

A FAKE FAN IN LONDON



Robert A. Madle

INTRODUCTION

Like many other things in the S-F world, it all started with Forrest J Ackerman. Forry, who is known in America as "Mr. Science Fiction", has been reading S-F since 1926 and has been a science fiction fan since the inception of the term. He was projected into fandom through being a demon letter writer, and he started at a very early age. I can still recall his first letter-to-the-editor. It appeared in the Fall, 1929 issue of SCIENCE WONDER QUARTERLY and started off thusly: "Although I am only twelve years old..." Through this, and subsequent letters, Forry obtained many, many correspondents, a large number of whom were residents of England.

During World War II, when it appeared that Anglo fandom was doomed to extinction, Forry kept it alive by contributions of books, magazines, paper, money - even mimeo stencils. As legend will have it, his English S-F friends wanted to repay Forry by paying his way to England. Forry, philanthropist that he is, wanted it the other way. He wanted American fandom to bring an English fan to America for a World Convention. As a matter of fact, Forry wanted to bring two English S-F fans to America simultaneously, if possible. (He specifically designated Ted Carnell and Walter H. Gillings, the two men to whom England owes so much for all they have done to propagate the science fiction faith throughout the British Isles.)

Thus was created "The Big Pond Fund", which was one of the projects of the 1947 World Science Fiction Convention, held in Philadelphia, Pa. The basic idea behind The Big Pond Fund was that fandom, through voluntary contributions, would pay for the passage of the first fan ambassador. Unfortunately, fandom was comparatively young (and small) and it wasn't until 1949 that Forry's dream materialized when Ted Carnell made it to the Cinvention, held in Cincinnati, Ohio. And even at that, Ted paid a good portion of his expenses out of his own pocket. But the die was cast.

Sometime in 1949 a young neo-fan appeared on the scene with an unpretentious publication called SLANT. This fan resided in Ireland and, as he was unaware of other fans in Ireland, communicated with American fans by sending them his magazine. The result of this was a large number of correspondents and an excellent staff of writers. This, coupled with meticulous typesetting and excellent format, catapulted SLANT to the top group of fanzines. And up the ladder with SLANT went its meticulous editor, Walter A. Willis.

In 1951 Shelby Vick started a campaign to bring Willis, fandom's brightest new star, to the Nolacon (New Orleans). However, the campaign didn't bear fruit until 1952 when Walt made it to the Chicon (Chicago, Illinois). When Walt returned to Ireland, he wrote up a lengthy report of his trip, THE HARP STATESIDE. This interesting document appeared in many installments in various fanzines and has been published complete in pamphlet form. And with the publication of THE HARP STATESIDE another fannish tradition was born, for it is expected that the recipient of the TAFF trip will write up his adventures so general fandom (or those who contributed for the trip) will be able to read it.

Immediately following the 1952 Chicon, Donald E. Ford, of Ohio, started a campaign to bring an English friend of his to the 1953 World Convention in Philadelphia. However, the friend, one Norman Ashfield of London, proved unable to come. Ford wrote to Willis offering the money to any English fan who might be able to make the trip. Ford's letter arrived just about the time of the English Coroncon (1953) and it resulted in Willis, Carnell, Ken Slater and several other Anglofen organizing the TransAtlantic Fan Fund.

Vinc Clarke, one of England's most loyal and enthusiastic S-F fans, was elected to attend the 1954 San Francisco Convention but proved unable to attend. This enabled a new election to be held, with the winner to cross the Atlantic for the 1955

Cleveland (Cleveland, Ohio). H. Ken Bulmer, both a fan and well-known professional writer, was elected. Ken and his charming wife, Pamela, were off for America on a tramp steamer.

Now it was America's turn to respond and send someone to the 1956 Cytricon (held annually in Kettering). Lee Hoffman was America's choice. Lee, however, turned down the trip as she had just married Larry Shaw (editor of INFINITY SCIENCE FICTION) and they were going to spend their honeymoon in England. And Lee preferred to go as a bride rather than as a TAFF candidate. The fund was held over until the following year, 1957.

The slate for 1957 consisted of eight candidates - with all segments of American fandom represented: fanzine publishers, convention goers, and a couple of decrepit relics of antediluvian fandom. One of the latter, Robert A. Madle, was the winner. What follows is his story.

Chapter 1

THE NOMINATION AND THE CAMPAIGN

When Forry Ackerman nominated me for the TransAtlantic Fan Fund the first time, I immediately declined - although I was very pleased at receiving the honor. This was in 1955 and, at the time, my working situation would have made it impossible for me to attend if I should be the winner. And, frankly, I didn't even consider that I could win.

In March 1955 my activity in fandom consisted of being President of the Carolina Science Fiction Society (I was living in Charlotte at the time) and of attending World S-F Conventions and Midwestcons. Now that I think of it, however, the Carolina group was publishing its own club magazine, TRANSURANIC, and we were preparing for the first Southeastern Science Fiction Conference, in conjunction with the Atlanta S-F organization, then headed up by Ian Macauley. Two such conferences materialized: Atlanta in 1955 and Charlotte in 1956. I was also writing my "Inside Science Fiction" department for SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY and SCIENCE FICTION STORIES. So, in reality, I didn't decline the nomination because of any lack of activity.

Some will remember that Lee Hoffman was the announced winner in early 1956. Lee, however, decided to marry Larry Shaw (or was it the other way around?) and they decided to spend their honeymoon in London. Lee felt she would rather go to London as a bride than as a TAFF winner, and so declined the victory. This left the field open for another campaign, and nominations were being accepted in the Fall of 1956.

The thought of running for TAFF didn't even occur to me until Forry Ackerman (that man again!) asked me at the 1956 New York World S-F Convention if I would consider running for TAFF this time. If so, he would be most happy to nominate me. Now this was an unusual statement inasmuch as Forry was a candidate for TAFF himself! Forry's reasoning was that, if he couldn't win, he would like someone like myself, who had been around fandom for years to win, rather than one of the comparative newcomers who were, apparently, going to comprise the slate of candidates.

It so happened that I was expecting to transfer from private industry to Washington to take a position with the U. S. Army. With my veteran rights, this would provide me with the opportunity to attend if I should win, as I would be eligible for a considerable amount of vacation each year. I told Forry I would think about it.

When my appointment to the Army came through, I accepted the nomination and became a candidate.

The Charlotte S-F Society sponsored my entry into the race with the customary \$5 entrance fee. And, by a curious coincidence, I was seconded by several members of the Washington S-F Society. This occurred inasmuch as I did not definitely decide to enter the race until just about the time I was transferring to D.C. and, the day I arrived, I attended a meeting of the group. I mentioned that I was going to have some of the members of the Charlotte group second my nomination. At this point it was suggested that, inasmuch as I was now a member of the Washington group, several of the WSFS gang should second. Among those who did were Bob Pavlat and Dick Eney, the latter of whom was also a candidate for TAFF. So, curiously enough, I was nominated by one candidate and seconded by another.

The problems of getting oriented to a new position, finding a home for the family, selling the house in Charlotte, and moving to D.C. took up my time for the next several months, and TAFF campaigning didn't even enter my mind. As a matter of fact, I had decided to sit out the election as I felt that, based on our many years of fan activity, either Forry or I should win. However, I didn't seriously expect this to occur as it soon became obvious to me that there was quite a bit of active campaigning being done. One candidate was alleged to be traveling about the country soliciting entire fan clubs to vote for him. Others were being supported quite actively in the fan press. The advertisements in British fan journals were almost unanimous in their support of Dick Eney. They had, apparently, decided to select one candidate and go all the way with him.

None of the above affected me other than that it was certain that a candidate would not win by sitting out the campaign completely. Forry Ackerman and I had exchanged several letters concerning this subject and he felt that if either of us made the slightest effort, one of us could win.

Bob Pavlat often joked with me about my complete lack of activity in the TAFF campaign. But, as I explained to Bob, I agreed with Forry that I didn't feel one should campaign - victory should come to he who deserved it most. (How idealistic can one get!) As time went on, however, it became evident to me that no one but no one could even hope to win without expressing himself to be an active candidate. So one day, late in the campaign (I believe it must have been late March or early April), I told Bob Pavlat I was going to make a last-ditch effort. Bob offered to run off ballots for me and my campaign was on.

My activity consisted of the following: I sent ballots to fans with whom I was personally acquainted with the following note attached: "I am a candidate in this year's TAFF race. If you are not already committed to another candidate, I would appreciate your vote." That is all. That was the extent of my campaign, except that Lynn Hickman wrote me and offered to campaign for me at the 1957 Midwestcon which was being held during the last few days of the TAFF race. I accepted his kind offer.

Letters I received from some of those I had written led me to believe that my vote total was rising. And, on the eve of the Midwestcon I had reason to believe that I was running a good race in the field of eight candidates.

There was quite a bit of activity at the Midwestcon. Various candidates were campaigning, one of whom was alleged to be so enthusiastic about TAFF that he was offering to pay the fee for those who would vote for him. Such enthusiasm should not go unremembered.

For the most part, my campaigning was handled by Lynn Hickman, although Bob Pavlat also obtained a vote or two for me. When we departed from the Midwestcon, I still felt that I had a good chance to win. And during the trip back to Washington (I rode with

and Ted White) much of the discussion centered about the alleged vote-buying. Ted, who was "campaign manager" for Dick Eney, was quite shaken by all of this as he felt that Dick was in and that his only real competitor was Stuart Hoffman, who had been the most active campaigner.

VICTORY & REPERCUSSIONS

Several days after returning I was informed by Bob Pavlat that I had won. He had received the information from Dick Eney who had just received a letter to that effect from Don Ford, the TAFF administrator. Official notification of my victory arrived the next day. Stuart Hoffman had come in second and Dick Eney was third. In the final analysis, the margin of victory was not close, as I led by more than 100 points. The brief campaign that I had conducted had been entirely successful. It had been successful, in reality, because I had been an active fan for more than twenty years whereas both Hoffman and Eney were comparatively new to the fan field. And Eney faced an even more severe disadvantage, as he had attended only one convention up to that time and was almost completely unknown outside of the fanzine field.

I began to ready myself for the impending trip to London and the first real overseas world S-F convention.

Several weeks passed during which time I was preparing for the trip by getting my passport, smallpox shot and so on. The TAFF winner had a reservation on the all-science-fiction KLM flight, so I had no problem in that respect. Everything was progressing quite smoothly when Lo! and Behold! I received a letter which shook me to my very foundations.

The letter was from Don Ford, the American TAFF administrator, and pertained to a letter he had received from Ken Bulmer, the English TAFF administrator. Don explained that Ken's letter referred to wild vote buying at the Midwestcon and that these rumors had come from the USA. He (Ken) said he had heard so many unconfirmed rumors that he had cut a tape and sent it about to other TAFF supporters in Great Britain for their comments. He further stated that many felt the winner was under a cloud and might not be welcome at the convention or otherwise.

To say I was baffled, bewildered and chagrined would be putting it mildly. I was, in fact, deeply disappointed and hurt by this completely unexpected turn of events.

Don explained in detail to me that, naturally, I was the one suspected of vote-buying because I had won TAFF - and had, in fact, defeated England's candidate, Dick Eney, by a very large majority. He went on further to explain that this reaction of a small group of British fans didn't surprise him too much as it had been building up for several years. It seems that Walter A. Willis, the first British administrator, and Don Ford had not seen eye-to-eye on how TAFF should be administered and, in fact, these disagreements had led to a complete break in relations between Willis and Ford.

Several factors had caused this. One, Willis and Ford disagreed on the definition of a fan. For instance, Robert Bloch and Bob Tucker had nominated E. E. Smith, Ph.D., for TAFF and Willis refused to accept him on the basis he didn't fulfil the definition of a fan. In reality, Doc Smith has not only been a fan for many, many years, but he is one of the actual architects of science fiction itself. Don Ford was incensed at this slighting of the legendary "Skylark" Smith. Two, there was a disagreement in how votes should be counted. Ford had released several thousand ballots which permitted the voter to place the name of his candidate in all three

places on the ballot. In other words, a person could get six points: 3 for 1st place, 2 for 2nd place, and 1 for 3rd place. Willis wanted this method abolished, with a candidate being allowed only the 3 points for first place if the voter didn't want to vote for a second and third choice. Unfortunately, the campaign was under way and Ford, in effect, told his critics to go pound sand. (In reality, Don expresses himself far more emphatically!)

Anyway, Ford went to great lengths to show me that this was a bitter reaction of an unhappy loser. The interesting thing about all of this was that the rumor that first went to England about vote-buying came, apparently, from a letter from Bob Pavlat who had supported me in TAFF to the extent of running off ballots for me and obtaining votes at the Midwestcon. Bob immediately set the record straight and there was a great number of letters exchanged between Ford, Pavlat, Bulmer, Inchmery Fandom (Joy and Vincent Clarke and Sandy Sanderson) and several others.

Several letters were sent to the English TAFF administrator, Ken Bulmer, representative of which were those from Forry Ackerman and Lynn Hickman. Ackerman (who, more than anyone else, deserved to win) said:

"So I didn't win, but MY candidate did! Note well that I entered Bob Madle's name into the race. And on the oath of my krieggefallen brother's grave I swear to you that, failing myself, I am glad that he won. He deserved to win... The fact that Bob Madle won restored somewhat my almost extinct faith that there is still a modicum of justice extant somewhere in this mad world."

Lynn Hickman wrote a strongly-worded message to Ken which said, in part:

"It is inconceivable to me that anyone over there would think that Bob Madle or Don Ford would do anything that wasn't open and above-board. And, too, it reflects directly on myself. I campaigned for Bob and am proud that I did. I stated my case for him in an honest way telling why I thought he would make the best candidate. I was completely honest and take it as a personal insult when asperions are cast toward Bob Madle. I think fans over there should give Bob a royal welcome. I also think an apology is due Bob from English Fandom."

Lynn's letter was especially strong in that it was coming from a member of the "zine fan" group - the group that the unhappy British losers had said had not supported me.

In reality, there is little point in beating this issue to death. Much could be written concerning it. Much was. Suffice to say, the matter was resolved, the British group who had participated in the round-robin tape discussion later printed a retraction and stated that I was welcome. And, in fact, some of the best times I had during my stay in England was with this very group which had first reacted with such vehemence to my winning.

In writing this portion of A FAKE FAN IN LONDON, I was tempted to ignore completely this chapter in the affair. However, it happened and to attempt to erase incidents that actually occurred in the light of retrospect is meaningless reporting.

The ~~entire~~ incident occurred through a combination of disappointment and a strange sequence of events that, I can even see myself, could be misconstrued by others just as it was by the small group of disappointed Eney backers. But of such world-shaking events is this microcosm we call fandom comprised.

WINGS OVER THE WORLD

The designated time for arrival of all passengers on the London Trip Fund Plane was 3:45 p.m., Monday, September 2nd. Much has been written about the problems entailed in chartering the plane. Dave Kyle conceived of the idea and, according to all the information I have, worked very hard to see that it materialized. Conflicting stories have emanated from various sources concerning intrigue and dissension among the trip fund workers during the soliciting of the 55 passengers.

Originally, the grandiose idea was to have a planeload of active science fiction people to go to the Loncon. As it turned out, many of those aboard were not fans, but were there merely to get a cheap trip for themselves. However, such a compromise was necessary in order to charter the plane. (Chartering it saved each person about \$150.)

Even though the plane didn't carry the group it was hoped it would, there were about thirty or thirty-five known fans and authors on the scheduled passenger list.

I don't have enough information to go into the alleged double-dealing and whatnot that occurred during the months that preceded the plane's takeoff. However, I will say that all of the information I received came from Dave Kyle and I feel he accomplished his purpose and, in so doing, made it possible for many to attend the Loncon who couldn't have otherwise.

I arrived at the New York City Eastside Airlines Terminal about 1:30 p.m. and looked for fans. The first I contacted was Arthur C. Hayes of Canada. At the time we were, apparently, the only two who had arrived. Naturally we headed for the bar and were soon joined by Forry Ackerman, Milton Spahn, Ossie Train, and several others. (Ackerman doesn't drink hard liquor but because he is a fan he spends a great deal of time at various bars.)

Soon others arrived and we were ready to have our last dinner before boarding the plane. This took place at the Forest Hills Inn on Long Island where KLM wined and dined us. Among those I noticed taking advantage of this windfall were Will Jenkins and Herb Schofield of Philadelphia, Sam Moskowitz of fandom, Dave and Ruth Kyle (they had just been married the day previous), Robert Abernathy of big-time pro fame, Steve Schultheis - the immaculate one, and Fred Prophet of Detroit fame.

It was but a matter of hours before we boarded the big KLM jetliner (who am I trying to kid?) and were catapulting down the runway. Some of us were wondering if this boxcar would ever get off the ground. It did, however, and we settled down to a nice long flight. (Seventeen hours flying time as I recall.)

On board, there was a great deal of confusion as few were interested in relaxing. Enthusiasm for the trip was at an all-time high and it appeared that a small convention was being held on the KLM plane itself. Food and drinks were in abundance - and not rationed, either.

One of the first to introduce herself to me was Valeria Anjoorian, a striking blonde reader-type from New Jersey. However, when I referred to her as a general reader she was quick to tell me that she had had one or two articles published in SPHERE (Joe Christoff's fanzine) under the pseudonym of "Valkon". About this time Steve Schultheis, who intended to compile a complete photo memory book of the trip

over and back asked me to pose with Val. We did - in a very compromising pose - but anything for good old Steve.

Another attractive female type I met for the first time was Mary Dziechowski, whom Forry had mentioned to me in letters. Mary, Forry, Sam Moskowitz and I were discussing the reaction in the S-F world should the plane go down. Some of the anticipated comments were:

H. L. Gold: "Why didn't I think of that?"

Cyril Kornbluth: "It should have happened sooner."

Donald A. Wollheim: "Why did it have to happen after "The Immortal Storm" was written?"

SAM: "Are you religious, Bob?" RAM: "Up here I am."

The dissension caused by my winning had not penetrated to the outer-circle group and there were few aboard the plane who had heard of the now-resolved controversy. Dave Kyle, however, suggested that he write a note and present it to the Convention Chairman as an expression of support to me should such support be needed. Several others of the inner-circle group signed it. As events ensued, it was not required - although it was presented to Chairman Ted Carnell.

"The Sense of Wonder is known as the Pounds of Wonder where we're going."

Harry Harrison was one of the passengers, as was Mrs. Harry Harrison, both of whom were going to England to stay. They had been in Mexico where Harry had done a considerable amount of writing. He hoped to do a lot more in England - and also hoped that his living expenses would be low enough that he could continue to live off writing.

Harry is both a pro and a fan. He used to be a member of the Queens Science Fiction League back before the war. After the war he became an author and a member of the Hydra Club, where all the big-time professionals hang out and where a fan may enter only at the request of one of the members. Harry told me of the night the Hydra Club had one of its famous purges. Drummed out in one fell swoop were Harry Harrison, Charles Dye, Larry Shaw, Frank Belknap Long, Phil and Morton Klass and Bruce Elliott. Unusual reasons for expulsion were given. For instance, Long was tossed out for throwing - not cigar ashes - but cigar butts on the rug.

The KLM hostess led a merry chase. She was constantly laden down with trays of food and drink. Harrison remarked to her, "I guess this group drinks and eats more than any other you've had aboard?"

To which she remarked, "Oh, yes - you do!"

In reality, KLM provided excellent and courteous service. However, a letter from the President of KLM informed me (after we had arrived back in the USA) that someone on board had complained about the food, service, et cetera, and what was my opinion? I wrote back stating I was completely satisfied. In fact, said I, KLM had exceeded my expectations. He wrote back to me several weeks later saying that all those who had answered his letter had expressed similar sentiments. Can't imagine why anyone would send a derogatory letter pertaining to the trip - I guess it takes all kinds.

To add somewhat of an official flavor to the flight, Dave Kyle called "The First Airborne S-F Conference" to order. It became known as the KIMCON. The only official action taken was the auctioning off of Ackerman's signature for which someone bid ten francs which, in turn, was given to me to help in the forthcoming TAFF campaign.

We were scheduled for a stop in Shannon, Ireland, but the pilot informed us that we had an excellent tailwind and could go right on in to London if no one objected. Not realizing that liquor could be purchased in Shannon at a fraction of its usual cost, no one objected, and we were soon over the beautiful farmlands of Merrie Olde England, preparing to land.

Chapter 4

FIRST CONTACT

The plane arrived in London about three hours ahead of schedule the afternoon of September 3. The fifty-five passengers disembarked, some of whom were science fiction fans. Theoretically, all fifty-five were alleged to be S-F fans. However, as Dave Kyle remarked, "It's a darned good thing some of the fans have friends." Admittedly, the makeup of the plane didn't enthuse Anglofandom one iota. However, for the plane trip to materialize, it was necessary.

Belaboring this point, the passenger-group consisted of a motley crew, none of whom were of vital interest to Angloactifandom. Of the entire group, about twenty-five or so were out-and-out non-fans and non-readers. The remaining thirty was composed of decrepit relics of antediluvian fandom, general readers and several professionals. It must be admitted that most of those aboard were serious-constructive fans, although there were a few seriously-constructed.

First contact! We were met at the airport by a rather heavy-set artist (Brian Lewis); a rather tall, slim, slightly-graying individual with a mustache (Ted Carnell); a somewhat shorter, but slimmer lad with a very close shave (Sandy Sanderson - sometimes known as Joan Carr); and a long beard, behind which was an even slimmer lad (Ken Bulmer). It just so happened that they had brought along a bus which comfortably seated the entire delegation. And we were off for the King's Court Hotel.

We stopped once or twice to discharge several non-fans who were staying at other hotels and, during one stop we almost lost Ken Bulmer. The bus driver took off like a bat out of hell - with Ken sprinting along like mad behind it. Someone finally suggested that it would be a kindly gesture to stop the bus and permit Ken to ride again. Finally, the bus pulled off the main thoroughfare and down a side street, stopping in front of something that looked like anything but a convention hotel.

But it WAS the convention hotel. How can I describe it? Come to think of it, I don't have to. Merely read Betty Rosenblum's article in the last issue of NEW FUTURIAN. For those Americans who have been attending conventions I can say that only one hotel in recent years can be placed in the same category - the good old Hotel Ingalls in Bellefontaine, Ohio, which housed several Midwestcons - and which will go down in fannish history as the hotel in which Jim Harmon broke through the door of success.

However, in all seriousness, at \$2.85 a night (including breakfast) I don't see how anyone can complain too much. Unfortunately, several Americans packed up and left. One of these, Viliers Gerson, even denied being a fan. Of course, everyone in fandom had been well aware of this for several years. One reading of a group of fanzine reviews by "Roger DeSota" was sufficient to display, even to a fake fan like myself, that Gerson and fandom had nothing in common.

Getting back to the hotel: we were met at the door by Ken's charming wife, Pamela, and Mrs. Newman's charming son, David. Pamela had a broom in her hand, and Dave a glass of beer. Thinking this over, I can't devise a good reason for Pam to be helping to clean up the hotel, although strange things occur in English hotels. Nor can I think of a good reason for Newman to have a glass of beer in his hand, God-fearing prohibitionist that he is. Newman, incidentally, made quite a hit with the American delegation in that he assumed the job of public relations and entertained the group from Tuesday until the opening of the convention on Friday evening.

One interesting bit of confusion developed upon our arrival at the King's Court Hotel. Oswald Train, owner of one of the most extensive science fiction collections extant, was returning to his native England after an absence of about thirty years. His uncle was to meet him, and, unfortunately, they misconstrued each other's directions. At any rate, the old gentleman wound up at the hotel immediately after Ossie took off for the airport office. To say the old boy was quite shaken up would be putting it mildly. Someone handed the gentleman a bottle of beer and said that Ossie would certainly turn up in a short while. Three hours later the old boy could be seen finishing his fifth bottle of beer. I suppose they eventually managed to meet up with each other.

There was also some hotel reservation confusion. It seems that some of those who had reserved rooms had been placed across the street in another hotel, which did not appear to be as lavish as the King's Court. One of these was Will Jenkins, President of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society. As he walked out of the King's Court, he was heard singing, "I'm just wild about Bobbie".

Meanwhile, back at the bar... Yes, in short order I had discovered that the bar was on the second floor and had wended my way up to partake of a glass of the warm beer I had heard so much about. However, much to my surprise - and elation - the bartender had thought to ice up several bottles, and my first venture into warm beer consumption didn't occur until some time later. The first three people I talked to at the bar were Pete Taylor, John Brunner and Reiner Eisfeld. Pete, a curly-haired lad of about 21, told me he had been away from fandom for some time, but was really coming back now. Fake-fan that I am, I recognized John Brunner as the professional writer of the same name. John is a most impeccable individual, and is the personification of the precise, Oxford-educated Englishman as he is known in America. John, it might be mentioned, is only 23 now, although he made his first sales to ASTOUNDING six years ago. Reiner Eisfeld is a German fan, who speaks the most precise English, and who gave an excellent speech at the banquet.

Eventually, Ken Bulmer came over and informed me that we were going to dinner. The party consisted of Ken, Pamela, Ted Carnell, Sandy Sanderson, Belle & Frank Dietz, Forry Ackerman, and several others. Ken, gracious host that he is, insisted on carrying my suitcase, which must have weighed more than fifty pounds. (At this point it must be mentioned that Ken had written me soon after I was announced TAFF winner, requesting me to be his guest while in London. This more-than-kind offer was gratefully accepted. As it turned out, this was quite convenient. Ken, being a professional writer, doesn't have to work, and was able to spend the next few days showing me about.)

Following the dinner, which included some scintillating conversation, the group split up, with Ken, Pamela, Sandy and me taking the underground which was headed in the general direction of 204 Wellmeadow Road, Catford. This, my first adventure with the London subway system, is somewhat of a blur--and I was sober, too! It seemed that we were constantly running up and down stairways, going down in elevators, and just missing the trains we were running after. Anyway, as I recall, we took several subways, and then a plain old railway train. Following this, a nice healthy walk to the Bulmer residence - with Ken and me taking turns on my heavily-laden suitcase. That evening I noticed that Ken was quite a fast walker - and a real runner when he heard the sound of an approaching subway train. Little did I realize then the amount of fast walking and

I was going to have to indulge in during the next few days keeping up with this fast-stepping lad.

And so ends my recollection of my first day in England. In reality, it was only one-half day inasmuch as it was late afternoon when we arrived.

Chapter 5

AROUND THE GLOBE IN EIGHTY BHEERS

Wednesday, September 4, dawned bright and early. Or so they tell me, since it was almost midday when I finally sat down to breakfast in the Bulmer dining room. (My late awakening was not completely unexpected as I had been awake most of the two previous nights - traveling from Charlotte, N. C. to New York the first night, and from New York to England the second.) Ken, who had just completed his third novelette of the morning, hustled me up some grub - insisting that I have a cup of tea prior to the fried eggs. (Some of you may have heard of this strange tea-drinking custom which is attributed to the English. Well, don't believe it - most of them drink coffee.)

After breakfast I read Ken's mail (none of mine had been forwarded to me as yet) and discovered the startling fact that English fan mail and American fan mail are very much the same! At this point, Ken combed his beard, and informed me that we were going to visit the editorial offices of NEW WORLDS and SCIENCE FANTASY, and have lunch with the editor of said staid, conservative journals. (Pamela, incidentally, spends her working days as a Personnel Assistant. Not, as Ken is quick to point out, that they can use the money. It's merely that Ken prefers to be in absolute solitude when writing - which he does in the mornings. And the afternoons he devotes to thought and meditation - which the presence of anyone would also disrupt.)

So we were off to visit Ted Carnell, known to all as London's only active science fiction editor, also rumored to be a fake fan who, through nefarious means, had gotten himself elected Chairman of the London Science Fiction Convention. Ken, as indicated before, is an energetic walker. He has two speeds - fast and faster. And I have two walking speeds - slow and slower. Unfortunately, Ken was unwilling to compromise, so I was compelled to amble along at a semi-trot, which almost invariably developed into a trot and then a veritable footrace as we approached the train station.

We arrived at the Red Lion just in time for lunch. Ted was there already, as was Brian Lewis, his staff artist, and Lynn Berman, his Girl Friday. (Lynn ordinarily works only part time - on Fridays. But this convention week she was his Girl Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.) Ted, for those of you who haven't met him, is rather tall, slim and dignifiedly graying. He has been around the S-F world since the early thirties and is, undoubtedly, one of England's two greatest fans - the other being Walter H. Gillings. (Members of Trufandor will snarl and rage in disgust at this latter statement - but 'tilt true, lads.) Brian Lewis is a jolly, somewhat heavy-set fellow, while Lynn can briefly be described as slim, blonde and shapely.

The Red Lion, by the way, is a combination Saloon Bar and Public Bar. Ted explained that the Saloon Bar is the portion of the establishment where it is kosher to take your girlfriend or your mother, while the Public Bar is the den of iniquity. This was rather surprising as, in America, the term "saloon" signifies a corner barroom almost invariably unfrequented by women - except for irate wives who enter merely to drag out their besodden husbands.

Finally, Ted suggested going back to the office, which was located only several hundred yards from the Red Lion. Almost immediately upon our arrival the place became a beehive of activity. Lynn assembled convention problems, Ted made and received

numerous telephone calls concerning where and how to pick up John W. Campbell, how the press meeting should be run, and so on. There is no doubt that Ted, as Convention Chairman, devoted a great deal of thought, time and energy to his position.

After leaving Ted's office, Ken suggested that, even though I was a fan, maybe a little sightseeing would be in order. So we went uptown to St. Paul's Cathedral, a must for any American touring England. It would have shaken the very foundations of American traditions if I had returned to the States and informed various and sundry that I had not bothered to visit St. Paul's. In reality, the cathedral is very impressive: incredibly large, very soul-stirring and, I thought, it is no wonder that the peasants of the medieval ages were so completely under the domination of the Church. Those who attended mass in some of the larger churches that existed then must have thought they were actually in the presence of the Almighty himself. The ethereal illusion is spoiled somewhat, however, at St. Paul's by the commercialism that abounds unrestricted within.

Leaving St. Paul's, we boarded one of the famous London buses, took our seats on the second level, and rode through various historical areas such as Fleet Street, Regent Street, past the American Embassy, and so on. It is interesting to note that as one approaches the area of the American Embassy, the cars appear to grow larger. Not more numerous, but larger. The Yankees stationed in London apparently prefer the monstrous tall-finned horrors to the small, utilitarian cars driven by the average Londoner.

By this time it was late afternoon, so we decided to drop over to the King's Court to see what was going on, if anything. There were a few fans wandering about, one of whom was Ron Bennett, editor of FLOY. Ron is a rather young (early 20's) chap, full of enthusiasm, quite friendly, and mustached. Pete Taylor and Reiner Eisfeld were also wandering around and, I was informed, Will Jenkins had been about but had left to attend the local burlesque show. Ken and I departed for the Bulmer residence to meet Pamela, following which my gracious hosts took me to a local (Oatford) eating establishment where we indulged in a delightful and filling repast.

Deciding to rest up for the next day, we returned to 204 Wellmeadow Road, where such subjects as Sam Moskowitz, old fandom, TAFF, et cetera were discussed. Ken startled me by tossing the March 1938 issue of FANTASCIENCE DIGEST to me - a publication which I read with enthusiasm. (Even though I edited it, I hadn't seen it for almost 20 years, so everything contained therein was practically brand new.) Ken compared the cover of that issue of FD (drawn by John Giunta) with the cover of issue #33 of FUTURE SCIENCE FICTION (painted by Freas) to prove that science fiction has changed very little in 20 years. Both covers showed men in space suits shooting (rifles) at gigantic monsters and, in fact, the similarity of the scenes is rather remarkable.

Like Wednesday, Thursday dawned bright and early, too. At breakfast, Ken informed me that we were going to rent a car. He needed a car so John W. Campbell could be picked up in style. So off we went to rent a car - a very simple project, thought I. Hah! Little did I realize that rented cars were in great demand in London and were, in fact, at a premium. At any rate, after much walking and talking, we finally gave up. I'm not quite sure what happened when Campbell arrived at the airport. There was a story going around that he was met at the airport and brought to the hotel in the BBC car. This I can't verify, although my source of information is almost beyond reproach.

Quite disgusted with his inability to rent a car, Ken decided to walk off his wrath. So we did a little more sightseeing, visiting such historical sites as Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, and 10 Downing Street, which was barred by a guard so we couldn't get in to tell MacMillan that his conservatism was not in keeping with the conservatism of those who had recently occupied the house, Eden and Churchill.

Note: Following the original publication of the above, the following paragraphs, which tell how Campbell was met at the airport, were received from Ted Carnell:

"After Ken had exhausted the possibilities of hiring a car, we then checked every garage within a mile radius of this office without success. It was then decided that I would go out to the air terminal and hitch a ride on one of the airline coaches to the airport, while Ken continued his efforts to hire a car to meet us out there, but at this time (mid-day) there was little likelihood of my reaching the airport by 3:30 p.m. when Campbell's plane was due to arrive from Ireland. This was also complicated by the fact that I had arranged for a BBC radio interviewer to meet John upon his arrival and felt that it would be essential for me to be there to get the two factions together.

"However, just as I was leaving the office, artist Brian Lewis arrived on his Vespa motorcycle and immediately offered to take me out to the airport. Then ensued a rather wild ride, which delivered me at the airport at 1:30 p.m., two hours before the plane was due.

"From the time Campbell arrived, things went magnificently - the BBC interviewer had arranged to record the discussion in their airport studio, and as John and his wife came through the Customs we went straight into the studio where the whole interview went very well indeed.

"During the whole of this time I was still expecting to receive a message from Ken or his arrival by car to take us back to the hotel, but as we left the studio the BBC interviewer asked whether we had transport, and not having seen or heard from Ken we accepted his offer to take us to the King's Court, where John and his wife were delivered in fine style to the amazement of the delegates in the foyer."

Being in the area of the King's Court, we popped in to see what was popping. There was a little activity in the lounge. Bob Silverberg, ex-editor of SPACESHIP, was celebrating his first acceptance by a promag - his first acceptance that day, that is. Barbara, Bob's well-groomed and good-looking nuclear-physicist wife, was present as were Boyd Raeburn and James White. Boyd had his usual sports-car driving appearance, even though, for once, he had not been able to bring his car to a convention. James White looked exactly as Ken had described him to me - tall, Irish and immaculately dressed. (James and Ken, by the way, are now back to back on a recent Ace Double Novel release.)

It should be mentioned that one person could invariably be found running hither and yon - upstairs, downstairs, in the lounge, on the phone. Yes, wherever one looked - one found Bobbie. For Bobbie was Convention Secretary - a job tackled only by the hardiest. It is assumed that her prior service in His Majesty's Rifle Corps prepared her, somewhat, for the challenging position she had accepted on the convention committee. Also, as most know, Bobbie resides with the Bulmers, and, late in the evenings - about midnight - she would return to 204 Wellmeadow and, with her eyes radiantly aglow with ethereal worship of her ghodly position, she would recount the wondrous occurrences of the day.

About five p.m. Ken informed me that we'd better make haste if we were going to be on time for our dinner engagement with Sam Youd and John F. Burke. Sam and John, by the way, were very active in the fan world in the late thirties and early forties. During these years, when I was publishing FANTASCIENCE DIGEST, Sam was publishing FANTAST and John was editor of SATELLITE, both marvelous and well-remembered fan mags. Today Sam (John Christopher) and John are two of England's most prominent S-F writers and it was with extreme eagerness that I anticipated the upcoming meeting.

We met Pamela uptown and proceeded to our prearranged meeting place, which turned out to be an old-fashioned beer dispensary - with small, private drinking areas - the kind men like. Several fascinating hours were spent with Sam and John, both of whom are sparkling conversationalists. Sam just bubbles over with interesting comment on such subjects as S-F, world problems, and USA politics. If the person to whom he is

Speaking is a conservative, Sam is a liberal. If his conversing partner is too liberal, Sam becomes conservative. American readers might obtain a brief glimmer of his personality if I should say he could be termed the English Isaac Asimov. Bob Silverberg says he reminds him more of Cyril Kornbluth - but this I cannot buy.

John Burke is somewhat more reserved, although not shy, and his knowledge of political affairs, like Sam's, is remarkable. Both Sam and John are just about my age - 36-37 - and both are affiliated with the industrial editing field. (To a certain extent, I am, too. For I edit a house organ on a freelance basis, in which house organ I sometimes use cuts by ATom and Paul.)

This was a scintillating meeting and I was rather impressed with the knowledge of American political affairs displayed by my English drinking companions. In America it is somewhat unusual to find a drinking companion well versed in American politics, let alone British! In America, though, I suppose it is traditional not to worry about the rest of the world for, after all, we do make it go, you know.

Someone suggested getting a bite to eat before heading for the Globe. Yes, this was Thursday evening and, as all British fandom knows, Thursday evening means just one thing - the Globe and the London Circle.

Ah, yes. Long shall I remember the anarchistic melee that is the Globe. We were riding in Sam's car and, after touring about on several main thoroughfares, we turned up what appeared to be a back alley, drove several blocks, and stopped in front of a smoke-filled den of iniquity, which reminded me of the local of "The Face on the Barroom Floor". The sign outside plainly stated that this was the Globe, so we forced our way in. I use the term "force" with purpose, for we had to do just that. Fans and writers were packed into the Globe and, in fact were overflowing through the door onto the pavement. I suppose all of the Americans were there, as well as most of British fandom and prodom.

I recall pushing my way forward to the bar and ordering a "large beer". Let me tell you - this WAS a large one! I no sooner finished that one than Ron Bennett grabbed my glass and had it refilled. After quaffing that one, I felt all aglow with a mystical ethereal feeling - I could truly feel the magnificence of Trufandom, which was all about me. My head was whirling and my mind almost reeled with awelike reverence when GHOD himself approached me! Yes he did, really and truly. Walter A. Willis displayed to me a photograph of myself taken at the Chicon (1952). However, even though GHOD himself had taken such an interest in me I suppose I knew, even then, that the gates of Trufandom would be, to me, forever closed.

Tears came to my eyes and I shuddered involuntarily as this realization forcibly impressed itself upon the inner core of my Id. I was brought back from the world of Nevermore by a voice belonging to Forrest J Ackerman. I gazed at Forry with that longing in my eyes - and he smiled wanly, knowing full well that I had found, like he had also, that Trufandom was not for us - and that we would spend eternity on the stygian shores of fake fandom.

Forry took my arm and dragged me through the crowd, introduced me to a young lady who remarked, "And now does it feel to be elected to represent all of the hundreds of thousands of American science fiction readers?" I shyly replied, "Well, there aren't quite that many." Anyway, this young lady, who represented the press, was out to get a story - before the other representatives of the press. Forry and I talked about TAFI and S-F in general for a few minutes, and then I was lost in the melee again.

I managed to find my way to the bar again and was introduced to Lou Mordecai, the manager. It seems that Lou was manager of the White Horse, at which establishment meetings of the London Circle were formerly held. However, Lou changed positions - and the London Circle changed with him. Such loyalty to a bartender is almost unheard of in the States!

Soon I found myself outside in the alley - pardon - street, and Sandy Sanderson introduced me to Vince and Joy/Clarke, who apparently had been unable to force themselves into the Globe. Now, under normal conditions, this could possibly have been somewhat of a strained meeting. The Clarkes had been among those who had campaigned most actively for Richard Eney - never even thinking anyone else had a chance of winning. This, incidentally, wasn't too illogical - looking at the situation from the English viewpoint. Eney, for the past several years, had been extremely active in English fandom and, to the average English Trufan, Eney was a cinch. However, when the results were released, a tempest in a teapot ensued. But, by this time, this was all water over the dam, and an extremely friendly meeting ensued.

The Clarkes are a very amiable pair - Vince rather tall, fairly quiet, and very well plied with beard. In fact, Vince probably has more beard than anyone else in fandom - which may appear to be a reckless statement when one considers the existence of Bert Campbell and Ken Bulmer. Joy is a redhead, quite exuberant and, unlike many wives in fandom, is a science fiction reader. In fact, I believe it was S-F that brought the two together.

Others I can recall chatting with at the Globe were Arthur C. Clarke, who told me that William Temple should receive credit for facetiously naming him "Ego" Clarke, an appellation by which he was notorious back in the dear departed days of third fandom; Frank E. Arnold, also known in ancient fan circles, and also somewhat of a pro; Sam Moskowitz, who described the manner in which his projected frozen-food trip to Norway fell through - ineffective communications between hotel desk and guest, resulting in tickets reaching him too late; and Val Anjoorian, seriously constructed fan.

Chapter 6

RIBALD DEBAUCHERY AT THE KING'S COURT

by David Newman

You know, when I agreed to do this report for Bob I must have been out of my mind. However, every effort will be made to detail the hedonistic occurrences at the Loncon hotel during the three days preceding the convention. Bob, being elsewhere, could not cover this history-making era. Well, to our muttons...as the French so nicely put it!

There I was, on that fateful Tuesday evening, sitting at the bar in the King's Court Hotel with a glass of the Right Stuff clutched in my grubby little hand, when the depressed-looking alcoholic sitting next to me (the Convention Secretary) raised her weary head and said that she thought that the bus had arrived from the airport. With one bound (everyone knows what a bounder I am) I was at the door, pausing only to ensure that there was something potable left in my glass. So, with some trepidation, and about a quarter of a pint of Brown Ale, I descended the stairs and there was about the motleyest crew (excluding the Liverpool mob) which it has ever been my luck to encounter.

Oh well, I thought, let's be British and do the proper thing, so I pushed my way into the seething mass and started making welcoming noises.

Have you ever noticed how it is when you meet up with a whole crowd of strangers for the first time, particularly when you know some of their names and a bit about them? You wander up to a character and announce yourself and then wait expectantly to find out whether you've

heard of him or, more particularly, if he's heard of you. After a brief pause his face lights up in that brilliant smile which people put on when they want to be polite but don't know from Adam who in hell you are. This goes on and on and proves to be very damaging to the ego unless you happen to be Walt Willis or some other such well-known character. After a while you start to get a bit glassy-eyed and then, if you've got any sense, you retire to the bar. I lay claim to a certain modicum of sense!

Several beers later, and considerably fortified, I tried again and the results were immediately more satisfactory. The first victim I encountered was Forry Ackerman and him I HAD heard of! Furthermore, if he hadn't heard of me he managed to conceal the fact very skilfully. I then went on to meet the Dietzes - and this was a bit of a surprise. Having had some tape chats with them, I had already formed my own ideas of what they looked like. Take my advice, don't do that thing, it's a hell of a knock when you see how wrong you can be. (Same thing applied to Boyd Raeburn when I met him later.) However, I tramped through the hotel hither, thither and even, occasionally, yon searching out more sensitive fannish faces to add to the Rogues Gallery which was building up in my mind until I had finally tracked them down and met them all. Then started the problem - I'd met 'em all, now to try remembering their names! An impossible task, and I hope that I didn't trample on anyone's feelings by avoiding using their names or, on occasion, using the wrong ones.

The night was still very young when the greater part of the plane contingent evacuated the hotel in search of a meal and I returned to the bar to console myself with ale and continue to cement good relations with the hotel staff. A self-appointed task, but you should have seen the hotel staff!!!!!! This was to have repercussions later on, incidentally.

'Twas quite late when the mob returned and I was all set to make a night of it but, to my disappointment and some denigration of the good name of American fandom, it was not to be... It seemed that people were tired and wanted to go to BED, of all places...

The following day started quite early in the morning, a habit of days - or so I'm told! Not quite so early, having been up till four-thirty cementing good relations as aforesaid, I staggered forth and met up with a whole crowd of people who were insistent that I had spoken to them the night before. They were so unanimous about it that I must have done it, though everyone knows that well-bred Englishmen don't talk to strangers (especially foreigners) unless introduced by at least three old friends of impeccable character. Having no old friends in the immediate vicinity (least of all with impeccable characters) I had to accept the evidence placed before me and be sociable. At least I didn't have to relax the INVARIABLE rule that Englishmen are not fit to be spoken to before breakfast!

After breakfast, things started happening thick and fast. Presumably owing to the cementing operations mentioned above, the hotel staff had fastened on to my name as a magic talisman and, whenever they had any difficulty, or wanted to know something, an anguished cry went up for Mr. Newman. Thus did Nemesis catch up with me for casting eyes upon the Blonde Mrs. Greer or the Brunette Miss Campbell.

The hotel being properly aired by this time, it was deemed safe to have a few beers to ward off all sorts of things which might have happened otherwise, and the whole gang of us got together in groups at odd times for instructive sessions on the peculiarities of English money (which, as everybody knows, is the only money in the world which feels like real money). I know that, as an Englishman traveling abroad, I have never had much difficulty with foreign currency as it is usually based on some simple metric system. However, I have frequently observed the tribulations of others when dealing with English money for the first time. It seems that the way we split it up is rather odd (though we find it very easy to get on with and just as easy to spend as any other money). The coins which seemed to give the most trouble were the Florin and the Half-Crown. To us it seems simplicity itself to understand that the Florin is four-fifths of the value of the Half Crown, and also to realise that the Crown is no longer used as an item of currency although it is still minted in small quantities. Then, of course, no one ever calls a Florin by that name; it is usually referred to as a Two-Shilling piece, or even more usually as Two Bob. Similarly, there is the common usage of the term Half Dollar for the Half Crown (Two Shillings and Sixpence) and Dollar for the sum of Five Shillings... Although everybody knows that a Dollar American is a nudge over seven shillings in English money. What fun!!!

Well, you can realise that this small matter of currency caused a lot of fun and games in the explaining thereof, and this also applied to the remarkable English Licensing Laws which govern the hours in which it is permissible to sell alcoholic beverages in various sorts of establishments. If anyone is really interested, I'll make this the subject of a whole article (or more) for some lucky fanzine which doesn't object to sericon stuff inside its covers.

Wednesday had begun to partake of the character of all the other days at the con, as far as I was concerned. I had only to settle down for a few minutes' interesting chat with somebody when I would have to go and answer the telephone, or sign for equipment which kept on arriving, or go and talk to a newspaper reporter, or tell the BBC what the power supplies in the hotel were, or consult with the Catering Manager about the number of people for Lunch or Dinner...and like that!! Still, I'm not complaining - now!!

Very few of the English fans had arrived at the hotel yet, and most weren't due to turn up till the Friday or Saturday. Odd Committee Members (no personal imputation there) drifted in from time to time and we were pleased to see one or two people with time to spare - such as Bert Campbell - who came along when they could.

Looking back on things, it would seem that we couldn't have enough friendly locals in the hotel at any one time. The situation was quite different from that supervening at any prior Worldcon, owing to the large proportion of foreign guests. As luck would have it, most of these were American, so to language problem didn't arise, thank Ghod - but there was still the problem of answering all the questions fired at us by insatiably curious visitors. We, or at least I, found quite a lot of difficulty in explaining things which I had always taken for granted and not bothered myself about. Things like...

...Why don't double-decker buses topple over when they go round corners? (I could deal with that one all right.)

...Where does the water come from in the Serpentine? (I knew that too.)

...Why is English toilet paper like it is? (Can't understand what is wrong with it.)

...Why have you the nerve to call that brown stuff "coffee"? (!!!!!!)

...How can I get to see the Queen ... Battersea Power Station ... Oxford ... a man about a dog ... the American/German/Swedish/Martian authorities in London ... St. James Park ... a real, live Detective Inspector ... etc. ... etc.???

Somehow, it seems as though most of Wednesday was like that, but, came the evening, and the picture was radically altered.

About nine o'clock, there were suddenly quite a lot of people loafing about in the lounge and an amnesty had seemingly been declared as far as I was concerned, so as always, the time seemed to be ripe for a bit of serious boozing...and yarning!

Yarning and boozing always seem to go down a bit better when there's quiet music in the background, so I got out one of the Programme Committee tape recorders and a spool of tape thoughtfully provided by Norman Shorrocks - and music we had.

Lord only knows what we talked about that night, or even what we drank - all I do know is that good old Bob and good old Val and good old Forry and good old Mary and good old Wally and good old Bob (a different one!) and good old Barbara and the good old waiter (and so on)... all had a wonderful time, including yours truly.

I seem to remember being rather tired about two o'clock in the morning and stretching myself out on the carpet to continue the conversation in comfort... About ten-past-three I was wakened by a waiter who had the strange notion that I would be more comfortable asleep in bed! There was nobody else around - the crumbs had all crept off to bed and deserted me. On second thoughts (being a charitable sort), perhaps this conduct can be explained by the reluctance of my friends to commit a possible breach of courtesy by waking me! After all, good manners are the basis of cordial relations and nobody wants to be accused of lacking them through ignorance of the correct etiquette in foreign countries. On the other hand, perhaps they just thought I was dead.

Thursday morning started rather like Wednesday morning, and on appearing at breakfast I was relieved to see that nearly everybody looked as bad as I felt... I could have been had up for evading Purchase Tax on the fur in my mouth. However, the shredded wheat was sufficiently abrasive, and after three cups of coffee and two Alka-Seltzers (my usual convention breakfast) I felt fit enough to face the rigours of the day with some semblance of fortitude.

The day itself turned out to be a watered-down version of Wednesday and nothing of particular note occurred... At least, I don't think so! After dinner in the evening, most of the assembled mob drifted off to the Globe Tavern (that much-vaunted eyrie of the London Circleits) for an evening of debauchery. By this time, the numbers of United Kingdom

and foreign visitors were more or less equal, the former having been arriving in dribs and drabs all day, while the numbers of the latter had been swelled by the arrival of those members of the Transatlantic plane trip who had been to the Netherlands prior to attending the convention.

Thursday night was a big night at the hotel after the mob had returned from the Globe, but I have very little idea of what went on. I was absolutely dead beat by this time, and more than a little worried.

Norman Shorrocks and I had been working on the programme for just on a year and, up to the week before that of the Con, were quite convinced that everything was organized and that very little could go wrong with the programme, provided that full cooperation was received from those people directly involved. The general idea had been that I should spend the week prior to the convention in the convention hotel with a view to getting all the loose ends tied up in London. Arrangements had been made with various contractors for the supply of sound equipment, lighting gear, stage curtains, etc., which were to arrive on the Wednesday before the convention and which I was to install and have working by the Friday morning. The contractors had kept their part of the bargain, but not so the hotel. The arrangement with the hotel was that the Programme Committee should have the use of three rooms - my bedroom, a room for use as a control room, and a small office. These had all been selected for their convenience to the stage and, had everything gone as planned, no troubles would have arisen. However, all this fell through at the last minute, and the only room available for our use was my bedroom, which was being decorated. This wasn't ready for occupation until the Friday morning and the stage (which the management had decided to rebuild at the last minute) wasn't ready till the Friday afternoon. This meant that I had work to do in about seven hours which had been programmed for at least six days. Naturally it didn't get done! That's why I was worried.

With that bit of background in mind, we now come to Deadline Friday, and this is where I fell out of sight as far as the general picture at the convention was concerned so, as already arranged with that nice Mr. Madle, I'll now hand back the story to him!

Chapter 7

THE DAY THE LONCON STARTED

Friday was, allegedly, the first day of the convention. However, the word was out that little, if anything, would occur during the daylight hours of this opening day. Consequently, it was late in the afternoon by the time Pamela, Ken and I found our way to the King's Court Hotel. Registration, just a formality in America, can be quite interesting in Britain. For instance, the TAFF candidate had been registered as such in advance. However, it seems that a young lady was occupying the room reserved for the TAFF winner. After the management ejected the young lady, I carried my 100-pound suitcase up to the third floor, thinking to myself, "Ah, these English fen! What they won't do to make the TAFF man comfortable!"

The first day of the convention was a beautiful, sunny day - and I found quite a gang of fen milling about outside the convention hotel. Walter A. Willis was standing nearby, accompanied by Arthur Thomson and George Carters. I ambled over and was

introduced to Art and George by Walt. It was a pleasure to meet Art and George, as I had been an admirer of ATom's cartoon's and illustrations for quite some time. And I did want to get a close look at George Charters in his wheel-chair. George, although not as old as described by Willis many times in HYPHEN (he couldn't have been more than 65) sat there with a copy of Max Brand's "Destry Rides Again" clutched in his decrepit hands.

In a few moments Walt and I got into a friendly discussion on fandom and who is a fan, and like that. This, as some may know, is a favorite topic of Walt's and, in reality, it is amazing how voluminously Walt can discuss this subject - especially when one considers that there are so few that Walt considers fans. Anyway, I managed to get in a few digs about Rich Ellsberry and Max Keasler (two of 1952's great Trufen for those who haven't heard of them). It seems that Walt, in THE HARP STATESIDE, was quite upset because Korshak hadn't introduced these GREAT fans - instead of such decrepit relics of antediluvian fandom, such as myself. Ah, yes - but where are Ellsberry and Keasler today? In fact, where were they two years after the 1952 Chicon?

At this point I shall digress from the convention continuity and make a few statements concerning Walter A. Willis and his peculiar outlook on fandom. Walt was quite upset when I won TAFF because he, too, thought Richard Eney was a cinch to win. Admittedly, Eney was the overwhelming choice of British fen. In fact, many of the British actifen agreed to go all the way for Eney, and gave him all six points. They also campaigned madly for him, providing full-page ad after full-page ad in their many fanzines. In fact, I can visualize quite readily how, in England, there appeared to be no one else in the race.

But Walt's basic philosophy fouled him up. He refused to recognize American fandom for what it is. It is a conglomeration of convention-goers, club-members, old-time fen, and fanzine fans. And, in America it is not generally the fanzine fan who is the BNF. It is almost always the old-time fan who has been on the scene for many years. It is the old-time fan who usually runs the conventions and conferences; it is the old-time fan who gets together at the big convention parties; and it is the old-time fan who has many friends and supporters, obtained through his many years in fandom.

This is not meant to belittle the American fanzine fan, as he is fandom's continuity. He is the lifeblood of fandom. Anyone who read my "Inside Science Fiction" in Lowndes' magazines will attest to the fact that I supported fanzine fandom wholeheartedly; in fact, religiously. After all, it is today's young fanzine publisher who becomes tomorrow's old-time BNF. Through my column I was in touch with most fanzine publishers and read and reviewed their magazines. Consequently, I was well-known to them and, I believe, well-liked by them. Therefore, it was no surprise to me when many fanzine fans voted for me for TAFF.

But to Willis this was a shock. And it all reverts back to what he thinks fandom is. Walt, despite the fact that he came to America in 1952 and attended an American convention, refused to believe what he saw. He referred to Erle Korshak and Ted Dikty (who were running the convention), to E. E. Evans (who shocked the convention attendees with his speech in favor of Philadelphia over San Francisco), and to myself and Dave Kyle (who were active in smoke-filled room political hassling) as the "ghost fandom" - who come to life but once a year. He didn't realize that we all had our active areas of fandom - for instance, I was one of the officers of the Philadelphia S-F Society, which then had about thirty members, 18 of whom attended the Chicon! It was merely that we were not active in fanzine fandom at the time. But to Walt, the leaders of science fiction fandom were Rich Ellsberry, Max Keasler, Shelby Vick. And, I am afraid, when Eney didn't win TAFF, Walt's dream-world (in which he had been living for five years) shattered into nothingness. It may be that Walt's views concerning

fandom are either changing, or have changed, for he has been very much in the background since the London convention.

As an aside, it should be mentioned that Ken Bulmer won TAFF in 1955, came to America, attended a convention put on by Nick & Noreen Falasca, Ben Jason and Frank Andrasovsky (none of whom, by any stretch of the imagination, could be termed fanzine fans), visited with fans, and went back to England with a true picture of American fandom and its segments of composition. But when he tried to explain this to his British fanzine fan friends, they wouldn't believe him!

Back to the London. My little conversation with Walt ended up quite happily when we traded magazines; I gave him a copy of FUTURE SCIENCE FICTION which contained a review of HYPHEN, and he gave me a copy of THE HARP STATESIDE. The latter, incidentally, is a marvelous piece of work by a great fan - a fan who could be even greater if he would expand his viewpoint somewhat. Walt's interpretation of who is and who isn't a fan reminds me of the little story about the recent arrival in heaven who was greeted by St. Peter and taken on a tour about the place. After visiting several places of note, they came upon a small group who were all clustered together. The new arrival questioned this, and St. Peter replied, "They're the Catholics. They think they're the only ones up here."*

At about 5 p.m. the press conference was held. This was handled in a very adept manner. Among those who participated in discussions with the London newspapermen were Harry Harrison, John Victor Peterson, Ted Carnell, John Brunner and John W. Campbell. One of the reporters asked Campbell just what was the primary reason for a science fiction convention. Campbell replied that this was the face-to-face meeting of science fiction people, and the exchange of ideas that resulted. (OK. So did you expect him to say the primary reasons for a convention are to get drunk, play cards, snog, or break down hotel doors?)

Campbell was asked about circulation figures of American S-F magazines, and he mentioned 95,000 as tops. (This figure is, presumably, the number of copies of ASTOUNDING sold each issue.) John Brunner, all decked out in formal clothes, and his usual impeccable self, told about Robert Heinlein's future history series. Some of the other points discussed were the pirating of stories from S-F mags by Latin-American publications, psionics, and fandom (letters to the editor, correspondence, and fanzines). This was probably the most comprehensive S-F press conference ever held, but what the reporters did with the many pages of notes they took I'll never know. Nothing concerning S-F could be found in the papers the next few days. Maybe they just dropped in for a few drinks?

By eight o'clock Friday evening, a crowd of appreciable proportions had gathered in the lounge. Arrangements had been made by the very clever convention committee to have a bar open 24 hours a day, and already in the early hours of the evening the attendees were making the bartenders earn their salaries. One of the first Britishers I met at the bar was, curiously enough, an American. This was T. V. (Tom) Boardman who, among other things, published E. E. Smith's "Lensmen" series in hard-covers in England. It seems that Tom had adopted England as his home. Tom is a very congenial chap who, it would seem, is not making money publishing S-F in England.

About this time Dr. Paul Hammett struck up a conversation with me. Hammett, and his youthful-appearing wife, are from the island of Malta and, it seems, enjoy S-F conventions - even better than fanzines. Hammett, and his wife, are very clever, and are good for a few laughs per minute. For instance, Peter Phillips, well-known British pro, staggered by and Hammett wryly remarked, "Here is a person who is about

*The basic misunderstandings between Willis and Madle were amicably resolved through the exchange of several letters. See Appendix.

to attain critical mass". It should be mentioned that Peter Phillips is noted for his ability to attain critical mass at any provocation.

Walt Willis, I believe, was the one who introduced me to Chuck Harris this first night of the convention. Chuck I knew quite well from reading HYPHEN - and, in person, he didn't appear to be the same Chuck Harris who roasted Reverend Moorehead over the coals of Purgatory. Chuck, despite his unfortunate hearing impediment, knows what is going on and, in fact, must be a very good lip-reader. In person, Chuck is a very pleasant chap who does look like Robert Bloch!

It was now about 9 p.m. and, according to the program booklet, the convention should be getting under way. (A helluva hour for a convention to commence, but these English fen are sticklers for nonconformity, you know.) The session was short, with the Guest of Honor, JWCjr, being introduced, and the TAFF delegate, RAMjr, also being introduced. The official world convention gavel was presented to Ted Carnell, 1957's Chairman, by David A. Kyle, 1956's Chairman. And that was about it. The convention hall emptied as quickly as it had filled, and the lounge filled as quickly as it had emptied.

On the way out of the hall Sam Moskowitz grabbed my arm and said, "Let's get a breath of fresh air". This sounded rather appealing, so we walked up to Bayswater Road and stood under the amber lights. Only a few moments elapsed before it became evident to us that an unusual number of women were walking by in both directions, almost invariably looking at us in a quite friendly manner. "These gals," said Sam, "apparently are not used to seeing handsome, well-dressed Americans in this area."

Sam no sooner finished his erudite statement than one of the girls stopped by us and asked, "Would you gentlemen like to be shown a good time tonight?" To which I replied, "You mean you want to show us the nite spots?" And she said, "Oh, no! I mean myke love."

At this point Sam went into a long discussion in which he indicated that we were attending a convention and had more women than we could handle - for free. "However," said Sam, "I am an expert on sex, as I am associate editor of SEXOLOGY, an American scientific magazine specializing in the subject." The young lady was visibly impressed, and chatted with us for some time before going on to sell her wares. As she left, she remarked, "I certainly would like to have you gentlemen come with me to my apartment - very inexpensive." But Sam and I remained adamant. And this is the true, unexpurgated story of how Sam Moskowitz retained his Sense of Wonder.

Returning to the hotel, we found a party going full swing in the lounge. Forry Ackerman was singing "Sonny Boy", a la Al Jolson. Others in this chummy group were Brian W. Aldiss, one of Britain's leading S-F writers, and a very friendly fellow; Mary Dziecowski and Val Anjoorian, Dave Newman, Ron Bennett, and Ina and Norman Shorrocks. This was, I believe, my first meeting with the Shorrocks. Norm, at first blush, gives the impression of staid, conservative seriousness - an illusory impression, to say the least. His attractive wife, Ina, although not a science-fiction reader to any great extent, shares his enthusiasm for fandom and, I am told, helped considerably in the preparation of that fabulous 4,000 foot tape, "Last and First Fen". More, much more, will be said about the Shorrocks in a future chapter.

Dave Newman and Ron Bennett, after several hours of beer-drinking and fan-gabbing, suggested a little game of Brag. I had heard something about Brag (England's answer to Poker) and accepted their very kind offer to join in. At this stage of the game I don't recall too vividly who won what, but the game I found fascinating, being a lover of a card game which has money in the middle of the table. I must remind myself to introduce Three Card Monte to London the next time I visit there.

When the hotel clerk informed us that one of the hotel patrons (a faaan no less!) was complaining about the noise, I decided to retire. It was only 5 a.m., I realize, but, after all, while this was but the first day of the convention, it was my fourth day in England.

Chapter

IN SEARCH OF PICCADILLY LILLY

Saturday, September 7, started with a bang - on my bedroom door. It was the maid, who wanted to know if I would care for breakfast and that it was almost nine o'clock! The bang had started a thud-thud-thud in my head, and breakfast was something in which I was not particularly interested at the moment - or hour. So I pleasantly thanked the maid for her consideration hoping, at the same time, that she would not be so considerate on the following two mornings.

Well-awake by this time, I decided to be different - and arise early, just to see who else would be up and around at this unghodly hour. Also, thought I, this will be a good opportunity to take a "shower" as there will be little competition early in the morning. My enthusiasm for such a venture dimmed somewhat when I suddenly realized that I would be compelled to gather together all of my equipment and amble down to the end of the hall to the bathroom. (It must be indicated here that the bathroom in a London hotel is just that - a bathroom. So if anyone should be going in the direction of the bathroom for anything other than taking a bath - he is certainly wasting his time. The management does, however, provide for all possibilities and has "water-closets" conveniently scattered about, broken down according to sex.)

Fortunately, the bathroom was unoccupied. However, it certainly must have been occupied quite extensively for some time, as it was in a complete and sad state of being all messed up. A closer look at my surroundings convinced me that this bathroom hadn't seen too much cleaning during the preceding several years. Ah, yes. Shades of good old Hotel Ingalls, Bellefontaine, Ohio - as I have remarked in a prior chapter. On leaving, I couldn't help but be amused by the notice printed in bold, dark type on the bathroom door. It went thusly: "HEALTH! On leaving the BATHROOM, please see that it is as clean as you would wish to find it yourself on entering. THANK YOU." The management, thought I, certainly has a peculiar sense of humor.

Like the preceding day, but unlike the typical British day - I am told, Saturday was bright, sunny and cheery. Someone (it must have been Dave Newman) talked me into having a glass of beer for breakfast. This didn't require too much convincing, as the banquet was due to get under way at one o'clock. So at 12:30 I wended my way to the banquet hall, only to find myself engulfed in a swarming crowd, most of the members of which were pushing or being pushed about. It appeared that everyone was attempting to enter the three by six foot door at once. And it further appeared that several people were guarding the door in an effort to retard anyone from entering. I later discovered that everyone had been assigned a certain seat in the banquet hall, and that great difficulty had ensued in placing each convention attendee in his proper perspective. (This, it should be unequivocally stated, should not be attempted at future conventions.)

After some passage of time, I arrived at the entrance and was told by Joy Clarke that my seat was at the speakers' table, between Rory Faulkner and Sam Youd, both of whom were already seated. I immediately perceived that the fake fans were being separated from the TRUfans inasmuch as this table included such non-fannish people as John W. Campbell, John Wyndham, Ted Carnell, Arthur C. Clarke, John K. H. Brunner, Forrest J. Ackerman, and Dave and Ruth Kyle.

The grand old lady of fandom, Rory Faulkner, had come all the way from California for the convention. Despite her years, she is exuberant and youthful and kept up a fast pace of charming conversation. Sam Youd, who sat on my right, was comparatively quiet this p.m. - perhaps something he drank the night before.

Glancing at the program for the banquet (known as the "Inaugural Luncheon" at the Loncon) I noticed that, along with most of the others at this table, I was scheduled for a "toast", and was rather surprised. What surprised me was not that I was scheduled - as TAFF candidate I had expected to say a few words - but that my portion of the program was to say something in behalf of the Convention Committee. Now, as I just stated, I was prepared to utter a few statements, and had jotted down notes on TAFF, the recent transatlantic flight, prostitution on Bayswater Road, the Sense of Wonder, and other timely subjects. So now I had to forget all of this and, while consuming roast duck, rearrange my thoughts toward the Convention Committee. (It would have been nice, I thought, if someone had mentioned to me, prior to the banquet, the subject about which I was to speak. I say this because I do not include among my assets that of being an extemporaneous after-dinner speaker. Unlike Sam Moskowitz, I am not able to stand up, after a moment's notice, and deliver a thirty-minute lecture on the superiority of the December, 1931 Astounding as compared with the December, 1958 Astounding.)

After a fine meal (at a cost of one-third the price of the average American banquet) the Loncon President, John Wyndham (also known in previous years as John Beynon Harris and John Beynon), proposed a toast to the Queen. After the toast, John Wyndham (who has never been known as John Christopher, even though so-stated by Jim Harmon in his delightful column, "Harmony" in the September, 1958 issue of Varioso) said, "Ladies and Gentlemen - you may now smoke." It was interesting to observe the simultaneous lighting of several hundred cigarettes, cigars and pipes. Pyromaniacs would have chortled in glee at the blaze.

At any rate, the time had come for Arthur C. Clarke to introduce the Guest of Honor, John W. Campbell. Mr. Clarke stated that Mr. Campbell had published more good science fiction than had any other editor. To which, the multitude roared, "Hear, Hear!" Mr. Campbell spoke on how an editor can help or, if you will, inspire a writer. Not because, as Campbell said, the editor is smarter or more brilliant than the writer. But because the editor should know what the changing trends in S-F are - and this knowledge should, in one way or the other, be transferred to the up-and-coming writer. He stated that the writer should be cornered in the editor's office, he should be gotten to talking and, between the editor and the writer, various ideas should be kicked around, combined with ideas of others, and blended into something original. In other words, the editor doesn't originate the idea, but coordinates ideas of the past with those of the present writer, and the writer then originates.

In essence, said John W. Campbell, the right story of yesterday is certainly not the right story of today. An editor must necessarily be a prophet to keep and expand his readership. He must be able to visualize (guess, in reality) what the reader of tomorrow will want. The late lamented UNKNOWN was mentioned as an example of not figuring out the reader. While many readers were violently enthusiastic over UNKNOWN, there just weren't enough of them. Mr. Campbell's speech was well received by the audience.

It was now my turn to toast the Convention Committee. Being a veritable old gray-beard (sometimes called "relic of antediluvian fandom") I recalled the earliest convention, held in Philadelphia in October, 1936, and attended by sixteen fans, none old enough to vote. (I can still recall that at least one had developed political convictions, however, for Donald A. Wollheim, who was probably the nearest to voting age at the time, was wearing an "Alfred E. Landon for President" button!) The progress of conventions through the years was mentioned, and the incredible amount of work

necessary to put on a big convention was stressed. To the Convention Committee thanks was expressed for all the time, effort and money which had gone into creating the London World Science Fiction Convention. To those stalwarts who worked far into the night - night after night - without the profit motive in mind - without, in fact, any hope of profit - I again toast you. I toast John Wyndham and John "Ted" Carnell who administered the affair; Roberta Wild, who handled all the secretarial work; Charles Duncombe and Sandy Sanderson, who were the financial wizards; Joy and Vin Clarke, who handled the publicity for Britain, and Pamela and Ken Bulmer, the overseas publicity agents; the hardworking Programme Committee, headed up by Dave Newman and Norman Shorrock; and Walter Willis, Eric Jones, John Brunner, John Roles, Ken Slater, and all the others who helped.

Forrest J Ackerman brought the round of toasts to a conclusion with one to Absent Friends. Forry mentioned, and eulogized, those who could no longer be with us, such as H. G. Wells, Bob Olsen and Ray Cummings. (All those mentioned by Ackerman were quite elderly when they died. It is ironic to mention the group of young men who have passed away since the Loncon - Henry Kuttner, Cyril Kornbluth, Vernon McCain and Francis T. Laney.)

There were several others who spoke. Sam Moskowitz asked for the floor and Ted Carnell reluctantly released it to him. Sam had observed the 200-odd people present and had come up with the startling statement that present at the Loncon were eight fans who had also been present at the First World S-F Convention in New York, July, 1939. This group included Dave Kyle, John Victor Petersen (who, by the way, was taking notes galore and transmitting them daily to NYC to James V. Taurasi and Ray Van Houten for SCIENCE FICTION TIMES), Oswald Train, Forrest J Ackerman, Harry Harrison, John W. Campbell, Bob Madle and, of course, Sam. He went on to contrast the first convention with more recent ones. In reality, the banquet at the first one cost \$1 - this banquet, at the Loncon, cost about twice that, but was, even at that, the most inexpensive since the 1939 convention.

Several foreign science fiction fans were present at the Loncon. Lars Helander, of Sweden, said a few words anent Swedish fandom and Reiner Eisfeld, of Germany, spoke quite forcefully on fandom in Germany and emphasized that Gerfans wanted to be friends with the rest of fandom. He mentioned the German S-F Convention which was being held the following weekend and invited all to attend.

So ended the Inaugural Luncheon. No further program was planned until Saturday evening, so it was obvious that there would be a large amount of intellectual discussion and beer-drinking in the lounge for the next four or five hours.

On the way out of the banquet hall I was hailed by Dave Jenrette, who was replete with all sorts of expensive camera equipment. Dave and I were buddies from way back. He had been a member of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society from about 1949 to 1953, at which time he enlisted in the Air Force as a cadet. Now a First Lieutenant, he had been stationed in England, not too far from London, since September 1956. Dave, as some may recall, was originally known in fandom as "Dave Hammond", but upon embarking on his service career had to change his name to "Jenrette", inasmuch as that happens to be his correct name. (The U. S. Government frowns upon people entering the service under a pseudonym.)

Dave is well-known in fandom, and has been at many conventions, so it would be superfluous to devote space to a description of this tall, handsome, dashing crew-cropped lad. I must mention, however, that his many assets attracted science fiction reader Rusty Silverman, and they were married in 1955. Rusty was not at the Loncon, as she was expecting momentarily, and Dave was ready to leave the Loncon at a moment's notice. Everything developed fine, however, and Dave was able to stay both Saturday and Sunday without receiving a telephone call that he was about to become a father. The little lad arrived a week or two after the Loncon.

It was a distinct pleasure to chat with an old PSFS member and, considering the fact that I was 3,000 miles from the PSFS made it doubly pleasurable. (As a matter of fact, three more PSFS members were present at the Loncon: Will Jenkins, Jean Bogert, and Herb Schofield.) I thanked Dave for giving me some publicity as TAFF winner in the latest issue of his fanzine, and he remarked that he had predicted to several of his Anglofan-friends that I would win.

Somehow I became separated from Dave and found myself in Ken and Pamela's room, where a party was getting under way. Don't know exactly how I happened to arrive there - unless Ken and Pam invited me. Or, perhaps, maybe I merely wandered in the direction of the noise. (At this late date some of the Loncon is rather hazy.) E. C. Tubb was quite busily extricating bottles of whisky, gin and orange smash from Ken's closet, all the while maintaining a constant monologue of sadistic humor. At this point a few words must be said about that master of the serious science fiction story, E. C. (Ted) Tubb.

Several years back, before his stories appeared in America, rumors started to seep through to U. S. fandom that "...this guy Ted Tubb is the English Sam Moskowitz". The first time I came across such a statement I thought the reference was to Sam's fannish historian activities. Later I was informed that Ted Tubb was Sam's equal as a master auctioneer. And anyone who could equal Sam as an auctioneer I certainly wanted to hear. Of course, Ted has been known in fandom for many years - long before he became a top professional writer. He was a TAFF candidate in 1955, and very active in fanzine publishing. Vin Clarke later showed me a copy of EYE, a fanzine he and Ted published about 1954-55. The issue I glanced through was an incredibly bulky one of about 100 pages - one of those issues that usually results in its editor(s) leaving fandom. (Where are you, Joel Nydahl?)

At any rate, Ted had one ultimate goal in mind--no one in that room would stay sober. The group consisted of Bearded Bert Campbell and Mrs. Campbell, Ethel Lindsay, Dave and Ruth Kyle, Mrs. Ted Tubb, as well as one or two others. Despite Ted's superiority as a party-propagator, after awhile things started to become rather quiet, and the crowd slowly dissipated. (Afternoon parties at conventions almost never get off the ground.)

Following dinner in the hotel, which I shared with Ken and Pam and Sam Moskowitz, the convention attempted to roll again. (Ken and Pam were continuing to act as my official hosts and they insisted on, in addition to feeding me at their residence, paying my train fare, buying my tea and, whenever possible, providing me with a full-course meal. Yes, the TAFFman was being treated royally.)

The Achievement Awards (Hugos) were scheduled to be awarded. Unfortunately, John W. Campbell and Eric Frank Russell had not returned from dinner. Naturally, the presentation of the awards could not be considered without the presence of JWCjr. (I suppose someone suspected ASTOUNDING might possibly win one.) And, as unastounding as it may seem, ASTOUNDING did win one. Ted Carnell also collected a Hugo for NEW WORLDS. And John Victor Peterson, representing FANTASY - oops - SCIENCE FICTION TIMES, proudly accepted a tin rocket-ship for James V. Taurasi and Ray Van Houten. Roberta Wild, who presented the awards, announced that the races were quite close, with FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION giving ASTOUNDING a run for its money, NEBULA breathing hot and heavy on the heels of NEW WORLDS, and HYPHEN (edited by Walter A. Willis, an Irish fan) giving Jimmy and Ray a scare. (In reality, there was some bitterness expressed at HYPHEN being nosed out by SFT which, as someone remarked, "isn't even a fanzine".

I'm going to merely mention that the BBC appeared this evening, replete with movie cameras and like that. And all sorts of creatures and "gentlebeings" slithered, slank and cavorted in front of the cameras. I'm not sure who won the prizes, but Dave and Ruth Kyle and Belle and Frank Dietz must have been among the top contenders. I'm

not sure who won the prizes because Dave Jenrette called me aside and said, "It's getting late. What say I show you Piccadilly Circus at Saturday midnight?" This sounded like a pregnant suggestion, so off we went.

Piccadilly Circus at Saturday midnight is an incredible maze of drunks, Teddy Boys and prostitutes. The Teddy Boys, with their homemade hair waves (parted down the back) and their trousers tightly cuffed, appear to wander about the back streets immediately off the main stem. Every doorway frames a pretty young thing who can be had all night for "five pounds - including breakfast".

Rather interesting are the advertisements which can be read in the windows of some of the poorer shops immediately off Piccadilly Circus. The services provided at a minimum charge are, indeed, unusual and aren't customarily sold so outwardly in the U.S.A. I thought that these for-real advertisements might add some zest to an otherwise somber con report, so I jotted them down for future posterity. Here they are, boys, you pays yer money and you takes yer cherce:

1. YOUNG LADY MODEL (very piquant indeed). Age 17. Only interested in Money and a Good Time. Is available for private bookings. Will send value for 10s and S.A.E. to --BCM/POSTGROUP, (VPIT), London, W.C.1.

2. YOUNG GENTLEMAN (in 20's). Wishes to learn of any interesting Occupations with Financial Rewards. Try anything! S.A.E. and letters to BM/TANGI. (QA), London, W.C.1.

3. YOUNG LADY, 19, Studio, 24 hour service. (fair comp: strong build.) Letter and sample snaps, 10/- to ...BCM SHOWCASES (YLL) London, W.C. 1.

4. LOVELY YOUNG 'OXFORD' GIRLS Seek Private Engagements (London Area). Please enclose S.A.E. and 12/6 to cover preliminary expenses of Services, etc., to BCM/POSTGROUP (LYOG), London, W. C. 1.

This is really private enterprise taken to the ultimate.

Dave and I finally attempted to return to the King's Court only to make the rather disheartening discovery that all the subways had closed! Yep - the subways close at midnight in jolly old Piccadilly Circus. After hailing about 100 taxicabs, we finally found one unoccupied. Arriving at the King's Court, we found the doors locked and had to practically break them down to get into our own hotel! (This is another peculiar custom of the British - the hotels lock their doors at ten o'clock or thereabouts. I was to encounter this problem again in the near future, only under far more humorous circumstances.

As we entered, a most amazing sight could be seen. Dave Newman had, apparently, sobered up and shed his green sweater (the one with the gorgeous "Knights of St. Fantasy" emblem emblazoned thereon) and was impeccably attired in a tuxedo! And, even more startling, he had shaved! His gal, Leslie Minard (who reminded me of a cross between Audrey Hepburn and Leslie Caron) proudly stood by him in all his glory.

A stranger in our midst was Ossie Train, who was visiting his homeland for the first time in approximately thirty years. He didn't get to spend too much time at the convention, although he was there Saturday evening (Sunday morning, I should say) with his ladyfriend. (A recent postcard from Ossie informed me that he was spending a long vacation in England again this year. Something or somebody over there fascinates our Ossie.) It is always nice to see Ossie Train. I've known him since October, 1935, when we both attended the organizational meeting of the Philadelphia Science Fiction League. (This was before it changed its name to "Society".) I was a wee, sma' lad at the time, and meeting Ossie was a great thrill because I had read an article by him in that most wonderful of all fanzines, SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST. He was

a noted celebrity so far as I was concerned. Of course, in those days, anyone who had a letter in "The Reader Speaks" was a celebrity. In fact, anyone who read S-F fell into this category.

Congenial Ellis Mills approached the group and said, "Let's have a party". But by this time it was 3 a.m., and he decided to postpone it until the following night.

I can recall that the final hours of the second day of the Loncon included a discussion of contemporary S-F with Ron Buckmaster, who is one of the nicest people I met at the Loncon and who, for some odd reason, reminds me of Spencer Tracy. Ron is a career soldier stationed, I suppose, in London. Also, and this is not generally known, he is the brother of Pamela Bulmer. Yes, you have deduced it. Pam used to be known as Miss Buckmaster. As legend will have it, Ron took Pam to a meeting of the London Circle. She took one look at Ken Bulmer and said, "I just gotta know what's behind that beard". And so they were married. That is how legend will have it. In reality, Ken didn't even have a beard then. In fact, he didn't even shave - he was too young.

Ron Bennett bought me a beer at 4:30 a.m. At 4:45 a.m. I climbed the golden stairs of the King's Court, ending, for me, the second day of the Loncon.

Chapter 2

ST. FANTONY AND THE LEGION OF THE DAMNED

The phone rang menacingly. Once - twice - thrice. "Whathell..." I muttered to myself, and pulled myself up and out of the sack. But it was too late. Judging by the hour, it was probably someone looking for someone to join him at breakfast. As I mentioned previously, breakfast in London hotels is on the house. The joker in the deck is that one has to be there, knife and fork in hand, about 9 a.m. This goes over like a lead balloon with convention attendees - at least it does with the Yankee brand.

But I decided to get one free breakfast at a hotel while in England. So I hied myself down to the dining room but - yes, you guessed it - I was minutes too late! However, all turned out well, as I met Vin Clarke, who, as luck would have it, was on his way to breakfast and invited me to join him. We had an interesting chat over our eggs and bacon and, as usual, Vin insisted on picking up the TAFFman's tab. (I again want to reiterate how well the Anglofen treated me. And, considering the fact that I wasn't the choice of the huge majority of them, they certainly went all out with the hospitality. Even not considering said fact, they treated me royally.)

On the way back to the King's Court (in Leinster Gardens) we came across Ted Carnell and his girl Friday - and this was Sunday! - who obligingly posed for a color snapshot. This turned out very well and is one of the fifty or sixty that I now show on my nationwide tour of fandom. (Lynn Berman - a nonfan - is Ted's girl Friday. And, considering the fact that she is a nonfan, it must be stated that she was quite popular with the fans. In reality, the fact that she is a nonfan was probably not even considered by the inner circle.

Back at the hotel, I met Paul Enever. Paul I remembered as having been active back about 1939. I gathered that Paul, who is a quiet, unassuming gentleman - and a horticulturist by trade - had been out of fandom for many years and had returned about 1950. His fanzine, ORION, was, for a long time, a reliable monthly publication. However, as reliable monthly publications in the fan world are wont to do, it became an unreliable semi-annual. It is now published under the aegis of Roberta Wild and cohorts, and the first of the new issues maintains the fine pace set by Paul.

About this time Eric Jones, President of the Cheltenham Club whom I remembered primarily because of the lengthy letter he had sent to TRANSURANIC when it was the official organ of the Charlotte Science Fiction Society, ambled over to me and pressed a note into my hand. It enigmatically informed me to be at the convention hall, first row, at 2:30, and my contention that "I am, too, a TRUFAN - Eney says so!" would be validated or invalidated.

"Nothing," said I, "will deter me from proving indisputably my contention." Inwardly I was not so positive. After all, how could I class myself with the TRUFANS - with such legendary figures as Rich Ellsberry and W. Max Keasler? I noticed the appalled looks on the faces of Sam Moskowitz, Forrest J Ackerman and David A. Kyle, who overheard my conversation with Eric. "How," asked Forry, "do you expect to attain such immortality? Trufandom is only for the chosen few - only for those upon whom Ghod has chosen to bestow this wreath of foreverness." To which Sam and Dave sagely muttered, "Yea, verily, and forsooth."

The appointed hour arrived. I pushed my way through the thronging multitude and took my seat in the front row. Sitting with me were Rory Faulkner, Bob Silverberg, Ellis Mills, Frank Dietz - and were there one or two others?--all with eyes aglow awaiting the time-honored "Ceremony of St. Fantony". The lights dimmed in the auditorium; stirring Wagnerian music from "The Ride of the Valkyrie" crescendoed through the auditorium like angry waves of the ocean deep; and, on the stage, stood several creatures dressed in ancient costume, one of whom was reading the scroll that told of the history of St. Fantony and of how only those who were able to drink of the waters of St. Fantony were permitted access into the revered ranks of Trufandom. Following the ceremony, a water tumbler full of the Water of St. Fantony was placed in the hands of each of the candidates and we were told to drink.

And drink we did of the Water of St. Fantony - and never shall I drink of said water again! I took one swallow, and a second, and then a third - but the third met the first coming up, while the second never went down. I was later told that the "water" was 140-proof Polish vodka! But, inasmuch as I valiantly forced the water tumbler's contents down, I became, forevermore, a TRUFAN! And, to this very day, I humbly and proudly wear the emblem of St. Fantony on my Tuxedo.

Seriously, the Ceremony of St. Fantony is quite impressive, and Eric Jones, Bob Richardson and the other members of the Cheltenham group are to be congratulated for the incredible amount of effort that went into the production. And, as a matter of fact, I felt quite proud to be a member of the revered order.

The rest of Sunday's program consisted, primarily, of movies. I didn't see too many of them - but I did catch the excellent fan movies produced by Norm Shorrock and the Liverpool mob - a real George crew if there ever was one. Norm and the boys and gals have a knack of combining the tape recorder with their movies, and the results are something quite professional.

The feature cartoon, "Mr. Wonderbird," consumed the largest portion of the evening's program but it was difficult to see from where Sam Moskowitz and I were sitting, so we, and many others, adjourned to the bar for beer and discussion.

Ellis Mills was having his big room party Sunday evening and he was telling all and sundry to be up there about 11:00. Ellis was the proud possessor of a mighty large room and when I arrived, in the company of Sheldon Deretchin ("Boy Ugh!") as I very dimly recall, the joint was really rocking. Fans were standing, laying - oops - lying, all over the place. Lawrence Sandfield was strumming away mightily on his git-fiddle to the utter delight of all attendees. Drinks were flowing freely - and everyone was having a fine time when somebody said to be quiet because the phone was ringing. Yep - you guessed it - it was the manager, who said he was sorry but he was trying to sleep and to take our party somewhere else. (This, incidentally, was

the only complaint by the management. Of course, it was the only wild party held during the convention. If the Loncon was lacking in anything, it was wild parties. Usually, at Worldcons, there are several being held simultaneously. It seems that the bar and lounge being open 24 hours a day eliminated the need for parties.)

So the party flowed out of Ellis Mills' suite and down several flights to Jean Bogert's room. Jean had a room perhaps half the size of Ellis's, but everyone managed to get in there - a tight fit to say the least. An interesting phenomenon that comes to mind was the snogging match between Sam Moskowitz and Daphne Buckmaster - with Daphne's husband smiling benevolent approval. (It should be mentioned that the British wives have a peculiar custom of snogging in public - so long as their spouses are nearby. Many of you will recall that "Snog in the Fog" was one of the selling points of London being awarded the convention. Anyone for Kettering - or Birmingham, I should say?)

The party lasted well into the night. I recall slipping over to Ted Carnell's room for a little nip and a bit of movie-making. There were some assorted fan types present, but I had had it. The third day of the convention was over, thought I.

But not quite. I decided to take one last look at the lounge and, sure enough, gentlebeings were still slithering about. Dave Kyle, with a mysterious glance to his right and to his left, called me aside.

"Bob," whispered Dave, "how would you like to be on hand for the business meeting in the morning?"

"This," replied I, "sounds real enticing. What's up?"

Dave informed me that two World Science Fiction Society Directors were to be elected. One of the nominees was Art Kingsley, a friend of Dave's and a member of the New York S-F Circle. Dave had the jolly idea of making the WSFS really international and wanted to nominate a Britisher. "And who," asked Dave, "is more international than Dave Newman?" "Quite so," agreed I. And would I second Dave's nomination of Dave? (Kyle nominating Newman.) This I agreed to do, never anticipating the intrigue going on at that very moment which would eventually culminate in one of fandom's most vicious feuds.

Chapter 10

THE DAY THE LONCON ENDED

Business sessions in London are just as poorly attended as they are in the colonies. I have never attended a business session at which there were more than a handful of brave early-risers present. The Loncon, perhaps, did a little better in this respect as there were approximately thirty fans on hand. This despite the fact that World Science Fiction Society Directors were to be elected and 1958's convention site was to be voted on. (Of course, it should be indicated that 1958's convention site was cut and dried - no possible competition. Ordinarily, the voting for the following year's convention is one of the real high-spots of the entire affair and is given an early Monday afternoon space on the program to elicit as much attendance as possible.)

Dave Kyle, the old fan politician, was quite happy to see that I had managed to arise early enough to make this 11:00 a.m. session. I was under the impression that I was to second Dave Newman's nomination. However, Dave informed me that I was intended to nominate Newman - that he, Dave, was nominating the only other candidate, Art

Kingsley, public relations expert and New York S-F Circle member. I was completely agreeable with this, as I felt that Dave had certainly worked hard enough to deserve this unquestionable honor.

As I watched Dave pulling the strings on the WSFS election, I couldn't help but think back to a similar day, eighteen years prior. As stated above, Dave was always quite happy in the role of the fan politician and, even in 1939, this tendency displayed itself. Some of you, through reading THE IMMORTAL STORM, remember the famous pamphlet passed about the morning of the first day of the NYCON which started off thusly: "Beware of the Dictatorship!" and went on to instruct the attendees to be wary of any move made by the unholy trio (Moskowitz, Sykora and Taurasi). While the pamphlet resulted in the barring of Wollheim, Michel, Lowndes, Pohl, Kornbluth and Gillespie, old smoothie Dave (who wrote, printed and distributed the pamphlet) was permitted access. Throughout the years Dave has been quite active in "smoke-filled rooms" at conventions and, as another example, worked hard to sway public opinion in favor of the Philly Phans when the PSFS pulled one of fandom's biggest upsets by easily winning the 1953 convention away from the Little Men of San Francisco.

Dave is a very fascinating character and his fanac goes back a long way. He was writing letters to prozines back in 1934, and some of you may be startled to learn that he sold a story to WONDER STORIES in 1935, when he was but fifteen years old! The April, 1936 issue of WONDER announces as coming next issue - "The Golden Nemesis," by David A. Kyle. However, fate intervened, for the April issue was the last under Gernsback. The magazine was peddled to Standard Magazines (under the aegis of Leo Margulies) and all material on hand was, apparently, returned. Some years later this story did show up in STIRRING SCIENCE STORIES, I believe. Of course, Dave was also a super-active fan in the years preceding WWII and, to a certain extent, has been active since the end of the war. But enough of Kyle at this time (except to say that Dave and I have always been the best of friends, even when on opposite sides of the fence) and on with the business meeting.

Looking about the room I noticed many familiar faces: Bob Silverberg, Boyd Raeburn, Joy and Vin Clarke, Chuck Harris, Sam Moskowitz, John Roles, Ken Bulmer, Ron Bennett, Bobbie Wild, Will Jenkins, Norman Shorrocks, Frank and Belle Dietz, and about fifteen others. Ted Carnell called the meeting to order and asked for nominations for WSFS Directors. Dave responded with a well-done spiel for his man, Art Kingsley. "Any other nominations?" I raised my hand - but what was this? Joy Clarke was vigorously waving her hand, and she was awarded the floor. Joy nominated Belle Dietz and it was rather obvious that Dave and Ruth Kyle were visibly annoyed at this turn of events. My nomination of Newman followed. The voting ("vote for two of the three") was as follows: Dietz, 21; Newman, 16; Kingsley, 15. At the time I didn't think too much of the results, even when Dave stated publicly that he had been double-crossed. But this was the beginning (to my knowledge, at least) of the infamous feud which still persists and which resulted in the death of the World Science Fiction Society.

Only one other business matter remained: election of the following year's consite. Forry Ackerman nominated "South Gate in '58", explaining the fine fannish tradition behind this battle-cry. Rory Faulkner seconded the nomination and it was approved unanimously. What had started out as a "tongue-in-cheek" fannish slogan more than a decade before had actually materialized. Which proves that no one should underestimate the powers of Trufandom.

In an effort to idle away a few hours during the long plane-flight from New York to London, Forry, Sam Moskowitz and I participated in a battle of wits in which we asked very difficult questions of each other. Sam would toss one out and give Forry and me the chance to answer it; then it would be Forry's turn, etc. Some of the spectators thought something like this would go over real well at the convention -

so we were prodded into asking Carnell what he thought. Ted was agreeable, and we were scheduled for a battle to the finish on Monday afternoon, following John W. Campbell's speech on Psionics.

But good old fate intervened again. Dave Newman (who was monitoring this portion of the program) found the three of us in the lounge and excitedly stated, "Campbell's supposed to go one, and he's nowhere around. If he doesn't show in ten minutes, can you boys go on then?"

"It will be the walk of a moment for us to appear on the platform," solemnly stated Sam.

JWC did not appear in the next ten minutes - and three of the most decrepit relics of antediluvian fandom went on in his stead. Dave Newman explained the game to the multitude that had assembled to hear JWC. Each contestant would be asked a total of ten questions. For instance, Madle, sitting on the left would ask a question of Sam. Sam would then pose one for Forry. Then Forry would toss one at Madle. One point would be given for each correct answer. If a contestant couldn't answer, or could answer only partially, he would be informed of the correct answer.

The questions were exceedingly difficult. As a matter of fact, we were accused by some of being fakes - "...because no one could know that much about science fiction". Let me admit that the questions were somewhat slanted. After all, we knew each other's areas of proficiency. And each of us knew that if one of us double-crossed another by asking an utterly unfair question like "Who has the cover story in the current ASTOUNDING?", he would be asking for retaliation in kind.

Three questions immediately come to mind. Most of the others I have forgotten. Sam asked Forry one from his province, the scienti-film: name all Frankenstein pictures from the beginning that have been released. Forry came through handily, and the audience was visibly impressed. Forry asked me to name a magazine that appeared in 1931 with only two issues; the dates of the two issues; the editor and publisher; the cover artist and stories illustrated; and the authors of the cover stories. I quickly clocked off all the answers to this question anent Harold Hersey's MIRACLE, SCIENCE AND FANTASY STORIES. The other crowd-pleaser was the final question of the game, which I asked Sam: Name every story by Stanley G. Weinbaum, and the publication in which it appeared! This one really shook up the audience as Sam methodically answered it perfectly.

The game ended in a dead heat, with each contestant having missed one question. However, in each case a portion of the question had been answered. Perhaps at some future convention the three relics can take to the stand again in a rematch.

Following the contest, Sam stayed on the platform and discussed his remarkable "Market Survey of Science Fiction", which he compiled from statistics gathered from more than 300 questionnaires returned by fans and general readers of science fiction. These statistics, when computed and analyzed, displayed the "amazing" fact that readers of AMAZING STORIES are somewhat older than readers of ASTOUNDING! In fact, practically the same group that reads AMAZING also reads ASTOUNDING, indicating there is no "juvenile" group toward which certain publications were slanted. (The demise of IMAGINATION and IMAGINATIVE TALES and the emergence of the "new" AMAZING back up Sam's original contentions.) Other deductions (backed up by cold statistics) are that 75% of S-F readers are adults, and that the reading habits of general readers and fans are relatively the same. Sam also stated that a very small percentage of circulation loss would kill innumerable publications. In this respect, Sam really hit the nail on the head when one considers the number of publications killed in the past year or so.

Following Sam, John W. Campbell, Jr., went on - and his subject was Psionics. JWCjr stated that much of magic can be explained by chemistry and physics - and some by Psionics. He went on to mention a report the Department of Agriculture couldn't publish because "...it didn't conform to accepted science". Science, said John, is suspicious of accepting results it doesn't even understand itself. Psionics, in its present stage, can be advanced only by intelligent amateurs, as results cannot be accepted by professional research testing. This type of research (by intelligent amateurs) is "...the first step in the creation of a science". The talk was followed by questions and answers and a demonstration of a psionics machine constructed by Eric Jones. Whether anyone got sticky fingers, I do not know.

Sam and I had intended to look over Ken Slater's enormous book display which was located on the landing between the first and second floors of the hotel. This appeared to be a likely time to do it - as Ken was just about ready to pack up and call it a convention. While Sam pawed through the musty old tomes, I struck up a conversation with a couple of gentlemen who, in turn, mentioned that they enjoyed very much the questions and answers, as they were S-F readers from the year one. Their names are John Briston and Mr. Wren (his first name eludes me). Their knowledge of S-F amazed me and I asked them if they would care to join us in dinner and continue the conversation. Wren had previous plans, but Briston, a local Londonite, accepted and we had a good old gabfest on current S-F as contrasted with Gernsbackian stuff. Forry Ackerman and his charming companion, Mary Dziechowski, joined us at the restaurant and added much to the conversation.

Sometime after I returned to the States I was quite pleased to receive a letter from John Briston, who expressed surprise that Sam and I, who were very well-known to him, should spend so much time with someone who had never attended a convention before and who, in fact, had never even had a letter in a lettercolumn. John didn't realize that both Sam and I are continuously looking for John's type: the general reader who has an intensive interest in S-F, yet never entered fandom. In fact, we agree that entering fandom is a rare freak of chance, and there are thousands of genuinely interested readers of S-F, all of whom are potential fans. Many of these potential fans send for fan magazines upon seeing them reviewed in prozines. And it is necessary that something in the fanzine they send for pertain to the field they know and love - science fiction. Otherwise they go back to their reading and collecting - lost to fandom forever.

The convention closed with a party - by invitation only. It was a catered affair, sponsored by Belle and Frank Dietz, and dedicated to the Convention Committee. It was set up in the hotel lounge, screened off from the outside world. There were no drinking matches or snogging matches; everyone had a quietly good time - although there was plenty of liquor available. All one had to do was beckon to one of the men in white who would rush over and fill one's glass. But, by this time, everyone wanted merely to sit around and relax with drink in hand. Movies were shown, and the famous three-hour-long tape, "Last and First Fen" was played. Although I had heard this tape before (at a meeting of the Washington S-F Association) I found it even more interesting the second time. Norm Shorrocks and the Liverpool mob are to be congratulated for their marvelous piece of work. (By the way, any fan group who hasn't heard this should make every effort to do so. I understand there are several copies of it floating about the States. Sometime back I sent a tape to Ted White so he could make a copy for me - but no results as yet. Ted, are you listening?)

The official portion of the convention ended for me with Dave Newman, Sheldon Deretchin, Will Jenkins and I appropriately drinking a final bheer. The convention was, indeed, over. However, strange, unusual and esoteric were my fannish adventures yet to come.

Chapter 11

WITH ROD AND GUN THROUGH INCHMERY FANDOM

Those of you who have been following this sordid saga from the beginning may recall that fifty-or-so-odd KLM Royal Dutch Airlines passengers were met on arrival in London by a group consisting of Ted Carnell, Ken Bulmer, Brian Lewis, and H. P. "Sandy" Sanderson. When Ken introduced Sandy to me as "Joan Carr", I knew immediately that I was in the presence of one of the members of that very active and outspoken trio commonly known as "Inchmery Fandom"; the other two being Joy and Vin Clarke. I also immediately perceived that "Joan Carr" represented the group who had been somewhat shocked when the TAFF winner was announced. But, primarily through some fast legwork by Bob Pavlat, the situation had been clarified. Also, the tense situation had lessened when Dick Eney, Inchmery's Cherce, sent a dittoed letter to all concerned saying, "Bob Madle is definitely a science fiction fan - not a flying saucer adherent". Following this disclosure, it became evident that the shook-up group was eagerly anticipating meeting me so we could discuss our collections, trade magazines, and talk about our favorite authors and their best stories.

And, to show there was no ill-feeling, Sandy forthwith invited me to spend a few days following the convention with Inchmery Fandom. And, to show there was no ill-feeling on my part, I immediately accepted. Besides, I never look a gift horse in the mouth.

While we're on the subject of invitations and Anglohospitality, permit me to mention several other very kind offers I had received. Walt Willis, during one of our discussions, asked me to fly over to Ireland and spend a few days at Oblique House. While I was quite tempted to take advantage of this kind gesture, the trip did not materialize. Another offer was from Dave Newman, speaking for the Liverpool mob. Dave suggested I come up to Liverpool the weekend following the Loncon. He promised a real M-A-D time. Considering the proximity of London to Liverpool, and also considering the hedonistic group that comprises the LASFAS, I accepted.

Anyway, back to the morning following the day the Loncon ended, September 10, 1957. I had breakfast with the Clarkes and Steve Schultheis. Joy and Vin told me not to wander far from the hotel, as we would soon be leaving for Inchmery in a rented van. The rented van was to carry piles of books, magazines, tape equipment and like that back home.

The news that I intended to spend the weekend with the Liverpool mob had, apparently, spread rapidly, for I had three separate and distinct offers of companionship: Steve Schultheis, GDA operator for the State of Ohio; Will Jenkins, the fan and then-President of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society; and Sheldon Deretchin, New York fan, to whom we later applied the affectionate appellation, "Boy Ugh!" The more, the merrier, thought I, and so I informed Dave Newman to prepare for a real orgy the coming weekend. Dave said, "Fear not. I shall obtain sufficient quarters for thee and thy cohorts". So saying, he provided me also with traveling information from London to Liverpool, making definite arrangements so we could be met at the train station Friday afternoon.

By this time, the van had arrived, and we were off for Inchmery. "We" being Joy, Sandy, the driver, and yours truly - Vin had hastened home so there would be somebody to greet us. He later confided that he had really left early so he could do some housecleaning preparatory to the arrival of the TAFF delegate. They take TAFF delegates seriously at Inchmery - even old relic types.

We were finally off, with two of us bouncing about in the back of the van on forever-shifting piles of ASTOUNDINGS. Suddenly the van started to make all sorts of weird noises, jerked spasmodically, and stopped. The driver informed us that it appeared that the van had broken down and to wait right there while he relayed this information to headquarters and that they would have a replacement van there in practically no time. Disembarking, we found ourselves somewhere uptown in London - right in front of a gigantic monument. Unfortunately, I neglected to discover to what or to whom the monument was dedicated. However, I shall always remember that imposing structure of granite as being the monument dedicated to "Where the Van Broke Down On Its Way to Inchmery".

After about fifteen minutes, the driver informed us it would take longer than he had anticipated. So we proceeded to take color photos of each other. I also walked up to the main drag - positioned myself in the middle of the street and took a photo of a smiling bobby, who condescendingly posed for me. After all, what is a trip to London without a photo of a bobby? I also got in a couple of a rather large stream called The Tams, or something like that.

The replacement van finally arrived and we managed to make it to Inchmery, the abode of the Clarkes and Sanderson. The affable trio lived (they have now moved, as many of you know) in a second-floor apartment, with the main room functioning as kitchen, living room, library and reproduction (of fanzines, that is) department. Science fiction magazines, tape recorders, mimeographs, and typewriters were to be found everywhere. Behind the dining table was the majority of Vin's collection, which included early WONDERS, AMAZINGS, et cetera. They were so filed that it is conceivable that if an especially heavy truck were to go down the street while someone was eating his Wheaties, he might find his bowl partially covered with old WONDER Flakies. Anyway, the room had a real fannish atmosphere and Joy, Vin and Sandy made me feel at home immediately. As a matter of fact, Sandy was so kind that he gave me his bedroom and slept on the folding bed amidst all the magazines, tape recorders and typewriters.

It seemed that we had been home only a few minutes when Joy came in with a gigantic, steaming bowl of omelet, which was the most delicious omelet I had ever tasted. It seems that Joy is noted for her omelets and, apparently, is also noted for fattening up her guests. Joy was forever placing food of some sort on the table - even to a full meal at midnight! No wonder I gained about ten pounds during my stay in England. Of course, several gallons per day of various hues of beer (light to dark) had something to do with it also.

Following dinner we listened to a very lengthy tape from Bob Bloch and Dean Grennell - most of which consisted of Bloch recounting his adventures at the Clevelention. Then we all said nice things to Bloch and Grennell. I remember saying that Inchmery Fandom was sercon, and had old WONDERS in their kitchen to prove it. I used (and use) the term "sercon" to mean "serious-constructive" in the broad sense, and not in the manner of implying scorn, as defined by Tucker and Raeburn. It seems that even if "sercon" did originally mean something else, like many other words and terms, general usage has resulted in it meaning "serious-constructive".

And that evening we had visitors. For this was the evening of "The Meeting at the Summit". The visitors were Walt and Madelaine Willis and Ken and Pamela Bulmer. This group, plus our quartet, made a jolly combined meeting of eight. The meeting was Ken's baby, and he had planned this so-called "Meeting at the Summit" to be somewhat different than what it finally materialized as. Ken's original plan was to have a meeting at the Loncon of himself, Walt and me. Ken had suggested that I invite several people who shared my opinions anent TAFF to attend. (He suggested Moskowitz and Ackerman.) This was so I wouldn't feel completely outnumbered in any TAFF discussion. However, plans of mice and men gang aft agley - and the meeting did not occur at the Loncon.

It was obvious from the start that the meeting would be a success, as everyone was happy and glowing and in compromising moods. The various facets of TAFF were hashed over, such as who may vote, who may be nominated, and who is a fan. My fading memory indicates that Ken and Vin were rather neutral about the whole thing, with Walt and me expressing somewhat conflicting views at times. In general, Walt's definition of an S-F fan was far more rigid than mine. Walt wanted to limit the voting to fanzine fans, publishers, and/or writers - while I wanted to include anyone who was interested enough in science fiction to communicate with others in some manner, be it correspondence, attending conventions, or joining local fan clubs. A compromise was reached whereby members of fan organizations of all types would be eligible; also eligible would be anyone who had subscribed to a fanzine. I felt these concessions were fair, and was fully satisfied.

Those of you who do not know Walt personally would find him to be a very enjoyable person - even though you might not agree with him at times. Walt is tall, handsome and seems to have a determined glare in his eyes, a glare which appears to give one the impression that this young man has a mission in life. His mission that evening was to keep TAFF from going to the dogs - ooops - convention fans and, I suppose, he knew that I represented a science fiction fandom much larger and more inclusive than fanzine fandom. Anyway, after much friendly discussion, a blueprint for TAFF was drawn up and agreed to. This blueprint was written up and published by Ken Bulmer in his OMPazine, STEAM. I am republishing it here and now so everyone will know what TAFF is, and the rules and regulations that apply to it:

1. A permanent Two-Way TransAtlantic Fan Fund shall be set up to help both British and American Fen to attend each other's conventions. (This category includes Irish, Canadian and Continental fans, also.)
2. The ballot shall be secret. Each fan must sign his own paper and no proxy votes are allowed.
3. Each voter is to be allowed a first, a second and a third choice. If he wishes, he may leave blank any place, 1st, 2nd or 3rd, on the voting paper. He may not vote for one fan more than once. The first choice shall receive 3 points, the second 2, and the third 1. Highest total of points elects.
4. Should the elected candidate prove unable to travel, the second shall be offered the opportunity and also the third, provided that they each received more than a quarter of the total votes cast.
5. Each candidate must sign a declaration that he or she is willing to go, come what may, save an impossible situation, such as an Act of God.
6. Each candidate must be nominated by a panel of five well-known fen, three from his side of the Atlantic and two from the other.
7. The leading nominator must provide an election platform of about one hundred words, detailing why it is considered their candidate should be elected to TAFF.
8. Fen on both sides of the Atlantic shall be allowed to vote in all elections, irrespective of which way the fund is operating each year.
9. A minimum sum shall be donated to the fund - at the present it is 2/6d or 50¢ - to entitle any one fan to vote. More donations over and above this are both welcome and requested.
10. In order to be entitled to vote, a person shall be a science fiction fan and shall, to show this, be active in fandom to the extent of having subscribed

to or contributed to or published at least one fanzine or have joined a reputable fanclub or organization prior to six months before the closing date for nominations (in both cases). This is a matter for the conscience of the fan; the decision on any point is the administrator's, and that is final.

The above are the rules as agreed to by Walt Willis, Ken Bulmer and Bob Madle - witnessed by Vin Clarke, Joy Clarke, Madelaine Willis and Sandy Sanderson. They were explicitly followed in the last election, and they are being just as explicitly followed this time. So be it.

I might add that merely because someone attends a meeting or two of a fanclub he does not automatically become eligible to vote. It must be proved (if the Administrator should question the ballot) that he is a fan, and not just somebody's wife or mistress who has no interest in science fiction other than to have a big time with a bunch of offbeat characters.

When I arose Wednesday I found waiting for me, in addition to Joy and Vin (Sandy was uptown - at work, I believe - he's a soldier stationed in London), a letter from Don Ford. Don was worried about the reception I was receiving in England, so I immediately sat down and wrote a note to him saying that Dick Eney, himself, couldn't have received a better or more hospitable reception. Yes, TAFF seemed to be in for some smooth sailing on calm waters during the next two years, thought I.

Wednesday morning was consumed by long discussions on science fiction and fandom. Joy is a voracious reader and is more up-to-date on contemporary science fiction than is Vin. On the other hand, Vin is an old-time collector and has a collection that goes back just about to the beginning. Vin has an excellent memory for the old-time stuff and we had a good time exchanging comments and views. As I mentioned in an earlier chapter, Vin proved himself to be a "sercon" fan - and here I am using my definition, which is certainly meant to be complimentary. In fact, Vin is my definition of "The Compleat Fan" - reader, collector, corresponder, club member, convention-goer, fanzine writer and fanzine publisher. I sincerely feel that to be a 100% "Compleat Fan" one must have participated, to a certain extent, in all the facets of fandom mentioned above. However, participation in any one of the facets makes one a science fiction fan, as far as I'm concerned.

We spent some time going through the Inchmery fanzine collection, and I came across a gigantic issue of a fanzine called EYE - 164 pages, with our Vin as editor, along with Ted Tubb and Stuart Mackenzie. This must certainly be one of the largest (if not the largest) fanzine ever published. I also looked over the early issues of HYPHEN, many of which I do not have. The morning flew by rapidly and soon it was time for another delicious lunch. The rest of the afternoon, I spent writing up the convention for "Inside Science Fiction" (the department that appeared in SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY, not Ron Smith's fanzine).

My typewriter pounding was interrupted by Joy, who excitedly said I had a long distance call from Leeds. I dashed downstairs, picked up the phone, and prosaically said "Hello". A voice, heavily laden with a cultured British accent said, "Hello, Bob. Mike Rosenblum here!" J. Michael Rosenblum, an old correspondent of mine from pre-war days, had heard from Ron Bennett that I was going to be in Liverpool over the coming weekend and suggested that I come over to Leeds (only about 100 miles from Liverpool) and spend a couple of days with him. It was certainly a pleasure hearing from someone out of the dim, distant past and I told Mike I would call him from Liverpool on Saturday morning, giving him a definite reply. J. Michael Rosenblum is one of the real old-time fans, one who has devoted many years to science fiction, and, like Vin, has participated in all phases of science fiction and fandom. I would say, however, that collecting has always been his number one interest - and he had one of the most extensive collections extant. But more, much more, about Mike Rosenblum and his collection will be told in a future chapter.

Joy is an expert on English culture and traditions and she wanted to make sure the TAFF candidate, just once, spent some time on something other than fans and science fiction. And so she planned the trip to Knole. The trip (which took care of most of Thursday the 12th) included a long bus ride through the beautiful rustic English countryside. It takes a trip like this to make one realize that he is covering ground that is so steeped with history that it is almost as if one were reliving the past. One little town was pointed out to me by Vin as being the birthplace of Shakespeare.

The Knole is a huge and ancient castle located in Kent, some 35 or 40 miles from London. It is one of the principal historical landmarks of the area and, although its beginnings are obscure, it is said to date back to the reign of King John, in the early part of the 13th century. The Knole is a massive and sombre structure, built of gray ragstone. It is also said that its 7 courtyards correspond to the days of the week, its 52 staircases to the weeks of the year, and its 365 rooms to the days of the year. In other words, what I am trying to say is, "This shack is like real big!"

Joy, Vin, Sandy and I spent several hours going through the place from stem to stern - or from courtyard to bedroom. The lecturer quite adeptly covered The Knole's history - and it sounded like a history of England. Such names as Queen Mary, Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn, John Dryden, Queen Elizabeth and John Donne were dropped at various intervals. And, I believe, the names of Thomas More and Jonathan Swift were also mentioned as having some affiliation with The Knole. (This adds a science fictional flavor to The Knole after all!)

After leaving The Knole, we had a delicious repast in a quaint restaurant in the nearby town. This entire town gave me the impression of having existed without change for 500 years. In fact, it reminded me of the old WEIRD TALES type of story about the ancient city that appears only once every thousand years. Yes, I know; there was a play with that plot, too - "Brigadoon" was its name. But WEIRD TALES did it first.

We arrived back in London just in time to make the last few hours of the London Circle meeting. All of the Americans were still in town, so there was quite a massive gathering at the Globe. At this stage of the game, one London Circle meeting seems to flow into other London Circle meetings. However, I do remember that there must have been about forty fans present in various parts of the bar. And I do remember having enjoyable chats with Arthur C. Clarke, Sam Youd (John Christopher), John F. Burke, Ron Buckmaster, and several others before the witching hour arrived.

And so, back to Inchmery - with a new series of fannish adventures to start on the morrow.

Chapter 12

THE LIVERPOOL CAPER

It seemed to be the unanimous opinion of just about everyone that no TAFF winner (or any other type of winner, for that matter) should leave Merrie Olde England without spending a few days in Liverpool. Not that Liverpool is noted for its scenic wonders or its historical landmarks - in reality it is a large (approximately 1,000,000 people) industrial city similar to Pittsburgh - and who would want to go to Pittsburgh, except to visit Pittsburgh science fiction fans? And this is the only reason a fan would want to go to Liverpool - for of the 1,000,000 who inhabit this vast metropolis, almost 20 are members of the Liverpool Science Fiction Society.

Ken Bulmer was the first to suggest that I not miss a weekend with this M-A-D group. (They utilize "M-A-D" as their trademark on films, fanzines and other emanations

- I believe it stands for Mersey and Dee-side, which are two rivers in the Liverpool area.) After I was announced TAFF winner, Ken wrote asking about my plans and mentioned, quite casually, that if my plans didn't include Liverpool, they should be revised somewhat. I didn't know any of the group personally, or through correspondence, although I had read their club publication, SPACE DIVERSIONS, and had read material by Norm Shorrocks, John Roles and Dave Newman. What with the Kettering convention writeups and Dave Newman's articles on booze, I felt a kinship for this group. Also, Eddie Jones appealed to me as a fan artist, and John Roles wrote the collector-type article that I liked. And it also seemed to me that a couple old first-fandomites hung out in the area, such as Leslie J. Johnson. So there seemed to be a lot for me in Liverpool.

And when Dave Newman, whose articles in fanzines do not belie his real-life activities, invited me to visit the group the weekend following the convention, I accepted with alacrity.

Friday, the 13th of September, dawned bright and early - I am told. However, no one at Inchmery was aware of it. We had had a full day on the 12th and had planned not to rise too early. We weren't up and about too long before Joy had prepared another of her delicious dinners and, following this, we were all off to the train station to catch the Liverpool Limited. (I was to catch it, but Inchmery Fandom came along to see that I did.)

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the trip to Liverpool appeared so enticing that I had three offers of companionship: Steve Schultheis, fandom's Adolphe Menjou; Will Jenkins, the fan who is not to be confused with the Murray Leinster Will Jenkins; and Sheldon Deretchin, of New York, a convention-goer and sometime fanzine publisher.

By the time Joy, Vin, Sandy and I dashed into the station, it was rather close to train time, and my colleagues had already arrived and, in fact, had become quite concerned about my lack of arrival. Also present to send us off in grand style was Tony Klein, a young, good-looking London fan of about early voting age. I had noticed that Tony and Ron Bennett had one thing in common - Lynn Berman, mentioned in previous chapters as Ted Carnell's Girl Friday. At Globe meetings and during the Loncon they both showered her with attention and, I suppose, could be considered friendly rivals.

The train finally took off with several jerks, and we were on our way. If I remember correctly, this was about 1:30 p.m., and the trip was to take about three hours. How to kill the three hours? We had been informed that there was a bar on the train - but we couldn't find it, and finally asked someone. He said that it must be on the other train that had left for Liverpool approximately the same time as this one. Just our luck - imagine taking the train without the bar!

So we settled down and someone said, "Let's give birth to some interlineations". This appeared to be a pregnant suggestion, as Steve and I had mentioned some time before the appalling lack of interlineations being promulgated about the Loncon. (Maybe we weren't listening to the right people - but Steve is a member of the Goon Defective Agency, and his opinion must be considered quite gravely on a matter such as this.) So we came up with interlineations galore which, it was suggested, could be distributed to con-report writers so they could be sprinkled throughout the reports, giving them an air of authenticity. Rather than sprinkle them throughout this report, I shall devote the next paragraph or so to solid, concentrated, unadulterated interlineations - sort of like the back page of HYPHEN, you know.

I DON'T MIND THE SMELL OF A BURNING CIGARETTE, BUT THE BURNING SKIN I DON'T CARE FOR ... WE'LL MAKE THIS AN INTERLINEATED LONCON YET ... "BUT THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN SAID THAT THIS WAS TO BE A PROFESSIONAL CONVENTION" ... BBC TV REPORTER ... IT IS A PROUD AND LONELY FAN TO BE A THING ... WHAT A WAY TO COLLECT QUOTES...ON THE TRAIN TO

LIVERPOOL AFTER THE CON ... I WANT THAT QUOTE FROM THE BATHROOM DOOR ... TAKING A BATH IS CONSIDERED AN HONOR HERE ... DAVE SHAVED OFF ONE-HALF HIS MUSTACHE AGAIN ... GIRL ON BAYSWATER ROAD: "I MADE TWO BOB LAST NITE - SILVERBERG AND MADLE." ... WE STILL DON'T KNOW WHO BOB MADLE IS, BUT HE'S A DAMNED GOOD BHEER DRINKER ... WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T GIVE THEM TO PETER REANEY ... PLEASE GIVE ME SOME AMERICAN CIGARETTES ... THE HELL WITH THE QUEEN, I WANT BHEER ... HE HAD TO BE ANOTHER JIM HARMON, Y'KNOW ... YOU'RE NOT FANS! ... EVER HEAR OF THE CANNIBAL WHO PASSED HIS BROTHER IN THE JUNGLE? ... SLOGAN FOR THE SOLACON: CALIFORNIA, WHERE THE WIND BLOWS FREE AND EVEN THE SUN GOES DOWN ... QUOTE FROM A LETTER RECEIVED FROM HAL LYNCH BY WILL JENKINS: "ENCOURAGE OUR BRITISH COUSINS TO MAKE A FILM OR TWO, WILL YOU? APPARENTLY THEY'VE SCROUNGED UP A CAMERA AND ACTING TALENT AND NEED ONLY A BIT OF PUSHING TO MAKE SOMETHING WITH A REAL STORY TO IT TO HAVE ALL THE MISERIES, I MEAN GLORIES, THAT WE HAVE." ... JIMMY SHANAKLIROGHLI SAID TO SAY HELLO ... THIS ISN'T TOO BAD A HOTEL ... SORRY, I DON'T DRINK ... IT SOUNDS LIKE A SOAP-DROPPING CONTEST ... I FELT RIGHT AT HOME IN LONDON. TYPICAL MIDWESTERN WEATHER ... I AM, TOO, A TRUFAN: ENEY SAYS SO.

So much for interlineations.

After all the mental effort expended, the four of us settled down to a little reading. I had copies of PLOY and TRIODE with me that made the next hour or so interesting. Steve, the Immaculate One, wrote a letter, while Will and Sheldon shared a copy of THE GREAT CHARLIE, the life of Charlie Chaplin. I couldn't resist taking a picture (in color) of this act of subversion by two so-called stalwart defenders of democracy.

Will Jenkins, then President of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, probably isn't two well known to fanzine fandom, but he's been around the PSFS for ten years or more. Will, I guess, is somewhere in his early thirties and works for the Pennsylvania Railroad. Consequently, he is able to attend conventions without having to pay to get to them or return. (PRR employees have this privilege, you know, of being allowed so many gratis railroad miles of travel per annum.)

Back in the good old days when I was one of the masterminds of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, we had an insurgent group that met at my place every two weeks. The PSFS was so large (over thirty members at the time) that two factions developed. Our faction met in my bedroom amidst thousands of S-F books and magazines, and plotted our various nefarious political moves. We also drank bheer, smoked cigars, told jokes and, in fact, had a real ball during our meetings. We called ourselves the Fantascience Literary Society and, as one of our group, Harry Alsdorf one time so aptly put it, "The PSFS is run from Madle's bedroom."

Well, Will Jenkins was one of the permanent parties at these meetings. Others who could usually be found there were Jack Agnew, Hal Lynch, Sol Levin, Dave Jenrette (he was known as Dave Hammond then) and Charlie Watson; occasional visitors were Jim Williams, Tom Claeson and Alan E. Nourse. Yes, we had quite a club in those days. And, oddly enough, I'll bet fanzine fandom didn't even know we existed! (This was back in 1950-53.)

Steve Schultheis and Sheldon Deretchin, my other companions, I had met many times at previous conventions. Steve, undoubtedly the most impeccable dresser in fandom (it has been said that he will not wear a pair of trousers more than once without having them pressed), was (and is) associated with the Cleveland group, some of whom are Nick and Noreen Falasca, Ben Jason and Frank Androsavsky. They are noted for throwing big parties at conventions in big suites. (They are to be contrasted with other groups who throw big parties at conventions in little suites - sometimes in no suites at all.) However, let me be the first to point out that Steve does not drink at all. Not so with Sheldon Deretchin: let me be the first to point out that he doesn't do anything at all but drink. Shel is in his early twenties and is not the modest, backward type.

I could almost say he reminds me of Harlan Ellison, except he doesn't smoke a pipe. He has been active in New York fandom for quite a few years, and headed up one or two of NYC's regional affairs. He is the type of person who cannot be insulted - although many have tried to do so.

The train finally arrived at Liverpool's Lime Street Station. Dave Newman had appointed himself our official host and had told us to meet him near the cafeteria about five p.m. As we were a little early, several of us decided to sample the delicacies of the Lime Street Cafeteria.

Leaving the cafeteria we found good old reliable Dave Newman waiting to greet us with open arms - and with both halves of his mustache shaved off! Dave hadn't been around fandom too long (about three years at the time, I believe) but had been extremely active in the Liverpool club work. At the Loncon, Dave proved to be the hardest worker and just about the most affable host. During the days preceding the Loncon (and following the arrival of the plane from America) Dave acted as the unofficial host for the Loncon Committee and showed the Americans a good time.

Dave said, "Shall we get a bheer, or would you rather go to your hotel and freshen up first?" Considering the fact that we were loaded down with suitcases, magazines, cameras and other paraphernalia, we unanimously voted for the latter. We all piled into a cab and Dave said, "To the Birkenhead-Central Hotel, please!"

It was just a short ride to the Birkenhead-Central Hotel. Unlike the King's Court (the Loncon hotel), the Central is a comparatively new hotel - and quite modern. It is not very large; I would estimate that it could accomodate about 150 patrons. The young lady at the desk informed us that Mr. Newman had requested the best quarters available for us. She proudly informed us that one of the rooms even had a private bath! This, it must be stated, is quite unusual, as private baths in England are certainly not the custom.

Steve and I grabbed the room with the bath - or Dave led us to it, I forget which. Maybe he thought the TAFFman should have the honor of bathing privately, or maybe he had heard Steve complain about not being able to take as many baths a day as he was accustomed to taking. Will and Shel were quartered just across the hall. The rooms were very spacious and well-furnished and, in fact, compare favorably with those of the average modern American hotel. This struck all of us as so unusual that I am making a special point of it. And, believe it or not, all of this cost but \$4 a day - including breakfast!

Steve suggested taking a bath, but we talked him out of it, as it was dinner time and all of us were quite famished. Besides, informed Dave, we just about had time to eat and then meet Ina and Norman Shorrocks. So Dave, making every effort to impress the well-heeled Americans, took us to a nearby restaurant which, I believe, had a Chinese name - something like "Won Hung Low". And, like the Birkenhead-Central, this restaurant compares favorably with just about anything that can be found on the main drag of any large city in the USA. I might add that the prices were comparable, also. When the waitress arrived, Shel made a special point about having ice water prior to his meal - not just plain old room-temperature water. This sort of shook up the waitress, but she did manage to uncover a couple pieces of ice for Shel's water. The meal itself was pleasantly ample and we all had nothing but praise for Dave's choice of eating establishments.

By this time, it was about 8 p.m. and we had to hurry to the saloon in which Ina and Norman were to meet us. Like in the USA, Friday night must be the heaviest beer-drinking night in England. The quaint little tavern that Dave led us to was packed to the rafters, with patrons being compelled to stand in the doorway to imbibe their suds. Fortunately, Ina and Norm had decided to wait at the entrance for us, and we all had a jolly time exchanging felicitations.

The Shorrocks comprise a pleasant man-and-wife fan team and are, it would appear, the focal point of Liverpoolian fan activities. Norm, as mentioned before, gives the impression of being a conservative, serious young man of perhaps thirty years. Ina is a most charming and attractive mother of several children, and is best known in America from the famous bubble-bath scene in the Liverpoolian color movie epic, "May We Have The Pleasure?" (This was sent around fan circles prior to the Loncon and, in fact, is still going about.)

Norm and Ina, while not considered extremely active in fanzine fandom (even tho they are affiliated with the Liverpool club organ, SPACE DIVERSIONS), are most noted for other types of fanac. They possess an incredible assortment of tape and movie equipment and have made excellent fan movies. Of course, their tape "Last and First Fen", has had excellent distribution. (Let me add that the entire group participated in these activities but, I believe, all of the equipment belongs to the Shorrocks household.) Norm and the rest of the Liverpoolians are also quite active in fandom--sponsoring conventions and might even be termed "convention fans". The Liverpool group arranged the excellent program of the Loncon, sponsored the Kettering conventions (with Dave Newman being the ramrod here), and have been given a lot of the credit for the success of the recent first annual British Science Fiction Association convention. The many-faceted Liverpool group might be termed "The Compleat Fan Club".

After having several bottles of ale, it was suggested that we all migrate to the Birkenhead-Central, as there was no reason for letting such an appropriate party area go unused. Fortunately, Dave indicated the difficulty that might ensue in obtaining sufficient glasses for the party, and this problem was resolved by each of us retaining the glass out of which we were drinking. We then ordered a quite sufficient quantity of various and sundry liquors of the realm and proceeded to the hotel.

Dave, who is an experienced bartender, utilized one of the closets for a bar. With his white apron, he really looked the part of the bartender, too. I'm pretty sure Steve or someone got a picture of Dave and the converted bar - unfortunately, this one showed up as a blank in my collection.

A very enjoyable party ensued. An item of interest to others who may be in the same predicament: about midnight we ran out of mixer, and I calmly picked up the phone to ask for room service. Dave and Norm had told me not to expect anything as the kitchen was undoubtedly closed. However, I obtained even fewer results than they predicted, for no one even answered the phone! Apparently, they close up the desk at midnight!

Soon thereafter I escorted Norm and Ina downstairs and everything was locked up. As a matter of fact, we had to literally break out of the place in order to get the Shorrocks home to their kiddies. This consisted of our removing a heavy wooden plank that was used to doubly insure the security of the hotel. After Ina and Norman slipped out, I quietly replaced the heavy plank, all the time expecting a bobby or somebody to slap me on the head with his billy-jack. The lounge was completely dark, with the only light emanating from the stairway to the second floor. I finally replaced the bar, and hastily went up the stairs, two or three at a time.

Dave, our official host, spent the night with us - sharing Steve's bed.

The maid kindly awakened us the morning of Saturday, September 14, 1957, by informing us that we had better hurry if we wanted breakfast. Deciding to beat one of these English hotels out of breakfast for once, Steve and I hastily dressed, although Steve was rather reluctant, as he stated he always bathed before breakfast. Dave was dressed before either of us, mainly because he had slept with his clothes on. So he dashed across the hall and told Will and Shel we'd meet them in the dining room. So, this time, we Americans actually took advantage of the breakfast that automatically goes with the price of the hotel room.

Some of you may be aware of the fact that I was American Agent for NEBULA SCIENCE FICTION. Naturally, Editor Peter Hamilton and I had planned on seeing quite a bit of each other at the Loncon. Unfortunately, Peter had been in ill health for some time prior to the Loncon, and, as luck would have it, Ted Carnell handed me a telegram from Peter during the banquet session of the Loncon informing me that he had come down again with something and could not make the convention. Naturally, I was disappointed, as I did want to see Peter for several reasons.

Now it so happens that Liverpool is about half-way between London and Glasgow, Scotland. So I thought it would be a good idea to call up Peter and invite him to Liverpool if he was up to it. I finally made contact, after several unsuccessful attempts. As luck would still have it, Peter was not yet able to travel and, as much as he would like to come down to Liverpool, he wouldn't be able to. "However," said Peter, "I have planned a trip to London for some time now for business reasons. I'll come down some day next week and we'll combine business with pleasure." I planned to be back in London by Wednesday afternoon, so this was the day we selected.

About this time Norm Shorrocks and Eddie Jones arrived. Eddie, one of the best known of the British fan artists (he's a pro artist now, too, having had several excellent covers on NEBULA), is a very neat-appearing, of slightly heavy frame, blond lad somewhere in his twenties. (I should point out that none of the Liverpool group wear beards - unlike their London counterparts - and I became so accustomed to fans wearing beards that to describe English fans without beards becomes difficult, as they all look alike without them.)

Norm had some business to take care of Saturday afternoon, but before leaving presented Steve, Will, Shel and me with an attractively boxed five-shilling piece as a remembrance of our visit to Liverpool. And, would you believe it, even though times have been hard, I still haven't spent it!

The six of us then went to dinner. This time Dave decided that maybe we should conserve our resources, for he led us to a spot where a complete meal could be had for two shillings (about 35¢ in real money). The restaurant was plain, but clean, and the meal was good. I told Dave this could never be done in the USA as it costs 35¢ for a mere hamburger in most places. However, it should be pointed out that the average wage in England is just about half what it is in the USA. At the same time, the necessities of life can be purchased rather inexpensively. I noticed that food, in general, is much cheaper than in the USA; medicine is, of course, taken care of by medical insurance, as is doctor and hospital care; rents are very reasonable; in fact, Mike Rosenblum informed me that some of the older sections still have the same rent controls that were clamped on them in 1917! Conversely, anything that falls into the "luxury" class is very expensive. Thus, automobiles and appliances come quite high - this includes such necessities of life as electric refrigerators and televisions! Consequently, not too many fans run about in autos. Gasoline sells for about three shillings a gallon, which is about 50¢ in our coin of the realm. And when the lower average income is considered, it can readily be ascertained that gasoline costs real dough in England. Now you all know why they have little cars over there! I would estimate that beer, cigarettes and movies are priced according to USA standards, which, of course, are high compared to English standards.

Like Norman, Dave had business to take care of Saturday afternoon. However, his business we were able to share in, as he was to be bartender at the Hoylake Rugby Football Club, just across the river. Dave was officially "Assistant Secretary", but the primary requirement was to be able to open bottles and mix drinks. The six of us (Eddie Jones was still part of the group) tagged along with Dave, and spent an enjoyable afternoon watching the rugby players in the cool, cool September air. And I mean that September in England is like real cool.

The most popular drink among the rugby players is something called, I believe, "Shandy", which is a weird mixture of ginger ale and beer. This I couldn't take, so I stuck to beer, as did the other fen.

The Liverpool mob had planned a big Saturday evening, which started with cocktails and dinner at an exclusive dining room. In addition to the six who had arrived from the rugby club, present also were Ina and Norm, Leslie Minard (Dave's girlfriend) and John Roles. Leslie had been with Dave to the Loncon, and has been mentioned previously. As stated then, she reminds me of a cross between Audrey Hepburn and Leslie Caron. At the time she and Dave were very close, and, said Dave, she was interested in marriage which, I gathered, didn't interest Dave too much. (A tape from Norm and Dave some months after the Loncon informed me that Leslie had gotten married - to someone else. I wonder if this is what drove Dave into his state of almost complete gafia?) Leslie is quite an intelligent young girl - in fact, she was doing graduate work of some sort in medical research at the time of the Loncon.

John Roles is a heavily-mustached librarian. In fact, I would gather that he and John Berry have this in common - heavy mustaches. Roles is the real collector-type of fan, and has an excellent knowledge of all phases of fantasy. We had several enjoyable discussions along this line, and I was impressed with his background in the field.

Following the dinner, we were taken to the fabulous Liverpool clubroom - which is located right downtown on a main thoroughfare. However, it seems to be on the third floor of a deserted office building. At least, I gathered the impression that it was deserted - perhaps this has occurred since the Liverpool group moved in? The clubroom is a cozy little two-room affair, replete with magazines, typewriters, cases of empty beer bottles and like that. The wallpaper is unique; it consists of covers and pages of prozines and fanzines. I believe this is completely original - and it certainly lends atmosphere to what might be rather dreary wall space. Others with clubrooms might follow suit.

Two more members of the Liverpool group were waiting at the premises for us: Norm Weedall and Leslie J. Johnson. Norm I do not know too much about, except for seeing his name in fanzines in recent years. However, he has apparently been a reader for a good number of years and complements this interesting group composed of all segments of fandom. Leslie J. Johnson dates back almost to the beginning. He was active in the formation of the Liverpool Science Fiction League in 1935 and helped organize the first British Science Fiction Association convention in January, 1937. He also collaborated with Eric Frank Russell on the first story to appear with the EFR byline, "Seeker of Tomorrow", ASTOUNDING STORIES, July 1937. Leslie was very active in British fanzine editing and writing prior to the war. He was also an organizer of the British Interplanetary Society, serving, if my memory holds firm, as one of its earliest Presidents. So Les brings a considerable amount of historical background to the Liverpool club.

We now had an even dozen present, and the makings of a real fanfest. So Dave said, "Let's get something to drink - I have a pound." That started it: we all contributed a pound and, as any resident of the British Isles can attest, twelve pounds can buy a good assortment of joy juice.

Norm had given me a letter from J. Michael Rosenblum which Mike had sent to me care of Norm. The letter contained further information pertaining to his kind invitation and so, on the way to the tavern, we stopped and called Mike, informing him I would definitely come to Leeds, arriving about 4 p.m. Monday afternoon.

Shorrock took many feet of film of this gathering, including a little skit. This, as Norman visualized it, would feature three players: Leslie Minard, Dave Newman, and

me. When the plot was outlined to me, I decided I had better remain a spectator for fear of possible incrimination. Basically, it was the eternal triangle, with Leslie sitting on Steve's lap (he eagerly volunteered) "myking love" - Dave comes storming in with pistol in hand and shoots Steve dead. Dave played a very determined part - he actually looked serious, but of course he couldn't have been - and Steve and Leslie went through their parts like old troupers. Steve made an awful noise when he hit the floor.

At about midnight we all decided to take the remaining stock and go back to the Birkenhead Central. Norm Weedall, Les Johnson and Eddie Jones decided it would be the better part of valor to go home, which left nine of us actually sneaking into the hotel. And the party continued for several hours.

Finally, the Shorrocks again decided they'd better get home before their children forgot them. Letting them out of the hotel was a repetition of the previous night, only the wooden bar didn't seem to be as heavy - or maybe I was floating a little higher.

This left a group consisting of the four Americans, Dave Newman, John Roles and Leslie Minard. It seems that Leslie resided somewhere over in the wilds and it would have been to no avail for her to attempt to go home. Steve, who waits for no man when it comes to taking a bath or going to bed, joined Sheldon Deretchin in his room. Will Jenkins, after finding Steve in his bed, came back to the party room and went to sleep on the floor. Dave, as usual, went to bed dressed for the next evening. John Roles piled into my bed. This left just Leslie and me. Leslie was quite disturbed about her situation but finally, on advice from the old Fake Fan, decided it wouldn't be scandalous to lie next to boyfriend Dave inasmuch as both she and he were fully clothed. And I joined John Roles in bed, ending a perfect evening.

Sunday turned out to be another cool, clear day - adding further lack of credence to all those stories one hears concerning the horrible weather in England. Sometime during the afternoon we added Norm and Eddie to the contingent and took a ferry ride across the Mersey - or was it the Dee-Side? Then back to the clubroom to continue where we left off Saturday (Sunday morning, in reality).

The rest of the evening was spent playing the fascinating game of Brag (the English equivalent of our Poker), general chit-chat concerning science fiction and fandom, and inventing new drinks - the latter primarily consumed the time of Dave Newman. At one time Dave proudly exclaimed, "Man this is something - not sure what it is, tho!" It was an unusual combination of Stout, gin and tonic which wasn't bad at all. (Frankly, at this stage of the game, I was beginning to become immune to just about anything.)

Norm, John Roles and I had a serious discussion concerning fandom and fanzines in England. It appeared that most of Anglofandom was arriving at the same conclusion concerning English fanzines - too esoteric for the neofan - or for the general reader. This widespread feeling resulted in the formation of the British Science Fiction Association the following March. However, for some reason not apparent to me, some of the most active British fen have not supported this worthwhile organization; in fact, they have almost outwardly opposed it. It is interesting to note that the opponents are primarily centered among a very small group of "fanzine fans", their description, not mine. Given continued support, though, the BSFA should prosper. More USA fen might consider supporting it, also.

The group dispersed about 11 p.m., with Norm traveling in the direction of the Birkenhead-Central with the four Americans as he had to get his bus across the street from the hotel. And, while we were shaking Norm's hand and telling him what a great time we had, and while he was bidding us all sad adieu and informing us that he and Ina planned a trip to an American convention sometime in the near future, guess what

happened? Yes, you are right - he missed the last bus, which pulled out without him, even though he was but three feet from it. So there was nothing else for Norm to do at the moment but join us at the hotel for a nightcap and a few more rounds of Brag.

Norm informed us that the meeting of the Liverpool S-F Association (LaSFaS) would be the next evening, and why not just stay over another day? This was out of the question for me, as I had made definite plans to visit with J. Michael Rosenblum, and Steve had made just as definite plans to fly across the sea to visit with Walt Willis at Oblique House. However, Will Jenkins and Shel Deretchin were game for another go with this Hedonistic mob, so they decided to stay and take a midnight train back to London following the meeting.

And so, Norm again bid Steve and me a fond farewell, and left the Birkenhead Central, saying he would have no trouble getting a taxi across the street at the terminal.

And so ended "The Liverpool Caper", a weekend the TAFFman and his three compatriots will remember with nostalgia forevermore.

Chapter 14

THE LEEDS PLAGUE

On Monday, September 16th, the American group rose too late for breakfast - rather customary of this group, it would appear. Steve and I were rather busy getting ready for our forthcoming trips. On the other hand, Will and Shel, having decided to stay over for the LaSFaS meeting that evening, were in no particular hurry to check out.

Steve accompanied me to the station and then departed for the airport and for Belfast, Ireland - specifically for the home of Walt Willis, commonly known as "Oblique House". Walt, as mentioned previously, had invited me to fly over also. However, much as I would have liked to visit Walt and his charming wife, Madelaine, it was a case of not being able to be at several places at the same time.

The train ride to Leeds was short and pleasant. It couldn't have taken more than two hours to cover the approximately 100 miles between Liverpool and Leeds. During the trip I merely relaxed and thought fine thoughts of the wonderful time I had been having since arriving in London almost two weeks before.

Mike Rosenblum had informed me that he would be on hand at the station to meet me. As I debarked from the train I saw a pleasant-looking, dark-haired, mustached chap, clutching a copy of GALAXY, walking toward me. This, I immediately surmised, must be Mike. I was clutching a handful of fanzines, a suitcase, and an overnight bag, and Mike picked me out of the crowd instantly.

Ron Bennett - who has since become my fellow TAFF administrator - made his appearance at this moment and it was just like old-home week. Mike hustled us to his auto and through Leeds to 7 Grosvenor Park. It was raining, and the appearance of the city was quite sombre, as it is wont to be on a dreary, cold, rainy mid-September afternoon. Leeds, like Liverpool, is a typical large industrial city. I didn't get to see much of the city because of the inclement weather that persisted for my entire stay at Leeds. Even so, there was, and still is, a warm spot in my heart for Leeds, in that it was one of the cradles of science fiction fandom.

Leeds was one of the earliest chapters of Gernsback's SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE, being formed by Douglas W. F. Mayer soon after the creation of the SFL in 1934. J. Michael Rosenblum was among its earliest members. Leeds was also the locale of what

almost went down in history as the First Science Fiction Convention. In January, 1937, this convention was held in Leeds with an attendance of twenty. Oddly enough, the attendance was held down by an outbreak of flu. The oddness of this situation will be clarified as this chapter progresses.

Some of those present at this convention, at which the original British Science Fiction Association was formed, were Ted Carnell, Eric Frank Russell, Walter H. Hillings, Maurice K. Hanson, and Mike Rosenblum. I believe Arthur C. Clarke, then an active fan, was also present. This convention would have been the world's first, if it hadn't been for the group that met in Philadelphia in October, 1936. Sixteen were present at this combined New-York Philadelphia gathering, and it was Donald A. Wollheim who suggested the group go on record as being the First Science Fiction Convention. At this meeting, impressive plans were also formulated for the First World Science Fiction Convention, to be held in conjunction with the 1939 World's Fair in New York City.

Mike, apparently, is one of the more well-to-do (financially, that is) of the British fans. He is a partner in the firm of Rosenblum and Newman, a real estate agency which, as Mike's letterhead reveals, has "Everything To Do With Property". 7 Grosvenor Place is a delightful little home replete with all the necessities of American life - many of which are luxuries in England. For instance, in America just about everyone has an automobile, television, electric washing machine, electric refrigerator and hot water plumbing. In England, there aren't too many families that have all of these and, probably, many families that have none of them. But, as I said, Mike lives off the wealth of the land - literally. (However, please don't get the idea that Mike is so well off that he lights cigars with five-pound notes.)

Mike has a very charming (and attractive) wife named Betty, plus two wee sma' ones - one male and one female. Betty, although not a science fiction fan, created quite a discussion when she wrote an article about the King's Court Hotel which appeared in Mike's fanzine, NEW FUTURIAN, immediately preceding the Loncon. Betty described the King's Court as being good training grounds for panhandlers or people on the road. (Bob Tucker wrote a similar article about the Ingalls Hotel in Bellefontaine, Ohio, where the 1954 and 1955 Midwestcons were held.) While both were somewhat exaggerated, both also were somewhat authentic in their descriptions.

Mike, Ron and I no more arrived than Betty summoned us to dinner - and it certainly was a delicious one. After dinner, Betty asked me if I noticed anything unusual about the food. I honestly hadn't - except for the fact that it was unusually good. She then indicated that it was meatless - and that the Rosenblum family was a Vegetarian group. Some of you gals who are collecting recipes might do well to ask Betty for some of hers.

That evening, Mal and Sheila Ashworth were over, and we had a nice little gathering which consisted of beer, more good food, and discussion. Ron Bennett and Mal and Sheila ran a continuous little game of "You insult me and I'll insult you". I gathered, from this constant banter that something had occurred in the recent past to cause this friendly enmity, but I never did discover what it was. We topped off the evening by playing a spaceship game called ASTRON, which is one of those things during which you spin an indicator and move spaces, get sent back to the moon for space piracy, and like that.

Mike, being his own boss, was able to provide for time off by keeping half an eye on his business via the telephone. So Tuesday morning, which was another cold, rainy morning, we spent in Mike's library. In reality, he has his books spread throughout the house, but there is one particular room on the second floor which is all library. In fact, just about every square foot is library.

I cautiously fingered many rare items that morning. Mike showed me first editions of H. G. Wells' WAR OF THE WORLDS and THE WARE IN THE AIR. He then passed along Griffith's rare and legendary A HONEYMOON IN SPACE and the same author's ANGEL OF THE

REVOLUTION. He showed me what may be the very first tale of the world destroyed by the splitting of the atom, THE CRACK OF DOOM, by Robert Cromie, published in 1895. Mike then surprised me with a complete file of my own "ancient" fanzine, FANTASCIENCE DIGEST, published during the years 1937-1941. One of them even contained an article by J. Michael Rosenblum! Also displayed was Mike's photo album which includes photos of many of the earliest British fans and photos taken at the Leeds convention. (Sam Moskowitz - take notice in case you ever revise or rewrite THE IMMORTAL STORM.)

Mike has thousands of S-F books and magazines. He has not attempted to keep up with everything published during the past few years, but up to about 1950, he has a fabulous collection of books, magazines and fanzines. Ron Bennett informed me that he has spent many enjoyable hours browsing through Mike's collection.

Through the years Mike has been active, to some extent, in fanzine publishing. He first issued THE FUTURIAN, a neatly printed journal, prior to the war. During the war the name was changed to FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST, and Mike, along with Forrest J Ackerman, deserved credit for holding together the far-flung segments of British fandom from 1939 until 1946. I had always enjoyed reading those of Mike's magazines that I received (although during the war I sort of lost track). Thus, when a copy of THE NEW FUTURIAN was dropped into my mailbox one morning several years ago, I was agreeably surprised. Those of you who haven't seen Mike's contemporary publication are missing a good, readable, mature magazine. It is slanted more toward the reader-collector type of fan, featuring as it does book reviews (old and new), discussions of trends in the genre (I know some people hate the use of the term "genre", but - gee! - ain't it like real intellectual to use it!), movie reviews, and Walt Gillings' own version of THE IMMORTAL STORM, called "The Clamorous Dreamers". I haven't seen an issue of Mike's magazine lately but, as he explained to me, THE NEW FUTURIAN has to wait for time and inclination.

The two little Rosenblums were down with Asiatic Flu Tuesday morning, as was, apparently, half the population of Leeds. Mike and Betty had planned to take Ron and me out Tuesday to dinner, but the sudden turn of events with the children meant finis for this. So, Tuesday afternoon, Mike and I drove out to visit several spots of historical significance. We spent a while at the Kirkstall Abbey and at the Temple Newsam House. The Abbey remains just as it was some seven or eight hundred years ago, and is replete with historical treasures of the Leeds area. The Temple Newsam House contains, primarily, the art treasure of the area. The afternoon was enjoyably spent with Mike acting as my guide.

When we returned to 7 Grosvenor Place we found Ron Bennett waiting for us. Ron teaches school in Leeds, although he lives in Harrogate, some twenty miles away. During my visit with Mike, Ron was also staying evenings and nights so we could have a constant and continuous fan gathering. By staying at Mike's, Ron was able to spend all of his time with us, except for the hours he was teaching school.

Ron mentioned how serious the Asiatic Flu epidemic had become. About three-quarters of his class hadn't attended that day and, it would appear, things were getting worse instead of better. We kidded somewhat about me taking Asiatic Flu back to the United States. Ah! Little did we realize - but that is another story and another chapter.

That evening we indulged in another of Betty's wonderful meatless dinners. This was followed by tasting some of Mike's liqueurs and after-dinner drinks. In addition to science fiction, Mike collects bottles of various types of liqueurs, such as Apricot Brandy, Forbidden Fruit, and that sort of drink.

That evening, with the rain still falling and the winds blowing and billions of Asiatic Flu germs drifting about Leeds, Mike, Ron and I sat about the living room, sipping our liqueurs and calmly discussing science fiction and its relationship to the world in general.

Chapter 15

LAST DAYS IN LONDON

On Wednesday morning, the 18th, I bid adieu to Mike's family and to Ron Bennett, the latter of whom was off to teach the remnants of his Asiatic-Flu-infested grammar schoolers. It would have been nice to stay another day at Mike's but, as I had made arrangements to meet Peter Hamilton in London that evening, it was the better part of valor to get a good early start in that direction.

Mike drove me to the station and we arrived just in time for me to make the train. It was difficult to say goodbye to Mike after having seen him for such a short time and realizing that it was improbable that we would meet again. But, in retrospect - the world is continuously getting smaller and I may get another chance to visit London. If I do, Leeds will certainly be on my visiting list.

I spent the several hours train ride deep in nostalgic memories. Mike had given me a complete file of THE NEW FUTURIAN and I derived a great deal of pleasure from reading them. I was particularly fond of the serialized "The Clamorous Dreamers", by Walter H. Gillings. Like THE IMMORTAL STORM has been criticized as being the life history of Sam Moskowitz, so has "The Clamorous Dreamers" been derided as being English fandom only as Gillings would have it. Perhaps so, but it makes excellent reading and for the fan historian it is invaluable. I have come to the conclusion that Walt Gillings may have not only been England's first fan - he may have been the world's first fan. His activities started as far back as 1927 and he fought valiantly for years to bring a science fiction magazine to England. He was on the verge of success several times, but it wasn't until 1937 that his dreams were realized with the advent of TALES OF WONDER. It lasted sixteen issues (until mid-1942) and was essentially a reprint magazine, drawing almost exclusively from the old WONDER and AMAZING. Walt was also active in the fan field. His SCIENTIFUNCTION was one of the most pretentious fanzines ever published and, in reality, could be termed a "professional fanzine". It was pure sercon and featured excellent bibliographical and historical material.

Arriving in London, I took the tubes and finally wended my way (100-pound suitcase and all) back to the Bulmer residence. Ken, having written a short story and a novelette that morning, was relaxing by grinding out a "Kenneth Johns" science article. This series of science articles (published in NEBULA for many issues) was a collaboration between John Newman and prolific old Ken, the former supplying the idea and basic information, and the latter doing the final writing.

Ken poured me a cup of tea and I related my hedonistic Liverpool weekend and my nostalgic several days in Leeds to him. Upon the termination of my fantastic revelations, Ken handed me a wire from Peter Hamilton which said he would meet me in the lobby of a downtown hotel at seven. (The name of the hotel escapes me, but it wasn't the King's Court.) Ken also reminded me that the weekly black mass would be held the following evening at the Globe. "Gee!" I said, all imbued with nostalgia and like that. "Do you think Walter H. Gillings will be there?"

"Very unlikely," said Ken, "as he hasn't been around in many a moon. But why don't you call him? After all, as one relic of antediluvian fandom to another - who knows?"

And so it came to pass that the Grand Patriarch of British Fandom was contacted by electric means. Walt IM4HUGO was at his office (he is a newspaper editor) and said he'd like to be at the meeting the next evening for sure. In reality, I must make a

slight confession at this point. Walt was not unaware of the fact that I was in England as I had written to him soon after winning TAFF. Judging by the information that was being relayed to me, all British fandom was in revolt because of my election, and I wanted to make sure I had a friend or two located in the British Isles. (My informants had told me that my winning was bad enough - but when active British fandom saw the list of the fifty plane passengers and not a fanzine fan in the bunch...well, there was no telling what might happen. Archie Mercer, for instance, jokingly threatened to distribute tacks over the runway immediately preceding the landing. Other Americans visualized the Fake Fan being confronted with "Madle - Keep Out!" signs, and doors being slammed in his face. As it turned out, the only things slammed in the Fake Fan's face were large glasses of beer, and faster than he could drink them.)

Anyway, Walt and I exchanged a letter or two - for the first time since before the war. He had told me that he had been away from the sweetness and light that was fandom for several years and that my letter had fanned one of the glowing embers into a slight fire. I suppose Walt is one of those very few who will be a fan forever.

Ken and I headed for the railroad to catch a downtown train and, to be expected, we had to race madly to catch it. Ken wouldn't think of casually missing it and catching the next one, which must have been at least five minutes behind. Ken's charming Pam met us outside her place of employment, and we ambled over to find Pete Hamilton.

Two years prior, Peter had contacted me and asked me to become American Representative for his magazine, NEBULA SCIENCE FICTION. The ultimate aim was newsstand distribution, but we planned to go slow for a while. I had, through independent distributors in Charlotte and Atlanta, placed about 500 copies of several issues on the stands and, while the sales weren't anything sensational, they compared favorably with most of the magazines except for the big three. So we had decided to try to find a distributor who would handle about 5,000 copies on a nationwide basis. After American News folded (they had agreed to handle NEBULA) things looked mighty dark. However, I had made an agreement with Acme News to handle 5,000 copies. As it turned out, NEBULA became a monthly, and 10 issues were distributed in the States. Unfortunately, despite its attractive appearance and fine selection of stories, it never sold well enough in the States and it was given up as an experiment that failed. Several issues later (early summer 1959) the magazine ceased publication altogether.

Pete is a rather stocky, curly-headed blond - a real handsome Scotsman. He has been a fan for years and it was always his dream to publish a professional S-F magazine. This materialized in late 1952 with the advent of NEBULA which, incidentally, had a print-run of only about 5,000 copies of the first issue. Pete is a firm supporter of fandom, and usually attended British conventions. He also pushed fandom as much as possible in NEBULA. (He ran Walt Willis' fan column and Ken Slater's book-review department from the magazine's inception. In the last few issues, he also included my fan column. NEBULA was probably the only magazine ever to run two fan columns simultaneously.)

After dinner, Pam and Ken went to a movie while Pete and I discussed the mundane matters of S-F, including the all-important distribution aspects. At the time, things looked mighty fine and we would have been satisfied with a little better than 50% sales in America. But the bubble was about to burst and, in retrospect, NEBULA came into America at the wrong time.

Pete was staying overnight and invited me to have lunch with him the next noon prior to his catching the train for Glasgow. At this point, Ken, Pam and I headed for Catford. On the way to Ken's I suddenly noticed that I was catching a cold. But a cold is something that never bothered me, thought I.

The next morning I awoke feeling pretty chipper after a good night's sleep - something I hadn't been having much of lately. Had my usual morning tea and fried eggs -

fried by the versatile hands of Ken Bulmer - the famous Kenneth H. Bulmer, Big-Time Pro and like that.

Then uptown for lunch with Pete. We were met by Steve Schultheis in front of the famous theater (whose name I do not recall) that was showing the notorious allegedly anti-American film, "A King in New York", starring Charlie Chaplin. We both said goodby to Pete and paid our four or five shillings for a choice seat in the cinema. In reality, the picture was interesting and appeared to be more of an anti-congressional-investigation-committee propaganda bit than anything else. It also ridiculed many American traditions, such as rock-and-roll, advertising, plush apartments, et cetera. But MAD does this every issue. As some of you may know, this picture has never been shown in America. Whether this is because of its plot, because it stars Charlie Chaplin, or a combination of both, I do not know.

After the show Steve and I exchanged stories of our respective visits. Steve had spent almost a day fogged-in on some unghodly place between Liverpool and Belfast, but had finally made it to Oblique House, where he was wined and dined by the Willis clan, and defeated at Ghoodminton by Ghood old John Berry.

Steve and I grabbed a quick bite and headed for the Globe and the London Circle meeting, perhaps the last we would ever attend. We were early, but a few had preceded us. Mike Moorcock, youthful editor of the English TARZAN COMICS magazine, was sitting there munching a hotdog and gulping beer. Les Cloud, oldtime fan, was present. Young Tony Klein and Sheldon (Boy Ugh!) Deretchin could be seen swapping jokes. And when Walter H. Gillings walked in, I knew him immediately from a photo I had seen of him taken in 1937. Believe it or not, he's still the same dignified, mustached individual. We had a jolly time imbibing beer and talking over old times. But, like all London Circle meetings, this one had to end. And I was beginning to notice that my slight cold was, apparently, developing into something else.

The next morning was the morning we all knew would come, whether we wanted it to or not. It was like real plane-catching time and all the British-types were at the terminal to see us off. I was feeling kind of low and bought me a little hip-flask of joy juice to nibble on during the long flight back.

Everybody bade everybody sad adieu. Even quiet Robert Abernathy (the big famous pro-type Abernathy) was chatting away. Bob is one of those fellows who doesn't have much to say - but he can certainly turn out a good story. Mentioning Bob reminds me of a little story that I just have to get in here because I can't think of a more appropriate time.

It seems that, back in 1949, I went on a field trip to Fort Knox, Kentucky. The second morning I was there, one of the civilians in the office asked me if I could possibly be the same Robert A. Madle who writes for SCIENCE FICTION STORIES. This, I thought, was somewhat of a coincidence. Then the fellow sitting across from him (a Captain) asked if I knew Robert Abernathy. It turned out that this officer was from Arizona and was one of Bob's boyhood buddies. He told me what a big deal they all thought it was when Abernathy sold a story to ASTOUNDING back in early '42. This, I thought, was quite a coincidence. Then I got to talking to the WAC receptionist who informed me she was from Kinsman, Ohio. Naturally, I told her I knew some people from Kinsman - Edmond Hamilton and his wife Leigh. The WAC said, "Why, they're my nextdoor neighbors!" So, all of this happening in one wee sma' office in one little old day strikes me as bordering on the impossible.

Anyway, back to the plane. We took off and had a short trip to Shannon, Ireland, where everyone (except me) stocked up on whiskey. White Horse Scotch at \$3 a fifth, good bourbon at \$2, et cetera. I was feeling mighty low and had no desire to even think about whiskey, let alone buy it. (Wish I could get Scotch at \$3 a fifth today, though.)

I became extremely ill on the trip back, and thought I had contracted pneumonia. The hostess kept piling blankets on me and, fortunately, because of the direction in which we were going, it seemed that we were flying into eternal night. I was not very cognizant of what occurred on the plane going back, but it seemed to me that everything was calm and quiet. Even Sam Moskowitz could not be heard.

We landed in NYC, I took the first plane out for Charlotte, N. C. (where I had left my family), my wife met me at the airport, took one look at me, and we headed for the hospital, where I spent the next ten days. It seems that I had caught that dirty old Leeds Asiatic Flu bug and this, combined with flying, had resulted in an acute case of sinusitis.

One consolation to all of this was that I had plenty of time to think about the wonderful previous three weeks and all of the fine friends I had made in London, Liverpool and Leeds. And, I hope, through "A Fake Fan in London" I have been able to share my cherished friendships and memories of English fandom with all of you.

APPENDIX

The following letters clarified the misunderstandings that existed between Willis, Hickman and Madle. Their publication did much to dispel (1) Madle's belief that it was Willis and his philosophy that had caused the reaction of some Britishers to his winning TAFF and (2) Willis' feeling that Madle was conducting a personal vendetta against him.

Dear Lynn,

I don't associate myself with Chuck Harris in his current argument with Bob Madle, and I have no wish to be on bad terms with you.*

So far as I know, what difficulty there is between us started with a disagreement about review copies. I don't remember exactly what I said, but I remember being in an embittered mood generally at the time, and it's possible that I gave offence. If so, I apologise, and I hope you will take this in the spirit in which it is offered.

Sincerely,

Walt Willis

Dear Walt,

I also have no wish to be on bad terms with you and am glad to be friends again. I will also publish your letter to Bob Madle as you requested, and Bob's answering letter.

Lynn Hickman

Dear Bob,

It may take two to make a quarrel, but you're doing the work of one and a half. I've been reading with bewilderment the installments of your London report and I'd like to ask you to re-examine this fixed idea you seem to have that I am the master mind of a vast international conspiracy against you and convention-going fandom.

To take the latest installment alone, I instance the title and sub-title, the snide references to me as "Ghod" and to my friends as "disciples", the suggestion

*Chuck Harris and Bob Madle had a controversy over the qualifications of a TAFF candidate and, more specifically, over his (Madle's) qualifications. This exchange was published in OMPA (Off-Trails Magazine Publishers' Association), an amateur press organization. Harris, upon learning that 25% of the British voters had supported Madle, publicly withdrew his accusations, which had been based on the premise that British fans had not supported Madle in the TAFF election.

that "who is a fan" is a favorite topic of mine and that I discuss it voluminously (actually that conversation was started by you and I wanted to postpone it until we got the chance to discuss the future of TAFF in tranquility), the statement that there are few I consider fans and that I refuse to recognise American fandom as it is, that Richard Eney is my 'idol' and your pointed avoidance of any reference to my attempts to offer friendliness and hospitality.

I should like to point out that to the best of my remembrance, my only comments on the last US TAFF election consisted of two sentences in FAPA mailing comments on Gemzine, which were directed against Stu Hoffman, whom I knew Mrs. Carr had been supporting, and part of a tape to Don Ford which I did not originate and in which I tried to be placatory. I have long ago had an apology from Don Ford for the allegation that I spread rumors about your election and I thought this canard was killed. As for the previous controversy about TAFF voters' qualifications, my arguments (apart from a brief outline of both points of view in a history of TAFF for YANDRO) have been confined to personal correspondence with Don Ford and a few others concerned with the founding and administration of TAFF. (Although one of them, my letter of resignation, was subsequently reprinted by McCain in his FAPAZINE.) I am not responsible for the opinions of Chuck Harris, with whom I often disagree, nor for those of other fans, even when they defend what they think to be my point of view. Perhaps it would help if I set down as briefly and as clearly as I can what my point of view is and is not:

1. My remarks about you and the other 'ghost fans' in THE HARP STATESIDE were literally true as far as I was concerned and I see no reason for anybody to take exception to them. To me and to any other fan not in the local fan clubs concerned - that is, in each case the majority of fandom - these worthy people were only three-day-a-year fans. I am not denying they were active in their individual local groups; all I say is that as far as fandom as a whole was concerned, they were not heard of between conventions. Isn't that so?

2. I have never said that a person who does not read fanzines is not a fan, nor that a person should have published a fanzine to be allowed to vote in or stand for TAFF. My argument (and it is one that so far as I know has not been answered yet) has always been simply that a person who ignores fanzines is not in a position to discriminate between the merits of opposing candidates, some of whom are fanzine fans. I admit that, like you, I have my own opinions as to what is the most worthy form of fanactivity, in terms of permanent achievement, use to fandom and sf as a whole, and pleasure given to others, but I do not deny that even a person whose sole contact with other fans is boozing in a bar on Labour Day is entitled to call himself a fan. If you're interested, my definition of a fan is a person interested enough in sf to wish to communicate with others of a like mind.

3. I have never said that you were an unsuitable candidate for TAFF, or a fake or fringe fan, and still less that you were ineligible to be nominated. I admit my personal preference for Eney and Raeburn on the grounds that they seemed to me to have done more for fandom in the years immediately prior to the election (i.e., fandom as I, and, I think, British fandom, sees it) but I did not campaign for them or against you before or after the election. I also admit I was sorry to see the election won by canvassing, but I recognise that you felt this was forced on you, and I believe it was the inevitable result of the TAFF rules which I fought unsuccessfully to correct, and therefore more my fault than yours.

I hope you'll feel that you should ask Lynn to publish this letter in fairness to someone who has been abused for almost a year without replying.

Sincerely,

Walt Willis

P. S. I've written an article for A Bas about the differences between fmzfans and confans, putting the extreme of both points of view and trying to reconcile them. I hope you'll think the opinions of both sides are fairly represented; at any rate, Boyd seems to think I've leaned over backwards in favour of the confans. This is a silly and pointless squabble, trying to set the two groups against one another - we are all fans - and I hope you'll let it drop. Take that chip off your shoulder, Bob: it's obscuring your vision.

Walt

Dear Walt:

Thanks very much for your letter of 22 October. It was nice to hear from you. As a matter of fact, and I suppose you realize this, this is the first time we've exchanged letters. However, I have communicated with you via tape - and am wondering if either of those tapes ever reached you. (I am referring to the tape made last New Year's Eve and to the lengthy job made at the Disclave by Pavlat and myself.)

Frankly, Walt, I think you are taking things a little too seriously. While I will concede there is a little needling going on in the various chapters of "A Fake Fan in London", I certainly don't think I am trying "to set the two groups against one another". If there is any truth to such a statement, I am afraid the separation of fandom into two groups occurred long before I won TAFF. And I am also afraid that you had a lot to do with the distinction between fanzine fans and fandom in general. I, personally, do not seriously adhere to such a distinction. To me a science fiction fan is a science fiction fan. In other words, if someone says he is an s-f fan, why doubt it? In reality, your definition in your letter is almost identical to mine: "A fan is a person interested enough in sf to wish to communicate with others of a like mind". In fact, I will say that the above is a perfect definition. However, communication covers more media than mere publishing. Personal contact is by far the most powerful of all media of communication.

So far as the title of my Loncon report (and the sub-title) are concerned, I feel that you are grabbing at straws to use these as a basis for your statement that I feel that you are conducting a vast international conspiracy against me. I am afraid that I cannot, at this late date, change the title of the report. Also, I am merely quoting THE HARP STATESIDE when I use the term "Relic of Antediluvian Fandom". You said it; I thought it was hilarious when I read it; and it has stuck in my mind. The same applies to "Ghost Fandom". I would like you to read very carefully page 16 of Ken Bulmer's Autumn 1958 issue of STEAM which contains his very excellent TAFF coverage. You will note that Ken and I said the same things regarding American fandom - and I guarantee you there was no collusion between us. (Incidentally, I consider Ken's coverage far and away the best thing ever written concerning TAFF. Ken managed, as you probably noticed, to defend you, Don Ford, and me, all at the same time. Such impartiality is to be commended highly. I don't agree 100% with everything he said - but I feel that everyone who has been embroiled in the TAFF controversy to any extent whatsoever should read it.)

I have never actually heard the tape which went out of England when the TAFF returns came in. Don won't let it out of his hands, but he wants me to listen to it next time I am in Cincy. Don't know whether I should listen, as it can do nothing but create more dissension.

Your clarification of your stand on such issues as who is a fan, who should be able to vote in TAFF, who should be eligible for nomination, and your opinion concerning my eligibility to be nominated for TAFF (and my suitability) are interesting to me at least. I have every intention to send your letter to Lynn Hickman, as you requested, so your opinions can be published for the record. In reality, it would

appear that statements made by others (such as Chuck Harris) are attributed to you. This is so because it has been felt in some quarters over here that the voice of Chuck Harris is the voice of Walt Willis. So it is essential for better understanding that your statement concerning your lack of responsibility for the actions of Chuck Harris be printed. In reality, I sat back and read all the controversy anent TAFF for some time before Harris finally goaded me into answering.

Anyway, Walt, thanks again for writing, and I'm sure our exchange here will do wonders to "clear the ether".

Best,
Bob

Chapters 4-5, 7-15 and the Appendix were originally serialized in Lynn Hickman's fanzines between 1958 and 1960. Specifically:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Ch. 4 - JD 27 | Ch. 10 - JD-ARGASSY 43 |
| Ch. 5 - JD 28 c/w SCURVY 3,
whole #30 | Ch. 11 - JD-ARGASSY 44 |
| Ch. 7 - JD c/w SCURVY 31 | Ch. 12 - JD-ARGASSY 47-48 |
| Ch. 8 - JD-ARGASSY 40 | Ch. 14 - JD-ARGASSY 51 |
| Ch. 9 - JD-ARGASSY 42 | Ch. 15 - JD-ARGASSY 54 |
| | Append.- JD-ARGASSY 40 |

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