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THE CHESHIRE SMILE

55



"THE CHESHIRE SMILE"

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Erratum: In our first issue the cost per issue was given as 6d. post free - This should read 8d.

Le Court _____ Liss _____ Hants.

THE CHESHIRE SMILE

Vol.I.

No.2.

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"The Cheshire Smile"

EDITORIAL



Dear Friends,

As threatened, I have borrowed the clown's greeting and say "Here we are again." We will leave the somersaults out, for enough somersaults were turned with leap frog and "I'm the King of the Castle." thrown in, in getting out the first issue. The Editor retired to his couch in Portsmouth Hospital and his bad dreams of what might be happening were only equalled by reality.

What was the reality? After "The Cheshire Smile" had not been put to bed, but lassoed and tied down, it was discovered that our typist, Mrs. Thorlby, could not possibly spare the time on the stencils --- her plate and our cup were indeed full. A good friend of Le Court, Mr. Stickland, stood in the breach and asked his typist to take on the job: and she --- Oh noble example of English womanhood! --- fulfilled the Herculean task beyond any expectations, without checking or even a guiding hand through the terror and horror of the Temple of Mistras! This much I know, for the rest I must depend on reliable evidence.

It is a tale of dogged courage to tear the heart strings. Joe Pincombe and Ted Sleaman, both of whom, by the way, now suffer from staplers elbow, banged staples with relentless purpose. Nipper, Alice, Miss Trow, Bill Chappel, Neville, Alan Davies, Leonard and Harry did great work in folding, sorting and lending their tongues to lick stamps.

Over the set-backs - torn stencils, missing pages, etc. I will draw a veil. In retrospect they have been forgotten and only the brighter side remembered and thus, Excelsior! --- "A banner with a strange device" --- was born!

Now, dear readers, for your criticism: was ever a magazine blessed with such tolerant readers? As you have all realised we are not a high brow monthly and are governed, regarding quality, by our contributor's skill. Apart from the letter which said "Can't read - when do I receive the 7/6d?" - the tone and suggestions have been most helpful. Elsewhere you will find a selection of comments. I should like to answer one, I think, pertinent criticism - a call for longer articles. I

am afraid that this will depend to a large extent on, as I have mentioned before, the development of our skill and also on space; in the sense that there are so many facets of Le Court life which will require mention.

Another suggestion which has received much thought is that we should allow the various Le Courtiers, (and how varied are we) to emerge so that, to use a government departmental euphemism, they should become personalised, or realised, I suppose, would be a better word, for our many friends of whom we have not had the pleasure of meeting and for whom Le Court is only represented by the facts - the ideals of G.C., - a building and some patients and staff. The easy way, of course, is to convey such information by means of profiles or thumbnail sketches and maybe that is the best method, however time will tell.

Now for a piece of great news, the printing press we so ardently desired, has become a reality too ! Squadron Leader Belton, M.B.E., of Belton (Printing) Engineering Co. has presented us with a superb machine. It will soon be installed and we are hoping that we shall be able to publish the next magazine in printed form. How to thank Squadron Leader Belton is beyond my powers of imagination, (indeed, how can we adequately say "thank you" for the widow's mite !) Our thanks can only take the form of words and, as I said, the uses to which we put this grand instrument. We must see that the tunes we play on it are worth the hearing.

Here a word of sympathy and regret to Mr. Harcourt-Williams whose name was somehow missed in the table of contents of our first issue. It was completely my fault and I am very sorry for the omission. I do hope that he has forgiven me and will put it down to my celloquence.

Of G.C.'s further plans - more gaps to be filled - you will read further on and I know that I can assure G.C. on behalf of Le Court's patients, staff and friends, new and old, of our love and prayers and help in any way that it is possible so that the great work can go on.

I must close before I should be accused of articles too long ! Before I do, I should like to thank again all contributors and helpers and if, inadvertently, I should have missed giving credit where credit is due then please forgive me for never have I been so well supported in anything I have undertaken.

Until next time S.J.Radford - Editor.

UP TO DATE BY G.C.

Dear Le Court,

At the time that the Cheshire Smile goes to Press we are on the point of opening two new Homes, Both of these like the original Le Court, have turned out in a most unexpected way and also at a most unexpected moment. In May 1948 the last thing I was thinking of was looking after the sick. Yet suddenly I found myself faced with an old man, Arthur Dykes, who had nowhere else to go and no-one to turn to but myself. Like anyone else faced with the same situation, I took him in because it would have been impossible to refuse. In this way Le Court started with the result that you know.

It so happened at that particular moment life was very difficult for me. The old V.I.P. Scheme had broken down leaving me with a great number of debts, added to which I had quite a few personal problems of my own which I couldn't see how to solve. If Le Court was to solve the problems of other people it was to solve my own, and in looking after those who came my way I found that the debts disappeared and likewise the problems. This taught me a lesson. It showed me that the surest way of getting out of trouble is to focus your attention outside yourself.

A few months back, when I was at Midhurst Sanatorium and told to do as little as possible, I was suddenly visited by someone from India who wanted to help me. His desire to help was so obvious and so genuine that it was very difficult to refuse. He discussed all sorts of ways in which he could be of use to us but none of them seemed to work out. In the end he returned to India, flew back once more to see me, and then returned again. He decided that his life must remain in India and that he couldn't leave; yet he still wanted to help. The only thing to do was to accept his help in India and to start a Home out there. Since that day quite a lot has happened both in India and in Australia and the scheme is now well under way. We have received a very enthusiastic welcome from the Indian Press and it looks as if we are going to be able to mobilise a lot of help out in Australia - which country I shall be visiting in September on my way to India. This is one of our two new Homes.

Over the Christmas period, when I was with you at Le Court, I suddenly received a very desperate appeal on behalf of an old man. He was suffering from advanced T.B. and was highly infectious. He was living at home

with his children and grandchildren and there was nowhere that he could find to go. It was obviously very urgent that he should leave his home. This appeal was rather like the one that came six and a half years ago from old Arthur Dykes. I decided that at all costs I must help him. In the eighteen days that have passed since then much has happened. We have been given a thirty bed-roomed house, we have three T.B. trained nurses, a fully-qualified cook, two full time voluntary sick-helpers, a large load of equipment and beds from a Sanatorium in Cheshire, a possible grant for a few thousand pounds from one of the Ministries to help us to repair the part of the building that has fallen into disrepair, and now we are to make a start on January 31st. This will be the sixth of our new Homes.

These two new Homes are not separate entities on their own but are part and parcel of Le Court, because they are all within the one family. The reason why things have gone so easily and so quickly for me in these two new ventures, is because of the example that Le Court has set. In the early days we used to take in everyone who came to the door so long as we could see that their need was genuine. This, of course, is no longer possible at Le Court but it is still possible within the family at large and we are doing that in the two new Homes. They both look upon Le Court as their mother house and we all know that we have your support and your affection.

The advance party of the Matron, myself and possibly one or two others will depart on the morning of January 31st to open up the sixth Home at Amptill Park House. The little send off that you will give us will be symbolic of your moral support and interest. On our side we would like to express our gratitude because, after all, it was you and all the well-wishers who have supported Le Court and the other five Homes who have made this possible. May God bless you all.

G.C.

A NOTE FROM MOLLY.

With all sincerity I should like to pass on a lesson which I learned the hard way. Not long ago I was completely indifferent to my appearance - to use the proper phrase - I couldn't have cared less.

It was not until someone coaxed me to look into a

hand mirror and the shock I received at what I saw there, that I determined that something must be done. Without either pride or false modesty I can say that the lesson was well learned and that the resulting change has had its good effect on, not only myself but the people with whom I deal, patients, friends and staff alike.

I would like to emphasise how essential it is for people, especially the disabled, to be well groomed. Because it seems a bore and takes longer than formerly - Please do not give up - a new hair set - some make up - it is amazing the difference that these things make to one's morale.

Use your make up to strengthen your personality. Let your well groomed hair - your good lip line - your nicely shaped hands or whatever your particular assets may be, conquer or disguise your disability. Try it - you will feel much more confident about life, I can assure you.

M. Conibear.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

Here is proof (if proof is necessary) that we have not a monopoly on eccentricity:- The letter is from Miss Woodward, 10 Woodward Street, Ches. She writes:- "I am in the Y.H.A. and last summer I was with two other girls in the Bettys-ee-Coed area. We were returning to our hostel called Idwal Cottage when we met a queer looking man - redheaded and about 6'3" tall. His clothes were clean but very odd. The style of the jacket I had not seen before and his trousers had once been presumably plus fours. He had piercing blue eyes and carried a staff in his hand and under his arm a bundle of walking sticks.

We passed the time of day with him and his story was as extraordinary as his appearance.

He was a Scotsman and had inherited a thousand pounds but because of his shiftlessness his father, in his will, had decreed that he should fend for himself for 10 years before the money should become his. Two years had passed of his trial and he was earning his living by selling walking sticks. He told us he was looking for an English wife. He gave a significant look in my direction and in case he was getting ideas we all hurriedly assured him that a Scots wife would be best. We are still wondering if it was all true."

A factual account of a journey to Singapore by
A.G.Stickland.

JOURNEY TO MALAYA.

As a small boy, one of my favourite authors was Jules Verne and I devoured his "Round the World in Eighty Days" avidly. Little did I know then that I was later to travel 8,000 miles (one third of the circumference of the world), in 20 hours - yet this did happen when I made a business trip to Malaya in November 1953 by Comet - one of its earliest flights to Singapore.

The journey actually started from B.O.A.C. Airways Terminal, Victoria, in the late evening and I can still recall the thrill of waiting in the Lounge and hearing the loudspeaker calls for passengers travelling literally to the four corners of the world.

My turn came quickly when a female voice announced over the inter-con that "passengers for the Comet flight to Singapore will please take the coach now waiting." I joined the waiting group, entered the coach and reached London Airport soon after 11 p.m. A quick cup of coffee was followed by attendance at customs, thence to have health certificates checked - inoculations for para-typoid, malaria, smallpox, yellow fever, etc., all in order - check up of Passport and currency and then a short wait until the coach arrived to take us across the airdrome to the waiting plane.

It was of course quite dark and pouring with rain - typical English November weather - but we were soon in the plane and addressed by a young and charming air hostess who explained the "escape drill" and the use of life jackets - a matter of routine as she was at pains to emphasise - and then an appalling scream as the jet engines started up. It was pretty noisy in the plane but the noise outside must have defied description. A few minutes to warm up and we then taxied to the starting point. Then the fun really started - the engines were opened up and the scream mounted higher and higher. It seemed impossible for the note to rise any further but mount it did - higher and higher and higher and at the point when it seemed that something just had to burst, we were off like a thunderbolt. Immediately I felt the plane to be airborne I looked out of the window to find the lights of London far below us - we were on our way.

The charming girl sitting just behind me who had flown all over the world in all types of planes, described the take off as the most frightening she had ever experienced - and who was I to disagree?

The warning lights "no smoking" and "fix safety belt" were flashed off and thankfully I groped for my cigarette case for the means of steadying my shattered nerves.

Most of the passengers were experienced in air travel and quickly went to sleep but sleep was not for me. I read for a little and then the air hostess seeing me awake asked if I would like some coffee - an offer which was accepted with alacrity. In conversation she told me that she had been on a number of the Comet test flights and regarded the Comet as the most wonderful aircraft ever.

On we flew with the plane as steady as a rock - until we crossed the Gulf of Genoa when we were buffeted about a bit - and not long after the passengers were awakened, safety belts were fixed, cigarettes were put out and very soon we touched down at Rome Airport. Here we had an early breakfast (it was just after 4 a.m.) and precisely one hour afterwards we embarked on our second hop - to Cairo.

At Cairo a second breakfast and then on to Badrain in the Persian Gulf which we reached just after mid-day in the first real heat we had experienced.

Again one hour for refuelling and on to Karachi. From Karachi right across India in a single hop to Calcutta and on to Rangoon. From Rangoon to Bangkok and then the last hop to Singapore which we reached just after 10 a.m. (Singapore time) having spent 20 hours in the air to cover a distance of 8,000 miles. Just imagine - we left London Airport at Midnight on Sunday, we were beyond Calcutta at Midnight on Monday and in Singapore before midday on Tuesday (earlier by London time), having made seven stops of an hour each on the way.

The food on the plane and the arrangements at the airports were perfect and it just didn't seem possible that in such a short time we had covered a distance that takes a fast boat just over three weeks.

Most of the time we were travelling at about 400 miles an hour and 35,000 to 40,000 feet (nearly 8 miles) high. Almost all of the time we were above the clouds in brilliant sunshine, sitting in our jackets because we were so warm yet the outside temperature was well below zero.

The plane was of course pressurised so that oxygen

masks were unnecessary and despite the great height we felt no discomfort apart from the usual deafness which assails many plane passengers and which can be overcome by regular swallowing and nose blowing.

Space does not permit me to tell of the night out in Singapore before the journey by Dakota of Malayan Airways to Ipoh (in Perak), of the journey to the Rubber Estate near Parit, of the inspection of the Estate armed to the teeth, or of the visits to other Estates by road accompanied by armed escorts. Neither can I describe that wonderful week spent in Singapore when the three weeks in the bandit country were behind me or of the return to London Airport when leaving Singapore in a temperature of 85 degrees I arrived in England just over 24 hours later with the thermometer showing 8 degrees of frost - a drop of over 60 degrees in a day.

As I write, the Comet is still grounded and several members of the crews with which I travelled have paid the supreme penalty so often suffered by pioneers. Their sacrifice will not be in vain, for their faith created a new era in air travel and here long the successor of the illfated Comet I will once again prove the supremacy of British Aircraft and British Aircrews.

A.G.S.

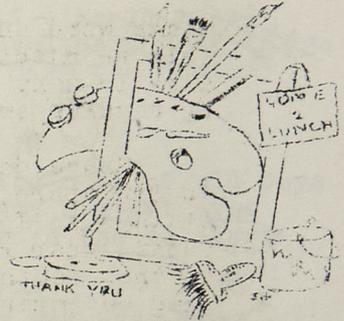
AN OBITUARY FOR OLGA.

Time passes on and so do people. On Tuesday 18th Olga Nadbrodna was at last freed from all suffering, fortified by the last rites of her religion. While we all miss her, we are happy in knowing that she is at rest.

D. Taylor.

From Wing-Co. Colin Cooper, N.A.T.O. Headquarters, Fontenbleau.

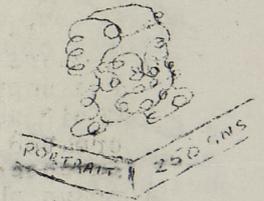
The letter said: "Dear Mr. Best,
 We all of us are much impressed
 By your most recent work of art,
 It melted our collective heart,
 And so, if you will grant permission,
 It will be put on exhibition
 Next Tuesday week by us, the Royal
 Academy, and your most loyal
 Friends - and, dear Sir, by the way,
 Henceforth you are James Best R.A. !



At Le Court there was a sensation,
 They gave Jim Best a great ovation.
 All went to London, on the day,
 To see his picture on display.

It's wonderful - thus spoke G.C. -
 To see so wild a storm at sea,
 With tossing waves so dark and chill.
 In fact it makes me feel quite ill!
 You cannot mean it! cried out Molly.
 A storm at sea? This is pure folly!
 The title should, it is quite clear,
 Be "Cattle" near Lake Windermere."
 I disagree! exclaimed Hugh Evans.
 It isn't that! Just look! Good Heavens!
 "Vesuvius Spouting Jets of Flame!"

AFTER REC. BUTLER

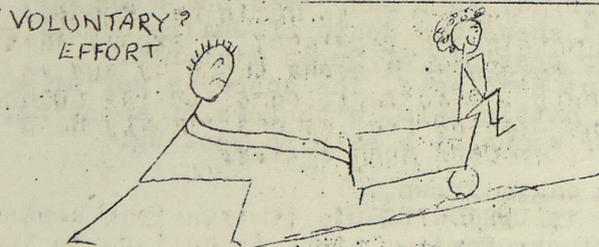
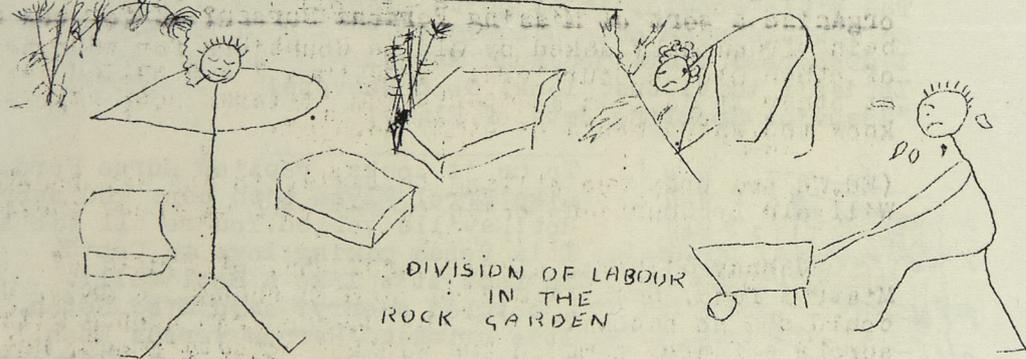
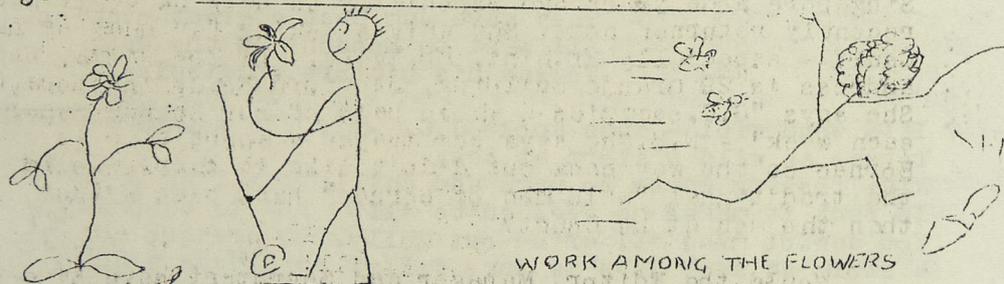
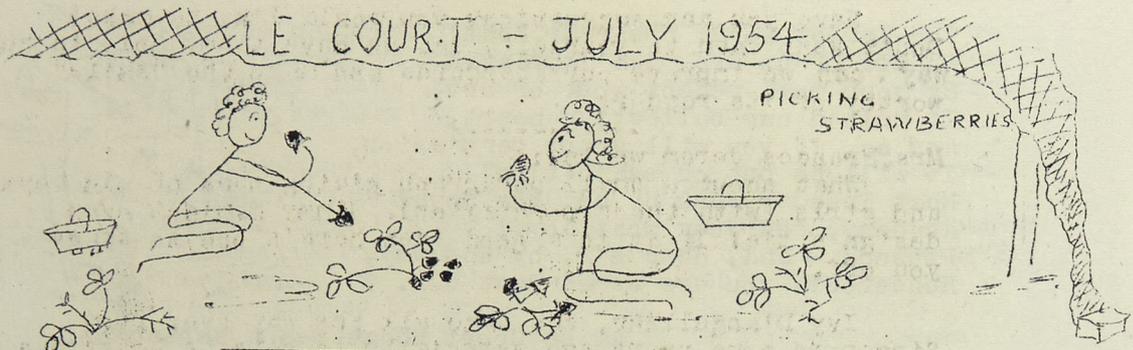


To me it looks, replied Nurse Ford,
 Like Errol Flynn with cape and sword.
 Rot! Neville yelled. You're all too stupid!
 It's Venus making love to Cupid.
 In fact it's like a Botticelli.
 A bottled cherry? said Miss Seton.
 It's cricket 'Harrow versus Eton.'
 For me, said Dan, it's not a teaser.
 It shows the death of Julius Caesar -
 Or possibly of Queen Victoria.
 But Eric said, The scene is gorier -
 A battlefield, with lots of shooting,
 Or women at a sale in Tooting.

Then shouted Jim with angry frown,
 They've gone and hung it UPSIDE DOWN!
 - My portrait - oh unlucky day! -
 Of Mr. Alan Finch, M.A. !

The portrait was, the same day, righted:
 In compensation Jim was knighted!

SLAVE ACTIVITIES IN THE GARDEN



KEY



MALE



FEMALE

E.A.B

SUGGESTIONS

Have you any suggestions you would like to make? Don't keep them to yourself, let us have them. Only in this way can we improve our standards and make the "Smile" worthy of its readers.

Mrs. Frances Jeram writes:-

What about a small paragraph giving news of old boys and girls (with their permission). Jimmy B. might even design a tie! If it is a good idea here's one to start you off.

Ivy D'Angellier, who came all the way over from Singapore some years ago especially to help Le Court has recently returned home. She writes asking for news of Le Court - especially Mr. Bint, Mr. Evans, and Mrs. Wilks. Her address is 29 Oranje Building, Stamford Road, Singapore, 6. She says "G.C. occupies a whole page of our Sunday paper each week" - N.B. She says she stayed a short time in Borneo on the way back but didn't like it there. Could the traditional "wild men of Borneo" have been wilder than the men at Le Court?

Would the Editor, Manager and Secretary have time to organise a sort of Missing Persons Bureau? I for one am being frequently asked by Old Le Courtiers for addresses of other Old Le Courtiers! sometimes I can oblige ---- at other times I am stumped - for instance does anyone know the whereabouts of Jimmy Herber?

(Ed. We are only too willing to assist in any way possible. Will old Le Courtiers write in and tell us about themselves)

Johnny Gilbert, alias Johnny Ray, of Temple of Mistras fame, has decided on another change of name. We could see no necessity for the change from Johnny Gilbert - surely a famous name in the world of entertainment, but Johnny Ray it was and is and isn't to be in the future. Will you help with something appropriate? I expect that you will all have the Temple of Mistras taped by now so take your chance to help - a suitable name for its author. Please not William Shakespeare for, as has rightly been pointed out, he hasn't written much lately.

Is the army of today all right? Is it true that certain of the rough soldiery, conducting night operations in the general direction of Le Court and, by strange coincidence, at a time when a wild orgy was taking place in a certain caravan, stopped to paddle in the fish pond.

SOME MORE DO's and DONT's WITH A CAMERA.

It is fairly easy, if you have had a little experience, to take a good view or landscape; but when it comes to photographing a person one knows, it will appear rather more difficult. The reason for this is that a snap is, as it were, the freezing into immobility for one instant of time of the dynamic characteristics of a person whom one knows only as living and mobile. Facial expression is constantly changing but here it is fixed, in a photograph for ever and if we are not careful - at an unfortunate moment - a frown, a leer or just plain stupid.

With a little care even the critical eye can be satisfied. You must get fairly near with your camera. If it is a box type, ten feet is the nearest you should be. But if you have a camera with a focusing scale, as near as four feet should be possible. Some box camera have a portrait attachment allowing the box to get even closer, THIS IS DANGEROUS. If you get too close with this lense attachment, distortion will result. As an example, people will appear to have oversized noses and one ear may appear bigger than the other.

LIGHTING. Another important point is lighting, although, usually, in out-door photography the sun is your source: nevertheless the success of your photo will depend on the way you vary the position of your subject in relation to the sun. One can still find instruction books which advocate positioning the subject with his face to the sun. This is completely wrong and the result will be a photograph of a person with a pained expression and eyes screwed up. It is much better to have the sun over the photographers right or left shoulder; in this way you will obtain shade to the face and thus impart character.

Your background should be as simple as possible. Don't allow a tree or telegraph pole to be so sited as to appear to "grow" out of the subject's head. Always remember, the sky is a very good background even if you have to take the photo from a low level. Don't ask for a smile or it may look false.

E.F.



LETTER BOX

"--- May I congratulate everyone concerned on having achieved a Le Court Magazine in the first place and on producing such an excellent first issue. What tremendous possibilities -----! "

Mrs. Frances Jeram, W.4.

"---I congratulate you most heartily. An excellent beginning. I anticipate great things ---"

Mrs. Winifred Warner, Alton.

"---May I take this opportunity of congratulating you all on the Cheshire Smile, and wishing it every success in the future ---"

P. Wainwright, E.8.

"---Could we as outsiders hear a little regarding the daily life at Le Court? Articles a bit longer too please! ---"

J. K. Taylor, Malpas, Cheshire.

"---I hasten to congratulate all concerned on a really good first issue. You ask for suggestions --- A gradual emergence of the separate personalities at Le Court through the publication of their various human characteristics ---"

Mrs. Ellen G. Anderson, Brighton.

"---May I congratulate you on your first issue --- people such as myself would like to know something about everyday life at Le Court --- Could you give us a series of "pen pictures" starting probably with yourself! ---"

Miss M. Idle, Normanton.

(Ed. I hope that these will not become pictures in the fire!)

"---May I congratulate you on your December issue, it is a very good effort ---"

J. Haynes, Whitchurch

"---I wish your paper all the best ---"

Miss E. Johnston, Edinburgh.

LETTER BOX (cont'd)

FACSIMILE

Oxford.

Dear Editor,

I mean Sir really of course, but considering I was allowed to say Sid once all I say is that class can be carried too far. Not all as a matter of fact, and this is so much too good an opportunity to miss taking a dig at Ole Sid. And frankly my first complaint is that having a quiet holiday in Vienna the Cheshire Smile arrives-the very day after I'd been signing documents promising to have nothing to do with violent and subversive politics! Naturally I was shadowed the rest of the time, and finally the four occupying powers asked me to leave (the first international agreement since 1948, I hear). The first joke about wanting 7/6 out of me every year is really good I agree, But something under the name of SJ Radford on page 3 makes the fatal mistake of saying the vote to produce the magazine was unanimous Sidney, Sidney - even Stalin never gave himself more than 98.5% or thereabouts, and this round number is indicative of frightful scenes of excess during the voting. The candidates for Editor, Mr. Radford. Advisory board, Mr. Radford. Bankers, Mr.well, need one for on? Whats that? You had to stop Miss Seton voting twice? A likely story, I must say. And what this about Jimmy Best found 'suspiciously' dead after an overdose of deadly lampshade?

I shall have to come down again soon as I see you soon Sid old chap, and get in the racket myself. (Rake off OK?). All the best meanwhile, and lets hear when the circulation reaches the double figures mark.

doubtfully,

Simon Flinn.

(Ed. I publish the foregoing as a dreadful warning and as an example of what we must expect from popular education - Mr. Flinn, I may add has been bought off!)

WHO WOULD BE?

Who would be a guinea pig
 Infected with a virus?
 Everytime he smokes a cig
 He puffs out clouds of cirrus!

THE TEMPLE OF MISTRAS:
A Ghastly Story.

PART II

All characters in this story without exception are the figments of the imagination.

Upstairs in the professor's bedroom the P.C. Charles John was looking with loving eyes at the Sally Thompson the unconscious Prof's daughter and the Sally Thompson was bending over her father crooning in his ear and her father was still alive and Doctor Alan Reese said to Sally Thompson - You must rest. The P.C. Charles John left the room unwilling and the doctor filled a syringe and said to Sally - let me give you this - and Sally Thompson said No - I must help my father - Professor Thompson he needs my help. The doctor moved up behind her and behind Sally's back he jabbed her with it. Oh said Sally Oh Oh - and then she passed out. The doctor's face was flushed - he suffered from wind and he gently laid the unconscious professor's unconscious daughter Sally Thompson on the floor and he said - Oh God - he said - both of them - and rushed from the room.

In the kitchen the detective Prawn was looking idly at the cook he was leaning on the draining board. Suddenly he said to the cook who was now looking better - what were you doing with the mincing machine - and the cook answered the Detective Prawn - Mincing - she said and then the Detective Prawn rushed to the pantry and examined the mincemeat - And what is this - said the detective Prawn producing a trouser button with some meat on it and the cook said - Oh dear Lord me husband's - said the cook and then the detective Prawn asked - when did you last see your husband and the cook told detective Prawn - Ten years ago in Wapping - Then the tall blonde whose name was Tawdry Rampage leaned forward and cried out - Leave the cook alone you big bully you can see that the cook is too old - and then the cook burst into tears and at that moment the door burst open and the doctor Alan Reese followed by P.C. Charles John rushed into the room and the doctor seeing the tall blonde the doctor screamed - Elspeth what the hell are you doing in this room - and the tall blonde Tawdry Rampage told the doctor that it was warmer inside The detective Prawn shouted with triumph - Arrest that man - he said and the P.C. Charles John said What shall we charge him with - he said and the detective Prawn said sardonically - Keeping a dog without a licence should be enough - take him away - he said to P.C. Charles John - No one must leave the building - he said and then

left the room and P.C. Charles John marched off his prisoner Doctor Alan Reese and the tall Blonde Tawdry Rampage cried - He 's all I have - she said.

Sometime later Detective Prawn was musing in the library - it was a fairly big cottage - when he noticed a book out of line on the shelf and the Detective Prawn picked up the book and saw it was a book on the WORSHIP OF MISTRAS - a bell seemed to ring in his head - it was the dinner gong - he ignored it - THE BOOK WAS PRINTED IN BLUE INK - it opened on a page about HUMAN SACRIFICE Ha - he said noticing some red ink - Blood - he muttered. He put his hand behind the bookcase and cried - Oh - and swore - he had caught it on a nail - Detective Prawns blood dripped a little pool on the floor and it seeped through the floor into the kitchen below and the cook put a dish cloth underneath to soak it up. The detective Prawn read on. Prawn looked up - slowly the bookcase opened and the Detective Prawn taking his courage in his uninjured hand plunged into the darkness - the bookcase slowly closed - not far away darkness had fallen.

(What was at the end of the passage? The mystery of the God Mistras deepens. What does the doctor know? Another terrible instalment next month!).

CHRISTMAS DAY AT LE COURT.

No Christmas at Le Court is quite like its predecessor: each one is unique in its own way. This year it was different in that we had G.C. with us again after his long absence and I am thankful to say very much improved in health.

The Christmas festivities began with the Midnight Mass of the Nativity for the Catholics in the Chapel here. A party of Anglicans filled the ambulance and attended the Parish Church at Selborne for the morning service of Christmas Day. The transport arrangements for wheel chairs neared perfection - one patient, leaving it to the last moment, nearly had to go to church without a shave.

After church there was sherry and biscuits and Dr. Roderick visited us with his wife to wish us a Merry Christmas.

After an excellent dinner we had the joy of listening to G.C. on the radio speaking just before Her Majesty and his message was on the necessity of trying to follow the example of Our Lord - that He had come to help us and therefore we should try to help one another. This is one of the guiding principles of our everyday life here - this precept of our founder and, as we look around us we can see the changing of pious hopes into practical and material facts.

We were all enthralled to listen once again to Her Majesty speaking, as it were to the family of the Commonwealth of which she made us feel a living part.

As you can imagine, after a very fine dinner, nothing very much happened in the afternoon and after the Queen's speech most of us played the game of "only just shutting one's eyes for a few moments.

At tea we had a fine cake made for us by our youngest patient's mother, Mrs. Pepparell, for which we thank her very much. It was good to have Professor and Mrs. Cheshire and G. C. with us for tea and our thanks go to a Sergeant Major from Longmoor Camp who presided over the Christmas tree and, in so doing, gallantly gave up some of his time to be with us. We all had splendid presents from off the tree and here we should like to thank all our good friends who sent gifts and helped to provide all those little extras that go to make the Christmas festival so different from any other.

Lastly, but not least in our hearts, we thank the staff for their hard work and good humour to make the day a success and this, in spite of most of them suffering from colds from whose grip not many of us escaped.

A.H-W.

REQUESTS

Molly, I don't know why, has asked me what it is like to kiss a bearded man. This is surprising for two reasons - firstly that she should have thought that I had had the experience and secondly that she had not. Ever willing, I have offered the nearest thing - to kiss the bearded lady in the circus (anything in the cause of science).

VIA MEDIA

The Government's attitude to myxomatosis - don't spread the disease and don't stop it - is rather like the Englishman's proverbial riddle of the road attitude: "Some people say there is a God and some say there isn't: the truth lies, probably, between these two points of view."

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE.

William Hickey in the "Daily Express". - He was in Manchester (I think) helping Mr. Morrison to get married - "Suddenly I knew what I must do - I must go to Liverpool!"

There is no truth in the infamous rumour now circulating that the families of the Editorial Board have written the letters in Letter Box.

HELP!

Has any reader a portable typewriter for sale cheaply? Standard keyboard and light touch essential. Offers to the Editor please.