



EDITORIAL ADDRESS:- 'At the Sign of the Black Cat', 27 Woodland Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, England.

AN OCCASIONAL MISCELLANY FOR FANTASY FANS. ISSUED IRREGULARLY. ISSUED FREE TO THOSE FANS I LIKE--THOSE I DON'T LIKE, CAN'T EVEN BUY IT!--SO THERE!! .....

EDITORIAL TIME IS STRICTLY LIMITED SO THIS FIRST PAGE IS BEING TYPED SOON AFTER THE LAST ISSUE. HENCE EDITORIAL COMMENTS WILL APPEAR LATER IN THE 'ZINE. IT ALL MAKES FOR VARIETY. SO HERE COMMENCES PART ONE OF

# CENTURY'S END.

BY CEDRIC WALKER.

The hill was steep, and, by the time they reached the top the old man was panting, and even the boy showed signs that the climb had not been too easy for one with so youthful a constitution. "Why do I always allow you to drag me up here", grumbled the old man, "Every Sunday it is the same. I wonder you don't get tired of it. Ah well, I suppose boys....." and he went on mumbling to himself. But the boy was not listening. He was gazing with shining eyes down into the valley and across the broad plain which swept away into the distance until it merged and was lost in the purple haze of the distant hills. "Look! There's one taking off now!" he shouted excitedly, and pointed down into the valley.

His companion smiled at the eager tone of the boy's voice, but obediently followed the direction of the finger. It was quite an impressive sight. A huge grey artificial oval, like an oasis in the green expanse of land around it, and glittering in the late afternoon sunlight, dozens of silvery cigar-shaped objects lying upon it like fish basking in the sunlight on the surface of their pool, and scurrying about them, little ant-like figures. As they watched, one of the silvery objects left the ground and rose into the air at a steep angle. In a second it was gone. A faint hum drifted to the ears of the watchers, then it died, and there was silence again except for the singing of a bird somewhere down the hillside.

"Gosh," said the boy (for that expression was still in use even in the year 2,000) "One of these days I'll be the pilot of a spaceship like that, and then I'll be able to go to Mars and the Moon just like they do and---oh, I wish I could hurry up and be grown-up!"

The old man chuckled and patted the boy fondly on the head. "Patience, my son. Your time will come." He fell to thinking of the time long ago when he had watched aeroplanes roaring off into the sky and longed in the same way as the boy did now for the time

CENTURY'S END by C.Walker(continued)

time when he too would be able to pilot those wonderful machines and know the glory of the heavens. How long would it be now? Lord! it must be almost sixty years ago. How time flew past one!

He must have murmured some of his words aloud, unknowingly, because the boy turned quickly to him. "Tell me about the aeroplanes, granpa. Mummy says they were noisy and dangerous. Were they dangerous?"

The old man sighed. He had told the boy many times already, but the youngster never seemed to tire of hearing about the old days, and, if it came to that he had to admit that it did give him a certain amount of pleasure recalling those old days. He would have preferred a less youthful listener although he knew he would have found difficulty in obtaining one as sympathetic.

"They were certainly noisy," he said, "but I do not believe that they were any more dangerous than these spaceships of yours."

They paused to watch a second ship take off two minutes precisely after the other as they always were. "Except during wartime of course. And then they were indeed the most fearsome of weapons. But not so much for the person who flew them as for the unfortunate people who chanced to be underneath when he dropped his bombs. When I say bombs I do not mean the atomic-bombs they use for clearing the jungles of Venus and levelling the moon mountains; I speak of the old-fashioned bombs made of gunpowder and sheathed in steel which were dropped upon cities in order to kill people by the force of their blast and also by the lumps of metal which were flung around. But in themselves aeroplanes were harmless."

The boy shuddered. "How beastly they must have been to each other. Oh, how glad I am that I was not born in those days! Why did people do those silly things? I mean dropping those bombs on each other. It must have been a frightful mess."

The old man's face creased into a smile, which, even at this distant time, held a touch of bitterness, and when he spoke, the words seemed as if they were coming to him across an infinity of time. "So many people have asked those same questions with that same note of bewilderment, and have received the same answer that I give you now, and that is nothing because even now I do not know, as I did not then."

The boy shook his head in wonderment. It was manifest that the thing was beyond him. With his brow knitted into a frown, he turned to survey the distant oval again. The old man drifted into his former reverie, only to be brought back to earth by an urgent tugging at his sleeve.

"Mummy says the Martians are being very troublesome recently," said the boy, "do you think that perhaps..." he paused and looked rather timidly at the other... "do you think that they might fight us?"

The old man stared at him in amazement, then burst into a hearty cackle. "Bless the boy! Who put that silly idea into your head? The idea...no, of course there won't be a war. The very idea!... another war!..." and he went on muttering to himself and shaking his head and smiling at such a ridiculous idea. Why, hadn't they fought the last war way back in the nineteen forties, finishing it off with the atomic bomb? Another war? Huh!

The old man signalled an air-taxi, which came up with a rush, landing as lightly as a feather. They reached the city just as the sun was sending its last warm rays over the glittering roof-tops, making the metropolis a shining glory of soft-hued colour. They clambered onto the roof, the old man a little stiffly, and went into the evening-room. The usually vibrant voice of the televox announcer was curiously-subdued. "...and now here is the president..."

The announcer faded and was replaced by the familiar worn face of the World President. He looked unusually grave and tired.

The fatal words filtered into the old man's brain, and for a few moments his whole being was numbed and unfeeling. Then he was aware that the President was still speaking:-

"...therefore I have no alternative but to declare that a state of war now exists between the United Nations of Earth and the people of Mars.....we shall, of course, pursue to the bitter end..."

..... and of part one of our first serial.....  
We need a second installment. This is intended to be a joint effort,

and we want a volunteer to write the next part. You've got a good start. You can bring in other characters if you like--you'll probably have to anyway--it's all yours! Will intending second parters please let the editor know. We don't want half a dozen second parts, so if a number of you want to have a go, we'll allocate one the second part, another the third..and so on....please keep your parts to roughly the same length as Cedric's first part. Come on, don't be shy!--let's shew the amerifans that we can do these things! Let's hear from YOU!

.....CORRIGENDA.....

For the benefit of critics, the date on the drum in the heading should be 1949, as should the date at the head of page 2. Why the heck should I correct them--it'll give you a chance to think how clever you are spotting an editorial error! YAH!.....

.....BRITISH ARGOSY.....

This magazine has been quiet of late in the fantasy line--nowt in the Sept or Oct issues, but the November issue comes up with two light fantasy items--'The Passionate Cow'-by Clive Burnley, and A G Morris's Tuttle Fields.

.....CORNER FOR WEIRD LOVERS(Harold Loney and others)

"Patience, good lady, wizards know their times:  
Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night,  
The time of night when Troy was set on fire;  
The time when screech owls cry, and Ban-dogs howl,  
And spirits walk, and ghosts break up their graves,--"  
(Henry VI, part II, Act I, Scene IV)

I am indebted to Raymond R F Bailey for this item; anyone else care to dig out something suitable for those gruesome-minded fans?

.....MYSTERY WINGLESS PLANE SPOUTING FLAMES SIGHTED BY PILOTS!

Zeda P Mishner send the following clipping from the Pittsburgh Sunday SUN-TELEGRAPH:-

ATLANTA, July 24....(AP)...Two Eastern Air Line pilots said they met a wingless two-deck plane early today southwest of Montgomery, Ala. They said the strange ship, shooting red flames and with a blue glow underneath the fuselage, passed the EAL ship at 5,000 feet, headed toward New Orleans.

The pilots said the stranger looked like a 'Buck Rogers Rocket Ship'.

The two-pilots--Capt. S.S. Childs, and co-pilot J.B. Whitted--were flying the Houston-to-Atlanta-to-Boston run. This morning at 4.45 a.m. 20 miles southwest of Montgomery they sighted the strange ship. After reaching Atlanta the two pilots told of their strange experience. Childs said that they first sighted the object up ahead when nearing Montgomery. He declared:-

"It was almost in line with our flight. We veered off to the left and this object turned to its left. When it came nearer to us, its fuselage appeared to be about 100 feet in length and about four times the circumference of a B-29 fuselage.

"It had two rows of windows, an upper and a lower. They were square. Out of the rear of the ship red flames were shooting 25-50 feet. There was a blue glow underneath the fuselage. The ship appeared to be doing between 500 and 700 miles an hour.

"When it got alongside of us it pulled up with a tremendous burst of flame out of the rear. The flames were so bright they blinded us. Then the ship disappeared into the broken clouds. The ship had no windows. It was fully lighted inside. We saw no occupants."

Of the 20 passengers on board, Childs said only one was awake and saw the ship.

At Montgomery, Maxwell and Donnelly Army Fields said they knew nothing about the report.

Air Force officials in Washington said they could not shed any light on the mysterious craft.

The Civil Aeronautics Administration at New Orleans said it had no report on the craft.

...Thanks Zeda, for an interesting clipping. Looks as tho' there really are more things in Heaven and Earth than we know! It sounds a bit more reasonable than those flying saucers reports! We're always pleased to consider off-trail clippings, so if you come across any, bung 'em in. Only space restrictions will keep them out!

COMPETITIONS! It seems that on the whole you yagvis don't like competitions. So we won't have one this time. But we will have a small prize for the item considered to be the best in the 'zine. When you're writing to me about this issue, please say which is the best in your opinion; don't include anything by the editor, for he's sure his stuff would get the first vote if included and that would be unfair! The item that gets the most votes will get a prize for its writer. The prize will be something between a copy of 'Comic Cuts' and a book reprinting all SF stories that have ever appeared in magazines. Should there be a draw, I'll tear the book in half, sending one to each winner; they can then swop when they've read their bit!

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INDEX ITEMS!

For a change let's have a list of the items that have appeared in the Avon Fantasy Reader--always full of good old 'uns.

No. 1. 'The Power Planet'-Murray Leinster; 'The Shattered House' by August Derleth; 'The Voice in the Night' by William Hope Hodgson; 'The Woman of the Wood' by A Merritt; 'The Truth about Pyecraft' by H.G. Wells; 'The Vaults of Yoh-vombis' by Clark Ashton Smith; 'The Central Figure' by H Russell Wakefield; and 'The Three Infernal Jokes' by Lord Dunsany.

No. 2! 'Stenographer's Hands' by David H. Keller; 'The Strange Case of Lemuel Jenkins' by Phillip M Fisher; 'The Day of the Dragon' by Guy Endore; 'The Mirrors of Tuzun Thune' by Robert E Howard; 'The Yellow Sign' by Robert W. Chambers; 'Automata' by S. Fowler Wright; 'The City of the Living Dead' by Laurence Manning and Fletcher Pratt.

No. 3. 'Rhythm of the Spheres' by Merritt; 'The Silent Trees' by Frank Owen; 'The Queer Story of Brownlow's Newspaper' by Wells; 'The Silver Key' by Lovecraft; 'Black Thirst' by C.L. Moore; 'Mimic' by Donald A. Wollheim; 'Bishop's Gambit' by Stephen Grendon; 'Evening Primrose' by John Collier; and 'Homecoming' by Ray Bradbury.

No. 4. 'The Arrhenius Horror' by P. Schuyler Miller; 'The Hollow Man' by Thomas Burke; 'Conqueror's Isle' by Nelson Bond; 'The Hoard of the Gibbelins' by Dunsany; 'The Derelict' by Hodgson; 'The Man Upstairs' by Bradbury; 'The Planet of the Dead' by G.A. Smith; 'A Warning to the Curious' by M.R. James; and 'Defense' by A.E. van Vogt.

No. 5. 'Scarlet Dream' by Moore; 'Sambo' by William Fryer Harvey; 'Fane of the Black Pharaoh' by Robert Bloch; 'The Random Quantity' by Carl Jacobi; 'The Gold Dress' by Stephen Vincent Benet; 'The Miracle of the Lily' by Clare Winger Harris; 'In the Court of the Dragon' by Chambers; 'A Study in Amber' by Owen; 'The Words of Guru' by C.M. Kornbluth.

No. 6. 'The Crawling Horror' by Thorp McClusky; 'Beyond the Wall of Sleep' by Lovecraft; 'The Metal Man' by Jack Williamson; 'The Thing in the Cellar' by Keller; 'The Drone' by Merritt; 'From the Dark Waters' by Joseph E Kelleam; 'The Star-stealers' by Edmond Hamilton; 'The Philosophy of Relative Existences' by Frank R. Stockton; and 'The Trap' by Henry S. Whitehead.

No. 7. --will be listed when it appears. At the second time of mention of an author in the above listing, his initials have been omitted. (special reasons).

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PSEUDONYMS; A short list of pen-names might be of help to the reader. George O. Smith and Wesley Long. John W. Campbell Jr and Don. A. Stuart. A. Bertram Chandler and George Whitley. Murray Leinster and Will. F. Jenkins. Raymond A. Palmer and A. R. Steber; Henry Kuttner, and Lewis Padgett, Paul Edmonds, Lawrence O'Donnell, Keith Hammond, Will Garth, Hudson Hastings, ... old Uncle Tom Cobley and all. .... Weaver Wright is Alden Lorraine, who is, I am informed, Dorrest J. Ackerman (4Sj) ..... anyone got any more for inclusion under this heading next time? --bung 'em along!

DUPLICATION. I don't want to start anything big in the few lines left, so perhaps you might be interested in some duplication of titles of stories thrown up by the card index. BOOLERRANG is by H. Walton (ASFRE 10/44) GWhitley (FFM 8/47) E. Tinde (ASFUS 11/47) & O. Cook (Switch on the Light). Technical Error was by A C Clarke (Fantasy 12/46) and Hal Clement (ASFRE 12/44) Spce gone!