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for

A N N U A L

M E R C A T O R I A L

T H E



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This is: THE MERCATORIAL ANNUAL,
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Owing to the annual change of
address of the perpetrators,

ARCHIE & BERYL MERCER,

it now derives from 9 Cotswold Road,
Bedminster, Bristol 3, in that part
of the European off-shore that is
grossly Britannic.

Caractus B. O'Flynn von Gestetner
is the lumbered duplicator. Both
Fred (Remington) and the (Imperial)
Titan are involved - nay, implicated
- in the typing though.

AT LAST !

IT'S HAPPENED !

The CHANCE we've been
WAITING FOR !

The CHANCE to WISH YOU,

DICK,

A VERY HAPPY

1967 !

*Archie
&
Beryl*

IT WAS MIDWINTER - in fact it must have been 1967 already, and the snow was falling softly on to an icy Bristol when the fan stumbled through the dreadful Bedminster climate in search of the fannish haven at No. 9, Cotswold Road.

Through the railway arch he plodded, head down against the chill blasts that came screaming between the rows of terraced houses as he started to climb Windmill Hill. He veered vaguely right, and started to follow what he thought was the right road. From door to door he canvassed until he scraped the snow off a wall to reveal the number nine beneath. Smiling through the cold, he knocked.

The door was answered by a stranger. No, she'd never heard of the Mercers. And no, this wasn't number nine, Cotswold Road. Cotswold Road was the next road down - the quickest way was through that alley there and down the steps to the bottom.

Thanking the unknown housewife, the fan plodded off again in the direction indicated. He found the alley, took one look at the steps, and shuddered. Then he saw another alley leading off horizontally, between the two terraces.

"Does that lead to No. 9?" he asked a snow-man who was standing gravely regarding him.

"Certainly, mate," said the snow-man. "Wonderful weather, isn't it!" The fan shuddered again, thanked his informant, and set off down the side-alley. He looked anxiously downhill - and suddenly he knew he'd arrived. Because there stood another snowman - wearing a beanie. He cheered under his breath - and his feet slipped from under him. There was a breathless whoosh, and he found himself at the bottom of the steepest flight of steps yet, just outside a cheerful-looking back door. Through this door he hastened, closing it thankfully behind him. Groping cautiously, he found another door on his right, which he opened. He stepped into the unlit room (the kitchen), and received a jar which rattled his teeth. "Nothing but blasted ~~arm~~-steps here," he muttered. He fumbled his way through the kitchen, found another door, and opened it. He heard with exultation the strains of Mercatorial music emanating from the other end of a long, narrow hallway.

"Success!" he rejoiced, and "DAMMITALL!" he cursed, as he slipped in a graceful parabola down another unseen step, landing upon a pained posterior. Picking himself up, he proceeded warily down the hall; he tripped over Beryl's boots en route, but refrained from comment. His hand was reaching for the handle of the door which would lead into the fannish paradise he sought. He opened the door, and - whoosh! - skidded into the book-lined room.

"Mind the step," warned Archie mildly. From his position beside the paraffin stove, the fan discoursed heatedly on the subject of snow, sliding, skidding - and STEPS.

"There are two more steps leading down to the front door," Beryl remarked helpfully. "And a whole, right-angled flight of 'em leading down to the street," added Archie. "Come and look."

The fan shot wildly down the two inside steps, just as Beryl told him to wait till she'd put the hall light on. "I can't open the front door if you continue to sit there," Archie pointed out reasonably.

Through the opened front door, the fan completed his hectic descent from the rear of the Mercatorial residence into Cotswold Road itself. He glared murderously at the Mercers.

"HAPPY NEW YEAR!" he snarled. "Same to you," Beryl offered. And: "Would you mind not sitting on the bonnet of our car?" requested Archie politely.