

1962

FOR

ANNUAL

MERCATORIAL

THE

SIXTH FABULOUS YEAR OF  
CONTINUOUS PUBLICATION

perpetrated as usual by  
ARCHIE MERCER  
of 434/4 Newark Road,  
North Hykeham, Lincoln,  
England (E80E), the Carravan  
in the shadow of the  
Inalleable Ironworks

A MERCATORIAL PUBLICATION

This is still not an  
OMPA Postalling, even  
though it is indubitably

IT SEEMS A shame to let all this  
good white space go to waste, so  
let's ramble on a bit. In case  
you're interested for instance,  
I might mention that the Merca-  
torial Annual is always duplicated  
on a home-made flatbed, whatever  
method of production may be used  
for other Mercatorial Publications  
these days (usually the firm's  
electric duplicator). This is  
mainly for sort of semi-mental  
reasons.

BEST WISHES OR SOMETHING

FOR 1962

from

*Archie*

to Dick Eney

THOUGHT FOR THE YEAR

"If there's one thing worse than  
being self-consciously 'period',  
it is being self-consciously  
contemporary"

--- Stanley Furcell

I HAVE NEVER climbed a mountain.

As well as not climbing mountains, I have never done plenty of other things, too, of course. I have, for instance, never scored a goal or a try or anything else in any form of organised football - though the number of times my various schools have had me out on the field dressed in silly little shirt and shorts are beyond counting. Then I've never been to any of the Lincolnshire coastal resorts - and probably never will go. Nor yet have I ever worn evening dress, or a bow tie, or smoked any form of tobacco or other recognised smokable substance nor partaken of caviare, pate de foie gras, sheep's eyes or haggis.

But in addition to all the above and much, much more besides, I have never climbed a mountain.

Not that my life has been an entirely negative one. Far from it. I have in my time done many things; the number of things I have done, in fact, is probably exceeded only by the number of things I have not done. (See above again, for examples). I may not have climbed a mountain, but I have done the next best thing, ie, climbed to the top of the Parker Pen. Repeatedly, come to that. I've been assaulted by a horse in Piccadilly. (I was riding a bicycle at the time. The horse was being ridden by a member of the Household Cavalry. Something ought to be done about the Household Cavalry.) I've fallen through a bed. (Quite an experience that. One moment I was sitting up in the top bunk holding a book, the next moment I was sitting up in the bottom bunk holding a book. Very luckily I had both bunks to myself at the time.) I have been thrown out of a castle. I have had my picture in a Gloucestershire paper. I have eaten black pudding. I have swum the Thames. I've learned "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" off by heart - and in later years forgotten it again so thoroughly that nowadays, if I chance to see a copy, much of what I once could recite complete fails to ring a bell with me at all. All these things, and many others, have I at one time or another done.

But I have still never climbed a mountain.

That this sorry state of affairs should be so is certainly **not** from lack of opportunity. I once lived, for months at a time, at the bottom of a small mountain, and used regularly to go for walks on and around it. But I never actually climbed the thing. I scrambled happily around the lower reaches of the thing, but never bothered to **take the well-trodden path to the summit**, no matter how often the opportunity offered. I have sometimes wondered at this, and have come to the tentative conclusion that the reason I never climbed it was because it was **THERE, rather than elsewhere.**

But anyway, I never climbed it.

So here I sit, happily contemplating all the mountains I've never climbed. Not to mention all the tobacco (etc) I've never smoked, all the bow ties I've never worn, all the Lincolnshire coastal resorts I've never been to. These things, I maintain, are for Others. You, perhaps, or you, or the little character over in the corner. But not, I fancy, for me.

I might manage a mouthful of haggis some day though, if pressed.