

# Heirloom

Wild Heirs 8.5



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**Heirlooms**, the reprint supplement, is **Wild Heirs 8.5**. It is distributed in conjunction with **Wild Heirs #8**.

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## A Few Words..

Welcome to the first issue of **Heirlooms**, a reprint and fanhistory fanzine from the Vegrants and Robert Lichtman. No promises on how often it'll ride along with **Wild Heirs**, but you know us; we'll try to get issues out as often as possible.

To me, the difference between a college fraternity mixer and a fan party is the context. Without the history, philosophy, literature and relationships that are fanzine fandom, one sidebar is pretty much like another.

Heirlooms hopes to make newer fans -- now that there are finally "newer fans" again -- more conversant with that context. We also think this stuff makes enjoyable reading.

The material in **Heirlooms** is drawn from all past fannish eras. We'll emphasize the pre-Boondoggle period, which is not all that well known, even to those who entered fandom as far back as the mid-1960s. Fans blessed with good collections are eagerly invited to suggest items for reprint.

We'd also like articles about the events and personalities of fanhistory. And if you want to annotate or footnote, that's great, too.

Letters are welcome, too, though they'll probably be printed in the regular issues of **Wild Heirs**. That way you'll get to read the feedback without having to wait for the next irregularly scheduled issue of **Heirlooms**.

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A Robert Lichtman

# HERITAGE REPORTING

## Doorway

Heiritage Reprint #1 by

Robert Lichtman

*This is the first in a semi-regular series of columns for Wild Heirs reprinting work from fandom's checkered but illustrious past. It has its inspiration in Terry Carr's "Entropy Reprints," a floating column that appeared in a variety of fanzines over several decades. This new offering had its genesis at the recent Corflu when I was approached with the suggestion that I do a reprint column. I'm starting out reprinting something I wrote myself over thirty years ago since it was easy to obtain permission.*

*Readers of my fanzine, **Trap Door**, may have noted that the editorial column therein is entitled "Doorway." I've used this title since the second issue. But "Doorway" has A History. I first used it as my editorial title in the final issue of my first genzine, **Psi-Phi**, which appeared as a FAPazine (with outside circulation of around forty copies) in the 105th mailing way back in November 1963. I then went on to use it in several issues of my '60s zine, **Frap**, before discontinuing that zine in the aftermath of the Breendoggle.*

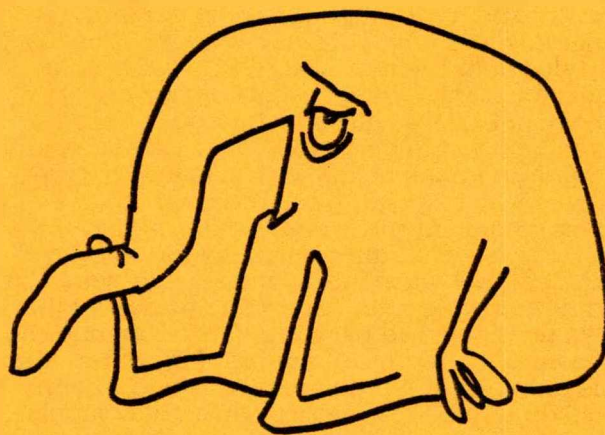
*When I revived the title in the second issue of **Trap Door**, Greg Benford wrote in to complain that he'd used the title for his FAPazine during the '60s and '70s and I was some sort of interloper. But as I replied at the time, we both stole the title from the same source: "Big Name Fan," by Charles Burbee. In that classic of faan fiction, **Big Name and Small Town** are resting at Meeting Point #1, when Small Town reveals:*

*"Soon's I rest a bit I'm going to write up this trip of mine and our meeting for my fapamag Doorway." Big Name asks him about the meaning of the name, and Small Town explains: "Doorway. That gives a picture of a gigantic brass studded door opening into an azure sub-space fringed with dark striations, sort of as though indicating the presence of a darker knowledge."*

*With that in mind, herewith the very first "Doorway":*

### The Ivory Tower & Others

"It sure would be nice," Ray Nelson used to say over dinner, "if we had a big double-decker bed up there in



the Ivory Tower." He would pour another glass of milk and muse, "Think of all the beatniks and fans we could put up in the Ivory Tower when they visited Berkeley."

The Ivory Tower of my day had no such modern conveniences; instead of that Soft, Comfortable Bed, I slept on a large army cot borrowed from Ray Nelson's father. Despite some padding and lots of blankets, it was never a Real Bed, but it served me in reasonably good stead not only in the Ivory Tower, but later on in some other places in Berkeley where I lived.

The Ivory Tower, which is actually a large bedroom on the top floor of Ray Nelson's split level house, still resembles in many ways the place I used to know and love. The envelope "to be opened in case in my death" and the picture postcard from L. Sprague de Camp are still on the wood paneled walls, and the pictures of Ray & Kirsten in Norway remain on the door. The old SAPS mailings gather dust yet in their cardboard box next to the closet; one wonders what will ever happen to them. The fanzines in the closet have gone out somewhere for a Visit but will probably be back. The book shelves have a lot more University of California Press stuff on them than I recall, and this is probably due to the Evil Influence of Richard Coney, who had the Tower after me and before Andy Main, and who used to work with Ray and me at the Press. And, of course, there is the fabled, wonderful Red Floor.

Life in the Ivory Tower, once I got my job, always began bright and early in the morning with Ray coming up and announcing in a cheerful and mainly loud voice, "Rise and shine." Occasionally this would be varied with "It's time to get up and go to work," and on occasions Walter T. would help, too, but usually it would be, simply, "Rise and shine."

Turning over on the Red Floor, I would say something like "Uh," "Groan," or "Shit O Dear," for what else can one say early in the morning? Stumbling into my work clothes and doing all the other things one does first thing in the morning (like running briskly around the block), I would go downstairs to a breakfast of Zen bacon and 'pataphysical eggs (triangular yolks). Plus lots of coffee and milk. Not necessarily in that order.

Ray and I both worked for Joe Gibson back in those days, and so we would go to work together, hauling our lunches out of the refrigerator and walking up to the bus stop on Colusa Avenue. Even during the summer, Bay Area weather is a bit nippy in the morning, so we were both well shielded in heavy jackets against the wind. The "67" bus took us directly to the University and, after school started, was always crowded with whole lots of little elementary and junior high school children in the morning. Ray and I, looking very Working Class and usually sitting in the rear seat, would talk about "nymphet-nuzzling," would occasionally sing, or talk to one of the little girl beings about nonsense subjects. (You had to be there.) Eventually we would get to work and pack books for the rest of the day, except when we stopped to read them.

Coming home in the evening, there would always be a good, hot dinner waiting for us tired workers. If dinner wasn't exactly ready, we would sit around in the living room after changing and talk while Walter T. zoomed back and forth from one end of the room to the other. When first I moved in, the Nelsons didn't have a regular stove, and dinners, prepared on a hot-plate, were always quite simple, though good. One day, though, a stove blossomed forth in the kitchen and from then on dinners were often complex, always plentiful, and also always Delicious.

One of the prime components of such a meal is milk to drink, lots of it. Once Ray decided that he was getting too fat and went on a diet which consisted mainly of substituting water for milk. He lost a little bit of weight, I think, but not without resistance on the part of the rest of us in the Nelson manse. Kirsten and I drank a little more milk than usual to make his going rough and to set a good example. Kirsten made encouraging remarks like, "But, Ray, I like you FAT." I said, "Not drinking milk will never make you lose weight unless you stop eating peanut butter, too." Ray never would stop eating peanut butter—three pound jars of the stuff disappeared every week or so, with the help of all of us, natch—and finally he gave up this insane scheme of his and stayed FAT.

(For the record, one must admit that Ray is not really that FAT, although it has been remarked that next to him, Calvin Demmon looks like a veritable Paul Newman or Bob Lichtman.)

"Fat, but happy," philosophized Ray Nelson later that evening, while in the middle of an explanation of 'pataphysics, and everybody laughed.

### **Tale of Two Cities**

From the rear window of the Ivory Tower, you can see Richmond, California.

Richmond, California, as the story goes, was founded about the turn of the century by enterprising businessmen from the nearby, bustling town of Oakland. It was meant to be a Planned Community, just like Chicago in the last century,

with a proper balance of industrial areas and residential tracts, business establishments scattered along well placed streets with exciting names like Cutting Blvd. and MacDonald Ave., and recreational facilities for the neo-natives. To provide rapid movement of traffic through the area, some of the streets were wide expressways of six lanes or more forming a sort of central nervous system for the city as it was envisioned. The community was to grow up around the lattice-work of streets rather like a fine tapestry.

Well, it didn't quite work. Industry moved in indifferently, bringing with it huge manufacturing plants sprawled here and there across the landscape. A few business districts, devoted to general stores and watering places, sprung up along the main arterials. Houses erupted upon the scene, like a major crop failure. The flatlands flooded every winter making Richmond an extension of the Bay.

Richmond, in other words, became an Industrial Slum and remained so, a failure of a city, for many years. In recent years it began to improve somewhat, as the citizens became more Conscious of the fact that they were the laughing stock of the East Bay, but people are still reluctant to move there if they can find any place better, and as a result of all this, the city of Richmond, sprawling expansively over an area nearly as large as that of Oakland (if not larger), has a population less than that of relatively tiny (in terms of area) Berkeley, only a hop and a skip from it down the freeway.

Just after the war, Richmond did develop one pretty nice section along its southern border. Pleasant, modest tract-type houses sprang up profusely along the flatlands bordering Alameda County and expensive houses began to spot the hills. However, this area soon seceded out of a sense of Civic Pride and a feeling of exclusiveness from the rest of Richmond. It became known as El Cerrito, and Ray Nelson's house is located there.

This geographical closeness of El Cerrito and Richmond meant that it was inevitable that I would be unable to restrict myself forever to the more civilized sections of the East Bay, such as Berkeley, Albany and El Cerrito, when I lived up there. The first time I was in Richmond I didn't even know it. Ray Nelson and I were driving around some side streets and I began noticing that the houses we passed were more shabby-looking than the ones I had become accustomed to seeing elsewhere. I wondered if we were in some part of Berkeley I had never seen before.

"No," said Ray Nelson while crossing a deserted intersection, "this isn't Berkeley at all. This is Richmond, which you may not have heard of before. People in Berkeley often spend their entire life without any knowledge of the existence of Richmond other than vague rumors, because Richmond is just like another world."

He went on like this for a few minutes while I listened incredulously, looking around me to see what was really so different about Richmond other than the flatness of the terrain, the grayness of the houses, the uniform lackluster of the people I saw on the streets. The cars around us seemed to be covered with a sort of pallid dust as though they'd been parked on this particular side street for years. Trees were scattered here and there on the park ways, but instead of lending a verdant richness to the scene, they seemed bereft of life, still and leafless.

"If I ever really wanted to get away from it all," said Ray Nelson, turning a corner, "Richmond is where I'd move to. People in Berkeley never think of Richmond, so I could move out here and they'd never find me again. Yes, indeed, Richmond is the place where old fans ought to go to die in peace and isolation."

Despite all this, Richmond became a place where we often found ourselves, on shopping trips and the like. But one day, we went to work at the University of California Press and found out that it was our last day there on campus in the small, crumbling building we occupied at the extreme south end of the administration building. We had known for several weeks that we were going to move out to Richmond, but we hadn't known exactly when or where.

We spent most of the day, Ray and I, saying goodbye to all the aspects of the University to which we had become accustomed. Working on campus had meant a great deal to me. It had meant Daily Cals to read in the morning, "borrowed" copies of the San Francisco Chronicle from the Student Union to read during coffee break, a chance to go down to Telegraph Avenue and dig the latest arrivals at the book and record stores, and access to the library on campus through an employee's pass.

Other friends and fans worked on campus. More often than not, during the course of a day I would see Joe & Robbie Gibson. Joe was my boss, of course, and Robbie worked in the campus police station a couple hundred feet away. Jim Caughran worked in the computer labs that summer and we often saw him on his way to and from work. At times fans would visit the Gibsons on campus, including such notables as Lewis Grant, Ed Wood and Sidney Coleman. We all got together at such times for a special lunch at the S.U. cafeteria where we "chewed the fat" (not a reference to S.U. food).

More than all that, it meant for me a chance to be around student-type people even though I was not any longer a student myself. By talking with students of both sexes and by participating in some measure in student political groups, I felt that I was keeping in touch with "my people," so to speak. Besides, there were beautiful girls aplenty around the fountain next to the S.U. who were more than happy to pass the time of day with a strange, bearded, khaki-clothed individual who had a habit of referring often to his watch to make sure he didn't overshoot his lunch hour.

The final days, then, were spent saying good bye to everyone. We were very indiscriminate about it. We said goodbye to beautiful girls, goodbye to ugly girls, goodbye to thin girls, good bye to fat girls. Also goodbye to many girls of shades in-between. "We will never see you again," we said, "and we'll miss you." Sometimes we inquired, "Will you come out to Richmond and visit us once in a while?" We said goodbye to janitors with brooms in their hands and lint in their pockets. We said goodbye to wild-eyed radical young men ("Share my burden?"), their hair a wind-blown heap above their bespectacled faces. (This last paragraph is all cribbed from a play by Socrates.)

The following day we were in Richmond, in an unheated small section of an old abandoned Ford plant at the end of South 10th Street. Two rotting ship hulks floated behind the building in the inner harbor, and in place of the restaurants on Telegraph and the S.U. we had a lath and shingle lunch room, hillbilly-style, across the street. (Its only attraction was its closeness, although from time to time there would be lots of Foreign Sailors in there, including \*Scandinavian\* ones, Andy Main.) The only drinking fountain in the plant was half a mile away and it wasn't iced. We felt very out of it, very Richmond, and that evening when we got home I ran up to the Ivory Tower rather like Linus and wrapped it around me as though it were

a giant security blanket.

Months later, I remarked to Joe Gibson on the way out to that Ford plant in the early morning in his old Fiat 500, "Richmond must be a place very much like Hell." He glared at me and kept on driving.

—Robert Lichtman, 1963

## Some Handy Info

A few footnotes might be in order. I wrote both these pieces to memorialize in print some of my experiences during the second half of 1961 when I lived in the Bay Area for the first time. In case you were wondering, I largely resisted urges to rewrite myself, settling for correcting a very few typos and awkward places.

In *The Ivory Tower & Others*, the assumption is made that the readers I was most interested in connecting with would have read Andy Main and Calvin Demmon's legendary fanzine, *The Celebrated Flying Frog of Contra Costa County*, where the Ivory Tower and its Red Floor were much written of.

Joe Gibson was an old-time fan who coincidentally turned up as our boss. Ray and I were hired by Joe during a shipping crunch that accompanied the U. C. Press' unexpected best-seller, Theodora Kroeber's *Ishi in Two Worlds*, a wonderful book about the last of a tribe of Northern California Indians. We would spend whole days mostly packing up and sending out copies of *Ishi*, but when sales finally died down after six months we all lost our jobs simultaneously (except for Joe).

Walter T. was Ray and Kirsten's son, about three years old at the time of these events and quite a bundle of energy. Ray invented a bed room story, *Burp. Said The Turtle*, which he developed over a few months of telling it to an avid Walter T. almost every night. This was later published in well-illustrated booklet form as *Frap No. 5* back in 1964.

Regarding *Tale of Two Cities*, it turned out that years later (in 1978) I found myself actually living in Richmond for over a year. I was living on *The Farm*, a commune in Tennessee, when I got asked to be the community's publishing company representative for the West Coast, where a good portion of our sales originated—sales we felt could be improved by someone on the scene. The Farm branch in the Bay Area was then in a huge former railroad workers' boarding house on a busy four-lane arterial road and right across from the main railroad tracks leading from Oakland to points East across the entire country, and also one block away from overhead Bay Area Rapid Transit lines. (The building has since collapsed.) I thought often and ruefully of my 1963 essay, even though at that point I hadn't seen nor had access to it for eight years—and wouldn't again until the '80s.

In the next installment of this column, it's my intention to resurrect something by the legendary F. Towner Laney — [RE, June 1995]

# WILDE HEIR WALT WILLIS

THE OTHER MORNING I was eating breakfast when the mail came. I opened it. "Ghod," I said, spreading marmalade distractedly on a crudzine from N.Carolina. "Ghod!"

"Not .....?" said Madeleine, growing pale.

"Yes," I said, "It's from Him. Charles Burbee."

Madeleine hastily swept the floor, polished the furniture, and brought out the table napkins.

"What does He say?" she asked.

I pulled myself together, and spoke in hushed tones. "He says I have Impeccable Taste."

"Burbee says you have Impeccable Taste?" said Madeleine.

"Yes," I said, "He says I have Impeccable Taste. He also says that one of my articles was Very Fine."

"Will you continue to live with me?" asked Madeleine humbly.

"Yes, woman," I said. "I shall not allow this to turn my head. I shall continue to mingle with ordinary people. Besides you need not feel inferior. Burbee says I have Impeccable Taste and since I chose you, you must be a very paragon among women."

"Thank you," said Madeleine. "You make me feel humble....and sort of proud."

"That is all right," I said approvingly. "Burbee thinks well of Pogo. Your taste, while not so Impeccable as Mine, is quite good."

I continued reading His fanzine, absent-mindedly proceeding with my breakfast. "Another crudzine?" asked Madeleine, passing me the marmalade.

From WAWCRHBSJWGAWCMWPMSSACW

"Ghod," I said. "I wish I could write like Burbee."

"Hell," said Madeleine, "You're always saying that. Why don't you try to write like Burbee?"

"Because," I said, "for one thing I do not live in California, and do not know Francis Towner Laney, Al Ashley, and similar fabulous fannish characters. Observe that even Lee Jacobs did not write like Burbee until he went to California. My Taste is far too Impeccable to attempt to produce a travesty of Burbeism."

"You have fabulous fannish characters here," said Madeleine. "Chuck Harris, he who is coming to stay with us tomorrow, is a fabulous fannish character. It's not essential to live in California to be a fabulous fannish character. Though it helps."

"Woman," I said, "you are right. My Impeccable

## Some Handy Info

The brilliance of Walter A. Willis rests on more than Burbee's judgment that he has "Impeccable Taste." The punchline, fine in its day, has acquired an additional, unanticipated (except by WAW, presumably) allusive meaning that makes a good joke even better. Playful words come to him like timid woodland creatures to the heroine of an herbal shampoo commercial.

The title is a pun on the name of the LA Insurgents' **Wild Hair** oneshots and the homosexual witch-hunt that surrounded Oscar Wilde. And it's "Heir" (rather than "Hair"), because WAW's piece concerns the Wheels of IF re-styling themselves into Fabulous Burbee-like Characters.

The extra element? Well, there's now a popular brand of hot dogs called "Oscar Meyer." And what did Laney and Burbee call each other all the time? "Meyer!" Time-traveling fan humor -- another Willis breakthrough!

What gives this piece a unique feel is that Willis venerated Burbee, and so was immensely pleased by his accolade, but he did not have the same high opinion of Laney. Hence the references to the self-flattering articles about fabulous Burbee-like characters in Laney's FAPazine **Fandango** and to Laney's confessed penchant for stamp collecting.

EE Evans was an N3F bigwig and would-be proto-SMoF. Laney found much humor in the incongruity between Evans' sanctimonious utterances (in his fanzine **Timebinder** and other places) and his less salutary personal behavior.

Walt addresses Chuck Harris (he was not yet "Chuch") as "Randolph" in imitation of Burbee's habit of addressing his buddy as "Towner" (his middle name).

A few clarifying notes: Peggy Martin, Sadie Shaw and Madeleine Willis, the wrongly accused, were the Significant Others of James White, Bob Shaw and Himself... the title of the FAPazine in which it appeared is a string of all the participants' initials, including George "All the Way" Charters... the story was also printed in *The Willis Papers*, an anthology edited by George Fields and published by Ted Johnstone in January 1959...

Taste tells me that you are. I shall suggest to Chuck Harris that we produce a one-shot for FAPA."

Next morning I went down to the docks to meet Harris. I saw his sensitive fannish face loom greenly towards me through the cattle. I ignored his greetings.

"Burbee," I said, "Burbee says I have Impeccable taste."

"He said that?" said Harris.

"Yes," I said. "He also said that one of my articles was Very Fine."

Harris turned humbly to get back on the boat again.

"No," I said, "You may stay. With my Impeccable Taste I have decided that you are a fabulous fannish character. We shall produce a FAPA oneshot after breakfast. Do you like marmalade on your crudzines? Or I have some books from Ackerman in JAM condition."

Harris looked doubtful.

"I am sorry," I said. "That was not worthy of my Impeccable Taste. That was not Burbee-like, that was a lousy Willis-type pun. It is my Impeccable Taste which enables me to recognise these things."

"What are you talking like Burbee for?" asked Harris.

"I am not talking like Burbee," I said, "and if you had Impeccable Taste like I have, you would realise this."

Harris abased himself and beat his head on the ground.

"Never mind," I said kindly. "I am in fact talking like Lee Jacobs talking like Burbee. It would be disrespectful to Ghod to imitate Him; instead we shall imitate Lee Jacobs imitating Burbee. Lee Jacobs, though a fabulous non-fannish character, and whom I have met in London and Chicago, is not Ghod."

"What shall we do first?" asked Harris.

"First," I said, "I must now address you as Randolph instead of Chuck. Then you must go out and expose homosexuals."

"Have you," he asked, "any particular homosexuals in mind, or is the ability to recognise them a by-product, a facet, of your Impeccable Taste?"

I smiled kindly at Madeleine, who was cleaning my shoes in the corner. "We shall find them," I said. "We shall have no difficulty. Vin<sup>†</sup> Clarke, one of England's fabulouster fannish characters, has declared that North Irish Fandom is remarkably homogenous. I am the genius, therefore the others must be homos."

"That was not like Lee Jacobs talking like Burbee," he pointed out. "That was like Willis talking like Lee Jacobs talking like Burbee. That was a lousy Willis type pun. Are you *sure* you have Impeccable Taste?"

"Burbee has said so," I pointed out reprovingly.

"I am sorry," he said humbly. "It is just that I cannot become accustomed to the honor of being a fabulous Burbee-type character. Could I not be a fabulous Harris-type character instead?"

"Very well, Randolph," I said. "I know how difficult it is to be a fabulous Burbee-like character. Even I should find it difficult were it not for the Impeccability of my Taste. After we have finished breakfast I shall go to my fabulous attic where I have *Fandangoes* which list the characteristics of these homos. Meanwhile I can tell you that I understand they are fans who prefer to go about with men rather than girls."

Harris went out into the morning.

Some hours later he returned. "I have found no

less than three homosexuals," he said.

"Randolph," I said, "I am proud of you. What are their names?"

"Peggy Martin, Sadie Shaw and Madeleine Willis," he said.

"Randolph," I said, "I am no longer proud of you. You have made a mistake. These are not homosexuals."

"But they go about with men instead of girls," he protested. "They are effeminate."

"Randolph," I said, "these *are* girls. I fear you have been concentrating too much on your fanac. Since you have been out I have been reading my *Fandangoes*. It seems that homosexuals are men who act like girls, have high voices, wear strange clothes etc."

Harris went out into the afternoon. Some hours later he returned. "Bob Shaw wears a green corduroy jacket," he said doubtfully.

"No," I said. "Bob Shaw is a fabulous Burbee-like character like ourselves, who collaborated on *The Enchanted Duplicator*. He is above suspicion."

"Well," he said, "George Charters wears shirts with coloured pockets."

"No," I said, "George Charters is also a fabulous fannish character. He cut the stencils for *The Enchanted Duplicator* and is above suspicion. That shirt is merely part of his cowboy set which he wears while reading Max Brand."

"Well," he said desperately, "James White helps pro editors off mountains and lies in hotel corridors passing notes under their doors until walked on by chambermaids."

"Randolph," I said, "you are wrong again. The pro editor in question was a female-type creature called Bea Mahaffey. James White is a fabulous fannish character too."

Harris went out into the night. Some hours later he returned. He had a distraught look on his face, like Laney finding out that E.E. Evans had several stamps he needed for his collection.

"There are no more fans in Northern Ireland," he said.

"Very well, Randolph," I said. "You may finish your breakfast. Do you prefer mimeo or hecto?"

"No!" he cried. "You, with your Impeccable Taste, have declared that there must be homosexuals in Northern Irish fandom. It is my Ghod-given duty to expose them. I realise that James White, George Charters and Bob Shaw are above suspicion, but the others I mentioned answer your description. I shall denounce Peggy Martin, Sadie Shaw and Madeleine Willis. I shall run them out of fandom."

"Randolph," I said patiently, "calm yourself. I explained this to you. These fans are *girls*."

"No!" he said wildly, "they are men! Homosexuals!"

"Randolph," I said, "Randolph----"

He began to roll about the floor, frothing at the mouth. "I shall expose them!" he screamed. "Perverts! That Madeleine Willis is the worst of the lot. He has been sleeping with a man for years!"

"Randolph," I said. "Randolph. She is a girl."

"NO!" he cried. "A queer! A homo. Painted and padded! Disgusting! It must be exposed!"

"Randolph," I said. "I assure you that Madeleine Willis is a girl. I am in a position to know."

He rose to his feet, a wild gleam in his eye. "Let her prove it!" he shouted. "Let her prove it to me!"

I looked at him for a few minutes.

"Very well, Randolph," I said. "You may call me Oscar."

# BOSH TOSH A column by BOB SHAW

From *Retribution* #7,  
edited by John Berry and Arthur Thomson

## **Yep, But How A-Gley Can You Get?**

The tendency, remarked upon by Robbie Burns, for the best-laid plans of mice and men to gang aft a-gley has been well known to me for years, but until recently I didn't worry about it too much. I never credited mice with much talent for forward planning anyway, and my own schemes usually worked out quite well -- until the time I decided to attend SF Expo and buy a house in the same month.

The experience has entirely changed my attitude towards mice.

I don't know what the poor little buggers have to plan while they're creeping about behind skirting boards -- it seems a fairly uncomplicated sort of life style -- but now I sympathise with them. If their arrangements go as far a-gley as mine went, it's no wonder they're so nervous and unwilling to mix with normal society.

Actually, I wasn't too keen on attending Expo itself, but the organisers had promised me almost a week's free stay at the New York Hilton, plus sufficient paid work during the event to let me more than recoup my air fare. It is five years since I've been to the States, and although I get frequent yearnings to go back the expenses of family life make it impossible for me simply to hop on a plane and go. The Expo thing seemed an excellent way to get over there -- in effect, without cost -- and again meet all my fannish friends. With that happy prospect in mind I borrowed £140 from the housekeeping money last January, bought a British Airways advance booking ticket and began notifying people like Terry Hughes, Sam Long and Arnie and Joyce Katz that I would be descending on them in June. They all responded favourably - hospitable souls, that they are -- and my dreams of a delightful three-week tour of the East coast were boosted by all the literature I kept receiving from the SF Expo organisers, telling me how well all their arrangements were going.

Now, mix in the second ingredient -- the house.

Our current place is so small that I have to use thin wallpaper to avoid reducing the living space, and suddenly I got the chance to acquire a seven-bedroom house in town, only 89 yards (I counted them) from my favourite pub. It was old and dilapidated, with wire-and-pulley servant bells still on the upper floor, but it was going for less than £6,000, and I reckoned that with a year of really hard work I could bring it up to standard. We made an offer for it, and at once got involved in a tangle of difficulties, some of which stemmed from the fact that I was newly established as a free-lance author and therefore was not the sort of person building societies like advancing money to, some of which arose because the house was not one of the modern boxes that building societies like people to live in.

The negotiations became rather tricky and suddenly I was in a position where if I went off to the States for three weeks I was likely to lose the house. The decision was additionally difficult because there would be no refund of my plane fare if I canceled at such a late date, but in the end I decided to be all mature and responsible, and I wrote to the US fans I had been planning to visit and told them I wasn't going to make it after all. I felt really rotten about the change of plans, but I was certain it was the right thing to do in the circumstances.

Next day the independent surveyor I had employed to check the house out called and told me it needed an entirely new roof structure at a minimum cost of



£2,000. This was a bitter blow -- because it shattered my dream of living in a mansion only 89 yards from my favourite pub -- but (fanfare of trumpets, flourish of coloured searchlights) it meant my trip to the States was back on again! This was only a week before Expo was due to start, so I gleefully dashed back to the typewriter to notify my friends I would see them soon, after all -- then a telegram arrived.

It stated that SF Expo had been postponed, and that I wasn't to go.

Reeling a bit from the shock, I sat down to reconsider the situation. I had been counting on recouping the plane fare during the Expo and using the money for travel and other expenses during the trip. It would have been possible to go ahead, but this would have meant sponging a lot on people over there -- and, into the bargain, all the trauma over the house had made me late with the current writing commission, and I could make good use of the time at home.

Once again, I decided not to go, this time aided in the decision by the economic factors. The "postpone-

ment" of Expo, for example, was an event beyond my control and I was sure the insurance scheme operated by the travel agency would see that I got the plane fare returned to me.

In the event, even that supposition was wrong. It appears that the only valid reason they would accept for canceling out would have been something like the Statue of Liberty coming to life and swatting all incoming aircraft with its torch.

So there it was! No Expo. No visit to US. fandom. No letter of apology or explanation from SF Expo. No new house. No £140.

Now, where did I leave that piece of stale cheese I was nibbling on..?

### Near Miss

"170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast" was one of the most famous addresses in fandom. That's where Walt Willis lived during his most productive years in our microcosm, and for a long time it was the centre of my own universe. That's where we in Irish Fandom held most of our meetings, wrote our letters to fans in distant countries, and sometimes wondered why all the most interesting correspondents lived so far away.

Recently I bought a paperback of E.S.Turner's famous history of British comics, *Boys Will Be Boys*, which was first published in 1948. In the chapters dealing with the MAGNET and the GEM -- the boys' and girls' papers which flourished between the wars and were perhaps the major stimulus to youthful imaginations in that period -- he quotes from one of their correspondence columns a letter from a Miss R.Cheater in which she asks for pen friends, age 16-18, any topic.

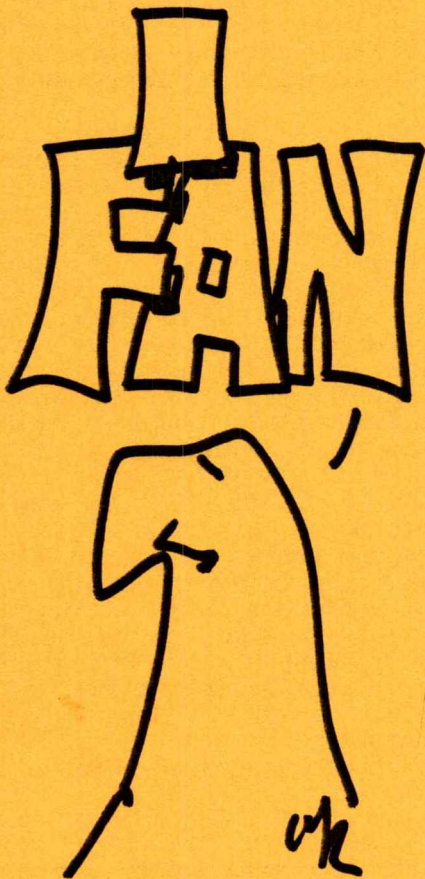
The address given for Miss Cheater is "171 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast."

### The Forever War - Part II

It's more than a quarter of a century since my first fanzine article describing the hostilities between myself and the insect and spider world, and I regret to report that the battle still rages on.

The latest phase of the campaign has been a particularly active one because, due to the aforementioned lack of space in my house, I have had to adopt/adapt one end of my garage as an office where I can work. It's a brick garage, so when it was partitioned off and fixed up with a ceiling, floor coverings, light, heating, etc, the result was quite a cosy and habitable work place. The only trouble is that it's down at the bottom end of my garden, and the attributes which make it comfortable for me also attract an immigrant population of bugs.

For a while I didn't mind too much, because -- this being my own private domain -- I was allowed to use countermeasures which Sadie would never have permitted in the house. For instance, I kept a Webley .22 air pistol in my desk, plus a supply of special soft-nosed anti-vermin slugs (which were actually little



I love a mystery, and this installment of "Bosh Tosh" is certainly one to me. In the long ago, before my 15-year gaffation, I published a succession of fanzines that played host to Bob Shaw's "Bosh Tosh" column. Recently, while going through some old papers, I found a manuscript that look like it hadn't been opened, much less printed.

Perhaps I printed this "Bosh Tosh" in a fanzine I can't find, or possibly Bob resubmitted it to another fanzine after finally, at long last, despairing of my resolve to publish it.

Or it could be an undiscovered classic from the mid 1970s. -- Arnie Katz

pieces of chocolate bar tinfoil rolled up into tight balls) and for some weeks I was able to destroy all invaders without even moving away from the typewriter. It wasn't easy at first, because it is hard to sight on a small object at very close range, but I soon became adept at picking the little swine off from any angle.

Unfortunately, the walls of my office are painted white and within a short time they began to be covered with unsightly impact/smear marks which spoiled the whole appearance of the place. What I'm looking for now is a new kind of bullet -- something like a halibut liver oil capsule filled with white paint, which would annihilate a bug and obliterate its remains at the same time.

I'll bet you, though, that none of the local shops stock such a thing. That's the trouble with living out in the country, away from all the big department stores.

### **Con Quest**

I lived in Northern Ireland most of my life, which meant that to attend a convention I had to cross the Irish Sea -- an operation which takes considerable time, money and trouble. Since 1973 I've been living in England, and although that's a fair stretch of time, I'm still not used to being able to reach a convention site at will just by getting into the car and driving off.

Somehow it seems magical, as if I'm cheating the laws of the continuum, and I get a peculiar kind of thrill when I casually detour off a trip and visit a hotel in which a well-remembered convention was held.

However, it's an experience with some elements of sadness in it, one which makes me aware of time slipping through my fingers at a frightening speed. To stand in the bar of the Blossoms Hotel in Chester and realise that nobody is going to appear at your elbow but mundane patrons; to walk into the Randolph in Oxford and discover that a Con Hall is just a hall when all the fans have gone; to look into the huckster room in the Imperial Centre in Birmingham and find it given over to a wedding reception; to gaze up at the windows of the de Vere in Coventry, or the Royal Station in Newcastle, and know that the last traces of all the room parties have long since been erased by cleaning staff and the subsequent presence of commercial travellers -- all of this can be genuinely poignant when, like me, you're addicted to conventions.

Happily, in England we now have more and more conventions, and can spend more time looking forward to new ones instead of gazing wistfully backwards at old ones. I've been to four cons this year (including one in Belgium) and the Novacon in November will give a grand total of five, which at one time would have been an impossible luxury.

First was the Faan Con at Blackpool early in the year, attended by about 40 fans. It was only a 90-minute drive from Ulverston, the shortest trip I'd ever made to a convention, and the whole time the con was going on, I was obsessed by this odd notion that I ought to go home during the proceedings and come back again just to prove that it could be done. Crazy!

Gray Boak, who masterminded the con, had decided on the bold experiment of having no programme at all. It worked out well, though I felt each day to be slightly formless and therefore vaguely unsatisfactory. Sitting in the bar at a convention, it's nice to feel the programme going on in other parts of the building, creating that kind of background noise which comforts a baby in the womb. A nice touch about the Blackpool minicon was that the little hotel was being renovated by a local construction firm who

had their sign up outside the front door. The name of the firm was MINICON.

Next came the Easter convention, embodying another bold experiment, that of using university halls of residence instead of a hotel. The experiment was useful in one respect -- we know never to do it again. Enough said.

Then came the Belgian convention in July, held in Liege. The two things about it which stand out in my mind are the unfailing courtesy of the convention committee, and the fact that in both the Holiday Inn, where we stayed, and the convention centre the beer cost one English pound per pint. The shock of discovering the latter was so great that I actually toyed with the idea of not having any booze for a few days. Harry Harrison talked me out of this desperation measure, and with his aid I solved a problem which has beaten me for years -- how to make Calvados palatable. The trick is to use plenty of ice and soda water, which gives it a more apple-like flavour than cider.

At the end of August came the Silicon, organised in Newcastle by the local fan group, which was easily the most enjoyable of the year. This was a "faan" convention too, but they had decided to provide just enough programme to give each day a sense of direction and structure, and I think they achieved a perfect mix. The Newcastle group are just about the best thing that has happened to British fandom in decades.

The Imperial Hotel, where the convention was held, is also the meeting place for local cowboy enthusiasts, who go by the rather confusing name of the North East Western Club. They had their monthly gathering there on the Saturday night of the convention, and for a few hours we had science fiction fans rubbing shoulders with men in full (Hollywood) cowboy regalia, each lot thinking the other lot was a bit soft in the head. One western fan became so intrigued with trying to understand our madness that he stayed behind after his friends had gone home and sat in the bar for hours, dressed up like Randolph Scott with plastic six-shooters, his face creased with honest puzzlement as he strove to figure out why we had never grown up.

I'm convinced, as you might surmise, that going around in a Randolph Scott outfit is silly, and that attending SF conventions isn't silly, but it is oddly difficult to explain why. It may be because we in fandom make use of fantasy for its own sake, in full appreciation of its value as fantasy; whereas the western fans were taking a different fantasy and trying to appreciate it for a reality which it never had.

### **Thought for the Day**

Don't worry about Armageddon -- it's not the end of the world.

## **Speaking of Conventions...**

Silvercon 4, with Pro GoH Joe Haldeman and Fan GoH Bob Tucker is scheduled for Las Vegas, Sept. 29 - Oct. 1, 1995.

There's a program, including fan panels, a new Andy Hooper play, a fannish Renewal of Vows by Shelby and Suzanne Vick, and the Katz' annual Kick-Off Party Thursday evening.

**I AM A  
GREAT  
BIG  
MAN  
FRANCIS  
TOWNER  
LANEY**

In FAPA recently (**F**aparade Nos. 1 and 2) we were regaled by reading autobiographies of a number of the members. A fascinating bunch of stuff it was, and I read it with a slow and majestic shaking of the head. These guys talked as though they thought they were great big men.

Like Cyrus B. Condra, for example, who told us that he was or had been at various times an aircraft estimator, a surveyor, a hatchery manager, printer and newsman, real estate broker, sheet metal worker, auto parts house manager, radio operator and mechanic (Armed Forces), tool designer, turkey grower, machinist, traveling salesman, construction worker, toolmaker, and a couple of other things.

It got me.

Why should Cyrus Banning Condra and the others be making noises as though they think they are great

I really *am* a g-r-r-reat, big man.

I AM the greatest, the biggest, the most colossal, that anyone has ever heard of. I take the great big steps, and I pound my heels when I walk. I open doors without knocking, and watch over peoples' shoulders when they are gambling. When people encounter a lesser Laney (and there are such, even though they fall far short of their illustrious model) they are prone to think of them and their attributes, as godlike.

I am a great big man!

Why should I continue to hide my light beneath a bushel? Let me tell you about myself.

I have been a lodge brother of national repute. My fame as a philatelist was at one time international. I am listed (or was) both in *Who's Who In America* and *Burke's Landed Gentry* (U.S. Edition). I am descended from William the Conqueror. I am a genealogist. My reputation as a discographer, bibliographer, mythologist, anthologist, and pro-author is, as you would expect, worldwide. In my younger days, when I was a boxer, I had several good bouts, including one with the then intercollegiate middleweight champion of the Pacific Coast. I have been editing magazines and newsletters, some of international circulation, for nearly 20 years. I am an expert on naval affairs of 20 years' standing, and much of my stuff along this line has enjoyed national circulation. I have been a sports commentator for a metropolitan daily. I am a linguist, too. I have been a

### **A Timely Reprint**

Moshe Feder, among others, has talked up a "Who's Who" of fandom. Rob Hansen has even developed a format for people to use when composing their own entries.

While completely in favor of such a volume, it put me in mind of this Francis Towner Laney article in *Spacewarp* #41, August 1950, one of the two Insurgent Issues of Art Rapp's celebrated monthly fanzine. When the Korean War claimed Sgt. Rapp's attention, Burbee and Laney stepped into the breach with two issues to preserve continuity.

Maybe we can have a contest for the most grandiose capsule autobiography, like the one Laney presents here.

paleobotanist. In a less intellectual way, I have been both a chauffeur and traffic officer. I have been the manager of a successful carnival. My own landscape gardening business was very successful for three years until I left it to go into the army. I have worked professionally as a pediatric nurse. For more than 20 years, I have been a linotyper and printer, and in fact have my own print shop. I have been the curator of a state museum. I have also been a college science instructor. During my seven-plus years with Potlatch Forests, Inc. (operators of the largest pine sawmill in the world, at Lewiston, Idaho), I was a number of pretty exciting things. I was a lumber grader for awhile, working under the auspices of the western pine association. I was an industrial chemist. And for several years I was departmental educational director. I am the author of a published manual on the operation of the Burroughs Moon-Hopkins billing machine and its use in the lumber business. I was also an independent auditor, and an estate agent or manager. My work at C.D. Lamoree's since 1943 has required me to function in a vast number of highly skilled capacities. At various times I have been a machinist, a jig builder, a die maker, a tool designer, an industrial electrician, night foreman, tool room supervisor, engineer in charge of plant layout and design, time study man and estimator.

All right, I suppose you think I'm just bragging. You don't think I'd say all those nice things about myself unless I could prove them, do you?

I have been a lodge brother of national repute. Well, in 1933 or thereabouts, I did hold an extremely unimportant national office in the order of DeMolay, in connection with an attempt to found a DeMolay Collectors Club. In addition to going through the chairs in my home chapter, I was a big wheel in regional and state conclaves; in fact captained the degree team which won the Idaho State Championship in 1935. My national repute as a lodge brother was enhanced by my being "tapped" for Kappa Delta Phi (National Greek letter honorary for education students) in 1935, with a consequent listing of my name (in 6-point type) in the fraternity's national magazine.

My fame as a philatelist was at one time international. Yessir! All the years I was a member of the Society of Philatelic Americans (member number 4707) my name was spread annually all over the civilized globe in their directory. (Of course, there were a couple of thousand other guys equally famous in that microcosmos!) In the same way, my fame was spread by Concordia, an international collectors' and correspondence club with headquarters in Berlin, to which I belonged until Hitler clamped down on it in 1934. Come to think of it I've had half a dozen articles and news notes published under my name in *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News* and other similar magazines. For a couple of years I was regional vice-president for IDAHO of the Society of Philatelic Americana, and in 1936 my display of early U.S. took third prize at the

Spokane Philatelic Society's annual exhibition.

I am listed (or was) both in *Who's Who In America* and *Burke's Landed Gentry* (U.S. Edition). Well, after all, my old man was a full professor for many years. Guys like that rate *Who's Who* almost as a routine, and of course I am listed as his son. *Burke's*? Well, the thing merely lists all the descendents of British royalty and nobility who have come to the USA. It so happens that several of my lines have been worked out by genealogically minded members of my family. If there is anyone in the world, of primarily English ancestry, who's *not* eligible for *Burke's*, it indicates merely that his line has not been traced out and authenticated. Those old kings and nobles sowed their seed like a machine gun spewing bullets; almost all English people trace back into the Plantagenets sooner or later. I am descended from William the Conqueror. So is nearly every other Englishman. But it makes me a Great Big Man, yowsuh!

In this same connection, of course, I am a genealogist. Heh. I took this zoology course, Heredity and Eugenics. As a class project I took all my mother's genealogical notes and drew a chart from them.

My reputation as a discographer, bibliographer, mythologist, anthropologist, and pro-author (Gee, ain't I versatile?) is, as you would expect, worldwide. Natch! As a discographer, I sent a few additions and corrections to Orrin Blackstone, and so my name is listed as one of the collaborators in *Index to Jazz, Vol. 3*. Bibliographer? Well, may fuggheadedness reign supreme always, I was the moving spirit in compiling a bibliography of H. P. Lovecraft, which Bill Evans and I published in FAPA in 1943. Mythologist? Who compiled the Cthulhu Mythology in *Beyond The Wall of Sleep*? Anthologist? Look in the preface to *Adventures in Time and Space*. Pro-author? The Cthulhu mythology was professional wasn't it? So was an article on weird poetry (brrrr!) which I wrote for Lilith Lorraine to publish in *The Raven* in 1943. I know for a solid fact that all this stuff went to Canada and England. But don't anyone remind me how minor - and unimportant all this stuff was and is, because I AM A GREAT BIG MAN.

In my younger days, when I was a boxer, I had several good bouts, including one with the then intercollegiate middleweight champion of the Pacific Coast. Ouch. Let's don't talk about this one. Ya see, my gym class was working on boxing at a time when the University of Idaho boxing team was having trouble with defense. They were giving their opponents a good going over, but were using their heads for punching bags instead of strategy mapping. So one fine day, my gym instructor, who was also the boxing coach, had the team work out with us. We were supposed to do our best to murder these guys, and they were instructed not to hit us back - just to duck, feint, weave, bob, block punches, and so on. Well, I drew the champ, one of the two best men on the team, because he was just my weight. So we milled around, with me whirling my long skinny arms like crazy trying to tag him. I probably looked like a grasshopper trying to get out of a spider web. I was so ineffably lousy that he got pretty careless, and I patted him a lulu, right on the button. It was a good blow; I felt it clear up through my shoulders. Unfortunately for me, the conditioned reflexes of the trained boxer took over, the champ forgot for a

moment that we were playing, and he practically knocked me through the side of the building. There is a hiatus in my memory (about five minutes long, they told me) between my popping the champ, which I remember clearly, and looking up groggily at the anxious face of the coach, who was trying to bring me to. F. Towner Laney, heavy-weight champeen of da world! Ugh.

I have been editing magazines and newsletters, some of international circulation, for nearly 20 years. I was editor of my high school newspaper in 1930-31. And of course there was *Acolyte*, various one-shots, and the ubiquitous *Fan-Dango*. Doesn't sound so big when you trace it down and get specific, does it?

I am an expert on naval affairs of 20 years' standing, and much of my stuff along this line has enjoyed national circulation. In the school year of 1928-29, I wrote a 59-page history of the U. S. Navy as a term paper for a high school history class. I just reread it, and it isn't too bad for a 15-year-old. And of course my remarks on navy stuff in *Fan-Dango* have had national circulation. They were in FAPA.

I have been a sports commentator for a metropolitan daily. Well, in a small way. In 1935 I wrote an article on football at the University of Idaho, and the columnist to whom I sent it used it in lieu of his column one day. It was under my by-line, and appeared in the *Spokane Daily Chronicle*.

I am a linguist, too. Shucks, yes. I took French and German in University and Latin in high school. I don't remember any of it, but I got good grades, which is all that matters. Besides, in addition to my native Anglo-American, I can express myself quite fluently in Anglo-Saxon.

I have been a paleobotanist. Well, I once or twice helped my old man dig fossil leaves for the University Of Idaho.

In a less intellectual way, I have been both a chauffeur and traffic officer. In the school year of 1934-35, I worked as a cab driver in Moscow, Idaho. Of course it was only part time for a little new struggling company, and I furnished my own car on a share-the-profits basis, and it was for only a couple of months at most--but it makes me a chauffeur, even if I didn't have a driver's license at the time. Traffic Cop? Well at one of the football games I was put in charge of a detail of four other ROTC cadets to direct traffic at one of the intersections on the way to McLean Field, Idaho. I might not have had a warrant, but I was the boy with the whistle.

I have been the manager of a successful carnival. Oh yes, I was chairman of the committee which put on a carnival for DeMolay in 1934. We netted nearly \$300.

My own landscape gardening business was very successful for three years until I left it to go into the army. That sounds really BIG until I explain that I used to spend my summers taking care of people's lawns and weeding their flower beds. When I went to ROTC camp for six weeks in the summer of 1934 I had to let it slide.

I have worked professionally as a pediatric nurse. When I was a kid, I used to do occasional baby-sitting for at least three families I can remember, and probably others as well. Well?

For more than 20 years, I have been a linotyper and printer, and in fact have my own print shop. When I was a junior in high school, 1929-30, I started hanging around the *Daily Star-Mirror* in connection with getting out the school paper. I used to set type now and then on their spare linotype. In my garage workshop I have a 7x11 job press about 50 years old and two cabinets of type cases. I use it a couple of times a year.

I have been the curator of a state museum. Yes, I have! In the summer of 1935, I got a job (through nepotism) under my old man in the University of Idaho Geology Department. My work consisted of dusting and rearranging the mineralogical and archaeological museum of the State Bureau of Mines and Geology.

I have also been a college science instructor. When my old man went on his sabbatical leave in 1935, I graded all his correspondence courses for him in exchange for the reader's fee.

During my seven-plus years with Potlatch Forests, Inc. (operators of the largest pine sawmill in the world, at Lewiston, Idaho), I was a number of pretty exciting things. I was a lumber grader for awhile, working under the auspices of the Western Pine Association. I was an industrial chemist. And for several years I was departmental educational director. Actually, I was a clerk in the invoicing department. But when the WPA (Western Pine Association, in this case) gave a six week's course in lumber grading, I was one of the half-dozen, office boys who took it. Why not? It was more fun than working, and it was on the company time. Every office worker is an industrial chemist in a modest way, that is, if he works for an industry. Sooner or later he will use ink



eraser. Departmental educational director merely means that from late 1937 through October 1943, I had to break in all the new clerks in the department and teach them how to use the Burroughs Moon-Hopkins Billing Machine.

(That paragraph shows why most great big men are so doggone vague about their greatness and bigness. The irreverent person reading the above might think that I was just a dime-a-dozen white collar worker. Don't you make that mistake, because I AM A GREAT BIG MAN!)

I am the author of a published manual on the operation of the Burroughs Moon-Hopkins billing machine and its use in the lumber business. I wrote this manual on the company time while I was working at my office in 1943, and ran it off in an edition of 25 copies on the departmental ditto machine. When I revisited my old salt mine in the summer of 1949, I was extremely gratified to notice two copies of my old manual, sadly dog-eared, lying out in the open where they were still in daily use.

Two other occupations, or rather professions, from my Northwest Idaho incarnation ought to be mentioned. I was also an independent auditor, and an estate agent or manager. Well, you see I had a Sunday date with this gal who worked in a newsstand. I dropped by the stand in mid-afternoon to make sure the date still stood and to find out for sure when she was closing up. It seems she had gotten her accounts for the day all balled up, so I stepped in for half an hour and straightened them out for her, finding the 25¢ she was afraid she was going to be stuck with. *But that makes me an Auditor!* Estate agent simply means that for a while, Jackie's folks had this little four-room house in Clarkston. When they moved away and rented it, I had to go down and pick up the \$20 rent once a month. Yippee!

My work at C.D. Lamoree's since 1943 has required me to function in a vast number of highly skilled capacities. At various times I have been a machinist, a jig builder, a die maker, a tool designer, an industrial electrician, night foreman, tool room supervisor, engineer in charge of plant layout and design, time study man and estimator. (Cyrus B. Condra, whose career this so closely parallels, will be interested to know that I have *never* faced off the bottoms of salt shakers. I'd use a sanding wheel; it's faster.)

Whew. Well, I do call myself a machinist. I'm not really deserving of that title by any means, but when I see the average run of fuggheads who call themselves machinists, I realize that I am entitled to lie a little, too. I'm just an average good, backyard mechanic who can operate most machine shop equipment in most of its less tricky applications. I'm in charge of the punch presses for C. D., and have one man and two women working with me. If I wanted to be a fugghead and pull my seniority on Burbee I could be in charge of the lathes, too, but he is twice as good a lathe man as I am; and besides, even if I were "in charge" of him, he and I would both go about our work exactly the way we do anyway. The typical fugghead thinks "being in charge" of something or someone expands him into a great big man. Plenty of idiots become company men and fuggheads because they are told they have a lot of rank. They start wearing ties and white shirts to work, never realizing that they don't get as little as 5¢ an hour more for being such big men, and never realizing

that their authority, when it comes to a clutch, is nil anyway. All most so-called jobs of authority mean is that their holder is entitled to get chewed out when something over which he has no control goes wrong.

My own "being in charge" of the punch presses merely means that I plan the work for all four of us, have charge of the orders, and keep track of the dies. I like it, because it enables me to pick and choose my own jobs to a certain extent and because having to keep presses set up for both the girls pretty much guarantees that I don't get stuck with any long and boring production runs.

Let's examine my bigness. **Machinist.** Already covered. **Jig Builder.** Sure, I've made some very simple jigs out of bakelite--ones with large tolerances and elementary layout problems. They only take me twice as long as they'd take a good man.

**Die Maker.** Our die maker says it takes a minimum of 12 years steady dies experience before a guy begins to know what he is doing. However, I do lots of simple die repair and overhaul jobs. And we have a set of universal washer dies, with knockout punches and bushings. Any lathe man can make punches and bushings for a new combination, and of course I've done that lots of times. The die work I do could be done by any die maker's apprentice's helper.

**Tool Designer.** Well, every time I make a new lathe bit and grind a contour on it, I'm designing and making a tool. For that matter, anything used in production is a "tool." If you spend 5 minutes making a special clamping fixture to direct an air jet into a die you are designing a tool.

**Industrial Electrician.** I have installed 3-wire 220-volt motors. (Each wire was tagged so it was impossible to go astray, and of the three I installed only two ran backwards the first time I turned them on.) I also built, a 220-volt material heating table with a battery of 12 infra-red heat lamps--built it complete from scratch. The wiring was easy for me, because an electrician drew me a diagram, and even I can follow a print. I still don't understand why it is wired like it is, but it works. And I'm proud of it.

**Night Foreman.** Lots of the times we've worked overtime I've had the key, because I had the most seniority of anyone working that night. This merely means I was stuck with waiting until everyone was out, so I could make sure that everything was turned off and then lock the door.

**Tool Room Supervisor.** The nearest thing to a toolroom we have is the rows and rows of shelves containing our 900 or 1,000 dies. I have to keep them in order and number the new dies. It is highly skilled intellectual work, because it requires keeping five simple numerical series straight. I don't misnumber more than four or five dies a year.

**Plant Layout and Design.** I picked out my own bench and put my tool box on the corner I wanted it on. **Big. Big. B I G !**

**Time Study and Estimator.** If the foreman asks me how long a job should take, I'll guess with him. Why not? A lot easier to shoot the bull than work. If he wants to talk about speeding up some job, I'll gladly spend hours discussing it -- on company time.

**So as you can plainly see, I am a Great Big Man. For its own protection, Society may have to institutionalize me, because I am such a Great Big Man.** And because these great vital truths upon which depend the orderly progress of the world cannot be mentioned too often, I feel it is my duty to repeat...

**I AM A GREAT BIG MAN!**

