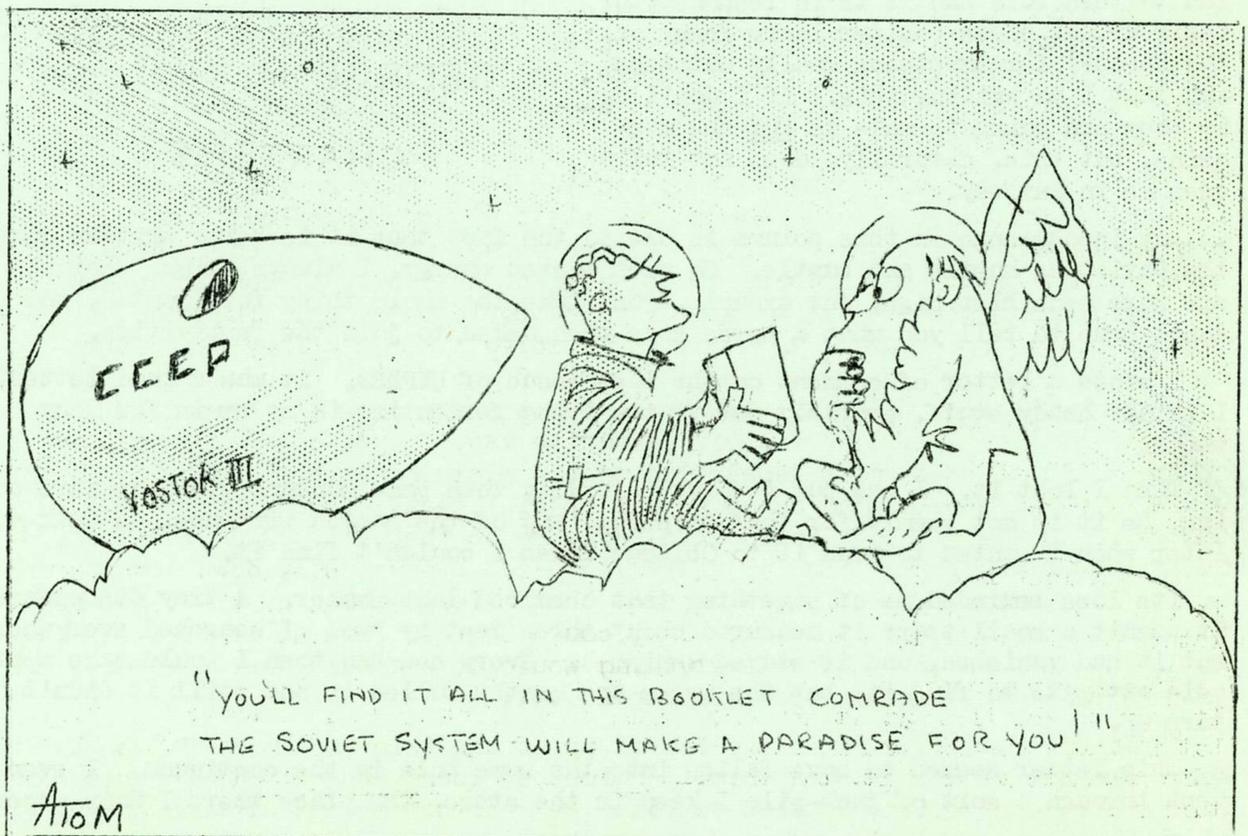
"With what we've got we could submerge the ground floor!" laughed the first. "When I get to making nuclear fizzes ..."

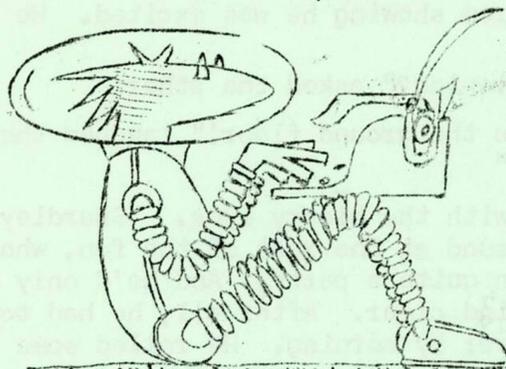
"What a capacity!" said the tall fan with the bleary eyes. "Snurdley, you sure can lap it up!" Snurdley looked around at the rest of the fen, who had long since passed out. Yes, it had been quite a party. And he'd only had a few dozen drinks, in order to keep his mind clear. After all, he had to complete the last three chapters on that novel by morning. He rolled some paper into a nearby typewriter.

"I'm finishing my novel," said Snurdley. The tall fan staggered over to a sofa, sat down, and looked at Snurdley with awe.

"What a man you are, Snurdley! What a man!"

Snurdley smiled his modest smile and began to type out the rest of his latest masterpiece





ALL THE WAY

JUDGING BY EDITORIALS a farmag's Editors spend most of their spare time in a furious and often futile hunt for good material. The Editorial Board of HYPHEN is no exception to this rule and it is in response to their urgent pleas (walter looks funny on his knees!) for something really outstanding that I am writing this. If I don't do it they are going to make me BUY the magazine, but this, naturally, does not influence me in any way.

GEORGE

CHARTERS

Any incoherence in this column is due to the fact that it is being written during the Christmas hustle and bustle. So much wasted energy, I always think. Animals are more sensible: pigs, for example, just take the whole thing for granted, and I don't have to tell you what a horse says when asked to join the festivities.

I wrote a letter of comment on the last issue of HYPHEN. It was a good letter, I think: heady stuff, probably due to its lying fermenting in my brain for many weeks.

Then I lost it. I had put it away carefully when some mundane visitors were coming, as it is not seemly for them to peruse any of the sacred writings. A week later when I wanted to send it to Oblique House I couldn't find it.

Its loss reminded me of something that occurred last Summer. A tray disappeared. It wasn't a small tray: it measured about three feet by two. I searched everywhere, but it had vanished, and it stayed vanished. Every now and then I would make sporadic attempts to find it, but the weeks and months rolled on and still it didn't turn up.

This letter seemed to have fallen into the same hole in the continuum. I even went through a sort of junk-pile I keep in the attic, the place where I dump papers

and books of practically no value. One of the things dumped here is a poem about a Martian Colonist, and I quote it just to show you what I mean:

He sat on the ochre sands,
And sweated and suffered and sizzled:
As he thought of the tales he'd been told on Earth
He felt that he'd been grossly misled.

He thought of the cruel loneliness;
He felt bereft of hope.
His youthful ambitions all were fled
Since the death of his wife Penelope.

The thought of her tender smile
Pierced him through and through.
His life since then, he reflected,
Had been very rough.

He thought of his wrecked spaceship,
Distant many a mile,
And the drinks and the drugs that were in her:
Whiskey, brandy, beer, port and sal volatile.

He'd have to get back to work
When he'd rested a little while,
But his strength was sapped by a desert as hot as hell:
He smiled wryly as he thought of the simile.

As hot as hell was right, all the same:
The heat was really wicked.
The worst desert on the face of the Earth
Was better than the planet he'd picked.

He wished - how he wished!- he was back
On Earth, sound and safe,
Sipping a long cold drink,
Outside a Paris cafe.

This effort was run off quickly and I will be the first to admit that I did not take great pains with it. Indeed, a close examination will reveal many faults. But I also compose poetry of more lasting value. There is one, for example, upon which I have spent a lot of time polishing and re-phrasing. It is the story of an atomic engine discovered in a cemetery in the wilds of Comenara. The first verse is, I consider, a little masterpiece in itself. It runs:

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Tentatively I have called it "Energy in a Country Churchyard."

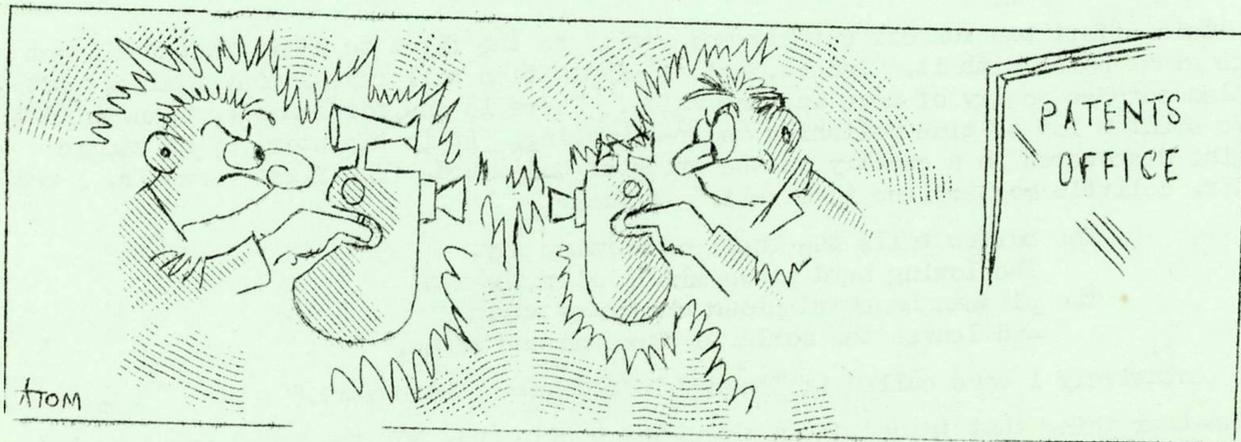
Another thing that turned up in this sludge pile (no, NOT the tray) was a pocket-book by Alan Ash called 'Conditioned For Space.' It is a good example of the kind

of SF which excites one's sense of wonder. It is the story of Brian Foley who wakes up to find that after 100 years encased in ice (following a jet crash), scientists have re-conditioned him, giving him a mechanical heart and reinforcing his body with a silicon lining. This makes him very strong, able to lift 15 cwt with ease. Also, he can breathe space, although as I understand it from Uncle Andy the air out there is pretty thin. Perhaps he can breathe by using the breadth of his shoulders. (That pun may make you shudder, but it stands head and shoulders above other puns I have committed.) The Earth is being bombarded by missiles carrying radioactive dust, and after years of investigation (by scientists, natch) it has been discovered that these missiles come from Planet Blank. This planet is 500,000 miles from Earth, but it has only recently (and I quote) "been seen by an amateur astrologer in Russia." It had not been seen before, presumably, because it is hidden in dense clouds. Well, our Brian takes off from a space platform, 1,000 miles above the Earth, to visit Blank and blow it to smithereens. He has to take off carefully or the lunar gravity would ruin everything. In 33 minutes after take-off the space-ship is doing 19,000 miles per hour, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours later it has reached a distance of 18,000 miles above Earth. These figures are impressive, but wait: three days at this speed and they have done 1,368,000 miles of their 500,000-mile journey and have only 100,000 miles to go. At this point there is an increase of speed and then a decrease: the reason is that "obviously the space-ship was affected by the gravity of the planet Blank." They decide the ship is going too fast so they turn end for end and "use the retard motors." But this does not have the desired effect so they jettison the fuel tanks in order to reduce speed. (I confess I'd never have thought of that). They crash at 1080 mph and four survive. Blank is a red hell with seas of radioactive dust and two factions, goodies and baddies. Our men join the goodies and, helped by $4\frac{1}{2}$ tons of atom bombs, move the planet to a cooler location. Brian weds the Princess of the goodies so all ends happily. Wasn't that nice?

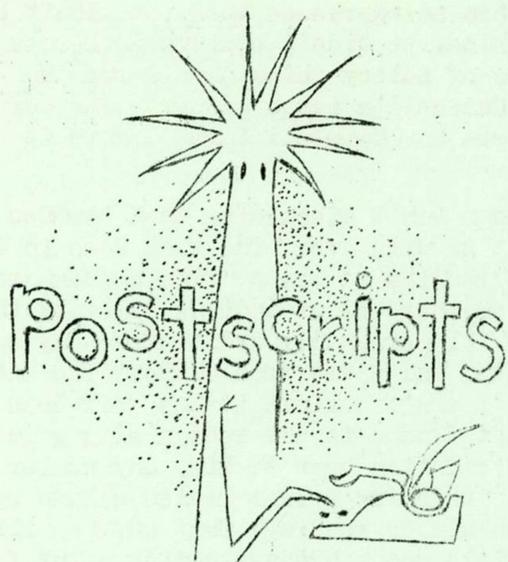
The swear-words used throughout the book are two in number: Goldain and Doggorn, so one can leave it around where the children can see it.

I could tell you of more horrible things in the sludge-pile but I hear Ian screaming for copy - and he is eleven miles away. He is the original of Matheson's "the Incredible Shrieking Man."

P.S. - The tray? Oh, yes, I found it last week. I do not know how I missed it - it was lying in the bath all the time.



ATOM



John Baxter, Box 39, King St. Post Office, Sydney, Australia == Do you remember Kingsley Amis's Lucky Jim? Remember how Jim Dixon, when unable to control his irritation, let out a "choked scream" between clenched teeth? After reading Brian Aldiss On The Sense Of Wonder I screamed myself, quietly, through clenched teeth and felt much better for it. Another page of Aldiss and I would have been making a Mad Peasant Face too.

The first half of Aldiss's piece is nothing but nonsense. Of all the fields to which one could ascribe national characteristics, literature is possibly the most remote. There is no "typically British" or "typically American" writing; and the recent popularity of disenchanted novels is just one of those trends which come and go all the time. To say that America has become "Europeanised" is rubbish--America has always had its critical novelists. Fitzgerald was

probably the best of them, but there is Faulkner and Dos Passos. On the other hand Europe has produced a number of writers in what Aldiss chooses to call the "American style; novelists who have a certain faith in the ability of people to get some fun out of life. Maugham, Cary, Forster, Wells, Mann--how do you classify these?

Incidentally I'd like to know how Kerouac got among these allegedly pessimistic American writers--his books are, in general, the happiest pieces of writing done in the last ten years, a kind of cross between Thoreau and Sandburg...they are all glorifying life or mankind in one way or another.

Writers like Aldiss seem to be ready to blame fandom for the failure of science fiction. If a story which they like is not given the critical acclaim which they feel it deserves, then fandom comes in for a kick in the pants. I assume we are supposed to be "leading the way" again. Why us? I don't see why fandom should be in the gun all the time. We are a group of hobbyists interested in amateur journalism, and a good part of our writing and reading is devoted to sf. We represent perhaps 5% of the people who read sf. How then are we responsible for the death of "good" sf? I don't see what good it does for an author to dress down fandom because we aren't praising the stories he praises. Try telling it to the other 95%, the group that matters. We've stuck it through all the bad times, have continued to buy the magazines and books despite their lack of quality, offered constructive criticism, provided a forum for the discussion of problems, given encouragement in the shape of IFAs and Hugos...what else are we supposed to do?

It's typical of the current professional attitude that the lack of popularity of a magazine or story will be blamed on dumb readers rather than a poor book. Analog no longer prints stories which interest fandom--therefore fandom is not intelligent enough to read Analog. I have not so far noticed a suggestion that Analog might be at fault in moving away from the traditions of fantasy which have managed to keep us interested since prehistoric times. From the year dit to 1959, sf was to

entertain---then suddenly it was to educate. Just how gullible is fandom supposed to be? We didn't believe in Gernsback's ideas when he expressed them, we didn't believe in Scientology, we didn't believe in psionics, we didn't believe in Deroces or flying saucers or Shaver or all the other pieces of idiocy which have sprung up from time to time. And now we don't believe in Campbell's ideas either. With our record, I think we can afford to sit tight and see how Campbell fares before we start giving him our support.

As for Henry Ward's "staggering" novels, fandom isn't discussing them because fandom has never heard of them. If fandom didn't go wild over "The Food Goes In The Top", then I guess it was because fandom didn't realise it was a "fine contemporary surrealist tale", but instead took it for just another bit of tedious allegory that wasn't devious enough for Mills to buy for F&SF. (I personally didn't find any surrealism in the yarn---surreal sf is hard to write, and apart from Coates' *The Biter Of Darkness* and Vonnegut's *The Sirens Of Titan*, I don't believe it has ever been done with any real success.) If Aldiss feels that fandom is not recognising good fantasy novels and stories, then he has an easy solution open to him. Any number of fanzine editors would be willing, nay honoured, to carry a book review column by him, covering all the stories he feels fandom should be reading. That way we will have a guide to the lesser-known parts of the field and a handy starting point for discussion. And if he doesn't want to write such a column and so spark the discussion he demands, then Mr Aldiss should pull his head in.

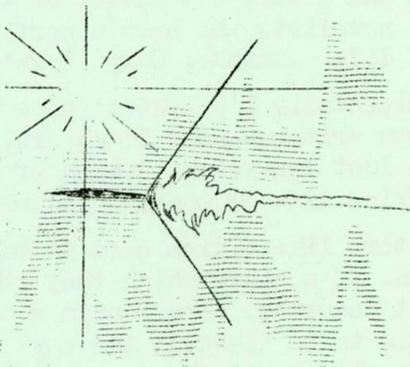
By the way, just for the record, which one of those backover quotes was the "Ulster Folk Saying". I'm intrigued. ("Now, there was a man who didn't have to stand up twice to cast a shadow.")

Rick Sneary, 2962 Santa Ana St., South Gate, Calif.

How can Aldiss say the world is less adventurous than it was 20 years ago. Things have changed, but it wasn't a world of roses back there...and science fiction was still able to find adventure and make living through trying times seem exciting. 'Sixth Column' and 'Final Blackout' were not gay, and yet they were great...and a lot of other stories dealt with the world and its current problems. It seems to me there are more real challenges now than there were in the past. The adventures may not be on as

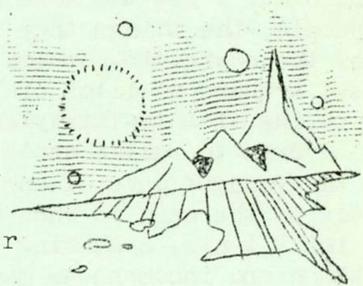
grand a scale, but they can be more believable... And the Hyphen crew are a good case in point, as you have always been able to take small and apparently commonplace events and build them with talented writing into high adventure and grand farce. If you chaps can do it, why can't the pro writers on a bigger scale?

Len Buffatt, 10202 Belcher, Downey, Calif. += The seeking for wonder-filled stories in this day and age is, I think, more than a yen to return to the attitudes of our youth.. This brings up the old argument as to whether or not sf is escape literature, and up pops the old, but still true answer: all fiction is escape literature... Mr Aldiss suggests we approach the modern sf field with a sense of reality well I can only speak for myself, but I have reason to believe that most sf fans approach everything they read with a 'sense of reality', as what reader doesn't? ...we start to read a story...we're real...the world around us is real...the mag is real...and the story? Maybe we shift restlessly as we read because the story doesn't seem real...we can't suspend disbelief. If we can it's because the story stirs our sense of wonder and makes it seem real

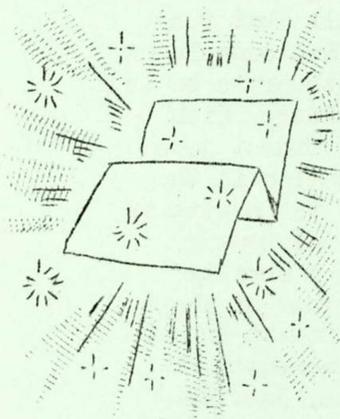


Brian Varley, 47 Tolverne Rd., Raynes Pk., London S.20
Chris Miller, Christ Church, Oxford

Johnny Heutz, 16 Galtrim Pk., Bray, Co. Wicklow == I'm not sure that I agree with Brian Aldiss. Very few sf writers are capable of writing good stories without gimmicks. The attempts at more psychological themes, or at ideas where personal reactions and the development of character are more important than the clever twist or the new gimmick seem to me to fail far more often than they succeed. Very often modern sf seems to be attempting stories for which it has not the literary ability. Even Heinlein at his best rarely gives us very great depth of character: why should he? He is involved in the logical exploitation of ideas. (Yes, but I wish that instead of the derogatory term gimmick you had used 'sciencefictional content'.)



Archie Mercer, 434/4 Newark Road, N. Hykeham, Lincoln, Eng.
Ted White, 107 Christopher St., New York 14



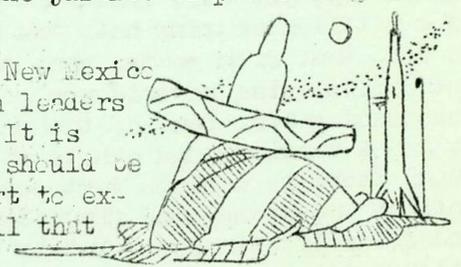
Terry Carr, 56 Jane St., New York 14 == I suppose it's time I write you another witty and scintillating letter of comment, even though you haven't printed any of mine for 3 years now. That may be because I haven't sent you any for 3 years, but I'm not sure...trouble is, most every issue of Hyphen causes me to do a mental draft of one of my typical witty and scintillating letters, and it's quite possible I've never actually committed them to print. I have a strange attitude towards such things: for me, once a letter is drafted in my mind it's pretty well finished and I'm satisfied; there's no need to put it on paper. It's

much the same syndrome I have regarding fuz, the one Dave Rike accurately tagged four years ago when we were co-editing INN: "well, the issue's run off and we have our copies assembled; now let's start on next issue."

Applied to writing, this makes me a dreadfully under-rated writer, because most all the things I actually set to print are 'things which I haven't drafted in my mind and therefore strictly off-the-top-off-the-head stuff...not nearly so good as the lovely lines and deadly barbs I lovingly compose and polish mentally while riding subways or staring blankly at the cracks in the sidewalk. Had I ever written some of those down now...well, there was the beautiful brandonisation I composed for Bob Leman a few years ago, "The Wind in the Slipsheets", and the long, pithy factfiction piece "FemmeFun!", and my most recent magnum opus, based on Burbee's "Big Name Fan" which has Big Name Fan in his fallout shelter shooting all the nees who try to get in and giving sanctimonious internal monologues on the justice of protecting one's mint collection of Habakkuk...

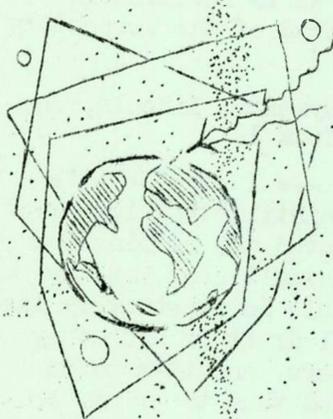
Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Mr Aldiss says that our sf writers have never been leaders in philosopho-economic thought. Why should they be? It is science fiction, not social fiction. The projection should be of scientific trends. Hell, it doesn't take an expert to extrapolate the current philosopho-economic trend---all that is necessary is the ability to read the newspapers



Len Moffatt, 10202 Belcher, Downey, California =+= James White's series is of great interest to me. I enjoy fiction, but the older I get the more I enjoy reading about people, real people, the things they do and why. Maybe this is part of the nostalgia-pattern that grows in one of My Age (please, Arthur, no illos of ljm in a long white beard-- I'm speaking of Late-Thirtyish types, not 90-year old fen)--an urge to relive one's younger days by reading about the younger days of one's fellows, but I think it is also due to the need to know more about the world and its human inhabitants, a seeking to understand why man can be both human and inhumane to man... well, I know why, or think I do, but there's nothing like gathering more evidence to back up one's arguments.

LATE-THIRTYISH LJM
WITH FALSE WHITE
BEARD



Don Wollheim, 66-17 Clyde St., Forest Hills 74, NY
Peter Graham, Apt. 8, 635 E 5St., Ney York 9 =+= why should sf be excluded from dealing with Man's struggles against Man, as you say walt but restricted to Man v. the Fates? As a fine example of what I mean, let's take another of Stewart's books than the two you mentioned: Earth Abides, which Bob Tucker and I agree is one of the finest jobs ever done in sf. It also has a reputation in the 'mainstream' field, and it certainly is an epic of human struggle. In one sense Man is, of course, part of his environment--more so as a society grows more complex... I would far rather sf chose to deal with the social problems of modern and future society than with the technological or physically environmental.

(I don't say sf should exclude inter-personal relationships, just that it is possible to write good sf without the current mainstream essential of introspective characterisation, and that in this lies a possible solution to the problem of modern sf. And also perhaps to that of current mainstream literature which I suggested, taking the long view, might actually be less 'mainstream' than science fiction.)

Harry Warner, 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Md.

Pod white is fonder of The Village than I am. My limited experience with New York causes me to suspect that it's the most provincial and bigoted part of a town which is already remarkable for those qualities. If you walk through the Wall Street district on a hot summer day, you will find some of those slaves of capitalism wearing hats and others bare-headed, some with coats, some carrying coats, and some showing no evidence of having ever possessed coats. Some of the natives will stare at tourists and others will ignore them. There is a close juxtaposition of antique and prosperous financial institutions and seedy little shops. But in Greenwich Village all is conformity: the buildings and the residents are obviously just a short distance ahead of destitution, everyone wears neither hat nor coat and the person who



ventures into that area equipped with either item is the object of stares exactly like those given to passing autos by the natives of the tiniest western Maryland villages, anyone with a camera or his eyes fixed on any point except the ground three feet in front of him is immediately the topic of nudges and sneers as another atmosphere-hunting bourgeois prude, and I imagine in another few years it will be impossible to imagine even jazz being played in the village because of the mob scene surrounding the folk music bandwagon. It has every disadvantage of the small town and none of the small town's numerous advantages.

Steve Stiles, 1809 Second Ave., New York 28
Colin Freeman, Ward 3, Scotton Banks Hospl.,
Ripley Rd., Knaresborough, Yorks. == was en-
joying Berry's article until I bumped into
"Thelytoky". It's a Berry fabrication, I
concluded, after finding no sign of the word
in the Pocket Oxford. (That reminds me of
the English fan who complained that people
kept accusing him of misspelling 'fued' but
he couldn't find the word in the dictionary.)
However as a final check I consulted my mate
who's a bit of an authority on these things.
"What does 'thelytoky' mean, dad? (He's not
really my dad.) It's got some connection
with crustacean."

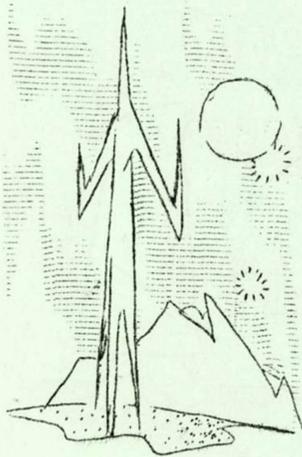
"Crustacean," he muttered. "which platform?"

Phil Herrell, 2632 Vincent Ave., Norfolk 9, Va.

Andy Young, 42 Prospect St., Somerville 43 Mass. == In a technical specification sheet sent round recently with a sample of EMI's new 'anti-vacuum pneumatube' the diameter is given as 5+3 inches and the length 16+13; drilling, tapping or operation above 376° F are not recommended; and the following numbers occur as maximum, median and minimum values of "girth at critical checkpoints": 3+, 2+, 3+.

I like to keep fandom informed of these cosmic developments.

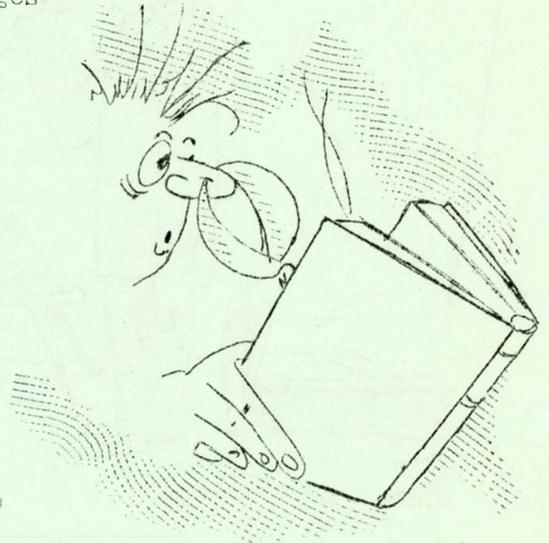
By the way, the cosmologists are still fighting about which part of Marilyn Monroe the space-time continuum is shaped like. (We may not know that, but we know at least what the cosmological Marilyn Monroe is wearing: a red shift.)



Sid Birchby, 1 Gloucester Ave., Levenshulme, Manchester 19.
Brian Aldis's follow-up to my remarks about fandom and sense of wonder was most penetrating. I particularly agree with his point that sf writers, although they speculate widely about the future, have in the main tended to lag behind in their grasp of the world situation.

He puts it gently: I'll be brutal and say that much of their speculation is half-baked. I suppose the reason is that it is fairly easy to churn out production-line sf for a quick sale but much harder to spend effort and research on a 'quality' novel. Here, as in the factory, the law of mass production seems to apply: small prophets, quick returns.

Ethel Lindsay, Courage House, 6 Langley Ave., Surbiton
Lenny Keye, 418 Hobart Rd., Sutton Tce., N. Brunswick, NJ
Ron Ellik, 1825 Greenfield Ave., Los Angeles 25



"ATTORNEY SIEGEL,
CANCEL THAT LAWSUIT"



ATOM

"... AND THEN THESE FLASHES
FORMED THE WORDS
'YUGGOTH SAVES'"



ATOM

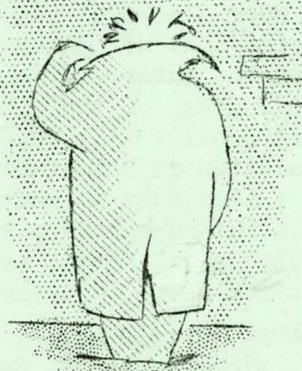
RANDOM ATOMS

BAN
THE
BOMB



ATOM

BAN
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PLEASE



(Ctd. from inside front cover) You'll be glad to know it was all worth while though (well at least one of us thinks so) because I have now been able to see both those programmes. Yes, I have. I admit the picture wasn't very clear, but I have seen them. Doesn't that fellow Serling hit a nice 7-iron?

There was a thing about that aerial episode that reminded me of fandom. After it was all over we were looking at the vast heap of demolished nest in the attic grate. "They must have been storks," I said, kicking a massive clump of twigs. "Or more likely cranes." "No," said Madeline, who is with it with the woodsy lore, "They just keep dropping them at random until some of them catch." I was struck by a poignant sense of fellow-feeling for those poor foolish birds, why, I thought, they're just like us fan editors. We fly around collecting bits and pieces and hopefully dropping them down the bottomless black hole of fandom, and we never know which of them are catching. Maybe it's not nice straight polished bits that are the best foundations for a fanzine, but gnarled ones that stick in people's gullets? I remember we thought something of this sort last time, after getting one of Archie Mercer's mordant postcards. "Thank you for your inbred fanzine," it said, Inbred. May a true word spoken incest, as they say; maybe Hyphen was too detached from the rest of fandom. We leaked this policy decision to Bob Shaw, who promptly attacked Void and Theodore Sturgeon.

We care enough to send up only the very best.



