

REX DOLPHIN

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28 May 1960

Eric Fayne, Esq.,
Excelsior House,
Grove Road,
Surbiton,
Surrey.

Dear Mr. Fayne,

Many thanks for your kind letter regretting the omission of my name from the CDWW. I was about to write you, but you beat me to it!

As they say, these things happen in the best regulated businesses.

I am grateful for your kind comment on my last Blake novel, and pleased to see that I have managed to satisfy one of the "old school." You probably know that I am also an admirer of the earlier Blake myself, and I do in fact try to steer a middle course in my stories. I didn't enter into the recent (or current?) Thomas v. CD controversy because I can see both sides....

Writing Blake is, believe me, much harder than writing a straight detective novel or thriller. Quite apart from the fact that you are obliged to use set characters and so on, you don't know what audience you are aiming at. Even Howard Baker doesn't know! The great majority of readers are quite inarticulate, as you can see by the fact that the same names recur in the Mailbag. It is not enough to assume, for instance, that any fast tough novel in the modern idiom will do. I am working on a story now, and Howard Baker told me to change the presentation as it was "too slick"! As a matter of fact, I believe we are gradually creeping back to a more conventional type of story....

Yes, I too hope to see you one day. My wife and I are spending a whole week in London in mid-July and shall probably give you a ring then with a view to calling on you.

Meanwhile, all the best, both for yourself and the C.D.

Yours sincerely,

Rex Dolphin