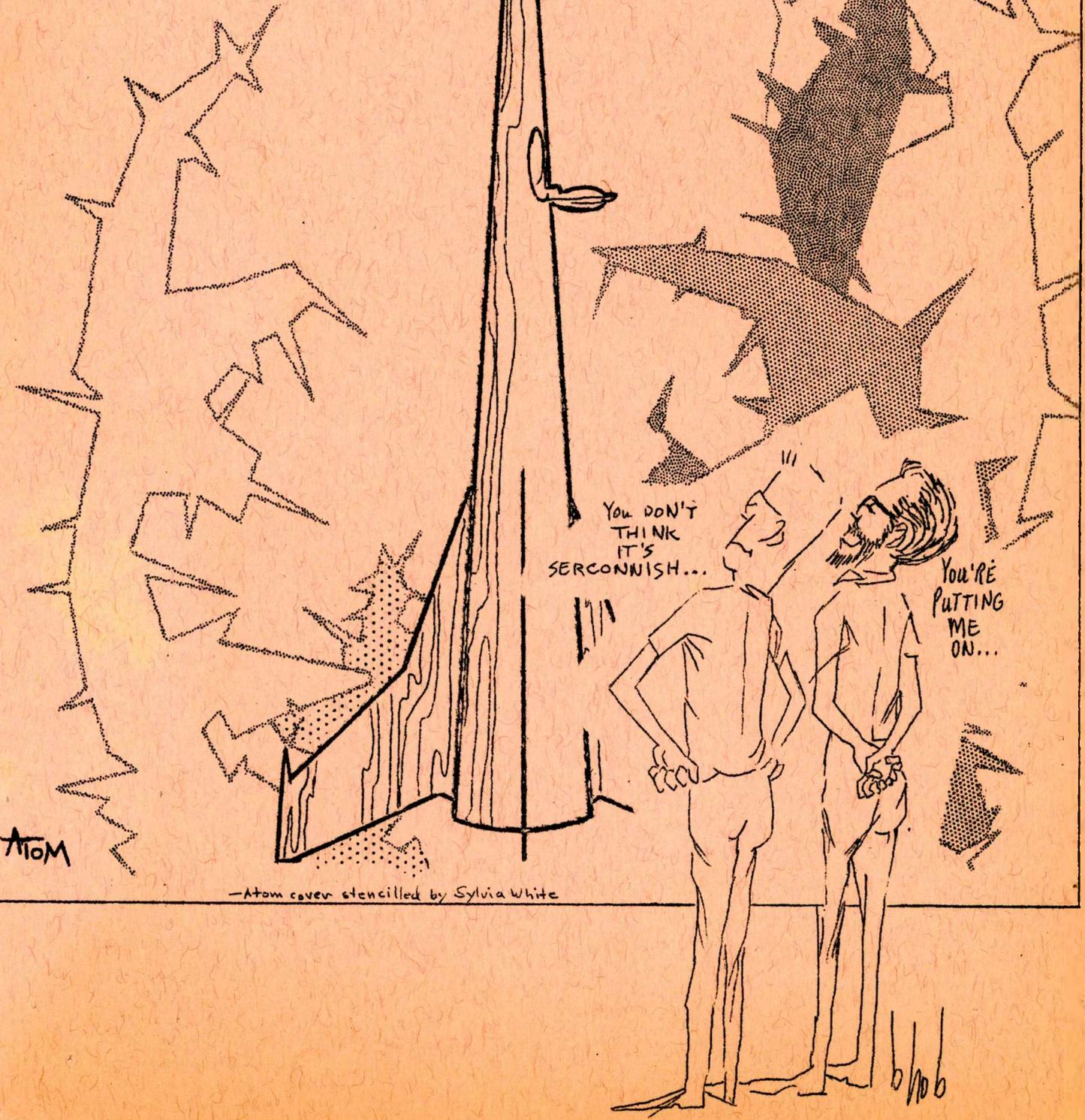


# Vaid

24



ATOM

-Atom cover stencilled by Sylvia White

b/nob

THE FANZINE WITH BUILT-  
IN INSTANT NOSTALGIA



is edited by GREG BENFORD (204 Foreman Ave., Norman, Oklahoma), PETE GRAHAM (163 West 10th St., New York 14, N.Y.), and TED WHITE (107 Christopher St., New York 14, N.Y.) and is published by the rejuvenated QWERTYUIOPress. Our sterling Sterling agent is RON BENNETT (7 Southway, Arthurs Ave., Harrogate, England). VOID is available for Trade, Contribution, Regular Letters of Comment, or...Money (25¢ the copy or 1/-). We will also accept White Slaves...

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# WALT'S REPLY:

We sent the Willis' copy of VOID 23 off air-mail and, needless to say, post haste. The thought of Walt reading a review of the issue before he'd seen it was, well, unthinkable. Upon receiving Walt's return letter, we quoted a portion of it in a special "news release" to FANAC which was likewise sent off air-mail and all that. Unfortunately, troubles in the Carr family have so delayed FANAC, and our own bouts with fafia have so delayed VOID that "the news" has pretty well leaked anyway. But the following has more value than news value, so, herewith, Walt's immediate reaction to the two-barrelled WAWISH...

"I started off this letter with the ribbon disengaged still from stencilling, which I suppose is about as near as I could have got to being speechless. I came down for breakfast this morning, focussed with difficulty on the small pile of mail and reached for a small envelope, which experience has told me is more likely to contain a letter. "Read that first," said Madeleine, pointing to the big brown one, "It's important!!" And by Roscoe it was. After a few minutes she reached over with a feather and knocked me down. I was half an hour late to work, not that it mattered because I didn't do any, and we talked it over this evening, again. And still all I can think of to say is..thanks, Ted. And you too, Greg, Pete, Sylvia, Les and the others. It was a wonderful thing to do.

To be more specific, thanks for having had the idea, and thanks for putting the invitation like that. What can I say but that I appreciate it more than I can express on paper, and that if the rest of the fans over there feel like you think they do, we gratefully accept. You must know how much I'd like to see the States again and all my old and new friends, and maybe even more to introduce Madeleine to them.

Bless you

all, anyway.

I feel almost too awed by this VOID to comment, not to mention being startled out of my wits by the contents, in both general and particular. For instance, I'd completely forgotten that early correspondence of ours, nor had I any idea of all that was going on in Greg's entourage: I don't even remember ever rejecting an article from him, but I suppose that was just put in because it made such a nice punch line. Larry & Noreen's letter was lively...I meant to type lovely, but it was both. I was going to quote the bits I liked best, like about Silverberg & Moskowitz, until I found I was quoting the whole thing. It was nice to see Lee again, in both art & prose. I remember her telling me about their waiting for me in the train station about five minutes after I finally arrived, but at the time I was in such a state that I didn't feel there was anything untoward about it. It would have been no surprise to me at all if that Greyhound bus had arrived at a railway station or even an airport, though a breaker's yard seemed on the whole most likely. Curious too that Bob [Shaw] should think of me as a sort of High Priest of Humor; that's what I always thought about him. I was surprised too at how long that article of mine turned out. All those pages, and not a single typo that I noticed. Though of course there must have been one because the only article I've ever written that was published without a single typo was, with a sort of wild fannish logic, published by Max Keasler. He got Marie-Louise Share to cut the stencils, in a ploy that I think only he and I ever

appreciated.

Even Peter Graham reveals things to me about THE HARP STATESIDE that I never realized. I don't know how much there may be in that semi-sociological introduction of his, being unable to be objective enough about it, but he is I now see quite right about THS being a sort of aide-memoire/memento for myself. I read it myself the other night and that's what it was. He is also uncannily perceptive about my relations with Lee and Shelby. Altogether it's a remarkable piece of analysis and I'm proud to have been the subject of it.

I'm afraid this is inadequate, incoherent and generally still symptomatic of shock, but I wanted to let you know that V23 and your letter arrived and were appreciated. Appreciated...how inadequate can you get?

Sincerely,  
Walt"

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# HAPPY BENEFORD CHATTER

FOR THE SECOND TIME in a year I awake from my mundane slumbers to find that I have a new coeditor. Actually, I suppose I shouldn't be too surprised by it all, since VOID is noted for its rapid turnover of editors, assistant editors, columnists and sundry other helpers. Still, it's confusing.

Just for fun, I counted the past editors of VOID on my fingers and toes. Enchanted by this pastime, I decided to count all the issues of VOID (I can't keep track of them either) and it only took my lightning-quick mind 20 issues to decide it was going to be more difficult than I had calculated. However, I am undaunted by all this sleight-of-hand on the editorial staff. I should be used to it by now, what with Sane & Sexy Sylvia, Walter Breen and other rather alarming characters flashing through my space-time continuum.

But what of this new intruder? What do I know of him? (And I'd better know something, for he seems to have an air of permanence about him.) Well, aside from that Clayfeet Country article and a few copies of THIS, Pete Graham doesn't sum up anything at all to my mind. Now, under normal circumstances this would be fine. I didn't know anything about Walter Breen either, and he's a Good Man. But a dark shadow has descended over V's future. Yesterday I got a letter from a BNF in which he said, "How long before, under Graham, VOID begins spouting the usual socialist totalitarian line?" Well, friends, as you can imagine, this struck fear into my heart. Is socialism recognized by the FBI as an un-American pastime? Is it recognized by Barry Goldwater? What will be the consequences if Graham starts spreading his vile propoganda through the pages of my pure white fanzine?

Friends, there is a terrible spectre looming in the future, for, until now, VOID was a simple, fannish publication dedicated to frivolity and fun, mindlessly passing its bright summer days on ocean beaches like the people in deodorant advertisements. But if this Graham person is dedicated to a Foreign Ideology, who is to say what the consequences might be? We might start getting serious letters about politics and society-at-large, and we would have to comment on these letters. And if we do this our happy-go-lucky fanzine will assume a pallid air of Social Significance, and we'll have to publish articles by Art Castillo, and Ted will haul out some of his jazz magazine rejects. We'll be pushed to the breaking point, because Serious Discussion Fanzines have to run over a hundred pages per issue. Why, this could spell the doom of VOID!

I certainly hope you have an explanation for all this, Pete Graham.

AS I SAID above, there seems to be a gradual change to what Ted Pauls calls New Trend fanzines. Well, fine and good. But I've noticed of late that there seems to be more discussion of who's-on-top-in-the-New-Trend and goshwow look at this New Thing In Fandom than there is discussion of serious topics. I'm thinking primarily of KIPPLE in this respect, for the last two issues seem to deal excessively with navel-inspection, and it's not in the least entertaining. I'm not trying to build up to any smashing point here, except that I wish there were more doing than talking in the New Trend. Does anyone agree?

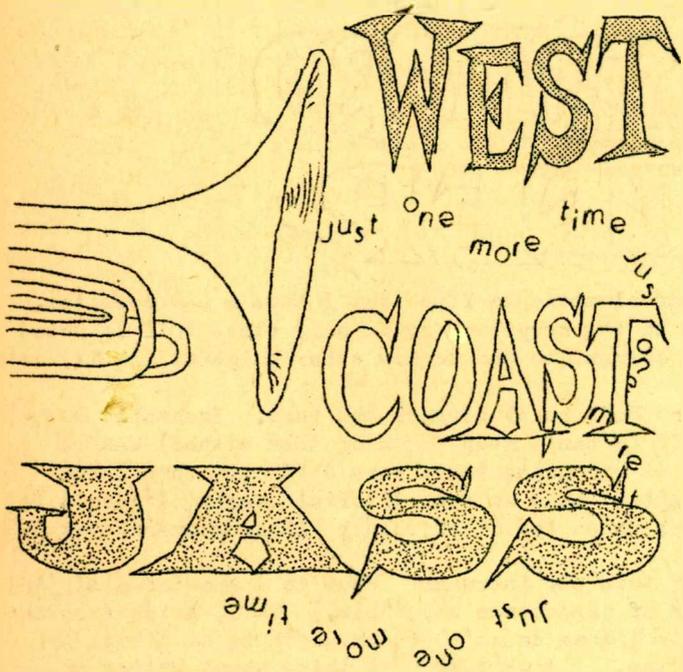
A STILL BACKWARD GLANCE: I thought I'd just about finished up the subject of Dallas fandom, but a little item brought it oncemore to my attention last week. A correspondent of mine in Dallas who had best remain nameless informed me that Dick Koogle was stirring about in his

habitat and once more making fannish noises. I passed it off as just another spasm that runs periodically through Dallas fans, but a few days ago I received THE SOUTHERN FAN #4 in which Dick was touted as "a fan for seven years" and "a contributor to such fanzines as SPHERE and LINE". It seems he has volunteered for a committee to Educate New Fans and other activities of the Southern Fandom group. Director Andrews says "you will find Chairman Broyles and Committeeman Koogle good and knowing fans with whom to work." Andrews grumbles over other members failing to volunteer for the committee, and appoints L.D. Broyles state-secretary for Texas, saying he "has certainly shown his administrative ability at that post." (By getting Rich Koogle, fan for seven years, on his committee, I guess.)

But I suppose all this is to be expected. A fan of seven years can't be expected to remain dormant for all of that time.

Rich Koogle, good and knowing fan! -greg benford

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IT'S BEEN TWO MONTHS AND MORE, I said to myself, since the last issue of VOID. I picked up the phone and dialed Ted's number. Sylvia's pearl-toned voice that I knew so well answered. "Hello," I said. "It's time to put it out again." "Well, I don't know," she said. I asked what's the matter. "I'm a little tired tonight." "That's all right", I replied, "you can go on to sleep and your husband and I will make out okay. Not that we won't miss your artistic talents, but you can work on that part of it with us tomorrow night. What do you think of that?" "I think you've got the wrong number", she said, and the voice hung up.

When I got Ted on the line I asked him how VOID was coming along, figuring that as long as he didn't reply something to the effect that "he only needs four feedings a day now" that I'd have the right party. We established communication--I only had to explain that I used to be a fan in San Francisco and was thinking of coming round to fandom again--and he told me that, essentially, nothing had been done on the next issue. This somewhat croggled me; as I may

have mentioned before, I have a Mental Image of Ted White as a publishing giant, which means that FAPAZINES, Cultzines, CRAPZINES and VOIDS should be flowing daily from his household. Naturally, therefore, I had expected that most of the work on the next issue would be done and I would only have the relatively easy task of coming over some evening to pen my editorial, stencil some letters of comment and add a few witty comments in my apothecic style, and drink Pepsi while Ted ran the issue off.

Nothing could have been further from the truth, as I say. Flashed into my mind at that moment was the cartoon on a recent FANAC: "Pete Graham is the only salvation VOID has left..." Gad, what power, I said to myself. I said as much to Ted, as a matter of fact, which caused a friendly flare-up, and then he hung up, or maybe I hung up, and we didn't talk to each other for a month.

Which brings us to VOID 24. Actually, since I spoko to Ted a month ago, I've been thinking about all the possibilities. As he said to me, my most recent re-entrance into fandom has been, by all accounts, my most successful fannish venture yet. The stuff I've had in VOID has been well received and my LIGHTHOUSE has gotten accolades from the best of sources. It occurred tome that, particularly given the long period of what was essentially gafiation on my part since VOID 23, that I should enter fandom yet again. Three months, after all, isn't...too many. So when Ted White called me again tonight, I readily acceded to his popular demand to get the hell off my dead ass and do some work. On my way over, I developed the new vistas further. Even if VOID came out on schedule, I could perhaps skip every other issue for my succeeding return to fandom. Every FAPA mailing would be the occasion for a new grand re-entry, each more gala than the last.

Or let's look at it another way, I mused. Here I had just re-entered fandom. "Apothecic", Boggs had said. "Perceptive", claimed Willis. "Inspiring", said Jeff Wanshel. What if I were now to flame out, as it were. Think of the wondering queries that would echo in fanzines for the next decade..."What ever happened to that bright new star on the fannish horizon? What became of that strong potential? That budding essayist, that flowering humorist, ~~that budding humorist~~?" I basked in self-appreciation of the puzzling act I would commit on fandom, and turned into Christopher street. But no, I decided as I walked up Ted's stairs, I liked the former plan better after all. Multiple re-entry was really the thing. Yes, everybody, welcome back to fandom. And you too, Hugo Gernsback.

ON ETYMOLOGY: I've seen one or two comments wondering just what JASS means as distinguished from the more familiar and perhaps more euphonic term. As far as I know, jass is the earlier form of jazz and for a time they shared usage, having a common meaning. Their common meanings extended farther than one might expect: in early times--in the early 1900's in New Orleans, I assume--both words were a synonym for semen. Loosely, too, this meaning extended to include the sexual act itself. How "jass" got applied to the wild new music of the time I don't even suspect, though a quite Freudian image comes to mind of a trumpet player playing "low and dirty". Anyone else have any information? ## This has been the serious part of my editorial.

PSHAW, BOB: One of the most interesting parts of Carl Brandon's apartment in San Francisco was his fanzine corner; it was over in one section of his bedroom and, since he didn't have many fanzines then, it was stored in a couple of orange crates. These crates, old and dirty from many oranges and more fanzines, comprised what Carl called his "Fan Niche."

"Some day", said Carl, "when I am a Big Name and Famous"--we both smirked--"I will have to write an article about my room, and about my fanzine section." I agreed, and took a draught on my Falstaff. "It'll be a little difficult, though", he said. I asked him why. "Well, actually, it's a question of paper; it will be a little difficult to get the right size." I put down the copy of PANACREA I'd been scanning. "How so?" I said, "normal size would be OK; or if you wanted to go British, you could use their quarto. And if you want to go to extremes, I suppose you could even use 8vo."

"Not good enough", said Carl.

"I'll need Nichevo."

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It's a sequel, and it's called "Fear Without Sex"  
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-pete graham

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WE'VE GROWN! Yes, with this issue, VOID Magazine adds another leaf to its growing list of accomplishments! We're expanding--expanding the number of our pages, expanding our offices, and.....

# gambit 41

Oh you noticed; VOID is late again. I could give you the same tired excuses (the last couple of months have been pretty busy for me; Pete was waiting for me to do an issue, and I was waiting for him to do one; we were both waiting for various scintillating items promised by various scintillating BNF's; etc., etc.; and even etc....) but as the opening press-agent-y lines indicate, I've got a couple of brand new, never before used excuses.

Because as a matter of fact, VOID has indeed "expanded" and "moved its offices." "Offices" until this consisted of two crowded rooms in our crowded five-room apartment. Two desks, a cabinet, and any number of tables, plus the mimeo, two mimeoscopes, and hundreds of lettering guides & styli were somehow crowded into what amounts to two large closets. (The size of our rooms may help to explain why the builder did not feel called upon to actually include any real closets in his plans...)

Anyway, under the guise of starting a new business in partnership with Bob Stewart and Walter Breen, the Metropolitan Mimeo Co., I've cleverly obtained separate offices for my mimeo and office equipment, and VOID now shares them.

The new "offices" are easily as picturesque as the old ones... They're located in what was formally a Quaint Village Basement Restaurant, alternately known as The Cellar or (most recently) The Cave. The last owners were lesbians with racketeering connections, who operated the joint mainly as a call-house (there is still a real, genuine, honest-to-ghod 100% red light outside over the door!) and as a storing place for stolen goods. The walls were "decorated" in stained pine panelling and crude murals. The latter have partially resisted five coats of white paint... At any rate, the place is large, airconditioned, and pleasant, and we've moved all the equipment in, which explains why at this very moment Pete and I are here in the depths of Metropolitan Mimeo's offices at 11:30 at night, having a VOID session.

How about that?

In addition to all of the above, ye QWERTYUIOPress has also undergone a few changes ...from a beaten old Gestetner 160 which saw five years in government service before spending another four with me, to a brand new, sleek and shingly beautiful Gestetner 360 With Everything. This monster, in addition to being the best stencil duplicator now being made anywhere in the world (shhhh,

Gestetner agents lurk everywhere), has all the accessories known to the mind of modern man, including a paper jogger, automatic inking, and a slipsheet. I've been told that it will even perform popular and obscene acts, and it also has reclining power seats.

What this means for VOID is an experiment in using much thinner paper, a 14# canary second-sheet stock, which will allow us to expand the number of pages without exceeding the 2-ounce weight limit. If this runs over thirty pages and is printed mostly on flimsy paper, you'll know our experiment was a success. If not, well...so much for another bright idea...

THE NEW TREND in fanzines, that is, is at least twenty years old, Ted Pauls. Pete and I were discussing Discussion Zines this evening as I stencilled Greg's column. "You know, Pete," I said, "Discussion Zines aren't so new."

"That's right," he said. "They had them in FAPA twenty years ago."

In fact, it seems to me that the people who're publishing and supporting the Discussion Zines today are simply thwarted apans looking for an outlet. All this furiously serious discussion of Social Problems and other Great Topics slightly if at all allied with stf, let alone fandom, has been going on--albeit more sedately--in the apas (most notably FAPA, but in VAPA too) ever since the days of FAPA's earliest Brain Trust, which included Speer, Widner, Stanley and others. It's still going on there, I might add, and perhaps the fact that I've been enjoying it in FAPA for the last six years myself is the reason why I can't get quite as worked up over the "novelty" of Serious Discussions and Weighty Topics as, for instance, Ted Pauls or Daphne Buckmaster can.

"After all, Ted," Pete pointed out, "HABAKKUK is really just a misplaced apazine." And from far off Berkeley came the grumbling answer: "Apazine, hell! It's a whole ghoddam apa!"

THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY WILLIS FUND, as you already know, is now an actual and functioning reality. Already we've covered most of the distance towards our first hundred dollars. But that's only the start; we'll need at least ten times that amount to be successful. Enclosed with this issue is a release from the Fund Committee, which I find myself co-chairman of. I admit authoring the piece, and I plead guilty to its sloppy writing and typos. I wrote, stencilled, and ran it off in less than an hour, with Bhob Stewart, Harlan Ellison and Sylvia beathing down my collar, hurrying to have it ready for the Lunacon, which was even then about to begin. But I trust you'll dig the message and overlook the goofs--and I hope you are all doing all you can for the Fund.

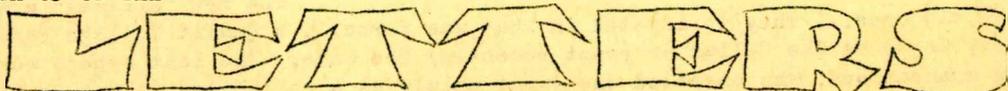
In addition to the pledge plan, the vittues of which you'll find enumerated on the flyer itself, I recommend an offshoot which developed when the Lupoffs donated a huge jar full of pennies. At last count it consisted of more than twenty dollars, a sum accumulated painlessly. The "Pennies for Willis" plan is utmost simplicity: simply start a jar of pennies, nickels or dimes, and when it's full, convert it to less bulky cash and send it off to the Fund. Why, if enough of you raised ten or twenty dollars in this fashion, we'd have a successful Fund in no time.

Some other novel ideas have been tried...for instance, Bob Lichtman is sending a dollar bill with every letter of comment on VOID. This has prompted us to consider making VOID four pages long, and weekly... Seriously, though, although I can--and will--relay all monies earmarked for the Fund, the place to send your doughnations is Larry & Noreen Shaw, 16 Grant Place, Staten Island 6, N.Y.--or, in sterling areas, to Arthur Thomson, 17 Brockham House, Brockham Dr., London S.W.2, England. (And I might add our thanks to the others who've volunteered to be British agent; if it could've been possible, we would have sworn you all in. I trust you'll continue to help us even if in a less official capacity.) Remember: send money early, and send it often!

-ted white

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AND NOW TO CATCH UP ON THE



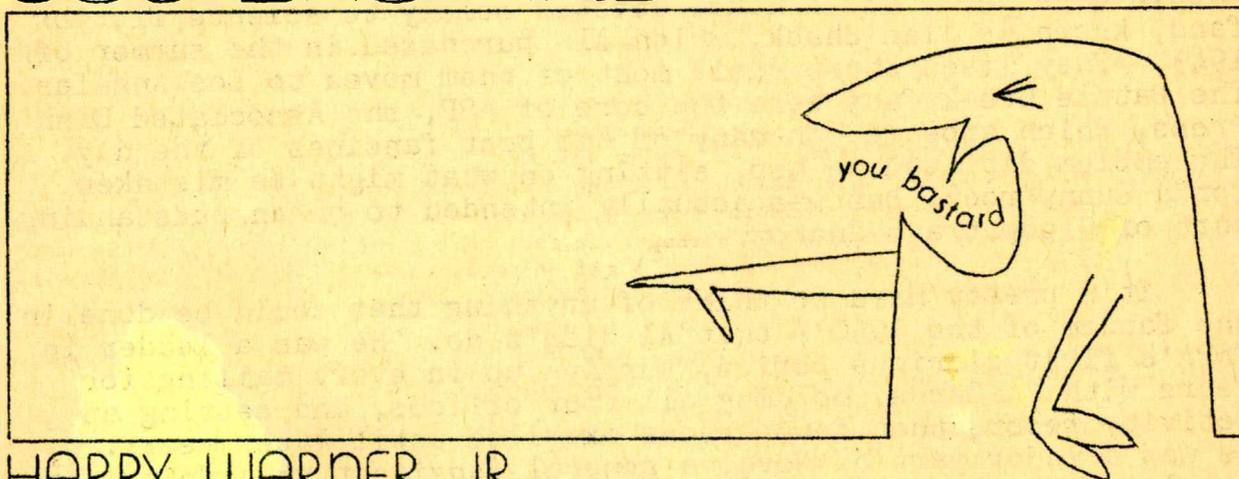
EMILE GREENLEAF

"Vandals of the Void" is one of the most interesting articles which any fanzine has published this year. I found it most informative, coming as it did from the horse's mouth. Who says sercon is a dirty word?

Reiss' cartoons are improving as he goes along. His caricature of Randall the Outrageous was unmistakable. And the others inspired by the Lunacon were an appropriate companion-piece to your writeup. I hope you write a Pittcon Report; I missed your Detention Report, which I gather was a real hell-raiser. I'm curious to see if we had the same likes and grotches. Harry Warner likens you to FTL, and I say "Eureka! I've been wondering just who it was that Ted White reminded me of. Now I know!" When are you going to start giving out Certificates of Fuggheadedness? ((No Pittcon report from me, I fear. As to the Certificate, will The Boot do? -tw)) [letters continued on p. 24/

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS:

WHAT AL ASHLEY DID  
BEFORE HE SAID  
YOU BASTARD



HARRY WARNER, JR.

Sometimes it's hard to remember that the great names of the world at one time may have been quite different. For all we know, Paul Revere may have fallen regularly from his horse and lost his way down vague New England roads before he became sufficiently experienced to make that notorious night-time gallop to warn citizens that those people from across the Atlantic weren't all TAFF winners. Doctor Faustus probably went through a certain stage of life when he didn't need to raise the devil to seduce a blonde German girl. Even Paul Bunyan must have been a little boy at one time. Keeping this in mind, maybe you'll take my word for the fact that there was an Al Ashley before Charles Burbee made him famous.

Burbee's chronicles in various insurgent publication have made Al Ashley a legend. Burbee portrayed Al as an individual with unjustified egoism, given to stupid remarks. But was this the real Al Ashley? For all I know, in person Al may have been the incomplete individual who appears in the Burbee anecdotes. My knowledge of him is based solely on one telephone conversation, a number of letters and postal cards, and a thick stack of Ashley publications, plus an imposing assortment of fanzines of the day that contained Ashley contributions. But fandom as a whole may have been blinded by the brilliance of Burb's characterization. The real Al Ashley, at least on paper, was one of the most intelligent, fun-to-read, and talented people who has ever been in fandom.

Al Ashley didn't even always live in Los Angeles. The best

years of Al's fan life were spent in Battle Creek, Mich. It is now a ghost city, as far as fandom is concerned, but during World War Two, it was one of the biggest fan cities in the world. Al was then married to Abby Lu, who was also active in fandom. Also living there were Walt Liebscher, E. Everett Evans, and Jack Wiedenbeck, plus several fringe fans and professionals. Battle Creek even had a house devoted solely to science fiction fans, known as Slan Shack, which Al purchased in the summer of 1943. They lived there until most of them moved to Los Angeles. The Battle Creek fans were the core of ASP, the Associated Slan Press, which appeared on many of the best fanzines of the day. The emblem depicted an asp, sitting on what might be mistaken for a sunny rock, but was actually intended to be an outstanding part of Cleopatra's anatomy.

It's pretty hard to think of anything that could be done in the fandom of the 1940's that Al didn't do. He was a leader in FAPA's first glorious period, turning up in every mailing for years with En Garde, holding all four offices, and setting an activity record that few persons excelled until later years. He was a major part of Nova, a general fanzine that didn't last too long but was spectacular while it survived. He bobbed up at most of the conferences and conclaves that were staged in the Midwestern and Eastern parts of the nation during the war years, had a fuss with Claude Degler, contributed to almost every fanzine of any repute, collected books and magazines in the old-fashioned way, and I seem to recall that he even dabbled in business as a fantasy book dealer for a while. And in all those activities, there were no evidences of the absurdities that Burbee has related, with two possible exceptions.

One exception was the fact that this highly intelligent person, a leader in fandom, seemingly capable of achieving anything to which he set himself, earned his living in the most unexpected fashion; he drove a taxicab. I was told by someone or other, not Ashley, that he chose this vocation deliberately, as one that would require no mental exertion on the routine task of earning a living, in order to spare his thinking processes for the more interesting things in life.

The other exception was Al's pet project, Slan Center. This was supposed to be something like a lot of Slan Shacks, but bearing the same relationship to a Slan Shack as a small town does to a single country house. There were two unfortunate things about the proposal which may have caused many fans to consider the project a preview of the qualities in Ashley that Burb later immortalized. The use of "slan" in the title caused some persons to think that Ashley was seriously convinced that fans were slans. And it was just about this time that Degler was talking about his wilderness settlement in the Ozarks where fans would make love and rise above humanity. It may have been difficult to determine whether the Ashley or the Degler proposal was the

parody of the other. But the misconceptions were the fault of fans who read hurriedly or incompletely. Al once wrote on the fans-are-slans topic a statement much like the relevant paragraph by Speer in the Fancyclopedia. Al said:

"We have never entertained any notion that fen are the cream of this planet's intellectual crop. The average fan enjoys intellectual superiority over the average man. But that only means that as a select group we excel the human average. No effort would be needed to find other select groups which surpass the fen intellectually." The half-serious use of slan, Al continued, was "a looser and more general sense" than the original meaning. He intended it to refer to such fannish characteristics as interest in fantasy, time-binding ability, interest in many things, ability to express oneself in print, and the strong feeling of kinship between fans.

Speer, I might add, had written from his testing observations: "Practically all fans fall in the upper one-quarter of the population in intelligence, and the average is within the top ten per cent. Fen in the Army went up quickly."

A lengthy article on the Slan Center project that Al wrote in 1943 convinces me that the idea is not inherently foolish. Fans can get along well with one another in such instances as Berkeley, and there is no intrinsic reason why fans should not make up the population of a city block, if they can run a household. Ashley suggested a location on the outskirts of a large city which would contain "a collection of adjacent individual dwellings sprinkled with a few apartment structures and with a large communal building." Choice of the site would be made with an eye to the city's current fan population, to permit some of the center's inhabitants to avoid a drastic break with familiar surroundings. And it should be understood that this proposal was taken very seriously by level-headed fans, at the time it was made. Art Widner, for instance, wanted immediate appointment of a treasurer who would bank weekly or monthly deposits by prospective inhabitants, as a starter toward construction which couldn't start until after the war. One other point: The proposal to erect a city block of buildings did not sound as crazy in 1943 as it does in 1959. It was just at this time that war jobs were producing inflated salaries and construction costs had not yet risen in accordance. Civilian fans who were making two or three times as much as they had ever earned before the war and soldier fans who had no outlet for their salaries except liquor and women could visualize construction operations that would be paid for after a few years' scrimping.

What kind of a man was Al Ashley in the pre- Burbee era? He once admitted in print that he possessed three physical quirks. He was quite interested in his toenails on the little toe of each foot, because they were so vestegial that they could hardly

be found by the closest examination. He had four nipples, instead of the normal masculine quota; the second set were smaller but surrounded by the characteristic tuft of hair, and were located about four inches below the standard pair. Finally, he said, "My skin is loose, very thick, and very elastic. Almost anyplace on my arms, legs, or torso, I can pinch onto it and pull it out at right angles for two inches to four inches. It is also very resistant to abrasion."

Politically, Al once described himself as a rugged individualist, detailing at considerable length the basis for his statement. He possessed the dissatisfaction so common to fans even today with the general national craving for security at all costs.

"I look askance," he told FAPA, "at exhortations to relinquish some of my individual liberty and cooperate for the general good of all mankind.... When asked to give up personal freedom in return for dazzling promises of security and increased comfort, I recall that old saying, 'All that glitters...' I sit down and reason things out, and I come to realize that the only real security comes from within the individual, and is governed by his ability, and capacity to adapt himself to his environment. Yet that individual ability is worthless without freedom to exercise it. Nature gave us an urge, and set each of us on our own road to its satisfaction. That need for satisfaction is tied in with our whole psychology, and at least some measure of its attainment is necessary to happiness. Are we then to stand idly by and applaud the fireworks while a few of our fellows blow up the road before us? Are we to stupidly give up our own chances and become one of a submissive multitude harnessed to the more speedy attainment of satisfaction by a few?.... Suppose we demand a government that is truly devoted to guaranteeing each of us an equal chance, and the maximum freedom to make the most of it. Wouldn't that be better than letting ourselves be blinded by the razzle-dazzle of so-called 'Progressivism'? Wouldn't that be better than 'progressing' right away from individual liberty into a nice little tight compartment with lots and lots of security—security from ever having to worry about doing anything except what we're told? I still believe that the least governed are the best governed. I want to remain free to spend my life making the most of it; not in the frustration of a tight little cell thoughtfully provided by some brand of 'managed society'."

Al is today a completely staid and conservative person, I understand. Evidence of this can be found in preview form in his fan writings. For instance, he was stornly moved to comment whenever unions were the topic. He said he would support any union that "is devoted solely to preventing industry or capital from exploiting labor, and not doing so merely so it can do the exploiting itself," but he gave the strong impression that he didn't believe such a critter existed.

He was half-scornful, half-fearful of drink, I suspect. In any event, he claimed that he rarely drank. He didn't even like the extremity implicit in the philosophy of optimism. Once he told E. Everett Evans: "There are some who aren't afraid to look right in the face of reality. There are some who endeavor to form their judgements and opinions from as careful an analysis as possible of the available data. They prefer to make their observations with eyes unclouded by rainbow spectacles. And, strangely to the faith-ridden optimists of the world, they discover that the observable data indicates that many things do not happen for the best. Facts happen to be what they are—not what they might appear to obscured vision."

The excerpts that I've quoted might serve as evidence on the merits of Ashley's style of writing. The best way to describe it might be as an anonymous style. It is the same kind of prose that you might expect to find on the editorial page of a newspaper or in a magazine designed to simplify complex subjects for semi-informed readers. It isn't an individual kind of writing, and it would be impossible to identify an Ashley article or letter solely by the quirks of style that make distinctive the prose of many fans. On the other hand, Ashley had the ability to write concisely, he used good grammar, spelled correctly, and he was notoriously free from bad habits of syntax.

In fact, the one thing that made Al's magazines instantly identifiable was the front cover. It is hard to determine how the responsibility for those covers was divided between him and Jack Wiedenbeck. Jack was the artist in Slan Shack, but on one occasion when he wasn't available, Al did the cover, and it is almost indistinguishable in general appearance from Jack's work, aside from confinement to a single color. The cover process was a kind of silkscreening that has not reappeared in fandom since Al stopped publishing. The colors were by accident or design just a trifle varied from pure greens, blues, reds, and grays, giving a quite distinctive appearance.<sup>1</sup>

It's hard to say how well an Ashley anthology would be received, after all these years and after the transmogrification of his character. Almost all his work for FAPA was ephemeral in theme, depending for full understanding on knowledge of what had gone before and what surrounded it in the mailings. However, a scattered item or two might be worth publication again at this late date. Al once made an impassioned plea for the substitution of tem for fan as the general description of us critters. It's worth reading for the thoroughness with which he worked out its possibilities, even if you don't like its derivation: from the Latin tempus, as a symbol of the time-binding ability of science fiction enthusiasts. Also suitable for reprinting would be "The Little Man Who Wasn't There," because of its epitomizing quality, its faithful explanation of the plight that most of us have suffered at one time or another, when a fan comes

calling and shows no signs of saying goodbye. This was the chronicle of Degler's attempt to attend the 1943 Michicon at Slan Shack.

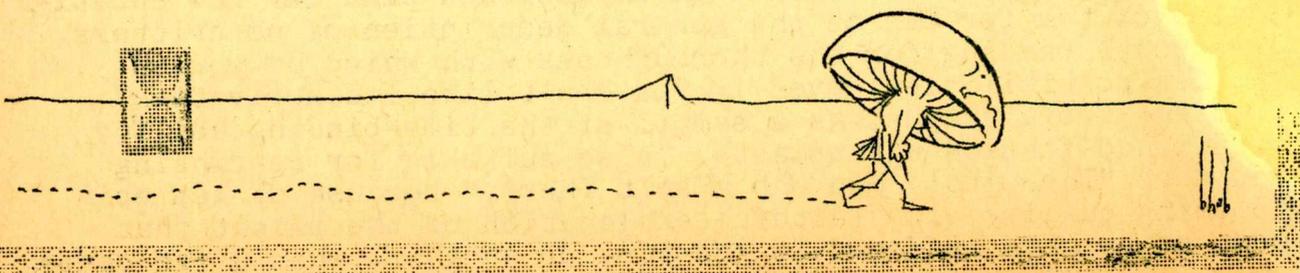
As an artist, Al had no particular personality, either. He did exhibit a firmness of line and a peculiar preference for tiny drawings that consumed just a small area and occupied that square completely; his work was good in contrast to the extremely low level of fan art that prevailed at the time. I don't remember that he did much poetry. His fiction was probably his weakest point, usually consisting of a very brief story that existed solely for some kind of jolting surprise in the last line. A sample was the one-pager in Walt Liebscher's Chanticleer, which ended: "Disgusted, at last, with her lack of faith, the other toadstool got up and slowly walked away." Al was very skillful at plucking from the dullest-appearing volumes or ancient magazines passages that appealed for their quaintness or unexpected appositeness to the current situation or times.

I imagine that any reasonably objective fan would have ranked Al Ashley among the top 25 fans of the time during a period of at least three years in the early 1940's. He had few real enemies while he was in Battle Creek, and at a distance, he imparted a quality of capability at handling any situation, a take-charge ability, and clear-headed sanity that were quite rare in fandom during those hectic days, when maturity was mostly gone to war. I don't pretend to know what caused him to drop out of fandom after the move to Los Angeles, and I don't know if the Al Ashley that Burbee describes is a man who has changed character or whose true character has come to light or a figment of the Burb imagination. But I wish there were more people in fandom today who possess the qualities in letters and fanzines that Al Ashley had during those halcyon years.

--Harry Warner, Jr.

1. As a matter of fact, the process used for EN GARDE's covers was usually air-brush, which makes use of cut-out stencils through which the ink is sprayed by the brush. This is a demanding and time-consuming process, to say the least. One of the early issues of Magnus' SF (1952 or 53) used an air-brushed cover in two colors (most SF covers were silk-screened), and this and the cover of GRUE #23 are the only ones I know of in the last ten years. -tw

This article, which was originally submitted to Sylvia White, and stencilled by her, is the first instalment of Harry's long-famed "All Our Yesterdays" columns for VOID. Now that INNUENDO is no more, the column will appear fairly regularly in future issues of VOID.



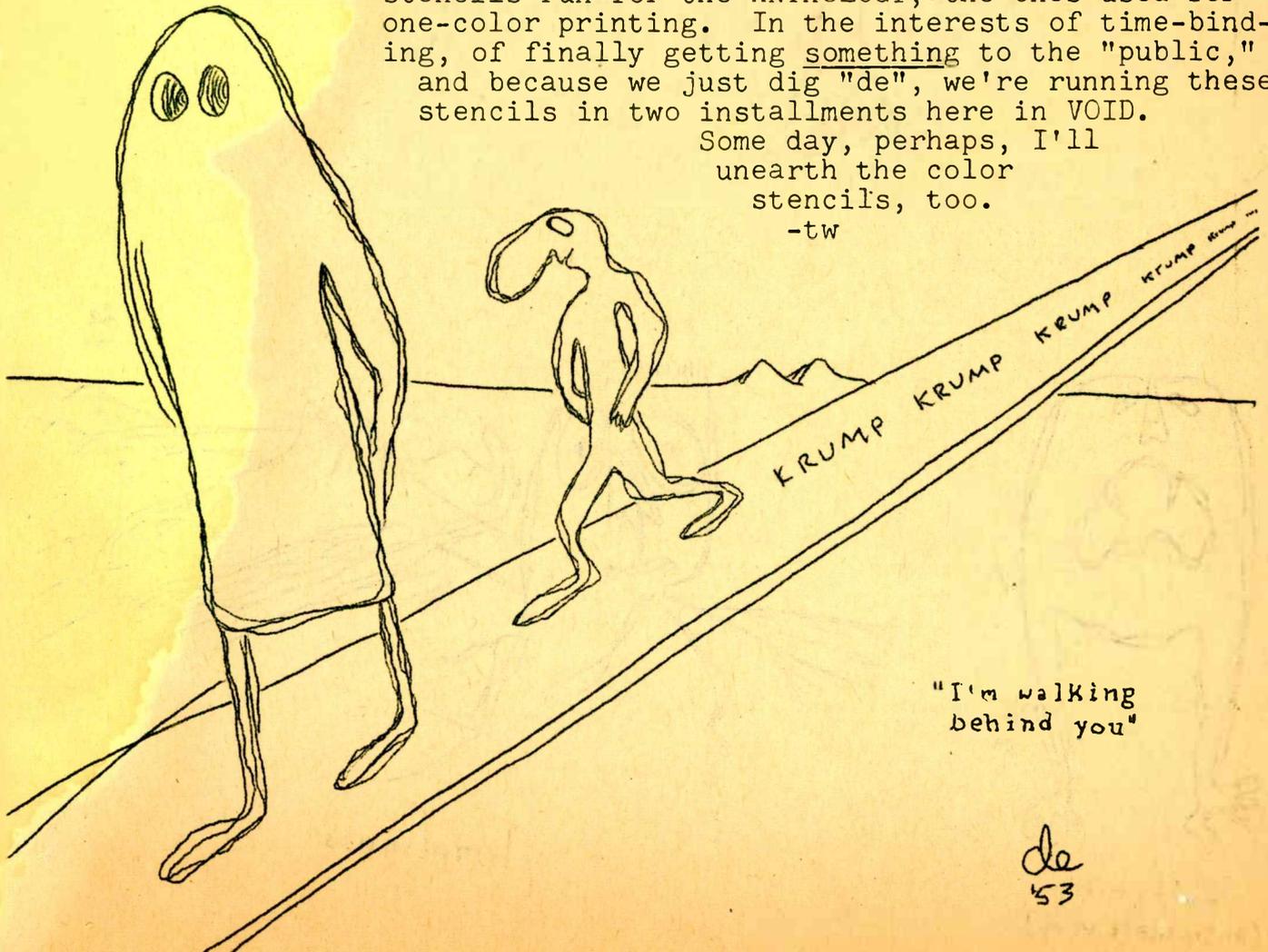
# THE DAVE ENGLISH ANTHOLOGY pt. I

In 1954, John Magnus first showed me the stencils he'd lovingly cut for the DE ANTHOLOGY he'd planned. The illos were all selected from late Sixth and early pseudo-Seventh fandom zines, done during English's first peak of popularity. Two years later, in 1956, we began to run off the first of these stencils in color. In 1957, we completed running the pages to be printed in color. These were hellish jobs, often requiring simultaneous multicolor (or Vicolor). ## "The rest we'll print in black, on colored paper," John said. The finished product as he imagined it was to be the most ambitious job of mimeo publishing ever undertaken in fandom. ## In 1958, after I moved myself and my Gestetner to Baltimore, and we'd taken an apartment together, John and I ran off those last ten pages. "All it needs now is the credit page and the introduction," he remarked. ## Both Harlan Ellison and I had written introductions. In the meantime, while John was seeking time to select the introduction and stencil it, he found good use for the perhaps ten reams of paper already run off: he used it for bookends. ## As far as I know, although touted for over five years as "about to appear" those beautifully mimeod sheets are still serving as bookends; the ANTHOLOGY has never appeared. ## Recently,

while sorting out old stencils in a futile search for one of the same period, I encountered those last ten stencils run for the ANTHOLOGY; the ones used for one-color printing. In the interests of time-binding, of finally getting something to the "public," and because we just dig "de", we're running these stencils in two installments here in VOID.

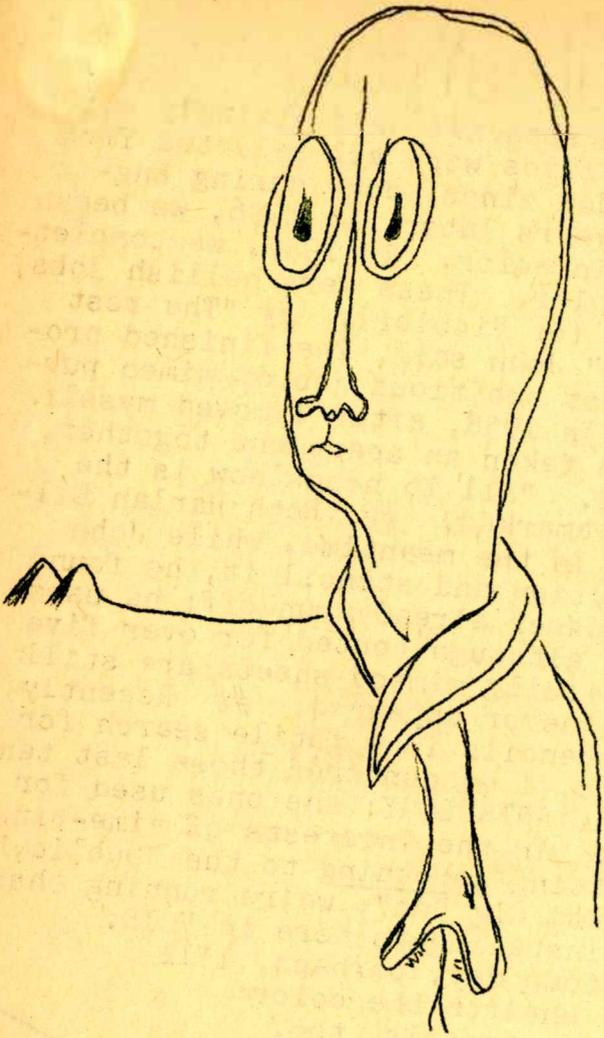
Some day, perhaps, I'll  
unearth the color  
stencils, too.

-tw



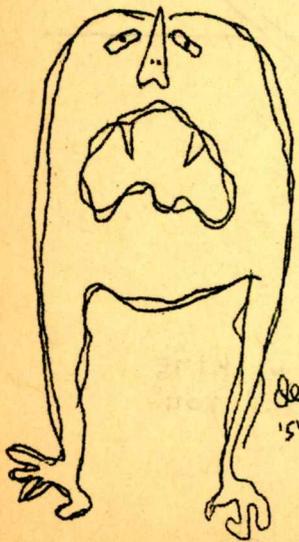
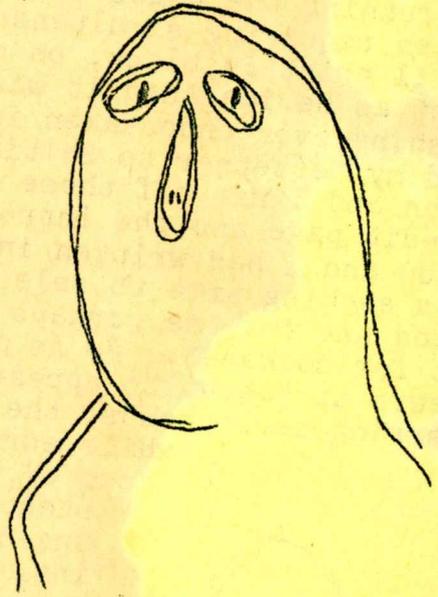
"I'm walking  
behind you"

de  
53



de  
'54

Suffering (mute)



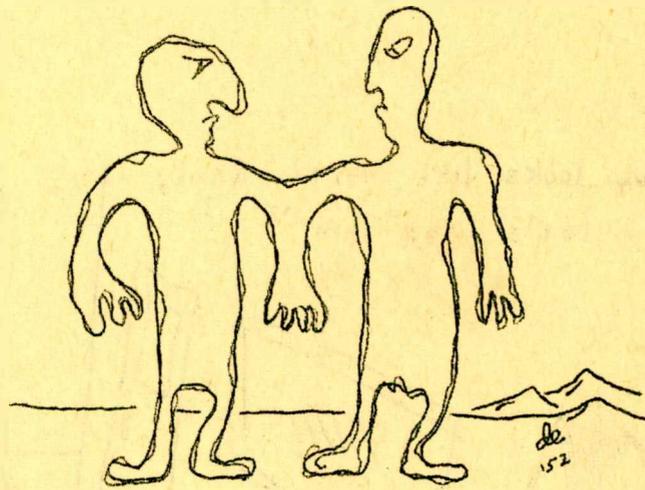
de  
'54

Suffering  
(articulate, very)



de  
'54

loneliness



The Siamese Twins:  
familiarity breeds contempt.



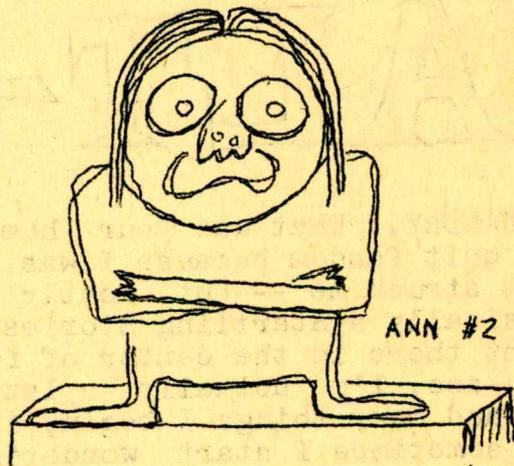
"that guy looks like martin Kane;  
let's jump him"



de  
'54



ANN #1



ANN #2

There once was a letter from Ted White. It was to Shelby Vick, and it requested material concerning Willis for the VOID Willish. Due to the vagaries of the U S Post Office, the letter arrived the afternoon of Dec 22nd and on the morning of Dec 23rd (the Post Office had nothing to do with this), my wife Suzanne and I were leaving to spend Christmas with her folks in Sarasota -- and the letter said that the deadline was Jan 1. When we got back on the 27th, work was piling up so deeply at Vick Mimeograph Service that we didn't get a chance to draw a breath for two or three weeks. This, I decided, was too far past the deadline. But even if it hadn't been, I dunno that I'd have gotten the article in. This was something important; not just a fanzine article, but something to help get Walt and Madeleine over to the US of A. I've never been certain of my writing abilities anyway, and this seemed to be something that called for much more thought and effort than I'm used to. It should be informative, interesting, and entertaining. What did I know that was informative, interesting and entertaining concerning the Campaign?

Nothing, it seemed.

So I missed VOID 23, but I understand Ted would still like to have something from me. Well, all right. Something should be done. Maybe a bad something would be better than a blank nothing. And VOID 23 did give me an idea of something to write about. So -- leave us write:

DEAR  
WALT-

No, I didn't quit fandom because your Chicon report was in Q instead of cf. (and here I must remind you that it IS 'cf.', NOT 'Cf'. The period and the little 'c' are just as important as the '!' was in OOPSLA! -- but you're forgiven; after all, it has been...several months since you received a copy). I was a bit miffed, but only because you really DID be-

long in QUANDRY. That was your home; cf. was just a friend's house. Partly, I quit fandom because I was worn out; partly, because of the polio that struck me -- but mostly because I never really belonged. I was basically a Startling Stories & TWS letterhack; I was out of place right there in the center of fandom where I suddenly found myself. You see, I'm actually a lazy introvert. I much prefer doing nothing...and many things I begin, I never finish. This irritates me, at times; sometimes I start wondering if I ever can actually finish anything I begin. I was feeling like this back in the summer of 1951, when the idea hit to try and get you to the Nolacon. Gritting my teeth in determination (goeey stuff, that determination; sticks to your mouth worse than peanut butter...) I vowed, "THIS is one thing I will complete!"

So from that time until after the TASFIC, I tripled, quadrupled, quintupled my usual fanac. Mostly, I had a great time, and I met fen who were swell people and was rather proud of myself...but sometimes I had to remind myself of that promise I had made. When it was all over, there was no pressure to continue turning out cf.s or other fanac. I still did a bit more; once things get to rolling, they can't stop on a dime, in spite of what these brake people keep telling us. But then came the polio, and that was a real good excuse. For over six months, I had a perfect excuse for doing nothing, and I loved it. But the steady stream of letters and fanzines became a slow trickle,

and then dried up entirely except for an occasional HYPHEN or OOPSLA! that dropped in. It was easier to stay out of things than to get back in. Prozine letter columns had dwindled away, the huge pile of unanswered letters became easier and easier to ignore...and I quit. Besides which, there was this beautiful blonde name of Suzanne with whom I had begun corresponding. Somehow, I found her far more fascinating than sf fen. I still do. I married her.

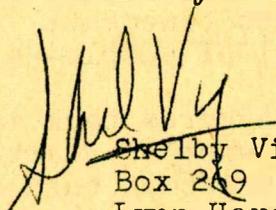
Now, to the business at hand. You've got to come over, Walt; there's no two ways about it. For one thing, Madeleine deserves it. For another thing, you deserve it to make up for that hectic trip I forced you into before. And for the last thing, fandom deserves it. Too many of the fans of this decade have never had a chance to participate in a Willis Campaign -- and to the older fen who did participate, it would mean a lot to do it again, "for old times' sake". Don't underestimate this fandom (seventh? Eighth? Who knows?). Not only have they a few more months to do it in, but there is a much bigger fandom to work with -- a good deal of the active ones from '52 are either still around or have returned, plus neos of that day who have become BNFs of the '60s -- and a lot of new ones who weren't around then.

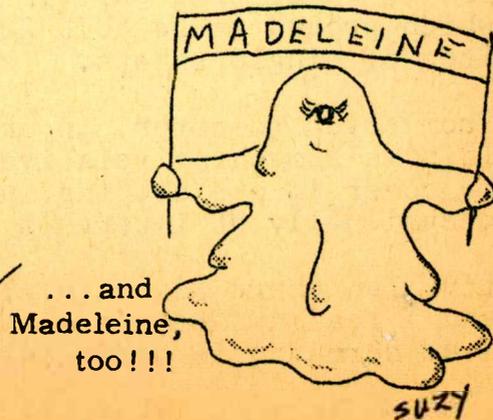
Too, this is better organized; back in '51, I just took off from a standing start with no groundwork or anything; what little organizing there was grew as things went along. These guys seem to have everything thought out ahead of time -- complete with a treasurer. (Shows they have confidence; they figure there's going to be money to be handled; a thing of which I was most doubtful when I started.)

There's more; you also should come over because we've been working on your ideal about a small college town in the Rockies, on the Gulf of Mexico within easy driving distance of New York. That is, we now have a junior college in Panama City. This is a beginning. We still haven't figured out how we're going to pull the Rockies and New York down this way, but we've been piling up chunks of limestone, and throwing dirt over them--and there's a guy I met in New York who wanted to sell me the Brooklyn Bridge...

But there is one catch; Suzanne says you CAN'T come if you don't bring that sexy French swimsuit you had!

See you in Chi!

  
Shelby Vick  
Box 269  
Lynn Haven, Fla



... and  
Madeleine,  
too!!!

LEE HOFFMAN --

# THE RASP of the DOOR

cut through my dreams and slowly brought me to a state of awareness. I lay abed, listening to it, for a while, and meditating the philosophical question of whether or not I should answer it. Like, who the hell would be ringing my doorbell at this hour? It was nine ayem. When the doorbell erupts at this hour, I am usually not around to hear it, being a nine-to-fiver during the bulk of the week; but today is not only Saturday, but also Christmas Eve.

Taking the latter into consideration, I thought it just might be the mailman. Well, normally there wouldn't be a mail delivery before noon, but it could be parcel post or something. After a while I got up and went to the door.

It was a mailman--one of the civilian types attached to the P.O. at this time of the year. He had a handful of stuff for me and an assortment of things for people whom he'd been unable to locate. In the true postoffice tradition, he wanted to dump all the undeliverables into my mailbox. But being a civilian and new to the tradition, he'd made the mistake of asking first. I said, No, I am not the building super and I don't know who lives in the building. For all I know, the lump of rock over my head is solid, the windows a mere sham. Or perhaps it's really the laboratory of a mad scientist, disguised as an innocent tenement. Come to think of it, I'm sure it's no normal tenement full of people--it's too damned quiet.

I took my fistful of mail and staggered back into the apartment, stumbling straight through to the kitchen where I started coffee and began sorting through the new arrivals. A Christmas card from somebody I'd never heard of--I considered the signature, read the address to me (there was no return address) and studied the postmark, wondering whether this was someone from fandom, folknikdom, or the office. I pulled the wrapper off the latest issue of SPORTS CARS ILLUSTRATED (soon to be CARS AND DRIVEL or something of that sort), and opened the tightly stapled bundle from TEW, which proved to be VOID 22 part 3, and the usually accompanying satellites of single sheets.

I poured coffee, lit a cigaret and opened VOID. From cover to cover, in one sitting, I read it. And I got to thinking. This is something relatively new to me. I mean reading fmz from cover to cover in one sitting, not thinking, which is something I have tried occasionally at intervals over many a year.

When I was a young and active fan there were a hell of a lot more fanzines arriving at my hovel, and I read a total of about fifty per cent of their contents. Now that I am dormant, if not actually dead, the fanzines are fewer, and I read

most of them in their entirety.

In the old days I would almost always write to the editor of the fmz I read. Nowadays I always contemplate writing--plan writing--and almost inevitably, don't get it done.

Fannish bouts with the typewriter nowadays are few and far between. Not that I don't intend them, but somehow I just don't get to it.

This morning with VOID in hand, coffee in stomach, and a day of no particular plans ahead of me, I thought that I would take advantage of the enthusiasm VOID had sparked and Do Something. My first thought was to whup off an item for VOID. (What is this mad power TEW has that

inspires in me the desire to write for his zine?) Then I realized that my FAPA obligations hung heavy over my head, and that there'd been a lot of stuff in the last mailing that I wanted to comment on, and so forth. And then there was a small pile of fanzines sitting in the debris in my "den" on which I wanted to comment profusely as soon as I had the chance, and I owed letters to several people, including my brother's family who last heard from me about a year ago.

But today is Christmas Eve and although that's hardly a reason, I felt it was sufficient justification to do what I felt like doing, rather than what I should be doing.

So here I am, less than an hour after having arisen from a damnably sound sleep, with paper in the typer, my fingers on the keys, the urge to write an article for TEW strong upon me, and nary an idea for an article. And I realize that this is just the reason why I haven't been writing for fanzines in my spare moments for the past several years. Nary an idea.

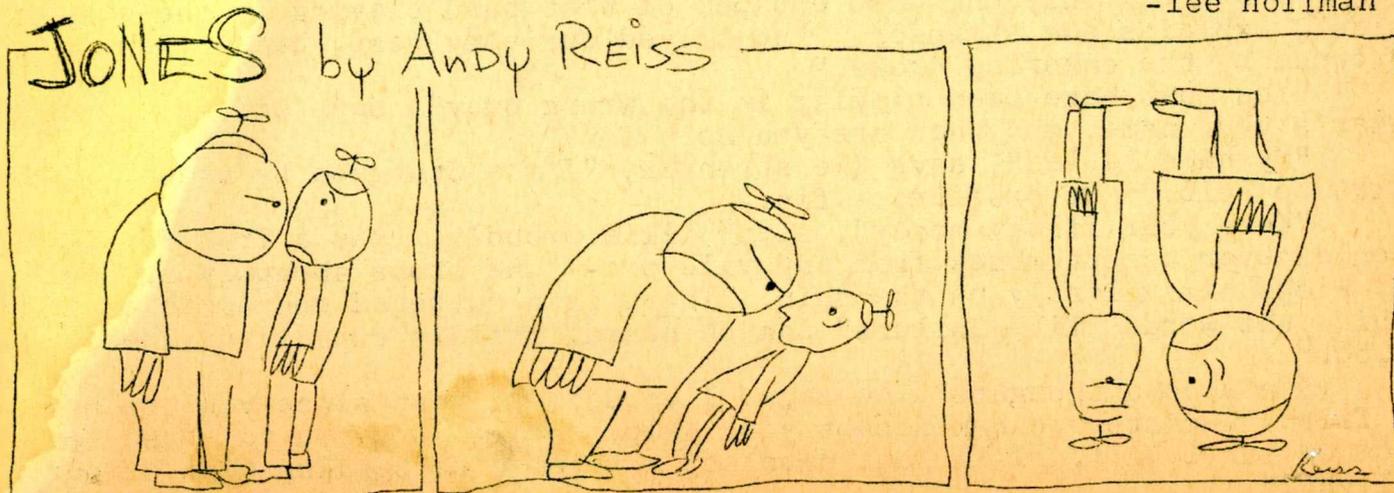
When I think about it, it seems to me that I didn't have many ideas back in the days when I was an active fan. As a matter of fact, I don't think I wrote many articles for fanzines then either. Mostly just con reports, usually of cons that had never been.

It is strange.

But I guess it explains why there is not an article by me in this issue of VOID--or in most of the other fanzines you've been reading lately.

-lee hoffman

# BUZZER



# WILLIS DISCOVERS AMERICA 2

## CHAPTER TWO

(QUANDRY 20)

"Your Immigration Service not only disarms me", says Willis, "It sends me into transports."

"Ch shut up", says Shelby crossly. "Ghosh I wish I had a cigaret." He paces up and down the narrow hold, the ball and chain at each ankle clashing about as he walks and making his remarks sound like a Stan Kenton vocal arrangement.

"It's a good thing I'm a chainsmoker", says Willis, puffing reflectively at a link of mild steel. "While you've been stalking up and down their throwing your weights about, I have figured a way to get us out of here. Just in the nicotine."

"How?" asks Shelby, pulling up his stalking.

"We'll bore a hole in the side of the ship", explains Willis.

"With what?"

"With one of my boring articles, of course." He takes the ~~badly~~ thing out of his pocket and presses it against the side of the ship. It makes very little impression.

"That's only to be expected", says Willis, "it had the same effect when it was published. Everyone said it had no point. Here, we'll try this very cutting one I wrote about Russ Watkins."<sup>1</sup>

This time the article rapidly bores its way through the ship's timbers. In a few moments it cuts completely through. A torrent of water pours through the hole, rapidly filling the hold.

"Hmm", says Willis. "Something would appear to have gone wrong. Wonder if I have another article with a good plug in it?"

"Puns!" shrieks Shelby hysterically, "at a time like this! We are trapped! Trapped, I tell you, trapped like rats in a trap!"

"Speak for yourself", says a passing rat, swimming confidently through the hole.

"Hm", says Willis. "I could have sworn that was Edwin Siegler."<sup>2</sup>

Abruptly the inrush of water stops, and the hold is flooded instead with liquid notes of music. It is some strange denizen of the deep.

Shelby stares in disbelief. "I must write to Willy Ley about this!"<sup>3</sup> he says. "I never saw a fish playing the banjo before."

"Don't be ridiculous!" says the unexpected visitor, wedging himself further into the hole. "This isn't a banjo--it's a guitar."<sup>4</sup>

"Oh, that's different", says Shelby, "But what are you doing here?"

"I was the only one that escaped of that band playing at the quay-side", explains the stranger. "We played our very best, but we were drowned by the cheering crowd."

"You must have been playing in the wrong quay", says Willis. "But what's your name, and what are you here for?"

"My name is Ted", says the stranger, "I'm a Sturgeon by trade. I'd like to help." He proffers a fin.<sup>5</sup>

"Keep your filthy money", says Willis proudly. "As a True Fan I would never accept money from any vile pro--" He stops abruptly as Shelby kicks him violently on the shin. There is a muttered conversation in which the words "five dollars" can be heard. Willis rapidly divides by 2.80.<sup>6</sup>

"On second thoughts", he says, "I've decided that since you are not a filthy huckster we can accept your help. We'll send you to rouse freedom on our behalf. I'll just dash off a brief note telling them of our plight."

Two hours pass, and Willis is still battering away at the typewriter. Shelby goes over to him. "All you have to do is ask for help", he complains. "You don't have to write a column about it. And what's all this about the April 1943 ASF? How will that get us out from behind bars?"

"Well, it would give me a complete file", pouts Willis. "But all right. There", he says, tearing a piece of paper from the roll in the typewriter and handing it to Sturgeon, "Go!" He points dramatically in the direction of the Sargasso Sea. "Tell fandom!"

As Sturgeon wriggles out of the hole and darts away, the sea begins to pour in again. The water level in the hold rises. The ship takes on a heavy list, which is checked.

"As if things weren't bad enough", groans Shelby, "they have to take aboard the Don Day Prozine Index! What'll we do now?"

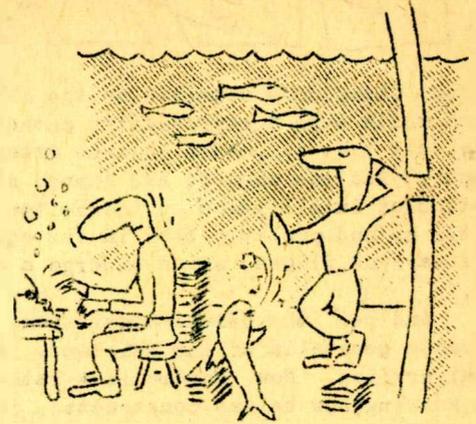
"I think we should bore another hole and let the water out", suggests Willis brightly.

"That's absurd", cries Shelby. "What's to stop the water coming through both holes?"

"Easy", says Willis. "We'll label one hole 'IN' and the other one 'OUT'. Any water worth its salt will be able to tell the difference!"

"I don't think it's just as briney as that", says Shelby doubtfully.

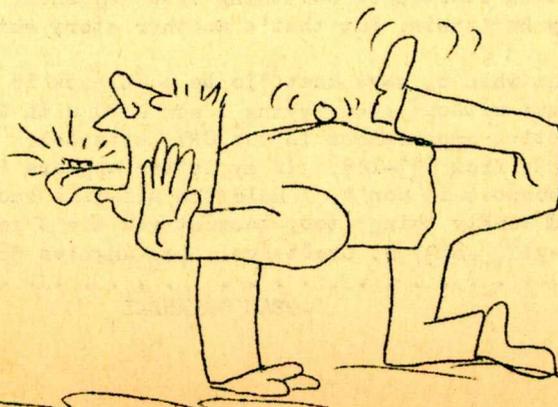
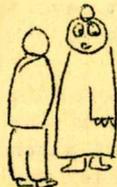
They are still arguing when the ship grinds to a shuddering stop and cries of panic are heard from above. The ship is sinking rapidly.



1. Russ Watkins' "Clean Up Fandom Crusade" was the current controversy.
2. Siegler had made himself notorious for his race hatred letters in the promag letter columns.
3. Willy Ley's "The Lungfish and the Unicorn", dealing with rare and mythological creatures, had just been published.
4. Ted Sturgeon's guitar playing is a feature of American conventions.
5. American slang for five dollars.
6. Current dollar/sterling exchange rate.
7. The Don Day Checklist of promags had just been published.

-walt willis

(to be continued...)



"FRISBY HAS A PINBALL MACHINE  
COMPLEX."

Ray Nelson

# LETTERS CONTINUED...

Read John Champion's comments on the Farmer story with considerable interest. The thought occurs to me that while such a reproductive method as that of the Eeltau is quite possible, though highly unlikely, all that is needed is some organism to develop a more efficient method, and the Eeltau would be kaput. And the chances are damned slim that all the millions of years of time necessary for the evolution of intelligence on the Eeltau planet would have passed without some organism coming up with a better method, probably back in the equivalent of pre-Cambrian times. The organisms on earth, such as the various flukes, which undergo a complicated life cycle, are rather far removed from intelligence.

And re: the sexual aberrations of the characters. Note the relative locations of the male and female genitalia of the Martians. And note also, the fact that the mouth of the Eeltau is the genital orifice. Now, Martia is a rather observant gal. Now, if she were to get hot pants (!) for Lane, knowing how he was constructed, don't you suppose she would know better than to expect him to try and swallow the larva? I think you can figure out the rest. No need to belabor the obvious. ((Are you sure you don't want to join the Cult? -gb))

I would like to be Farmer's psychiatrist. His dual concern with sex and religion intrigues me.

Get some more FF from Nirenberg. Even if you have to threaten to burn down the candy store.

[1303 Mystery St., New Orleans 19, Louisiana]

DON FORD

Received VOID 22-2. Tucker's "Vandals of the Void" was completely interesting. As far as I was concerned the rest of the mag was superfluous. I'm glad you printed this article. ((That's nice.-gb))  
[Box 19-T, RR #2, Loveland, Ohio]

BOB LICHTMAN

VOID 22-2, dominated as it was by Tucker's article which I had of course read before in its original fanzine appearance in Bob's fapazine, doesn't have too much in it for me to comment on. However, there is this line in your comments to Ethel Lindsay that strikes me as having a typo in it. Shouldn't it read, "[Duplicator manufacturers] can't seem to understand that some people can amuse themselves swearing over an office machine..."? Seriously, some duplicator salesmen can imagine it. For instance, Brian W. Storey of Duplicating Supply Products Comapny here in Los Angeles. This is the place where Los Angeles fandom (at least the part of it that centers around the Gestetner 120 and the Rexograph ditto) buys their supplies. They have a deal where they buy all their paper at the 400-ream price, so that, for instance, a ream of 20# ditto bond, white, costs only \$1.35. This may sound high to you in the East, but it's a good buy out here I can assure you. Anyway, Mr. Storey attended the Xmas meeting of the LASFS and I met him there. This was the night I was distributing the local copies of PSI-PHI #7 and he asked to see a copy. Right away he suggested to me what my duplicator was doing wrong. "It's letting fluid get on the master", he suggested. Now the fact that I knew this all along (and can't find anything to do to correct it, dammit) is beside the point--that he would be so helpful as to tell me is what I'm pointing out. This much established, I decided to see if this man had ever heard of my brand of ditto machine. "Everheard of a Copy-Plus spirit duplicator?" I asked, to which he answered the now-expected no and then proceeded to explain that a lot of obscure brands of duplicators and mimeographs exist. We talked a little while more about papers and masters and then I think the meeting started or something else happened. It might have been that Ted Johnstone walked in with Kathy Bernstein, but that's another story entirely...some other time, maybe.

Dick Schultz is only half-right when he says that "To be a CRYhack is a proud and lonely thing." I'm not very proud of the fact that without even trying I now hold with Rich Brown a tied record for the longest string of consecutive appearances in the CRY lettercol. His string extends from 112-124 inclusive, while mine extends from 133-145. If my letter appears in 146, which was published yesterday, and I have no reason to suppose it won't, I hold the all-time record. Yay for me, I guess? ((To be a VOIDhack is a proud and lonely thing, too, because you don't get your letters published until you're probably out of fandom. -gb)) [6137 S. Croft Ave., Los Angeles 56, California]

DEAN GRENNELL

Succinct Sonnet:

VOID  
was enjoid.  
Tanks  
of thanks.

[402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin]

BOB TUCKER

I was both pleased and surprised (mostly surprised) to receive VOID 22-2 yesterday. So the issue really existed and wasn't a ploy, as I first suspected when I got a fanzine from Les Nirenberg commenting on it.

Surely you see the tenuous connection churning in my evil mind: Tucker thinks Walter Breen is a pseudonym for Ted White; other people think Les Nirenberg is a pseudonym for Boyd Raeburn. A perfect ploy to squelch Tucker would be for White-Breen to plot with Raeburn-Nirenberg and manufacture a tremendous hoax: Raeburn-Nirenberg would review an imaginary issue of VOID containing "Vandals of the Void" and Tucker would get all excited and write to White-Breen demanding his copy. All two-four people would then rear back and laugh.

But you spoiled it by publishing VOID 22-2. Shame. ((But I thought you knew Boyd Raeburn was a hoax? -gb))

One small correction please, altho the original error could have been mine rather than yours. The long paragraph near the bottom of page 32, concerning agents: The closing sentence should read "Many of the better ones cannot advertise--they belong to a guild which prohibits it, and which provides a code of ethics."

For your peace of mind (and your daily dosage of egoboo) I hope you get more comment on this issue than I did with the original FAPA edition; it was startling to see the number of Faps who entirely ignored my zine, and it was also startling to count the number of outsiders who likewise ignored it. I mailed out about sixty copies to non-members...friends, likable strangers and exchange editors...and in return received perhaps three or four letters and about a half-dozen reviews or acknowledgments. I figure that I threw away about fifty copies there, give or take a couple; it caused me to cut back sharply on extra copies of my next FAPA zine. No point in spending the money on paper and ink, if you fail to receive indication the magazines are being read. I'd be happy with nothing more than pocsarcds bearing three words: "I read it." ((I read it, too. -gb)) [Box 702, Bloomington, Illinois]

DON ANDERSON

Well, hooray, the VOID Annish is complete at last. It's good to see Pete Graham's lighter stuff, but I hope that this doesn't mean that we'll see less of the TEW serious type of thing. ((No, Ted will still be writing his usual light, humorous, serious-type editorials. -gb))

"Vandals of the Void" was, as expected, the outstanding bit of the entire issue. It was one of the most interesting and comprehensive articles I have seen in any Fanzine. In fact, I would vote it the outstanding article of the entire year. I have seen the contracts offered by the vanity publishers such as Vantage Press, and I wonder that they are allowed to advertise as "publishers" at all. In truth, they are nothing but printers who arrange to cut a slice of pie for themselves in case they happen to fall into a good thing. [141 Shady Creek Road, Rochester 23, New York]

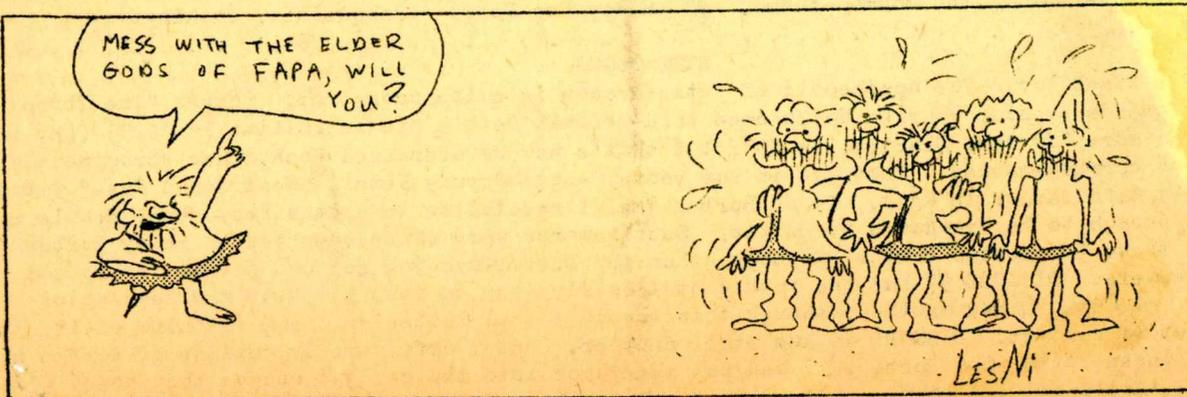
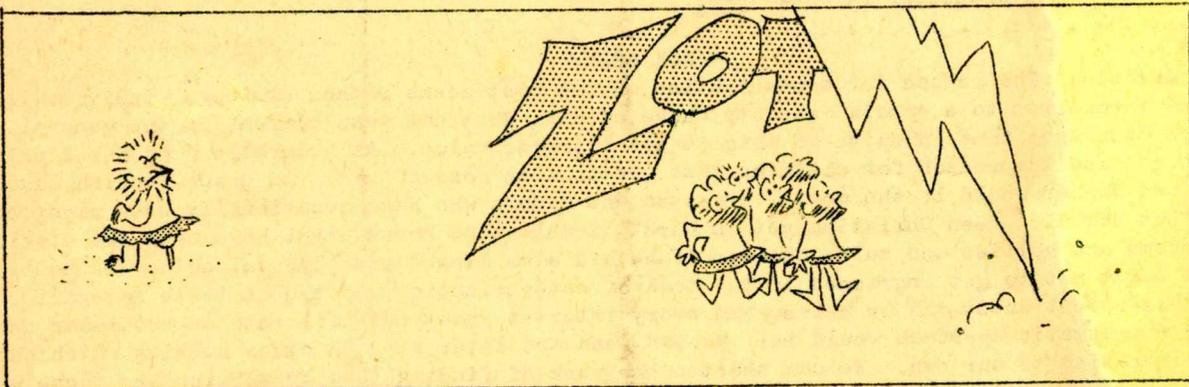
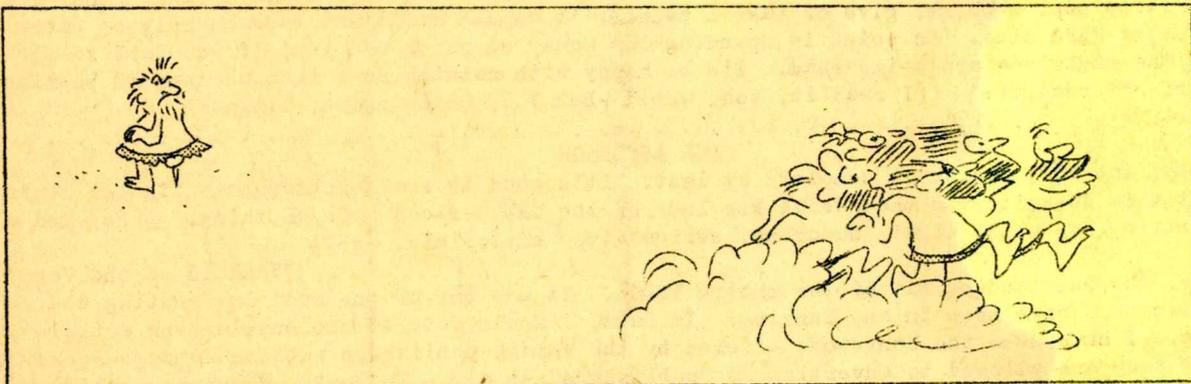
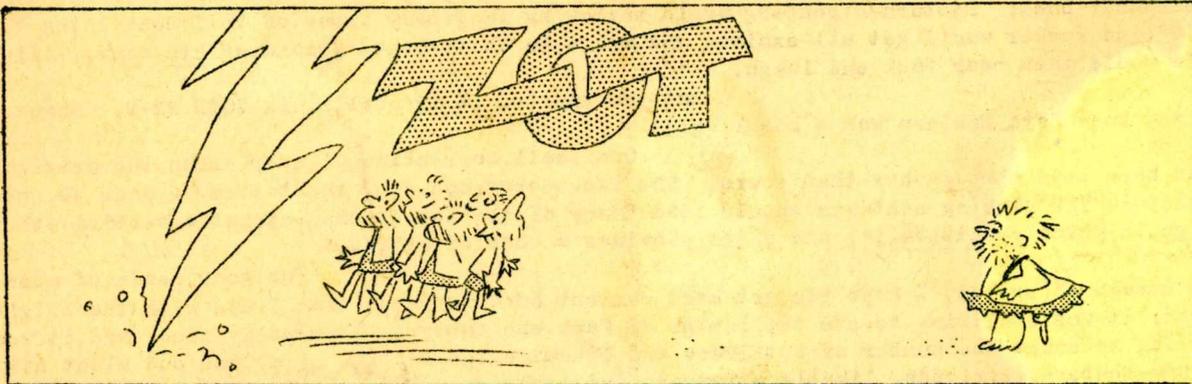
JACK SPEER

On Breen's article. The reason for concentration on the past seems rather obvious. Individuals who have devoted themselves to a special society whose coinage does not pass current in the general population seek assurance that in spite of this it has ultimate value. An honorable past helps provide this. Such is also the reason for claiming that greats were "one of us". An apter fannish example than Bloch and Tucker would be the movie adresses and actors who have occasionally been reported to read stf. But how did Queen Christina get in here? I felt that Breen might have made the distinction between fandoms and hobbies and cults clearer if he had also listed some typical cults and hobbies. However, we ought not to get engrossed in the task of categorization, as though these categories were Platonic classes that subsisted in heaven and every interest group must fit into a particular one of the three. A pragmatic approach would be: We s-f fans are interested in other hobbies which show surprising similarities to our own. We can shorten the work of finding them by eliminating those which are not sufficiently similar through two criteria: They don't have an ingroup feeling, or they have a humorless attitude toward the common theme. ## Happy Foo Year. [Snoqualmie, Washington]

REDD BOGGS

I liked Ted's zines too. The apotheosis of Peter Graham is quite croggling. (Maybe "The Three Figs" has some reference to him; Charles Wells once told me that Pete's middle initial is "I.") ((My middle initial is no more "I" than Charles' is "O", but that's how we addressed each other throughout a furious spate of correspondence. That was in our youth. -pg)) Anyway Pete's "West Coast Jass" was one of the funniest performances in ages. In re Burbeeisms, I specialize in quotes from other people who were unwary enough to be overheard by Burbee. Such remarks were often reported to me by Burbee on wire or tape and these I remember better, perhaps, than the Burbeeisms you got out of the Incomplete Burbee and elsewhere. DISCORD #7 had one such quote--fairly easy to spot; it's in the heading of an articlette. DISCORD #8 had another, though this one is a real Burbeeism, come to think of it, but not memorable out of context. DISCORD #9 has still another. But I defy anybody outside of Burbee himself to identify these latter two Burbeeisms and put them back into the context whence they came. ((Three Burbeeisms...that's not too many. -gb)) [2209 Highland Place NE, Minneapolis 21, Minnesota]

F F



ETHEL LINDSAY

Greg gives a lovely hilarious air to his tale of Dallas fandom, and in a quiet deadly way too. I know I'd rather like him to describe Ted. ((What? And break up our beautiful editorship? -gb)) I guess these fans he met were the authors of the weirdest zine that ever came my way. The grammar and spelling errors were so bad that I fairly blushed for them. I didn't have the heart to comment, as frankly words failed me.

I like [Andy Reiss/] Thaddeus better than Jones--he seems to show more, uh, personality. In fact this Reiss is quite a guy all round, for that is a very good story (and the number of times I have made that remark about fan fiction are few and far between). I have also been admiring your use of the micro-elite in the layout of this story. Beautifully done. ((We tried using m-e for all the text in VOID in the last annish (I say "last," since the next is nearly upon us...), and if we hadn't been able to expand the number of pages, we'd still be using it. We made an exception for the Willish, of course, since that was something of an exception. Last December Pete said to me, "Ted, you're not going to use all micro-elite in future VOID's are you? I don't like it for a whole issue." At the time I insisted that although the pica was more attractive, micro-elite was what we'd be using. But his criticism rested heavily on my mind, and was one of the strongest factors behind my decision to try this 14# stock. So the other evening, as Pete was typing up a piece he said, "Aren't we using micro-elite throughout?" "No," I said. "We're back to pica for the main body of text." "Gee," said Pete, "and I was beginning to like the micro-elite better, too..." Well, as they say in the movies, you can't win 'em all...-tw))

Walter Breen's article was extremely interesting and so well written in comparison to many fan articles, that it almost seems too good for a fanzine--but there, not yours, my dear!

I very much admired Ted's attitude to the Inchmery breakup, and I do know that his kindness to Joy and Sandy was a great 'liftup' when they were feeling depressed. And I found his thoughts on DNQ and DNP etc. witty and laughable, and then, of course, they made me sigh and think. It is quite true that fans love to gossip, faunch to know all about each other, and two sitting together are probably tearing up a third! ((Well, not always... -tw)) It is very hard to make rules about these sort of things, when in doubt, I should say use your instinct. [Courage House, 6 Langley Ave., Surbiton, Surrey, England]

JOHN KONING

For my money, Benford's editorial is the best part of 22-1. The humor contained in this, and past editorials is in the same vein as that which made INN and CELSY so enjoyable to me (I think it was CELSY). I have always sensed a kinship spirit between VOID, STELLAR, CELSY, A BAS, and, to a lesser extent, HYPHEN that seems the very essence of faaannishness. For this reason, those zines are most enjoyable to me.

I have just perceived the significance of the photo on page 3. Obviously it is not Boyd. The secret lies in the inscription, "We're tired of fake photos which mis-represent Boyd Raeburn as a j.d.-type hood. The above is a genuine unretouched photo." Yes, but a genuine unretouched photo of wh? ((Whom.-tw)) This is a fake photo which represents Boyd Raeburn as something other than a j.d.-type hood, right? ((Absolutely. Honors go to you as the only one to figure this out--among, at any rate, those who had met Boyd and knew what he looks like. The photo was of a teacher at Les Gerber's former high school. Les had the Gestefax made for a school zine, and after running it I spliced it into VOID. It seemed like the fannish thing to do... -tw))

DICK SCHULTZ

Bhob Stewart is something of a genuine character, I must admit. However, he is also a genuine Art Student, and the field holds his interests and ambitions quite fully, I think. ((Well, when he's not studying acting, working in the stock exchange, or selling mimeographing, anyway...-tw)) Like Reiss, Barr, and a few others, he is one of the few genuine Artists in fandom. ((Could we please strike Barr from that list? -tw)) Reiss' talents were given much better outlet in oils, such as those at the Pittcon than in fanzines, but even there the effectiveness and spontaneity of his cartooning is amazing. His "untitled" (woman's face on a blue back) is a beautiful piece, surely one of the most esthetically pleasing oils that were shown at that show. His Jones series, Lunacon scenes, and "Dig" are out of this world.

...Some more witty Pete Graham and TW writing. Naturally to achieve such a casual tone, the two of you must have written your sections over, at least once more, probably twice for Pete. ((Well, Pete, should you tell him, or...? -tw)) The funniest line was the last in Pete's column/editorial: "Welcome to VOID, everybody. And you too, Hugo Gernsback." [19159 Helen, Detroit 34, Mich.]

DICK ELLINGTON

((Dick begins his comments with STELLAR #20(!) and works up to)) V21: Did you ever hear the old Circle-song--made up by Curran I believe (to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me"): Calvin loves me, that I know, 'Cause his mother tells me so.

I am Calvin's little fan.  
Yes, by Cal Thos Beck I am.

That pic of Raeburn is horrendous.

Who the hell is it? Reiss' cartoons incidentally have continued to amuse me no end all the way through this pile. Of course I found this Jones item particularly apt. ## Greg's columns seem to be getting better and better issue by issue. I think he's spending more time on them for one thing. There are touches definitely stemming from reading of Bayareamags but a lot of it is pure Benford and I like it. The bit on Dallas this time around was a scream. ## I think Gerber overdoes it a little but hell, when it is someone you've known that dies, particularly in a violent manner, it is a thing to think about. For whom the bell and like that.

Oh God! I almost forgot Fetishier Fandom.

Now there's a weirdy for sure and you'd be surprised how fannish it gets. Ever seen mags like Bizarre, Exotique and such like? ## Tucker's long piece is another that belongs on the permanent reference shelf. Must I didn't read it straight through, having read the original.

Plagiarism almost.

Your Captain Capitalism I mean. About three years ago we all the LL had invented a Captain Anarchy with black cloak and slouch hat and such like and your Captain Capitalism would serve as a nemesis for him--believe we had something similar in mind but time dulls the memory. Vince Hickey actually went to the extent of starting the strip but I don't believe he ever finished the first page. Typical. ((What about a Captain Western Civ--he meets the Communist challenge! -gb)) [2162 Hillside Ave., Walnut Creek, California]

GEORGE SPENCER

It was a fine issue, really rather inspired. The Willis tribute was a fine idea, and the fund an even better one. It may be a mistake, though, to sound quite so confident about the success of the fund, for two reasons. First of all, it is one thing to raise enough money to bring over one popular fan, and quite another to bring his wife along, too. Secondly, it is only in a very limited sense that the Willis fund will not be in competition with TAFF. There will be no financial competition only if fandom is willing to shell out for both funds. I assume that it is, but if not, then both funds will be competing for the same fannish buck. I mention these things only because to minimize the problems will be no aid whatever in making the fund a success. If ever a fannish project deserved to succeed, this one does. ((I think fandom would be interested in meeting the charming half of the Willis household, and would be more than willing to bring her across. The financial problem should not be too great either; fandom hasn't grown rich, but I think it will support a campaign of this sort. I know I will. -gb))

That three-page cartoon-introduction by Stewart was

fabulous! I hope you can get him to produce more of the same, even if you have to sit on top of him to make him produce ((he won't let me: "Enough I do for fandom, standing on one leg", he says. -pg)). Bhub is the only guy I've ever seen who has cultivated the art of fancy lettering in cartoons--except Walt Kelly, of course. [8302 Donnybrook Lane, Chevy Chase, Md.]

DON FORD

VOID #23-Willish arrived 2-3 days ago. I'm in bed with mumps and fannish reading was like a breath of fresh air. WAW for '62 sounds like a good idea to me. I recently wrote Busby, when he said he thought Les Gerber was going to try for this year, that I thought '62 would do better--10th anniversary, etc.

I'm glad to note that campaigns such as these call for continued support of TAFF as well. This is the way it should be. There's no reason why fandom cannot support more than 1 venture simultaneously. [Box 19-T, RR #2, Loveland, Ohio]

DONALD A. WOLLHEIM

Walt Willis issue is most impressive, although I confess to being The Fan Who Missed Willis. He rose to fame and glory in precisely those years I was out of the fan world (sharing that glory, y'understand, with Ellison the Fan). I recall seeing the first two or three issues of, what was it, Slant or Hyphen, to which I did not reply although enjoying them, and so Waw dropped me from the list--presumably with justice since I doubt I'd have acknowledged anytime in the past decade.

John Berry

and Lee Hoffman are relatively unknown to me too--but by Ghod I met you thrice! That's an accomplishment in this latter day s-f age when a pro editor is not the god he used to be in 19 hundred and thirty-three, but just some g-d s.o.b. to be ignored or at best denounced. ((There's another lad, one Carl Brandon, I'd like you to meet. -pg)) [66-17 Clyde St., Forest Hills 74, New York]

JOHN BERRY

It was wonderful to get this WILLISH...and to see such a battery of egoboo for this boy who has never looked for it, which I think is one of his major attributes. There are many factors of the Willis personality which have never been published, his utter generosity for one thing. Who else would give you a superb Gestetner for \$5...? And his generosity is spontaneous...I mentioned the other day that I was going to purchase either a record player or a tape recorder, I couldn't make up my mind

which. Quick as a flash he told me to take his tape recorder and see what I thought of it. Then again, the day before I left for America in 1959, he came round with a bag full of American coins, must have been subs he'd been keeping for years...must've been about \$5 worth. Many kindnesses he's done for me...a multitude of them.

Then again, there is the wonderful anticipation of another HAE STATESIDE...that is something worth looking forward to. ## Much egoboo for Larry and Noreen, especially, Noreen...look what she and Nick (and Larry) did for me. ## I sincerely hope the cash accrues...I know it will...fandom owes it to Willis. [31 Campbell Park Ave., Belmont, Belfast 4]

.....  
CHUCK WELIS

I remember reading The Enchanted Duplicator at Leeh's one time. I never had a copy; I suppose I thought it was all sold out, as Willis mentions. Nothing else, nothing else published at least, has affected my view of fandom more than that. Not FANCYCLOPEDIA I; not even any single issue of QUANDRY (though the total effect of that remarkable fmz was immense). When I sat down to write material for the first issue of CADENZA the first thing I wrote was a fanstory which was in fact a poor imitation of the style of TED. This was the first thing I wrote since I came into fandom for the second time. I didn't realize when I wrote it (about three weeks ago) that it was derivative to the extent it was; I had forgotten about TED along with almost everything else I did or read in my first incarnation. Perhaps if I had realized it I never would have written it.

Coming into fandom again, with the perspective that getting away from it for a while gives one, has led me to appreciate QUANDRY a lot more than I ever did the first time, too. I was too close to it then. It was my introduction to fandom, and I had nothing to judge it by.

But those were the good old days. The quantity of good fanzines I have seen in the past months--WARHOON, VOID, VINEGAR WORM, among others--plus the amazing number of fans who have remained active since I left in '55 will alleviate the nostalgia. Fandom has improved a hundredfold since then, in excellence of publications and in quantity of worthwhile material. Nothing will ever replace QUANDRY, of course. But the other fmz of that period--of Sixth Fandom--do not measure up, in my memory, to the fmz of today, of Eighth Fandom, if you will. Q dominated a middling good field. Today we have an excellent field dominated by no one, unless it is by FANAC. Perhaps all this is due to a sort of reborn neofannish enthusiasm on my part; I don't know. Perhaps when I start getting a lot of fanzines I have not yet seen my opinion of fandom-as-it-is-today will drop. But allow me my hour, eh? [190 Elm Street, Oberlin, Ohio]

.....  
SHELBY VICK

VOID 23 was nothing short of tremendous ((tremendous won't do? -pg)). To begin at the beginning, I'd like to say that I have never seen a three page cover before, but I'm certainly in favor. The idea itself wasn't bad, but the cartoon style was what really made it. Didn't know Elob had it in him.

I thoroughly approve, endorse, recommend & whatnot, the Willis Campaign II. Definitely. In fact, in honor of the occasion, CONFUSION is returning to confound the already muddled populace... I'm planning on three or four issues, to lead up to the Big Special Willish which will be timed to come out around convention time--possibly to be given out at the Chicon III. I want to charge 35¢ for it and have monies sent to Larry, who--if he's agreeable--will deduct 25¢ for the Campaign and send me the name and the dime for cf.--which won't help an awful lot, but maybe some; and maybe the publicity will be some help.

Andy Reiss is a superb cartoonist. Berry (what else) excellent! Hoffman was muchly like the old Leeh. Meaning, of course, superb--wup, no; I shoulda said 'wonderful'. Bloch is superb. Great Shaw. ...somehow, that little illo on page 18 looked right out of MAD comics. And just LOOK at all that Willis! Hoo, boy!!! ...and it seems very fitting to me that Pete Graham is helping to get Willis over this time... Hmmm; you're reprinting WDA. Man, the leftover egoboo that I'm getting! (And egoboo is something that NEVER depreciates with age.)

All in all, a very great issue you put together and a most fitting way to get a new Campaign under way. I wish you the best of luck ever, and would like to congratulate everyone in any way connected with undertaking such a really worthwhile scheme. I won't offer any advice; it looks like you have things far better organized than I ever did. More power to you! [Box 269, Lynn Haven, Florida]

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JEAN YOUNG

VOID 23 came only about two hours ago, and I'd like to report that because of it I've spent one of the pleasantest mornings of the past month, sitting in the rocking chair in front of the radiator, with breakfast and coffee and reading about Willis. It's been a long time since I had a fanzine for breakfast, and silly as it seems, when the fanzine is a good one, it's one of the nicest customs I know. I can remember rare occasions, some of them dating back to our first year in fandom, when either the mail came early or we got up late, when we would sit about the kitchen at breakfast time, reading Grennell or Tucker or Willis or Geis. It gave a special thrill to the day, something like sneaking in a bit of Sunday in mid-week.

So thank you, good people all, for a happy morning, and the

best of luck with the new Willis project. At the moment, I have just enough cash on my person to get milk and orange juice for the hungry hordes (which at the moment include Sean O'Hitchcock, who has been here since January 13); but I imagine we will all get together pretty soon and send a mass donation to this redoubtably worthy cause. Perhaps even Sarah Lee will contribute; I'm sure Willis is as much a legendary figure to her as to the rest of us.

There are other VOID's and Whitezines about the house. Some of the segments are still in the bathroom, I think (it's where we read, sillies; we buy special soft paper for the other purpose), some in the Fish Room, some in Larry's room, and perhaps this thing over by the telephone, on the marble bench, is...yes, it's VOID 22pt.2. Sitting on top of two telephone books and a bib, right next to a stack of magazines that has SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN on top, and a toaster...

What I'm getting at is that I shall eventually get all the Whitezines together, insert them into their proper place in the File (a pile of fanzines and letters that moves from room to room, but in which items are more or less kept in order of arrival, and which I answer in that order--when I do answer, which is damn seldom). But I didn't want to wait this letter till that distant day, because by then I'd probably have forgotten the beatific effect it had. It's enough to make me want to sit down and go through our old fanzine files and dig out old HYPHEN's, and thence GRUE's and PSYCHOTIC's and so on...

Instant Nost-

algia is absolutely right. [42 Prospect St., Somerville 43, Mass.]

.....  
STEVE STILES

It seems that every VOID I get these days is special in some way or another. This issue is a Walt Willis appreciation issue...where will it all end? I hope it doesn't.

Bhob Stewart's introduction was appreciated, quite original, and cute. It would seem that the comic strip is slowly infiltrating into fandom or sumpin'.

I'm for the WAW Fund, particularly if he stops in NYC--I'm a selfish bugger--and I'll send a doughnation sometime between now and June.

I really enjoyed all the goodies by Berry, Hoffman, and Bob Shaw. Some parts inspired punning on my part for two days, much to the dismay of my friends, before I ran down. "...reverted to type."--Ha!! ((Hoho. -gb))

Of course the best section of VOID was the part in which Willis himself appeared. I'm rather upset over never possessing, heck, even reading, "The Enchanted Duplicator," likewise "The Harp Stateside." Isn't some delightful guy somewhere planning to reproduce them? ((That I don't know, but the very last copy of "TED" and around a dozen copies of "THS" are being raffled or auctioned to help the Fund. Watch These Pages...! -tw))

And by the way, thanks for running "Willis Discovers America". [1809 Second Ave., New York 28, NY]

.....  
YOU ARE RECEIVING THIS ISSUE OF VOID BECAUSE:

- For some reason you're on our Regular list
- You Paid Money  ...And it runs out this
- You've contributed something to these pages
- We wish you'd contributed ditto
- Your name is mentioned
- This is a sample copy; for future issues do something, why don't you...?
- We Trade
- Well, there must be some reason...

This entire issue has been produced by Gestetner, and automatically slipsheeted; and printed on unlabelled 20# stock and 14# Saxon manilla second-sheets. I think maybe nextish we'll try something else...



this is VOID 24  
published by Ted White  
at 107 Christopher St.  
New York 14, N.Y., USA

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whatever happened to sixth fandom, anyway?