

WAHRSCHEINLICHKEITS

RECHNUNG

number one

REDD BOGGS, editor

AUGUST 1987

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FAPA MAILING 100 • AUGUST, 1962

Though I have in my collection a few fugitives from the first and second FAPA mailings, the third mailing (spring 1938) is the earliest of which I possess a representative selection. This mailing is virtually complete, lacking Mutation or Death! most prominently, and I have been leisurely leafing through it this quiet midnight in deep summer 1962.

Most of the entries in this mailing are hektographed, and many are folded into half-lettersize format. Their titles -- Galaxy, Interplanetary Tales, Queer Tales (before F. Towner Laney, "queer" was not a pejorative term in fan circles) -- their contents, largely fan science fiction, and the halfsize format indicate that these fanzines were intended as imitations of the professional magazines.

Two hektographed fanzines in full lettersize, Strange and The Vagrant, both published by Robert W. Lowndes, make a much pleasanter impression on the fan who examines them in this year of 1962, and it is hard to believe that the same may not have been true in the year 1938.

One printed paper, Bulletin of the Leeds Science Fiction League, consists of two off-centered impressions on two mismatched sheets of paper, and makes as dreary reading as the title implies. On the other hand, the mimeographed journals in the bundle are more praiseworthy efforts. These include Daniel McPhail's The Rocket, which is somehow legibly mimeod on both sides of sleazy 16 lb. (?) paper, Way Out West (Russ Hodgkins), neatly stenciled in two typefaces but spottily mimeod, and The Fantasy Amateur (Don Wollheim, Fred Pohl), whose chief defect is an overabundance of uncorrected strikeouts, marring an otherwise workmanlike job.

All the headings in both the mimeod and the hektographed journals are either typed or hand-

lettered. The hektomags contain many illustrations in a prism of watery colors (one of them, a cover drawn by Charles Stiles Jr for Olon F. Wiggins' Galaxy, exhibits some artistic talent) but the mimeod magazines offer not a single example of artwork. No lettering guide, stylus, or shading plate was used in the preparation of any of these magazines. Nor do the mimeod fanzines boast colored inks or paper.

The material in this third mailing is not noteworthy for its far-ranging quality. James V. Taurasi's "Bob and Koso" stories are ubiquitous in Solor and other prozine imitations, but in other magazines the material concerns organizational matters and the politicking and feuding that preoccupied leading members during the formative era. Way Out West and Fantasy Herald print chatty notes about fan clubs and fan and pro personalities. Lowndes presents some Lovecraftian imitations in Strange, and verse is sprinkled through the other magazines (that by William Hornspit in Queer Tales being the most interesting). But the only creative effort that is still of great interest is The Missing Sea-Serpent, a short whimsy by Richard Wilson.

In Loke Jack Speer inaugurated the mailing commentary, but "Alpha and Beta in the Second Mailing" manages to "review" 12 journals in a grand total of 99 words and without any serious attempt at critical analysis. Example: "MENTATOR -- Ye Spays Flyghte best; Observation (the one about the virdots gleep snortling) close second." Ideas are scarce in this 1938 mailing.

That was FAPA in its first year. In the ensuing quarter century the hektograph became obsolete, and even the old fluid-ink mimeograph is outmoded. Elaborate headings and artwork, some of it done by electronic stencil, grace or disgrace many fapazines, and colored inks and papers are found in profusion. The nature of the material has changed as completely as the publishing methods. Fan science fiction is

quite dead in FAPA. While politicking and fan feuds still involve many fapans, the serious, dedicated tone has been replaced by a sophisticated and satiric air. Mailing commentaries have grown from the modest seed planted in the third mailing to become the most bountiful and characteristic feature of most 1962 fapazines.

What of the future? Unless doomsday arrives, and barring revision of the calendar or of FAPA mailing dates and/or frequency, FAPA mailing #200 will be assembled on Saturday, 8 August 1987. What will that bundle be like? The vast differences between the mailings of 25 years ago and those of today teach us that predictions are probably futile, but I will make a few wild guesses.

Since fapans are tending to retain their memberships for longer and longer periods, it's probable that the modal age of members in 1987 will be somewhere between 55 and 60. Age has its rewards, and leisure time will be a more plentiful commodity in the "golden years." Thus fapazines will probably tend to become more elaborate productions; layouts will be painstaking, even fussy. New and handier duplication methods will probably allow everybody to produce fapazines that will make the QWERTYUIO-Press publications of 1962 look drab, but I suspect, too, that handset printed magazines will become more prevalent over the next hundred mailings. As the pace slows, a more leisurely sort of duplication will be utilized.

As to material, mailing comments will continue; so will politics and feuds, but the tone will be less feisty, if more querulous and testier. Science fiction will be dead, but old-time fans will continue to drone on about the old "classics." The most characteristic feature of 1987's fapazines will be the personal reminiscence, in which the editor harks back to the Good Old Days, when he and the world were young and FAPA sent forth its hundredth mailing.