



No 9

No 9 comes from Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis Minnesota 55417, for trade, letter of comment, or 25¢/issue. Contributors get the issue their material appears in and the following issue. No comes out irregularly three times a year. December, 1971.

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Brag Dept.: The North Stone Review (James Naiden, ed., PO Box 14098, Universasion Station, Minneapolis MN 55414, \$1.50/copy) had a poem of mine, "Dianiac on a Gibbous Night" in the Fall issue.

The SHsf Fanthology #2 is now available. 50¢/copy. It is 21 pp of material on Sherlock Holmes from sf fan publications (including Dean Dickensheet's review of "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" from No; the rest of the material, Edward Ludwig's "The Martian Who Hated People," Jon White's "A Letter (Mycroft to X.)," and Doug Hoylman's "Moriarty and the Binomial Theorem," appeared in other fanzines).

Boston and Beyond

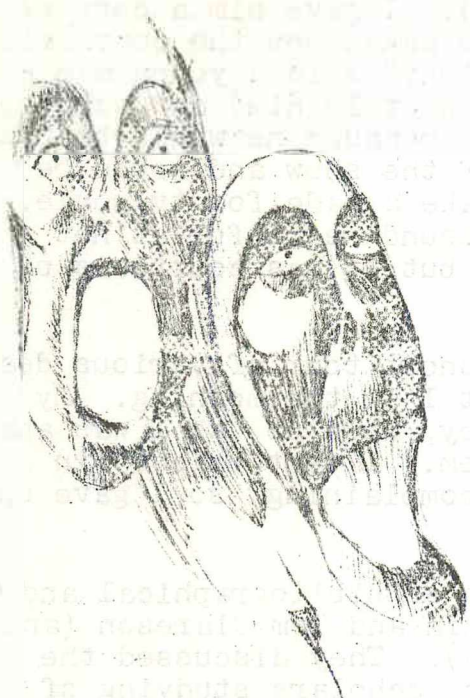
September began unpromisingly with a visit to the Minnesota State Fair, where I lost a contact lens while trying to photograph two roosters. (For some reason, the act of staring intently at something through a camera lens makes the contact lens slip.) After I had tired myself out thoroughly with wandering along the midway, listening to a spieler promise to bring out a sample freak for free viewing Real Soon Now, and looking at tanks of beautiful fish (beautiful as seen from the left eye, that is), I returned home to find that my period had begun. That evening I stepped on a jar-lid, not normally a harmful occupation, but that particular lid had a spout in it.

So the morning of the 2nd I dropped down to the hospital for a tetanus shot, finished packing, and set off for the airport. As it turned out, the cut foot was useful -- I couldn't wear myself out trying to run around seeing everyone and everything as I normally do at a convention, because the foot wouldn't take it. I never did see some large sections of the art-show near the back of the room, because I got too tired by the time I'd stood looking at picture-after-picture for a couple rows. I saw less, but enjoyed what I did see.

The airplane eventually (after a non-air-conditioned half-hour waiting for takeoff) got me to New York, where my luggage eventually (one hour) came, and I took a taxi to Devra Langsam's apartment. We spent the evening chatting with her cousin Debbie, who was just back from Europe and unable to exhaust herself as planned with a trip to the con immediately following her return, because she'd come down with mono in Amsterdam.

Friday morning the 3rd I spent reading Devra's copy of Zelazny's Nine Princes in Amber, a fine specimen of sword-and-sorcery plus metaphysics, which ends annoyingly in what is obviously the middle of the story. In the afternoon, Mr. Langsam drove me to the library where Devra works and from there drove us both to the airport. We were met in Boston by Joyce Yasner and Valerie (whose last name I forget), rented a rent-a-car, and drove blithely down into Cape Cod.

That's to say, I drove blithely. I was all set to start out navigating, a chore I abhor -- you feel so guilty when you sit there with a supposedly accurate map and nothing to do but watch for street signs, and get lost anyway. Whereas the driver merely has to keep you from getting smashed and can put all the blame for getting lost on the navigator. But the car turned out to be a make that I'm familiar with and Devra isn't, so I did all the driving that trip. Some of it was in rush-hour



traffic, but I thought that, by comparison, I had the easier job. Happily, Devra thought she had the easier job, so we praised each other's work, got lost every time we tried to go anywhere (not the fault of Devra's navigation; in Boston they seem to consider street signs vulgar), and nevertheless managed to get where we were going in one piece and reasonable amounts of time.

Once we got out of Boston proper, the drive was beautiful, for the road went through forests of pine and oak/maple/etc. They were all heavily overgrown forests, with rather small trees -- crowded-locking, compared to the Minnesota north woods -- but lovely all the same.

We stopped in Plymouth for supper and spent a little while there gawking at the combination of History and Tourist-trappings. A replica of the Mayflower is moored at a dock in the harbor. Across the road from it is a John Alden Gift Shop (I suppose I should just be glad it isn't a Ye John Alden Gift Shoppe) with a Pilgrim head and torso sticking out of the roof. Next door to it is a Howard Johnsons.

From Plymouth we drove on south into Hyannis (not to be confused with the more celebrated Hyannis Port) and found our way to the Melody Tent, where Leonard Nimoy was playing Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof." We stood around for half an hour or so trying to hawk our two-tickets-too-many, and eventually succeeded.

The production itself turned out to be quite good. Nimoy acted Tevye well. It seemed odd to see someone thin in the part, but Nimoy's command of voice-rhythms and movements made him convincing. He was, of course, weak on the songs, as were most of the other actors (except the butcher Lazar Wolf, who could outsing the entire rest of the cast). Afterwards we waited around and saw Nimoy briefly. Devra gave him a copy of Masiform-D (and he did a doubletake at sight of the cover -- instead of the trekkish drawing you might expect from such a title, possibly a picture of Mr. Spock being sick, the cover is a drawing by Alicia Austin of a sensuous woman wearing

black gloves and black lace stockings). I gave him a copy of a trekkish Songbook I've compiled. He asked how the convention was going ("A science fiction convention?" said a young man standing behind us. "Gee, where?" So we told him) and expressed his regret that he couldn't attend it, because he would be busy Saturday with the last performances of the show and would be flying to England Sunday morning to make a made-for-tv movie. (He didn't, you understand, actually sound regretful at not being able to visit the convention -- but it was courteous of him to say so, even if he wasn't.)

We drove back to Boston, took a short tour of various dead-ends, and checked into the hotel about 1 in the morning. My room-mates, Nan Nagel and Anne Trembley, were up, so I was able to unpack a bit without disturbing them. I went briefly in search of parties, but my foot began complaining, so I gave up for the night.

On Saturday, I went to a talk on sf bibliographical and critical scholarship, with Alex Panshin and Tom Clareson (and two others whose names I've forgotten). They discussed the problems of (A) getting fans to accept scholars studying sf without resenting them as intruders and (B) getting scholars to accept other scholars studying sf without rejecting them as frivolous. As a graduate student in English, I naturally found this topic of great interest. Afterwards I spoke briefly to Tom Clareson, and then drew back, as he seemed to want to talk to a man who was approaching -- and then I broke up their conversation after all, because I suddenly recognized the man as Alan Ravage, who is the son of long-time friends of my parents. He is also an editor of sf, with Bantam books, and it gave me, simultaneously, an odd feeling to be asking Alan, "Well, and what are you publishing now?" and to be asking an editor, "Well, and how are your parents?" And Tom Clareson withdrew, instead, so as not to interrupt us (I apologize belatedly).

Later that day I met George Clayton Johnson (that is, I'd met him before, but hadn't spoken to him before), who is a thin man of moderate height with a thin face and long hair, something like one's idea of a mummified Egyptian come to life, except that mummies don't have warm smiles and would probably have black hair rather than brown. I'd heard a little about Logan's Run (written by him and William Nolan) and asked what progress was being made towards making a movie out of it. Little at present, he said, because they wanted to use their own screenplay, instead of handing it over to someone else to adapt. It's a strongly visual novel (they wrote it hoping to be able to make a movie out of it in the first place) and will, I suspect, make a good movie eventually.

Sunday Devra, Maureen Wilson, and I met at the Issac Asimov/Clifford Simak talk, which was supposedly going to be on robots, but turned out to be on how much they love each other (in a decent, manly way, of course). Asimov told how, when he was a brash young neofan, he wrote Simak a long letter explaining all the faults in a story of Simak's which had just been published; Simak wrote back a long, courteous letter, thanking him for his criticism and inviting him to write again, with further suggestions. "So," said Asimov, "I sat right down and re-read the story, to tell him in even more detail how he could improve it... and realized it was a wonderful story. I had totally misunderstood it."

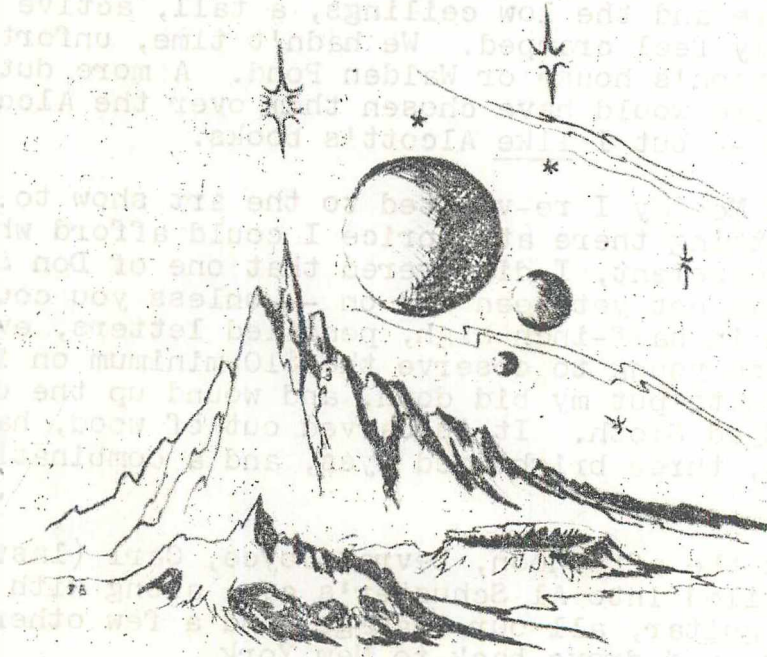
From their nostalgia, we switched to my nostalgia. That's to say, Devra and Maureen and I got into the rent-a-car and navigated our way to Concord to see Louisa May Alcott's house. It really does look like just the sort of place for Little Women to happen in, except that I had always visualized Jo's garret as a third-floor attic, and instead it turned out to be a small room on the second floor. I was also surprised by the crowdedness of the rooms, full of fussy furniture and objets d'art everywhere; it becomes easier to see why tomboy Jo felt so cramped and constricted by her world. Between the quantities of furniture and the low ceilings, a tall, active woman would certainly feel cramped. We hadn't time, unfortunately, to go see Emerson's house or Walden Pond. A more dutiful student of literature would have chosen them over the Alcott House, I suppose -- but I like Alcott's books.

On Monday I re-visited to the art show to see if there was anything there at a price I could afford which I wanted. To my amazement, I discovered that one of Don Simpson's sculptures had not yet been bid on -- unless you count the 50¢ written in half-inch high, penciled letters, evidently by a child too young to observe the \$10 minimum on it. So I hastened to put my bid down, and wound up the owner of a Three-Eyed Sloth. It is carved out of wood, has blue and green stripes, three bright red eyes, and a combination adorable/eerie air.

In the afternoon, Devra, Joyce, Carl (last name forgotten), Al and I piled into Al Schuster's car, along with Al's unsold stock, Carl's guitar, all our luggage, and a few other little space fillers, and drove back to New York.

On Tuesday Devra and her father and I went to see 1776. It's a musical of great charm -- it left me feeling patriotic for the first time in years. As Vietnam drags on, it is difficult to feel any pride in this country; it's good to be reminded that the country has had higher ideals in the past and may again.

Quite apart from the show's historical interest, it is theatrically charming. I think it's the only musical I've ever seen where the chorus in one song ("But Mr. Adams") was echoing the soloist's words not so much for the purpose of stressing his emotion as for the purpose of annoying one of the characters. On Wednesday visited a fan (Jacqueline Lichtenberg) who hadn't been able to get up to the con. (This statement may surprise those fans who were at the con. But, as strange as it may seem, the entire universe was not standing in line ahead of you to get into any given function at Boston; only a large proportion of it.) And Thursday I "did" some sightseeing, and so to the airport at midnight, where I sat around for a few hours reading Mary Queen of Scots (the Fraser biography), caught the night coach, and arrived in Minneapolis with a cold, grey dawning.



Emperor Hadrian visited Britain in AD122, and, desirous of attempting to hold back the savage peoples from what is now Scotland, he ordered that a wall be constructed across the narrowest part of England, just over 73 miles in length, from Solway Firth to the mouth of the River Tyne.

This wall is unique, there is nothing else like it in the Western world, not even in Italy. It represented, in Roman days, the most northerly part of their vast empire. It took about 5,500 cavalry and 13,000 infantry to garrison the wall, and many were auxiliary troops from all over the empire...Frisians, Tungrians, Dacians, Asturians, etc. At intervals of 1,620 yards (one Roman mile) mile-castles were constructed, and between each mile-castle were two turrets which served as watch-towers or signal posts. And at 17 places along the wall, larger fortresses were built. Additionally, the Romans also constructed a deep V-shaped ditch to the north of the wall, and to the south they built a wide flat-bottomed ditch, called the vallum. Still further south, running parallel with the wall, was a Roman road, built earlier than the wall, called the Stanegate.

Between 13th and 18th of September 1971, I visited the remains of the wall with my son, now aged 21, and I'd like to tell you about it.....

ROMAN IN THE GLOAMING

by John Berry

When my children were very small, I always used to tell them that one day I would take them to Hadrian's Wall...as they grew older they termed it one of my lrp's (long-range projects). On the 11th September, my son Colin suddenly said, "How about visiting the wall on Monday next?" I said I would, a snap judgment unusual for me. He knew a friend who was visiting England via the Larne-Stranraer ferry, and who promised to take us as far as Carlisle. From various friends he also accumulated two haversacks, thermos flasks, etc., and at 7am on 19th September, his friend Paul called at the house in his Mini, and we drove to Larne. The crossing of the Irish Sea only takes 2½ hours, and the drive to Carlisle took about four hours through the beautiful Scottish countryside. Paul took us to the railway station at Carlisle. So far, Colin and I had not made any arrangements...it was completely spontaneous. We examined the excellent map of Hadrian's Wall, especially prepared by British Ordnance Survey office, and costing 50 new pence, detailing all the remains, at a scale of 2 inches to one mile. Existing parts of the wall, and

accompanying ditches and roads, are indicated black on the map, and the entire structure as it was originally constructed is shown as red. Much of the distance between Carlisle and Newcastle-upon-Tyne is shown as red, but we did note that much of the wall appeared to exist to the north of a small town called Hexham, and the train took us there. We arrived at about 3.30 pm.

The weather was fine and warm, and we stood outside the railway station looking north, and we could see high hills in the distance. For the first time I lifted my haversack. Colin whirled his round his shoulder, struggled for a second, then strode away. I almost suffered a double hernia even lifting mine. I tried to throw it behind me, but I hadn't the strength. Two kindly railwaymen, with huge biceps, hefted it onto my back and clipped it into place, and stood back, laughing like mad. My body was leaning forward at about 45 degrees, and I felt very hot. I lumbered forward, my body rocking from side to side. Prior to this, although I am ~~well over~~ in the forties, I had imagined myself to be in perfect physical condition, but my strained breath wheezed out of me, and I began to see the dreaded red mist before my eyes. The only reason I kept plodding along was that I didn't want Colin to see me give in...I had always brought him up with the "stiff upper lip" maxim, and it was parentally imperative that I now proved its worth.

I followed him, about a hundred yards behind. He had the rather unhappy trick of waiting for me to catch up with him, and then prancing off again as soon as I arrived, with the cheerful news that Chollerford village was only about four more miles. Before we reached Chollerford, however, we came to a small village named Wall, because, so we were told by a local, the entire village was constructed with stone removed from the wall, about a mile to the north. We stopped at a smart inn called the "Hadrian," and purchased a most welcome cup of tea.

We reached Chollerford at 7 pm, much too late to do any examination of the wall, so we stopped at a very clean and cosy guest house called the "George," and we spent the rest of the night in the bar, drinking Guinness and playing darts.....I was rather perturbed to see that Colin was able to drink considerable quantities of Guinness and still manage to get the darts on the dartboard...after my third glass of Guinness people cowered behind tables and chairs when I took the darts in my hand.

* * *

At Chollerford, next morning, we visited CHESTERS ROMAN FORT., which is said to be the finest example of a cavalry fort to be seen anywhere in the Roman Empire. Unfortunately, much of the excavation was done in a haphazard fashion between 1792 and 1890. However, the remains now visible, in the care of the

the Ancient Monuments Department of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, are quite magnificent. The fort measures 110 metres wide and 160 metres in length, and the Headquarters Building and the Commandant's House and Bath-House, together with a 30 metre length of the barracks, exist in foundation form, the walls of the barracks rising about four feet above the grass level. On a lower level, near the River North Tyne, are much better remains of a large Bath House, about 30 metres in length and width. Some of the walls are ten feet high, and separate a number of rooms, including the Changing Room, Latrines, Hot Dry Room, Ante-Room, Lobby, Cold Room, Early Cold Bath, and other miscellaneous Hot and Cold Rooms. This is a most imposing ruin, and photographs extremely well. Whilst we were there, I noted several groups of Americans who were on a "package tour," and they all displayed enthusiasm for the site, and paid much more attention to it than they did to the fort, which is really a collection of neatly contrived ruins scattered over the wide area I've already mentioned.

The complete site of Chesters Fort is surrounded by tree-covered hills, with a very few human habitations visible, and with my vivid imagination it was a simple matter to transport myself back to the second or third century AD in the sure knowledge that the countryside then is almost exactly as it is nowadays. The Ministry of Public Buildings and Works is to be congratulated on the subtle way they have "cleaned up" the ruins, and kept the grass neatly trimmed, and the many visitors we saw there, from many parts of the world, confirms that most people really like to meander around ancient ruins.

The museum is nearby, and contains a staggering amount of relics which were excavated during the hundred years I've mentioned.....the guide book pronounces, and I accept it without question, that the museum contains "one of the most important collections of Roman relics in Britain." There are iron tools and weapons, Simian pottery (a sort of glazed clay colour), signet rings, large slabs of rock bearing military inscriptions, confirming that Chesters was once occupied by the Second Asturian Horse; statues of gods and goddesses, and many sculptures of animals and noble Roman men and women. The



individual items must number many thousands, and to a student of the Romans, like myself, it is mouth watering to know that to the west of Chesters is a large area, as yet unexcavated, where the civilian settlement was sited. There are no plans at present for excavation.

* * *

We discovered from enquiries that it was at least five miles to the nearest part of Hadrian's Wall where it was in good shape. Locals suggested that a fine place to have as a base was the small town of Haltwhistle, to the west. We caught a 'bus to Hexham, and had a couple of hours to spare before the train to Haltwhistle, so we left our heavy kit at the railway station, and walked round the market town. There is a very old cathedral there, and I was surprised to see that, in an effort to collect monies for renovations, a shop was constructed next to the cathedral, in the grounds, selling plates and postcards, etc., and also Roman coins for 25 pence. These were small rusty bits of metal, very thin, with a green scum on them. Very little surface detail was visible. I decided not to purchase one, although it has always been my ambition to have a Roman coin..... and as soon as I was on the train to Haltwhistle recriminations set in, and I realized that not at least browsing through them to look for a reasonable specimen was one of the biggest mistakes of my life.

* * *

Haltwhistle is a little country town, with little more than a main street. I looked for a reasonably-priced "Bed and Breakfast," and at the end of the town saw a sign advertising this. I knocked, and the woman looked rather askance at our rugged appearance, but I spoke in a very refined English accent, which made Colin snigger, and as soon as she heard this, she smiled us inside. The house was superbly furnished; we had a twin-bedded room upstairs, and it was sheer luxury. We stayed there for three days...the beds were feather soft, and the breakfasts were the biggest I've ever tried to eat. Colin and I were both tired, and after a walk round the town we retired to our beds at about 9 pm, and slept soundly.

* * *

Wednesday morning, 15th September 1971....cloudy and misty, and rain forecast on the radio, so we packed one haversack between us containing a full thermos flask of tea, half a bottle of whisky, a few minor eatables and two heavy waterproof capes. Somehow I lost the toss which meant I had to carry the haversack.

We travelled northwards along a stream, covered over with trees, called the Haltwhistle Burn. After a mile, this brought us to the "Military Road"...a road running straight for quite a few miles, and built after the Jacobite Rebellion in 1745, its construction being based entirely on stones taken from the wall. We crossed this, and a quarter of a mile further north we hit the wall. I've already mentioned that Mile Castles exist along the entire remaining lengths of wall, and they are numbered, starting from the eastern end of the wall. We hit MC (Mile Castle) 42.

This is merely a foundation, showing the outline of the fort; nevertheless the stone walls are about five or six feet high. I must now explain the topography of this part of Northumberland, because the wall is superbly strategically sited. From MC 37 to MC 46 the wall is situated exactly on top of an escarpment, which rises up from the south and comes to an abrupt descent, ranging in height from 800 feet to 1,000 feet. Colin and I stood on the wall at MC 42, and decided to walk on top of the wall towards the east.

Hadrian's Wall, along the escarpment north of Haltwhistle, and to the east, is the best section of the wall. Its average height is about six feet, although it does sometimes rise to eight feet, and dips correspondingly in some places to only about three or four feet high. Originally, as built in the second century AD. it was 15 feet in height, and, bearing in mind that a complete village and the foundations of a long road were constructed from it, it is a wonder any of the wall remains at all.... and for this we undoubtedly have to thank the difficult countryside.

It was still cloudy, with the sun completely covered, but the rain didn't really threaten very much, although, looking across country to the south, long dark wavy lines of rain could be seen fingering their way downwards, but I correctly guessed that it would miss our locality.

As we progressed eastwards, the scenery became more rugged. Gradually, the rim of the escarpment snaked upwards, farmhouses dotted to the north became scarcer; several times we were in cloud. Once we emerged from a mist and saw a corrugated-iron shed with men huddled inside it, and many signs of wall-reconstruction going on. Of course, this brings up an important point in archaeology...is it better to have an untidy pile of stones denoting scattered ruins of the wall, or is it preferable to have the wall rebuilt, using the original stone, giving a compact neat structure with obviously newly-made concrete holding it together? Many parts of the wall are original, with merely suggestions of cementing, but obviously a long term programme is being planned to eventually reconstruct the wall over huge lengths of the countryside. In some of the more remote areas, the wall is grass-covered, with grassy banks either side of it...these areas represent sections of the wall which have never been

excavated....and by some coincidence this occurs in really wild parts of the countryside, without any visible signs of humanity apparent. There have been occasions when I've worried if no other human is about for miles....not that I have agoraphobia, far from it, because I am quite happy when I am alone....what I reflect on is this.....given that there is a 50,000,000 population in Great Britain, if there is no one else for miles around, why are we the only ones there.....why are we the only ones to have made the decision to be there....why has the rest of the population shunned the place?

I mentioned these philosophical thoughts to Colin, and he broke the spell by producing his transistor and getting the latest riot news from Northern Ireland, which I had been trying to forget about for a few days.

In the early afternoon we reached MC 39. Between it and the next eastern Mile Castle (MC 38) a long lake, called Crag Lough, stretches parallel with the wall, but about one thousand feet below it. The wall is non-existent along this stretch, except for isolated clumps of rock, but the path of the wall goes through a narrow woodland, and the lough is a sheer drop below. It looks jet black, and a couple of swans on it showed up in great contrast, rather like diamonds on a jewellers black exhibition cloth.

From MC 38 we walked besides or on top of the wall to MC 37. There is a lot of grass on the wall, but it is of regular height (about six feet) and consistent because it is unbroken for this mile. It snaked through the wildest countryside we had so far seen, through the romantically named Hotbank Craggs and Cuddy's Craggs. A few hundred feet past MC 37, still going east, we reached Vercovicium, now called Housesteads Fort.

Housesteads is about 150 metres long and 100 metres wide. Low rectangular defensive walls still exist, rounded at the four corners. The fort could accommodate 1,000 infantry, and excavations (which are still going on) have shown that at one time it was garrisoned by the First Cohort from Belgium. We saw ruts on stone roadways inside the fort formed by chariots. A considerable area of foundations exist, again beautifully presented by the Ministry, the surrounding grass neatly trimmed, the stone-work cleaned and cemented here and there. Once again there is a considerable civil settlement nearby which has not been excavated.

We walked south to the military road already mentioned, and this time walked westwards for a mile, before turning left along a country road which brought us to the latest excavation site along the wall, the romantically named Vindolanda. This is the second year of excavation at this site, and it is expected that the work, being done in the summer months by university students (there were some American students there, I noticed), will last

for another eight years. Visitors were welcomed at the site, on payment of a small fee, and we saw areas roped off, and healthy-looking girl students in tight sweaters were dabbling about in the soil. It was exciting to see the section of earth...grass at the top, then a couple of feet of soil, and then the courtyards and foundations of many buildings. I noticed two students, a male and female, kneeling down together in a ditch, working side by side in silent rapport, labouriously dusting away at artifacts with brushes....these two were tremendously enthusiastic, obviously dedicated archaeologists, but most of the others were teenage girls to whom, I guessed, the thrill of digging had worn a mite thin. I purchased a rather unusual gift for my wife at the site.....it was a bronze casting of a coin of Hadrian's reign, found in a drain at Vindolanda. It is very heavy, and of course only has one side of the coin in relief. Sad to say, my wife didn't like it; she said she'd have liked a jumper instead.

* * *

Thursday 16th September 1971 was our last day on the wall. Again we retraced our steps along the Haltwhistle Burn, over the military road to the wall, but this time we walked westwards, planning to hide from MC 42 to MC 46. Once again I had lost the toss, and had to carry the haversack, but the weather was much more sunny, and we left behind the two waterproof capes.

Once again we walked either on top of the wall or alongside it. Most of the wall along this stretch was in pretty good condition, except that there were more deep valleys in the escarpment, necessitating steep descents and even steeper climbs, which I was now taking with the agility of a mountain goat. We walked slowly, because of the heat, and several times when we stopped for tea I stripped to the waist and let the sun dry the sweat off my body. On this morning, no one else was "walking the wall" and for about three miles, looking all round us, we saw no sign of humanity. No voices, no sounds of cars, not even aeroplane engines; there was nothing to destroy the stillness of the day, and there was something ethereal in being able to walk along and have one's thoughts clear and unhampered by the accepted norms of civilisation.

This spell was shattered as we neared MC 46. The little village of Greenhead is nearby, and the wall is well signposted; consequently as we got to MC 46 quite a number of people were examining the wall, and cars were drawn up. The older people were basking in the sun, and the younger generation were scrambling over the wall, one or two enthusiasts trying to chip away a bit of stone as a souvenir. Now our walk had been organised with the assistance of the large scale map I've already mentioned, and I noted that a large quarry was near Greenhead. I hadn't mentioned this to Colin, and I don't think he knew about

it. Suddenly, there was a large explosion....and this is the phenomenon I noted.....instinctively, I knew it was the quarry.... the other people around didn't know, and there were one or two screams, and a few of the older people ducked down, looking round warily. But Colin walked along in front of me as if nothing had happened. He said nothing, but strode along completely unconcerned. This was his Belfast training, you see. Even though we live at least two miles from the scenes of conflict and bombing, we hear so many loud explosions several times a night, and sometimes during the day, that we have become conditioned to loud explosions. Colin says he didn't even hear it...I think this was bravado, but he definitely didn't jump.

The map indicated that a railway ran from Greenhead to Haltwhistle, and we had planned to take the train, but the station had been pulled down; the Carlisle-Newcastle train rushed straight through. We were tired, but had no alternative but to walk to Haltwhistle, about five miles away. I suggested that Colin follow the map and lead us to Haltwhistle via a cross-country route. It was one of the happier times of my life. It was all rolling green fields and streams, little woods....startled pheasants rising from the ground a few feet in front of us, and flapping their wings like mad to get airborne....rabbits bounding to the shelter of the woods....lapwings rising in their hundreds as we neared them...the sun at its hottest, peace and tranquility. I savoured every moment of it, because I knew that on Friday we were going home.....

* * *

It was a long journey to Stranraer next day. Train to Carlisle, another train to Dumfries, a two hour wait, and then a four and a half 'bus journey to Stranraer. Another long wait at Stranraer because another ferry had got our berth because we were late...we berthed at 1 am on Saturday morning, 18th September 1971.

Then we could only leave the ferry ten at a time. I guessed what it was. The quay was thick with soldiers, searching every passenger. My turn came. I blundered down the ramp with my huge haversack on my back, and the soldier, politely, asked me to open it. I could have explained that I was a respected member of the constabulary, but I didn't bother. He pushed a hand inside, grimaced as he grasped a pair of dirty sweaty socks... then his eyes hardened. A hairy hand extricated itself from my haversack with a huge red rock in it.

"What's this?" he rasped. "A rioter's do it-yourself kit?"

I didn't laugh, because I wasn't sure it was a joke. I guessed that Colin had dumped it in the haversack when I wasn't looking.

"No," I said. "That's part of Hadrian's Wall."

He dropped it in the haversack again, and wiped his hands.

* * *



No and Yes: letters

John Boardman, 234 E 19th Str Brooklyn NY 11226

September 19, 1971

I recently heard of a very peculiar sort of Sherlock Holmes fandom. On Friday, one of the graduate teaching assistants at the college told me of a talk show he'd heard the previous evening. The talk show was hosted by "Long John" Nebel, an accommodating nitwit who will give air space to any sufficiently crazy theory that comes down the pike.

Last week Nebel really outdid himself. He had on the show a man whose name my informant couldn't remember, who claimed that Sherlock Holmes and John Watson really existed, that every word printed in the Canon is absolutely true, and that the Baker Street Irregulars are a bunch of phones.

(No, in addition to its other connotations, is On spelled backwards, and on is Greek for "being." You may make of that what you will.)

In the review of The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes the well-known story of an actress who asked George Bernard Shaw to collaborate with her on producing a child was cited. I have heard that the actress in this story was the famous Isadora Duncan.

I like the Fletcher illos in No and hope to see more. Now can you get him to run his comic strips, that formerly appeared in the late lamented Dippyzie International Enquirer. "Dr. Goodfellow and the Banana Friends" was the best of the lot, and especially Dr. G's pet pussycat Ptomkin.

Harry Warner, 423 Summit Ave, Hagerstown MD 21740

September 25, 1971

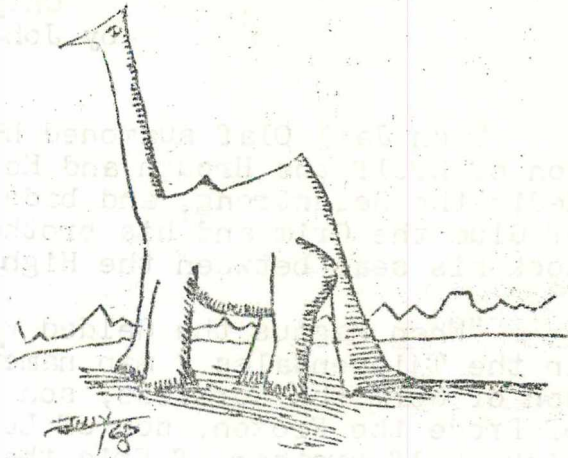
Nan Braude's item was very amusing and a trifle sad in a pleasant sort of way. It's strange how rapidly nostalgia can overtake old television programs. I've been unable to stop myself from picking up the U.N.C.L.E. paperbacks when I run across them at the Goodwill Industries store, even though I never have time to read them and I've probably accumulated duplicates of several titles through inability to remember what is dust-catching in the attic at home. I don't care much for the idea of novelizations of a television series but I just have this fond feeling for Solo and Kuryakin and hate to turn up my nose at anything associated with them.

So I'm glad to see someone in fandom who thinks enough of the series to write about its characters, even though I'm confident that I've missed quite a bit of humor because of my ignorance of Berkeley's people and institutions. I don't even know if there really is a President Kerr, (There was -- RB) but Nan makes him seem too real for him to be entirely imaginary. I can't remember much in fanzines about the U.N.C.L.E. series: maybe one or two brief and poor parodies and the tale of how some fan or other had made appropriate symbols to wear on pins when they met one or two of the actors. I appreciated the series for one thing above all, the fact that it really moved. Except for the first black-and-white episodes, when the later spirit hadn't yet appeared, everyone seemed to put a zest into their heroism and villainy that made it impossible for endless conversations to force the action to come to a stop. The Wild, Wild West is the only other major series known to me that managed to keep up a similar pace, and there's another television mythology that has been inexplicably neglected in fanzines, even though it had enough science fiction elements to get into a Sam Moskowitz tome.

Despite John Boardman's contribution to this issue, I've gradually acquired the belief that the battle against the feghoots has finally been won and that now we have only isolated pockets of resistance in such places as Brooklyn. The best evidence is the way that the feghoots which still slip through occasionally are almost never identified as such by a similarly named hero.

The art work is generally good with particular praise due the portrait of Solo. It looks like a ditto equivalent of electrostenciling, if such a thing exists. (Yes. Called dittofax in this area. -- RB)

Ken Fletcher is turning into a splendid artist-cartoonist, if it's fair to describe his artwork as a combination of the two fields. And the illustration on page 12 is exactly right for the poem, which in turn strikes me as just about the best poem ever written about the Tolkien books.



Mary Schaub August 17, 1971
Box 218, Apex NC 27502

I was delighted to see some recognition FINALLY for poor UggAwump on the back cover -- that soulful smile, those touching eyes. No doubt it will now come to live with Fred Heskall (or Haskell), being overcome with gratitude being brought to wide notice at last. (Considering its teeth, I hope that Fred is a nimble fellow.)

Jackie Franke, Box 51-A RR 2, Beecher IL 60401

November 15, 1971

School theses are school theses no matter where they are seen...I'm not serious enough to really appreciate them, I guess.

The "Illuminati" article was informative, "Loudsnore" painful (which it was meant to be).

Eleanor Arnason

August 6, 1971

Eleanor of Aquitaine? I guess that's me, huh? My mother always told me she'd named me after that lady.

I didn't finish Nan's piece in No. I guess I feel the same way about Uncle fiction as I do about Star Trek fiction. Enough is enough. However, I liked your paper on the MacDonald stories. They sound worth reading.

THE SAGA OF OLAF LOUDSNORE
 Chapter CCC
 by John Boardman

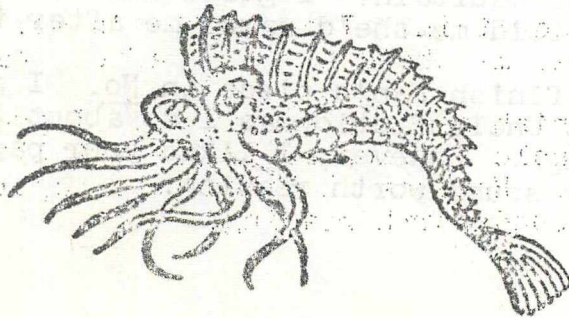
Then Jarl Olaf summoned his skald Thjodolf the Tonedeaf, son of Krolf the Hrough and Helga the Hellion, daughter of Hedin the Headstrong, and bade him sing to the company the tale of Glum the Grim and his brother Grim the Glum. So Thjodolf took his seat between the High table and the low, and began:

"When Magnus the Gelded was King of Norway, there lived in the Tjippendales a man named Ketil the Black. He was the son of Gorm the Gormless, son of Halfdan the Half-assed, son of Frode the Frozen, son of Lambi the Meek, son of Olaf the Pink, half-brother of Eric the Red. His mother was Aud the Odd, daughter of Gudred Good-Rod, son of Knute the Brute, son of Skeggi the Shaggy. Ketil's wife was Liv the Lively, and her father was Thorolf the Thorough, a leman's son of St. Edward, King of England. Ketil had three sons, Helgi, Hogni, and Hugl, and a fair daughter Unn..."

"Then whence come Glum and Grim?" cried Jarl Olaf's nephew, Sigfus Sigfusson.

"Patience, my lord," the skald replied. "I tell this tale in the manner of our forefathers, as sags are always sung, and you must bear with me. This Unn that I mention is the great-grandmother of these brothers, and they are not born until the ninety-seventh verse."

"Hearing this, Sigfus split Thjodolf's skull with an ax, thus incurring fifteen blood feuds, and left the country in disgust.



Casting Director's Lament
 (a la W.S. Gilbert)

by Ruth Berman

As frequently it happens that an actor must be found,
 I know an awful lot (I know an awful lot)
 Of silver voiced people whose emotions know no bound,
 But they never can be got (they never can be got).
 There's the lady from a rural spot, a lovely country child,
 Who yesterday was called from home to go back to the wild.
 There's the helpful little gentleman who has a plastic face,
 Only yesterday he moved, they say -- but don't say to what place --
 And the every-purpose neutral type who fills in any slot,
 But he never can be got (he never can be got).

CHORUS: He knows an awful lot (he knows an awful lot)
 Of silver voiced folk who never can be got.

Then the crews who run the show backstage and must be found in
swarms,
 I know an awful lot (I know an awful lot)
 Of men so quick and neat you'd swear they all had extra arms,
 But they never can be got (they never can be got).
 There's the lighting man with all his lamps and bulbs and
colored gels,
 Who's been hired away to make electric monsters for Mattell's,
 There's a most aesthetic costumer whose fingers start to twitch
 Each time he sees a piece of cloth -- but cannot sew a stitch --
 The scene designer with his floor plans who would be there on
the dot,
 But he never can be got (he never can be got).

CHORUS: He'd be there on the dot (he'd be there on the dot)
 But he never can be got (he never can be got).

