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## IN THE EDITORS' CONFIDENCE

**ERIC HUTTON**, a frequent contributor to Maclean's, lives in Toronto but was born in Trinidad. Revisiting the scenes of his youth recently, he found most of his boyhood friends talking about the possibility of the West Indies becoming Canada's eleventh province. He wondered about the advantages, disadvantages and problems of such a union, went after the answers, and wrote *The West Indies Want to Join Us* (on page 7) . . . Subject: Centaur, an unusual

short story on page 22, introduced a new writer, **John Gray**, a University of Toronto graduate still in his early twenties, he reports that the cheque we sent him is helping finance a honeymoon in Majorca, which, in case your geography is rusty, is a Spanish island in the Mediterranean. His bride, **Araby Lockhart**, is a Canadian



Eric Hutton

actress who has lately been making her name on the stage in England . . . **James Dugan**, who wrote the *Louis B. Mayer* profile on page 17, collaborated with **Capt. J.-M. Cousineau** on *The Silent World*, a book about undersea adventure which is now on the best-seller list. Now he's struggling to complete a book of his own by May 1 so he will be free to take off with Cousineau for France on an archaeological expedition which will salvage a Greek ship that sank twenty-three hundred years ago. This jaunt will produce another book.

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### EDITORIAL, CIRCULATION & ADVERTISING OFFICES:

181 University Avenue, Toronto 2, Canada.

### MACLEAN-HUNTER PUBLISHING COMPANY LIMITED

Founded in 1907 by John Bayne Maclean

HORACE H. HUNTER, President of the Board

FLOYD R. CHAMBERLAIN, President

DONALD F. HUNTER, Managing Director

THOMAS H. HOWSE, Vice-President and Treasurer

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS, 270 Spadina Avenue, Toronto 2, Canada

PRINTED IN BRITAIN: Maclean-Hunter Limited, Wellington House, 125 Strand, London, W.C.2

Single copies 15c. Subscription prices: In Canada, 1 year \$2.00, 2 years \$3.50, 3 years \$5.00. Outside Canada, 1 year \$2.50, 2 years \$4.00, 3 years \$5.50.

Published as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.

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S SUBJECT: CENTAUR



Illustrated by Harold Town



**WIDE WORLD TRADING CORPORATION**

422 Salway Place, Montreal, 3, P.Q. Telephone: NE. 1-76652

August 7, 1950.

Professor Werner Albrucht,  
Department of Anthropology,  
University of Toronto,  
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Ned:

In this morning's mail is a quite remarkable letter from George Sampson, our buyer in the Eastern Mediterranean area. Sampson is one of our best men. He has been with us for almost twenty years, and I might say that I have always found him truthful and reliable. This is, as you will understand, a necessary prelude to his report, which I thought might interest you.

Sampson explains that he has met a centaur. He has been traveling in Thessaly and stayed one evening a few weeks ago in the small village of Arion. They were having one of their summer festivals and Sampson, who always takes a keen interest in local customs, joined in. Late that night he went with a new-found friend to view some ruins that constitute the main pride of Arion, and he says that it was here he met the animal. I think it best to quote from his letter:

Soriopolus had wandered off somewhere. I was standing looking at the low mound of the ruins when I heard someone speaking to me. I thought for a moment it was Soriopolus, but when I turned I saw a horse standing a few feet from me. That is, John, I thought I saw a horse -- but when he came closer, I realized he was half horse, half man -- a centaur! And speaking to me! Somehow it seemed quite in keeping with the place and we chatted for a few minutes. He was explaining some of the history of the temple when we heard Soriopolus returning. The centaur excused himself and galloped away, saying it was best not to upset the villagers.

The next morning I found it difficult to credit what I had seen. I stayed an extra day, kept away from wine, and returned to the temple in the evening. I met him again and we had a lovely time together... His name is Cliones...

Sampson says he has kept the whole affair quiet because he's sure no one will believe him, and also because the

Continued on page 48

A Maclean's Short Story by John Gray

## Subject: Centaur

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

animal asked him to. And that, Ned, is all I know about it.

Ruth and I expect to be in Toronto within the next few weeks and are looking forward to seeing you again.

Sincerely,  
John.

484 Argyle Terrace,  
Toronto.  
Aug. 14, 1950.

Mr. John Hayward,  
President,  
Wideworld Trading Corp.,  
422 Solway Place,  
Montreal, P.Q.

Dear John:

Thank you for the interesting report re the centaur. But I think we would both admit that while it makes a lovely after-dinner story, taken seriously it's that sort of thing that leads you to the mental institutions.

The last time centaurs were reported (to the best of my knowledge) was in the year 736 AD in the small village of Brunchi, in the Roman province of Uferan. The report was discredited. Evidence produced made it clear that the story originated with an old man addicted to both alcoholic beverages and tall tales. Without wishing to seem unkind I think you might seriously consider bringing Sampson home for a year's rest.

My regards to you both,

Ned.

Leeds Hotel,  
Istanbul, Turkey.  
Aug. 14, 1950.

Prof. Werner Albrucht,  
University of Toronto,  
Toronto, Canada.

Dear Prof. Albrucht:

A letter from John Hayward today explains that he mentioned the centaur to you, and suggests I send along pictures. The pictures are not ready yet, but I will forward them in a few days. You will appreciate that I have gone to some pains to keep the matter quiet—mainly for Clomes' sake. He is really quite a remarkable creature. I was back to visit him last week and discovered for the first time that he speaks quite tolerable English. Once you have conquered the slightly unreal feeling he gives you you find him an excellent companion—one of the best I have met in these parts.

I feel confident that I can trust your discretion.

Yours truly,  
George Sampson.

Department of Anthropology,  
University of Toronto.  
Aug. 21, 1950.

Mr. George Sampson,  
c/o Leeds Hotel,  
Istanbul, Turkey.

Dear Mr. Sampson:

I can quite appreciate your concern lest news of your recent discovery leak out. I can assure you I will not make it public.

I suggested to John Hayward that you take what seems a much-needed rest. Might I take the liberty of passing it along as a personal suggestion?

Yours very sincerely,  
Werner Albrucht.

TORONTO AUG 21/50  
PAUL PAXTOS  
UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS  
ATHENS GREECE

PLEASE CHECK RUMOR CENTAUR  
REPEAT CENTAUR SEEN NEAR ARIEN  
TEMPLE RUINS REGARDS NED

Arien, Greece  
Aug. 25, 1950.

Dear Ned:

When I received your cable last week I suddenly felt as if we were right back to Potosy and the Minotaur rumor. I thought of him that day in London: "Gentlemen—who are ye to say that such things cannot be. If you have the courage of your conviction then track it down, track it down!" So we did. The long wild goose chase. I guess we were pretty green, but Potosy did make you believe it could happen. Those were the thoughts on my mind, that wild summer in 1923, as I came up here. I am working on the Sorenson Marbles.

When I arrived in Arien I looked up old Alex Soriopulos, who is the authority on local antiquities, and told him I had heard he was keeping a centaur out in the old temple ruins. Ned, I wish you could have seen his face! He was very upset.

"I would rather not talk of it," he said. "I think perhaps you have been hearing of things that are not of our concern."

That's when I began to suspect there might be something in your rumor, fantastic as it seemed. When Alex found the Arien Blackfigure vase he acted much the same way—as if we soiled the ancient glories whom we probed too deep. I pressed the matter. The man trouble with Alex is that he remains as corruptible as ever. A little silver and he told me the whole story.

Clomes (that is the centaur's name) first appeared on the scene about three years ago. He refuses—I have asked him several times—to tell where he comes from, what he is doing here, how old he is, anything. He avoids the village and the inhabitants, but maintains a lively contact with the world through Alex. He seems to have plenty of money, most of it in contemporary currencies. His education is amazing. Nine languages, Ned, and he is currently learning Russian! His cellar is the best I have met in Greece ever, and his library a gold mine.

On the way up I tried to conjure up a picture of what such a creature might look like. He is magnificent. His hair and tail a light straw blond, with a tinge of pink. He has a great torso, of which he is rather vain, and a profile so classically perfect that I found it hard to believe it not a dream. He is charming, and playful. One of his favorite early morning habits is going quietly into town and singing love songs outside Alex's window.

He has tried to swear me to secrecy regarding his existence but I have explained that the news is out and it will probably be impossible to keep it quiet. My suggestion would be that you get on a plane and get over here before the hordes. I have told him of you, and he is anxious to meet you.

I return to Athens tomorrow and will expect to hear from you.

As ever,  
Paul.

Department of Anthropology,  
Aug. 30.

Dr. Gerald Green,  
President,  
University of Toronto.

Dear Dr. Green:

I have hesitated until now to bring to your attention a remarkable discovery that has been made in my field.

About three weeks ago I first received word of the existence of a centaur in Greece. Since that time I have

been able to substantiate the original rumor through the kind office of Professor Paul Paxtos, a colleague at the University of Athens.

While I appreciate the difficulties involved in my leaving at the present time, I would like to request a leave of absence for an indefinite period so that I may personally investigate the matter.

Sincerely,  
Werner Albrucht.

Aug. 31.

My Dear Professor Albrucht:

I find the centaur story difficult to credit. Indeed, I must be frank and tell you that I do not believe such a creature could possibly exist. If, however, you feel the rumor worth further investigation by all means pursue it.

Forcut!

Sincerely,  
Gerald Green, President.

484 Argyle Terrace,  
Aug. 31, 1950.

Dear Paul:

As soon as I can make the necessary arrangements I will leave for Greece, to see with my own eyes what my reason tells me is impossible. In these past few days I have wondered and wondered whether such a thing could really be true, or whether in the final analysis it wouldn't be like most of our illusions—so real they feel like the taste in your mouth when you wake up in the morning, the drops of the party the night before.

Potsy would be pleased. I am glad now he taught us well.

Sincerely,  
Ned.

Argyle,  
Thursday.

Dear Peter:

Events have moved so quickly that I have had no opportunity to write. I am sitting in the study wondering if I can reasonably ask you to cut short the vacation you have planned for so long and return here to help me with a new project. I am enclosing several letters which should explain it. Fly to Greece on Sunday. Please come if you can.

Love,  
Father.

Arien, Greece,  
Sept. 6, 1950.

Dear Peter:

I have met him!  
Last night, just after midnight, we went out to the temple, and with Professor Paxtos and the man Soriopolus I met Clones. There is no way to describe my feelings—it was as if we had been suddenly wafled back three thousand years, back to a time of traditions and the multiple realities of a pagan world. I felt somehow that here was a creature man had created himself come dramatically to life for we who have so little faith. Even now I find it hard to believe—I expect that when I go back he will have gone, or that he will never have gone, or that he will never have been at all.

I find him a modern centaur (I was going to say man). He knows a great deal about the world as it is, and we talked for a long time of the things that trouble us so much. Several times I had the feeling that he knew much more than he would speak of, that his experience was broader than his ever indicates.

Most importantly though—he asked if he might visit us. As you know I wanted to invite him to come back with me, but I hardly dared bring the subject up at our first meeting. We were talking about what people would

think of him, and say about him, and he suggested he come to Canada. Is there any reply yet from the Minister? We must make sure he gets a royal welcome.

Above all, be discreet. The news will break soon enough. We must at all costs avoid turning Clones into a circus attraction.

Love,  
Father.

Argyle,  
Sept. 7.

Dear Father:

I had hoped for some word from you by today. There is none. I thought you should know however that it is not going to be so easy as we imagined.

I was in Ottawa yesterday and had an interview with the Minister. He treated the whole thing as a joke, and almost threw me out of the office. I sent him the documentation today (I stupidly left it here) and I hope that will do some good.

Dr. Green phoned today and asked if anything had happened. I told him you hadn't yet sent word. Apparently after seeing the letters and photographs his attitude has changed. The publicity department of the university stands ready to give you all the help you want when you decide to release the story—which leads me to suspect they see a good thing in it after all.

It may be necessary for you to return to work out the immigration details . . . I will write again.

Love,  
Peter.

Department of Anthropology,  
University of Toronto.  
Sept. 13, 1950.

Mr. Charles T. Biggle,  
Minister,  
Department of Citizenship and  
Immigration,  
Ottawa.

Dear Sir:

I have today returned from Greece where I have personally verified the existence of a centaur, named Clones. I was disturbed on my arrival to learn that you have to date done nothing following the request of my son for temporary visa papers for the admission of Clones to Canada.

As you know, I have undertaken to sponsor Clones while he is here. I fail to understand your adamant refusal to take the matter seriously. I would ask you to review the case at your earliest convenience in order that we may take the necessary steps to bring Clones here by the end of the month.

Yours truly,  
Werner Albrucht,  
Professor of Anthropology.

Department of Agriculture,  
Ottawa,  
Sept. 17, 1950.

Professor Werner Albrucht,  
Department of Archaeology,  
University of Toronto,  
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Sir:

The Minister has asked me to write you concerning your recent request for the admittance of one Clones, a "Greek citizen." The case has been referred to us by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

Inasmuch as "Clones" does not fit under any of the existing classifications of livestock, we regret that we are unable to be of assistance to you.

Yours truly,  
George Leclerc,  
Secretary to the Minister.

Department of External Affairs,  
Ottawa.  
Sept. 17, 1950.

Professor Werner Albrucht,  
University of Toronto,  
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Professor Albrucht:

Our attention has been drawn to recent investigations you have made regarding the discovery of a centaur in Greece.

We are also informed that you have made tentative plans to bring the creature to this country at an early date. We would like to point out that certain complications make this a difficult plan as far as we are concerned. As you are no doubt aware, international difficulties in the eastern Mediterranean area make it essential that no untoward incidents occur between ourselves and countries of that area which might in any way strain the present delicate relationships. The Minister has already discussed informally with the Greek Minister to Canada some of the problems the centaur poses, and while they are agreed that a courtesy visit would be of benefit and value to both countries, further discussions must take place before concrete arrangements can be made.

Could you be in Ottawa on the 20th, to go into the matter more fully?

Yours very sincerely,  
John Johns,  
Under Secretary.

Angèle  
Sept. 18.

Dear Peter:

I trust you have arrived in Arien and have met Cliones by now. Please convey to him my very best wishes.

I am delayed by officialdom. Immigration says it can do nothing. Agriculture hasn't the proper classification. External Affairs are worried about the world situation and want to discuss the matter more fully (I go there the day after tomorrow).

Meanwhile, today, a reporter phoned and said he had heard about my recent trip to Greece and would I care to make a statement. I told him I had merely gone to look at some marbles, and described some of them to him in detail. He eventually rang off, and I think I put him off the scent. I have written the shipping people and hope for some reply today or tomorrow.

How will Cliones react to all this? I am beginning to worry that we have made a grave error. We could have talked quietly by the temple and that perhaps would have been enough. Please write fully.

Love,  
Father.

45 Place du Gare,  
Montreal, P.Q.  
Sept. 19, 1950.

Professor W. Albrucht,  
University of Toronto,  
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Sir:

Your recent request for passage for one "Cliones" creates a problem.

First class is definitely out of the question. You must remember, sir, that we have many passengers to take care of and that we cannot subject them to freaks of one kind and another. It is possible that hold space could be obtained for the creature, provided he is supplied with his own keeper, and properly provisioned by you.

We will inform you further on this point when we have made further enquiries.

Yours sincerely,  
J. R. Longmore,  
Star Lines.

Argyle,  
Sept. 24.

Dear Peter:

Things are in such an uproar. The news broke three days ago and since then the bedlam has been almost unendurable. The reporter I mentioned in my last letter—a John Cunningham—apparently wasn't the least thrown off the scent by my marbles—for it was he who got the first "accop." The University is very upset for they wanted to do it properly. Since then I have been swamped with letters, with telegrams, cables and people. A man wants to run Clones in the King's Plate. And an advertising agency forced their way in here this morning and presented a plan to use him as the central theme for a new stunt which would go: "Clones Says: 'My Horse Sense Tells Me That . . .'" Someone else wants him to model, and another thinks he would be wonderful on the stage.

A couple of hours ago the people from the Society for The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals were in. They wanted to know what kind of accommodation has been made for him, what he will do, who is his handler, and so many details. They are very kind—but they simply don't understand. The reporters haunt me. Down at the University things are in a state too. In an attempt to make up for lost ground, Dr. Green got on to the CBC last night and gave a talk on the significance of the appearance of such an animal as Clones at this time. He called him a "symbol of a return to the humanities, a forging of the great strength of tradition with the developed intellect of modern man . . ." !!! Gower, Shultz and McBean have been a great help, and very understanding, and fortunately my work in the Department hasn't quite come to a standstill.

You were wise to anticipate the flood, and get Clones away from Arden. With the exception of yourself and Paul Paxtos, no one, including myself, now knows where he is. That is best. I have written the shipping company and told them we won't need their boat—the airlines are taking care of us. They will have already gotten in touch with you through Paul. Until something happens in Ottawa we can do nothing—I will let you know when we can go ahead.

I am so tired—and so unsure of what we have done.

Love,  
Father.

**FROM THE MONTREAL  
GAZETTE**

Ottawa, September 24 — The case of the centaur, Clones, was the occasion of a sharp exchange in parliament yesterday afternoon.

Several questions concerning the centaur, who has aroused world-wide interest, were asked of various Ministers during the question period. Mr. Aldwinckle, the Minister of Agriculture, in reply to a question from Mr. Perry (CCF, Messable Up), stated that there was no question of opening a new classification to allow Clones into the country. Mr. Biggie, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, answering a query from Mr. MacDougall (P.C. West Centre), said that the current quota arrangement could hardly be enlarged to take care of a creature "that is neither man nor beast. . . . We must be careful to watch our precedents lest we put the whole immigration scheme completely out of kilter."

Hansard continues:

Mr. Macdougall: Is there no way in which we can grant Clones admittance?

Hon. Mr. Biggie: Under the present regulations, no. Mr. Macdougall: My constituents have taken a great interest in this creature and on their behalf I would like to ask the government to look into its antiquated immigration machinery and find the inevitable loophole which will allow him entrance.

Some Members: Hear, hear. Hon. Mr. Biggie: Would the member from West Centre care to suggest some way in which the laws of the country can be stretched to admit an animal which simply does not exist?

Mr. Macdougall: Surely the Government, or at least the Cabinet, could once again take into itself some of those functions ordinarily ascribed to the Privy, and we could have an Order-in-Council.

Some Members: Laughter. Mr. Speaker: Order. Later in the question period the Minister of External Affairs, Mr. Warner, explained to the House that his Department has had the matter under consideration and expected to be able to announce some action within a few days . . .

Department of Anthropology,  
University of Toronto,  
Sept. 25, 1950.

Hon. Mr. H. H. Warner,  
Minister,  
Department of External Affairs,  
Ottawa.

Dear Mr. Warner:

The recent conversations we have had and the information you gave the House yesterday prompt me to hope that an early decision will be forthcoming which will allow us to proceed with our plan to bring Clones to Canada. I have had word from my son (today) saying that Clones is very much disturbed at the commotion he has caused, particularly in this country.

The same letter also informs me that Clones has received several invitations from the Russian government asking him to visit them, preferably at once.

May I expect your early reply.

Yours very sincerely,  
Werner Albrucht.

OTTAWA SEPT 27

PROF WERNER ALBRUCHT  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
PAPERS DISPATCHED BY COURIER  
THIS MORNING TO CANADIAN EM-  
BASSY ATHENS ALLOWING  
CLONES, GREEK CITIZEN, TEMPORARY  
ASYLUM IN CANADA STOP IN  
REFERENCE TO IMMIGRATION REG-  
ULATIONS CLONES MUST HAVE  
VACCINATION SMALLPOX BEFORE  
ADMITTANCE AT GANDER STOP MAY  
WE ASSURE YOU OF OUR CONTIN-  
UED CO-OPERATION. H. H. WARNER,  
MINISTER DEPARTMENT OF EXTER-  
NAL AFFAIRS.

FROM THE MONTREAL  
HERALD, OCT. 16, 1950:

Clones is dead.  
The handsome, strange animal who arrived in Montreal only last night was crumpled to death in a sea of people who surged forward to greet him when he appeared unexpectedly at the service entrance of the Mount Royal Hotel shortly after midnight last night. Also trampled to death in the crush were Marcelle Labelle, 7842 St. Sauveur Ave., and Mr. Jans Suithe, 72, of Cornwall, Ont.

In spite of the fact that extra police were assigned to handle the unprecedented crowds who turned out to welcome the highly publicized Clones, nothing could be done

to handle the sudden surge that greeted his unexpected appearance. When he was finally extricated from the mob of people the centaur was rushed to Royal Victoria Hospital, but was pronounced dead on arrival. Coroner Dr. Henri Meviers said an inquest will be held . . .

Arvyle,  
Oct. 24

Dear Paul:

For a week now I have been trying to sit down and write to you, to try to explain what happened. I can not— for in truth I am not sure. He was with us in the suite, and then suddenly he was gone. It was so strange, for he had only a half an hour before assured me and reassured me with his confidence and his good humor . . . It seemed to go so well.

I was thinking this afternoon of that first evening in Arien when you took me out to the temple and I met him. We talked for a long time while you and Soriopolus went off. It is curious that the conversation should remain so clearly in my mind.

We talked of many things, until finally I felt free to question him about himself. He would say nothing of his immediate background. But he did talk of what people would think of him if he went out into the world.

"For you," he said, "I am hardly real. I am something someone thought up a long time ago that really shouldn't be here. I am a dream that suddenly solidified. Because I'm partly human I will draw the interested stares and the curiosity of those who are wholly human. None of the other animals will have much to do with me. And if I do, as you suggest, appear in the world, people will be partly afraid, partly curious, partly bored, and if I understand the twentieth century in North America properly, they will clip bits off my tail, and want to touch me to reassure themselves that their imaginations have not run riot.

"Yet in the end I will have no meaning for them . . . I will only be a freak, a passing diversion, and after that quite dull. It is very hard on my vanity."

We talked a great deal that evening. In the end, just before you returned, we came back to the projected visit. Clones said:

"Are you quite sure you want me to come? Are you quite sure that if I come I will not destroy what we have found so valuable here tonight, the fusion of the real and the unreal, the dream and the dreamer, the what we are, and what we think we are . . . Perhaps it would be better if I didn't come."

Paul, I don't know. I thought it a good idea. People would have loved him as we loved him, if only they had the chance. But by bringing him out into the open we killed him. Perhaps old Patsy was right—perhaps there are things we think we understand that are far beyond us. I wonder now whether he would have been pleased with us—we chased the rumor—and killed it.

I am so very tired . . .

As ever,  
Ned. ★