

# ALEXIAD

(ΑΛΕΞΙΑΣ)

\$2.00

There is a new ordinance in Louisville today. It forbids the sale of dogs and cats except directly from the breeders of these animals. I thought over this because I am a firm believer in free markets but did this time come down on the government side. I believe that the puppies and kittens from most pet stores are products of puppy and kitten mills. I find it hard to support the abuse of any animals. Moreover, these animals are often not healthy. Selling unhealthy animals for the prices pet stores charge is fraud. One client claimed to have paid close to three thousand dollars for an animal which ended up running up a huge vet bill. I have always felt it is much better to get an animal from a shelter. Rescues have a much lower price tag initially and I would trust a local shelter's documentation on its animals a lot farther than that of a pet store, unless the pet store animals were shelter animals such as those from Feeder's Supply here in Louisville.

— Lisa

Triple Crown) was **June 30, 2023** at Yonkers Raceway in Yonkers, New York. Up Your Deo won.  
 The 98th Running of the Hambletonian (2nd leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) was **August 5, 2023** at Meadowlands Racetrack in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Tactical Approach won.  
 The 131st Running of the Kentucky Futurity (3rd leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) was **October 8, 2023** at the Red Mile in Lexington, Kentucky. Tactical Approach was boxed in at the beginning but broke clear to win.  
 The 68th Running of the Messenger Stakes (1st leg of the Pacing Triple Crown) was **June 30, 2023** at Yonkers Raceway in Yonkers, New York. Captain Batboy won.  
 The 67th Running of the Cane Pace (2nd leg of the Pacing Triple Crown) was **August 5, 2021** at Meadowlands Racetrack in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Confederate won.  
 The 78th Running of the Little Brown Jug (3rd leg of the Pacing Triple Crown) was **September 21, 2023** at the Delaware County Fair in Delaware, Ohio. It's My Show won and received the first \$1 million purse in the history of the race.

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## Reviewer's Notes

Robert Sacks was not popular at Worldcon business meetings. Every year he proposed that there be an annual NASFiC and every year he lost.

Now Robert's idea is being revived. Five out of ten Worldcons were held outside the North American continent. But, as seems to be the case with many such fans, the concept will not be submitted to the Worldcon business meeting.

A group of people issued a request that the Worldcon control board disallow the Jeddicon bid, for Saudi Arabia. There is no such organization. (The Jeddicon bid moved its venue to Cairo and became PharaohCon, only to be canceled.)

There has been a fondness for exotic Worldcon venues. It began with the Bermuda Triangle Bid for 1988, which would have been on the S.S. *Norway*. The thought of a week where no one could leave before it was over does not seem very appealing. It was a hoax bid, but became very popular for some reason.

Now we have Chengdu, Jeddicon/Pharaohcon, Kampala, and Tel Aviv, not to mention the Puerto Rico NASFiC. Were there, are there enough people experienced in conrunning at those venues to run a Worldcon?

The sadly missed Knarley Welch had wanted to have a professionally run Worldcon. This is the trend to another Dragon\*Con. But these cons are getting expensive; this year's NASFiC, Pemmicon, had a budget of over a million dollars.

There may be an end to Worldcon as we knew it.

— Joe

## RANDOM JOTTINGS

by Joe



TRINLAY KHADRO

Buy my books. (All available on Amazon.com for quite reasonable prices, except the Hugo-nominated *Heinlein's Children*, which can be bought from Advent Publishers, or from ReAnimus Press in electronic format.)

<https://www.amazon.com/stores/Joseph-T-Major/author/B01BMC4MU>

<https://www.AdventPub.com/1531>

Advent Publishers  
P.O. Box 16143  
Golden, CO 80402-6003

<https://reanimus.com/store>

— Advt.

The Sir Ernest H. Shackleton Appreciation Society and the [British] National Maritime Museum will hold the Shackleton 150 Convention on May 18-19, 2024, in honour of the Boss's 150th Birthday, February 15th at the National Maritime Museum in London. Ticket price is £250, or £125 for a day ticket. They say, "the intention of the overall Convention is to commemorate the Boss's legacy in all its forms — Heroic Age events (expeditions and personalities), science (then and now) ships (with emphasis on the discovery of *SY Endurance*), politics/geopolitics (then and now), leadership and much more."

I was reading Whittaker Chambers's review of *Atlas Shrugged*, "Big Sister Is Watching You" [*National Review*, December, 28, 1957] and I realized something. *Atlas Shrugged* is a Doc Savage adventure, with John Galt as Doc Savage. They both have a team of brilliantly skilled associates. They both have an exotic and huge source of wealth (Galt has an electric generation system and so never has to pay power bills, and Doc has the gold of Hidalgo).

Just imagine *Doc Savage Magazine* for 1957, featuring "He Would Stop the Motor of the World".

In the newspaper this morning were

accounts from survivors of the World War II carrier *Yorktown*. Very few are left as might be expected from the fact that it has been eighty years. On impulse I did a search for Japanese World War II survivors. There are still a few. I found pictures and stared at these stern, sad old faces. And I thought of Thomas Hardy's poem "The Man He Killed". These were the men my father fought against. Yet looking at them I was struck by their resemblance to my mostly Native American grandfather, and by the sadness in their faces. I could not muster up hatred or dislike for these sad old faces that had witnessed the conquest of their country. They fought for their country as my father had.

— Lisa

## YOU'RE SO VAIN

by Joe

There was an annular eclipse on **October 14, 2023**, visible in Oregon, California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, New Mexico (including Roswell), and Texas. It then passed over Yucatan in Mexico, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, and Brazil. The longest period of annularity was 5 minutes 17 seconds at 11° N 83° 6' W off the coast of Panama. The eclipse is part of Saros 134, which began June 22, 1248 and will end August 6, 2510.

2024 will have two solar eclipses. The first will be a total eclipse on **April 24, 2024**, beginning in the south Pacific Ocean and passing through Sinaloa, Dueango, Coahuila, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland before ending off the coast of Norway. The longest period of totality will be 4 minutes 28 seconds at Nazas, Durango. The eclipse is part of Saros 139, which began May 17, 1501 and will end July 3, 2763.

The second solar eclipse will be an annular eclipse on **October 2, 2024** beginning in the South Pacific and passing over Easter Island (Rapa Nui; Isla de Pascua) and Aysan, Chile and Santa Cruz Province, Argentina. The longest period of annularity will be seven minutes 45 seconds, at 22 degrees South 114 degrees 30 minutes West. The eclipse is part of Saros 144, which began April 11, 1736 and will end May 5, 2980.

NASA Eclipse website:  
<https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse.html>

Other useful eclipse websites:  
<http://www.hermit.org/Eclipse>

<http://www.eclipse.org.uk/>

## DO GOOD WORK

Commentary by Joseph T Major on  
**ROUND THE BEND**  
by "Nevil Shute" [N. S. Norway] (1951)

Aviation had a burst of energy. When Nevil Shute Norway was born (1899) there had been no powered controlled heavier than air flight. When he died (1960) manned space-flight was being developed.

And one of the men who would go into space was addressing the workers who would build the rockets that would launch his fellow astronauts into orbit. But Virgil Ivan "Gus" Grissom was a man of few words. And struggling with the right things to say to the employees of Convair, makers of the Atlas missile, he finally blurted out, "Do good work!"

They took it as their motto, putting up banners all over the facility that said:

## DO GOOD WORK

Unfortunately, not all the contractors took that to heart. North American Aviation, which built the Command Module for Mission AS-4, for example.

Tom Cutter, the narrator of this story, has a career which is so much of the past. He became an aircraft engineer out of curiosity, and through apprenticeship. He also learned to fly.

His private life was less than satisfactory. He got married, but his wife had an affair with a Polish count in the Free Polish army. Only, the man wasn't a count, and Cutter's wife kills herself in shame.

He devotes himself to work then. Being a talented engineer, he establishes a business, and being averse to rationing and austerity, ends up in the Middle East, in a small emirate which is oil-rich. One of his employees is a little different.

Cotton is expanding all over the Middle and Far East. He runs into an old co-worker, Constantine "Connie" Shaklin. Connie was born in Malaya, but to a Russian father and Chinese mother. So he stays outside the reach of British law, not being welcome in the country.

Connie is involved with a gun-runner who is arming Indonesian rebels. This is not a career path conducive to long life. Tom and Connie wind up the problem, and Tom gets the gun-runner's plane.

The details of aviation are complex, and the author spares no effort. The models of aircraft, their flight capability, and the need to find pilots all feature. It's how he makes a living.

Back in the Gulf, Connie goes to work. And then . . . and then he starts addressing impromptu meetings, lecturing on the need to work properly, being attentive to detail, fulfilling the needs of the task, and generally being a good and obedient employee. In long, "Do good work".

More and more people come to hear him.

A lecturer on work procedure might earn a good living, but Connie doesn't take money.

This worries the British political administration. They don't want another Mahdi. After some pressure, Connie is persuaded to leave the country. He settles in a small village in Indonesia. Whereupon people start coming to hear him talk.

For all that his speeches have a religious nature about him, Connie never claims to be a prophet. He does not profess a new religion. (Given what happened to the Bahá'í, that seems to make him acceptable to the Arabs.)

But people go to see him all the same. The acclaim doesn't turn his head.

Finally, a new political officer at the emirate concludes that Shaklin wasn't a threat. And the Emir, who is very ill, resolves to go see Connie. But getting him there requires a great effort, and Tom, for one, worries about him.

The emir arrives with a large entourage, in a special plane built to accommodate him. He has a conversation with Connie, then goes home to die.

His will includes a clause leaving ten percent of his estate to Connie, which is quite a lot. Connie feels he doesn't need it. He uses it to set up schools and medical facilities in the emirate.

Medical. Connie is dying, too. He gets up enough strength to make a tour, then retires to his bed, where people still come and see him. And then he dies.

The new Emir has resolved to have Connie Shanklin's name honored. Cutter is going to be one of the contributors and this is his contribution to the memorial library.

This book works on several levels. It is a thorough picture of aviation in the early mid-century, the time that Norway would remember. "The past is a foreign country, they do things differently there" (L. P. Hartley), and there is much about the apprentice structure (today Cutter would have to have degrees, special training, and licenses). The acquisition, modification, and employment of aircraft is a significant factor, like in *An Old Captivity* (1940) when much of the book deals with the purchase, equipment, and use of the expedition plane (nowadays Connie couldn't salvage and reuse the gun-smuggler's plane without inspections, title searches, licenses, and the like).

It is a picture of a strange prophet, a prophet without a religion, a prophet of "do good work". He is set against the scene of a region having to transit from ancient to modern ways, of having to use the technologies of the West with the understanding of the East. The world was changing, and this fictionalizer was chronicling it in his own way.

### **Superhero Battled Hate**

(2012; National Geographic Society; ISBN 978-1426309151; \$16.95; National Geographic Society (Kindle); \$9.99) by Rick Bowers

This is the non-fiction background for *Superman Smashes the Klan* (2020). Bowers also tells the early history of Superman. Jerry Siegel and Jerome Schuster were eofans, and they produced fictionzines about Superman. Then they realized that there was money in that, and managed to get through to DC Comics, with the desired result.

Stetson Kennedy began as a researcher for the New Deal, going to various small Southern communities and recording their lore before the last person who knew it died. Inevitably he ran into the dark side.

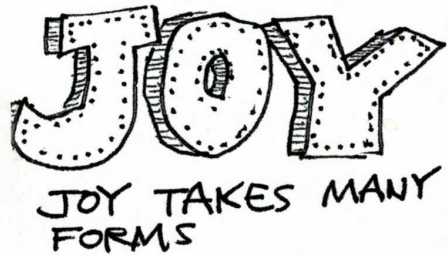
The Ku Klux Klan was not what it had been, due to the Depression, the antics of D. C. Stephenson, and so on. Nevertheless small Klan chapters persisted, and spread the evil ways. Kennedy infiltrated them and revealed their actions. Then he realized it had to be discredited.

As a result, the radio show ran "Superman Smashes the Klan". The writers deftly split the racial issue by having the target family being Chinese-American, and having the antagonists be "The Klan of the Fiery Cross".

The story continues, with the development of Superman's family (Greetings to Jonathan "Jon" Kent, half of the Super Sons) the careers of Sigel and Schuster, and other comic matters. The book is targeted at early teens but is informative for fans of all ages.

### **The Joy of High Tech**

by Rodford Edmiston



Being the occasionally interesting ramblings of a major-league technophile.

Please note that while I am an engineer (BSCE) and do my research, I am not a professional in this field. Do not take anything here as gospel; check the facts I give. If you find a mistake, please let me know about it.

Rifle Grenades

Remember that scene from "The Battle of

the Bulge" movie? The one where the angry sergeant shows a frightened private how to ready his rifle-launched anti-tank grenade and makes a comment about how green the troops are? The movie is infamous for playing fast and loose with the facts, but the M7 rifle grenade launcher could, indeed, be fitted to the M1 Garand and one type of grenade which it could use was the M9 anti-tank projectile. This had a shaped-charge for anti-armor purposes, and was theoretically capable of penetrating 100mm of armor, with a practical range of 100 meters. Of course, hitting a moving tank at that range...

However, the launcher shown is actually an M7A3 from the fifties. The grenade shown is not period accurate, either. Or even from the right army. Instead, it is a Spanish Instalaza M61 HEAT (High Explosive Anti-Tank, or shaped charge) grenade from the Sixties. (The movie was filmed in Spain, and the Spanish government provided much of the military equipment used in filming.)

The M7 launchers could handle anti-armor grenades, fragmentation grenades, smoke grenades, or "pyrotechnic signals," and send them nearly three times as far as the hand-thrown equivalent. All of these rifle-launched grenades were also larger, heavier and more effective than hand-thrown grenades. (Yes, there were hand-thrown or emplaced anti-tank grenades.) There was even an adapter for launching the lighter hand grenades using the M7. Naturally, hand grenades went much further when used in this way, though, of course, aiming at such a range was problematic, especially at a moving target. Also available for use with the M7 was a booster charge (given the nickname "vitamin pill") which could add another 130 meters to the maximum range of the rifle grenades. Again, aiming accurately was a problem at this distance. This charge was actually loaded into the launcher, and was ignited by the blank round used with the M7 for grenade propulsion. The launchers came with a special set of sights used for the grenades, these being attached to the side of the rifle. None of this was unique to the Garand, or even to the US. Indeed, none of this was even new when used in WWII.

The idea of the rifle grenade is an old one, and dates back to at least the 18th Century, when someone got the bright idea to fit a cup-shaped discharger to the muzzle of a flintlock rifle. Said rifle being loaded with powder and wad, but no bullet. On the surface the idea is quite reasonable. Once grenades were reliable enough for common use (which took the development of modern fuses and explosives in the late Nineteenth Century) people in just about every nation with a military began working on ways to give grenades a longer range. After all, they already had grenades and rifles, why not provide infantrymen with a simple gadget which could combine those and give every soldier a light mortar? Of course, while some rifle grenades could be reasonably fired from the shoulder, in most cases, to launch grenades

### **FASTER THAN A FIERY CROSS**

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**SUPERMAN VERSUS THE KU KLUX  
KLAN: The True Story of How the Iconic**

the rifles actually had to be used more like small mortars. The rifle butt was placed on the ground and the grenade launched in a high arc, in indirect fire. The civilian equivalent is the line thrower. This is normally a dedicated, rifle-like device used to send lines between ships, or between ship and shore. These are actually directly aimed, with the line thrower shouldered like a normal rifle.

The first modern (that is, created in the early Twentieth Century) rifle grenade launchers developed for US military forces acted as miniature spigot mortars. The entire launcher was sent downrange by the gasses released from firing a special, blank cartridge. These devices used a steel rod inserted in the barrel of the rifle, to provide the impetus and initial direction. This followed British developments in this area. Naturally, those steel rods were hard on the rifle bores, and using these launchers put a large amount of stress on the firearm. When the US entered WWI they actually used the French V-B cup discharger and rifle grenade system. This was adopted - and adapted - by the US Army. The devices were reissued to some US forces at the beginning of WWII. However, not only were the grenades and launchers getting pretty old by this point, the launchers would only fit the M1903 Springfield and M1917 Enfield bolt-action rifles. At least these devices didn't require a separate type of cartridge, having their own propellant charge which was set off by the passage of a standard bullet through a channel in the grenade. They also made use of the muzzle blast of the fired round to help propel the grenade.

Early rifle grenades mostly used adaptations of existing hand grenades, often holding the grenades in cups attached to the muzzle of the rifle. The grenade might also be modified for this use, with a flat disk attached to the base, to give the gases from the blank a better surface to push on. The cup would hold the spoon of the grenade in place after the pin was pulled, until the grenade was launched. However, custom projectiles - often much heavier than standard hand grenades - were soon developed, along with dedicated launchers. Especially once the shaped charge was adopted for anti-armor use. Which came into its own in WWII.

In fact, pretty much anything which could hurl a projectile was used against the early tanks, and things only escalated in the Second World War. For that tank-heavy altercation, the shaped charge was applied to anything which could send a non-spinning projectile downrange. Just look at the WWII British PIAT (Projector, Infantry, Anti-Tank) as an example. This shoulder-fired spigot mortar (the British seemed to like that concept) had a giant spring driving a steel rod which ignited the propelling charge. The combustion of this drove the projectile off the rod and downrange, and also (hopefully) recoiled the spring. This weapon was usually fired with the shooter prone on the ground, aiming the heavy

weapon. It had little signature, and someone shooting from concealment might go unnoticed by the enemy. The PIAT had a larger warhead than most anti-armor weapons available early in WWII and unlike most rifle grenades could be used in a direct fire role. That is, it could be aimed directly at targets within 105 meters, increasing to 320 meters by switching to indirect fire.

During World War Two the US military quickly decided that the V-B rifle grenade and launcher was deficient on a number of grounds, one of them being simple age. Instead, they quickly developed their own rifle grenades, and adaptors to use them with issued rifles. The 1903 Springfield used the M1 grenade launcher and M1917 Enfield used the M2 grenade launcher. These were bolt-action rifles, and the semi-auto Garand required something different. Eventually, M1 Garand users were given the M7 grenade launcher. Unfortunately, all three of these muzzle device grenade launchers required that the rifleman carry separate blank propelling charges.

During WWII, armored vehicles were so prevalent that multiple anti-tank devices were tried. The Germans even had an anti-armor grenade which was fired from a flare gun! This used a shaped charge and was claimed to penetrate 80mm of steel, though this was probably mild steel and not armor. Like many other anti-tank weapons (the early Bazooka being quickly outclassed) the explosive charges in these devices were more often used against bunkers and emplaced enemy weapons than to attack tanks. At least the bunkers and emplacements didn't move! Hitting a vehicle underway with a slow-moving rifle grenade was more a matter of luck than skill for most soldiers.

As noted, some rifle grenades used special blank rounds to provide the impetus, such as with the M7 family of launchers used on the Garand. This turned out to be a bad idea. Not only did this require the soldier to keep track of an additional type of cartridge (though at least with the Garand there were unlikely to be any other loose rounds on the soldier, as the rifle normally fed from 8-round en block clips) with a narrow application, but inevitably someone would try to launch a grenade with a standard round. Fortunately, many rifle grenade launchers used standard ammunition with pass-through or bullet-trap devices. With some the bullet was caught by the grenade, and that transfer of momentum was the primary or additional impetus for the rifle grenade. With others the passage of the bullet literally triggered a propellant charge in the launcher, as with the French V-B rifle grenade. With some of the pass-through devices the gas from the firing of the cartridge shoved the grenade along after the bullet went through. The amount of inventiveness and creativity applied to the apparently simple concept of using a rifle to lob a grenade was impressive. As was the variety of solutions applied to the task.

There are still many rifle grenade types and launchers in use by the armies of multiple

nations. In fact, most military forces are adopting the Combined Arms Doctrine of having at least one specialist grenadier in a group (the size group varies with the force). This often includes the soldier charged with this task having some means of launching grenades relatively long distances using their rifle. The troops issued these modern rifle grenades are instructed that they are primarily to be used the same as traditional grenades, and that they might - might - be useful against lightly armored vehicles. However, in many militaries rifle grenades have mostly been supplanted by dedicated grenade launchers (such as the Vietnam-era M203, which was typically attached under the barrel of the M-16 rifle and can fire many different types of existing low-pressure 40mm grenade and which can fit many different rifles) and disposable rocket launchers (such as the Russian RPG, or Rocket Propelled Grenade, which was inspired by the WWII German Panzerfaust).

Still, the concept - and the equipment - perseveres.

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## HUGO AWARD WINNERS

Courtesy of Locus

### Best Novel

*Nettle & Bone*, T. Kingfisher (Tor; Titan UK)

### Best Novella

*Where the Drowned Girls Go*, Seanan McGuire (Tordotcom)

### Best Novelette

"The Space-Time Painter", Hai Ya (Galaxy's Edge 4/22)

**Best Short Story**

“Rabbit Test”, Samantha Mills (*Uncanny* 11-12/22)

**Best Series**

Children of Time Series, Adrian Tchaikovsky (Tor UK; Orbit US)

**Best Graphic Story or Comic**

*Cyberpunk 2077: Big City Dreams*

**Best Related Work**

*Terry Pratchett: A Life With Footnotes*, Rob Wilkins (Doubleday)

**Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form**

*Everything Everywhere All at Once*

**Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form**

*The Expanse: “Babylon’s Ashes”*

**Best Editor, Short Form**

Neil Clarke

**Best Editor, Long Form**

Lindsey Hall

**Best Professional Artist**

Enzhe Zhao

**Best Semiprozine**

*Uncanny*

**Best Fanzine**

*Zero Gravity Newspaper*

**Best Fancast**

Hugo, Girl!

**Best Fan Writer**

Chris M. Barkley

**Best Fan Artist**

Richard Man

**Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book [Not a Hugo Award]**

*Akata Woman*, Nnedi Okorafor (Viking)

**Astounding Award for Best New Writer [Not a Hugo Award]**

Travis Baldree

**DRAGON AWARDS WINNERS**

Courtesy of File770.com

**1 Best Science Fiction Novel**

*The Icarus Plot* by Timothy Zahn

**2. Best Fantasy Novel (Including Paranormal)**

*Witch King* by Martha Wells

**3. Best Young Adult / Middle Grade Novel**

*The Golden Enclaves* by Naomi Novik

**4. Best Alternate History Novel**

*Lost In Time* by A.G. Riddle

**5. Best Horror Novel**

*A House With Good Bones* by T. Kingfisher

**6. Best Illustrative Cover**

*Tower of Silence* by Kurt Miller

**7. Best Comic Book or Graphic Novel**

*Dune: House Harkonnen* by Brian Herbert, Kevin J Anderson, Michael Shelfer

**8. Best Science Fiction or Fantasy TV Series, TV or Internet**

*The Sandman*, Netflix

**9. Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Movie**

*Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves* by Jonathan Goldstein, John Francis Daley

**10. Best Digital Game**

*The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom*, Nintendo EPD

**11. Best Tabletop Game**

*Magic the Gathering: The Lord of the Rings: Tales of Middle-earth*, Wizards of the Coast

**SIDELINE AWARD WINNERS**

Courtesy of File 770.com

**SHORT FORM**

Wole Talabi, “Dreams of Electric Mothers,” *Africa Risen: A New Era of Speculative Fiction*, edited by Sheree Renée Thomas, Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki, and Zelda Knight, Tor.com, November 2022

Eric Choi, “A Sky and a Heaven,” *Other Covenants: Alternate Histories of the Jewish People*, edited by Andrea D. Lobel and Mark Shainblum, Ben Yehuda Press, December 2022

**LONG FORM**

B.L. Blanchard, *The Peacekeeper*, 47North, May 2022

**WORLDCON BIDS**

2026

Los Angeles  
August 27-31, 2026  
<https://lain2026.org/>

2027

Tel Aviv  
August 2027

2028

Brisbane, Australia  
Mid-August 2028  
<https://australia2025.com/>

Kampala, Uganda  
Kampcon: The 86th World Science Fiction Convention  
August 23-27, 2028  
<https://kampcon.org/>

2029

Dublin  
<http://dublin2029.ie>

2031

Texas  
<https://alamo-sf.org/>

**WORLDCON**

2024

Glasgow  
August 8-12, 2024  
<http://glasgow2024.org/>

2025

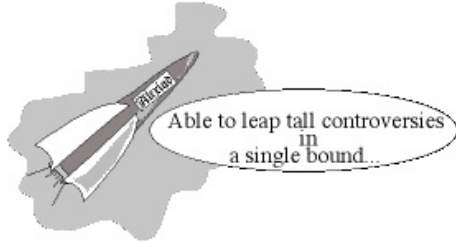
Seattle  
Worldcon Seattle 2025  
August 13-17, 2025  
<https://www.seattlein2025.org/>

**NASFiC**

2024

Buffalo, NY  
July 18-21, 2024  
<https://buffalonasfic2024.org/>

## Letters, we get letters



From: **Tom Feller** September 6, 2023  
[tomfeller@aol.com](mailto:tomfeller@aol.com)

Thanks for e-mailing the zine.

I think my first Heinlein book was the *Green Hills of Earth* short story collection in paperback.

I've read all six of the Hugo best novel finalists and five of the novellas. I haven't ranked them yet, but will probably go with *The Daughter of Doctor Moreau* as my first choice for novel and *Ogres* for novella. I've only read one each of the finalists in the Best Related Book and the Young Adult categories, but I still have 25 days until the deadline. I've seen five of the six Best Dramatic Presentation-Long Form finalists and will definitely make *Everything Everywhere All At Once* my first choice.

By the voting deadline for the Dragon Awards, I had only read one each of the finalists for Best Science Fiction, Best Fantasy, and Best Young Adult novels, so I ended up voting for *The Spare Man*, *Babel*, and *Bloodmarked*.

From: **Jerry Kaufman** September 6, 2023  
[jkaufman@aol.com](mailto:jkaufman@aol.com)

Thanks for the new issue. I can't say with any certainty what my first encounter with Heinlein was. It was probably some of his short stories as collected in the anthologies my local library in Cleveland Heights had in their small SF collection, collections assembled by Groff Conklin and August Derleth.

I haven't been to the Museum of Popular Culture (originally the Experience Music Project, and passing through a number of intermediate names that included "...Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame" for awhile) for at least a year, so can neither confirm nor deny the removal of Rowling's name from the Harry Potter portion of the Fantasy display or from anywhere else in the building. But by visiting their website, I can confirm that Rowling is still listed as a member of their Hall of Fame.

From: **Nic Farey** September 9, 2023  
[fareynic@gmail.com](mailto:fareynic@gmail.com)

I must admit a little surge of joy at seeing

a parody of *The Iron Dream* but having little to no knowledge of the battle of Westerplatte (which I did of course Google), I'm sure I missed some of the subtleties of your mashup. Nevertheless the point about the impracticality of the motorcycle formation was well taken.

I met Norman Spinrad for the first time at the infamous Brighton Worldcon, and was compelled to ask the Question You Shouldn't Ever ("Where do you get your crazy ideas?"), referring specifically to *The Iron Dream*, and getting the amiable reply "from a conversation with Michael Moorcock".

Good arrers!

This is Westerplatte from *Hurry Up Living*, with Major Sucharski being the Quantum Leaped version. Nevertheless the Major Sucharski we knew was honored greatly for his holding out for six days when he was supposed to surrender after twelve hours, but sadly died after the war of injuries. Incidentally, have you bought the book yet?

—JTM

From: **Darrell Schweitzer** Sept. 19, 2023  
[darrells@comcast.net](mailto:darrells@comcast.net)

I see that your computer apparently does not pick up my italics, so I will have to go back to putting titles in all-caps. If you can correct this, anything in all-caps is intended to be in italics.

### Sorry about that.

A couple quick comments:

Another one of your correspondents who may not be living in the same universe as the rest of us is Richard Dengrove, who suggests that climate change may happen so slowly that people will not notice. No, in our timeline it is happening right now, very rapidly, and it is accelerating. There are massive wildfires all around the world, in whichever hemisphere is having summer. Just a couple months ago I could see gray skies over Philadelphia and billowing smoke (visible if you looked down a street for a couple blocks) from Canadian wildfires. When has that ever happened before? If you can remember back twenty years, you know that Canada and California did not burn all summer, as they now routinely do. Who ever heard of whole towns being swallowed up by racing fires in Hawaii? I always thought Hawaii was tropical and wet. You also know that storms such as the one that caused such devastation in Libya recently are not normal for the Mediterranean area. Superstorms are increasing everywhere. There are reports of climate disasters in the news (the real news, e.g. the BBC, not some fringe website) almost daily. The ice in Greenland and Antarctica is melting at an astonishing rate, which not only affects sea level rise but the albedo of the Earth. Some island nations are

making plans for total evacuation before they are swallowed up by the rising seas. If, say, Florida and Louisiana disappear in the next thirty years, will Americans be able to cope? No, if you are awake and at all aware, you can see climate change all around you. It may be as simple as remembering that it used to snow in the winter ten years ago and now it rarely does. (As is the case in Philadelphia. I did no shoveling at all last winter.) Of course if you work in the biological sciences you can chart climate change by the way southern species move north into areas where they are never seen before. (My older brother is a top expert in North American moths, so he sees this daily.) Epidemiologists study the progression of tropical diseases into temperate zones. I wonder if I will ever see wild alligators in New Jersey.



I made a comment elsewhere about where publishing will be in thirty years. I am unlikely to be around to see. Someone suggested we won't have publishing in 30 years, as people will be too desperately struggling for survival amid shrinking landmasses and diminishing resources to have time for such things. I suspect that in the richer countries, some semblance of civilization will continue. At least until the revolution. It will hit other countries harder than the US. How will India cope where the entire population of Bangladesh moves in on them? Meanwhile, rich Americans may be taking boat cruises to view the ruins of the old Florida Disneyland. One hopes Manhattan will have a sea wall by then, or else it will be a crumbling wilderness of half-drowned skyscrapers.

Regarding trans people. I wonder if any of these rapes of women by trans inmates in prisons have actually happened, or if this is just Republican scare propaganda. How common is it? Presumably the solution would be to put these rapists back in the male prison where they can rape weaker male prisoners in the time-honored fashion.

That is not politically feasible.

On the subject of Heinlein's *Sixth Column* a.k.a. *The Day after Tomorrow*, what you don't

get if you only know science fiction pulps, is that *Argosy* ran a Yellow Peril serial at least once a year in the later 1930s. There was even a series by Arthur Leo Zagat (actually a pretty good writer) set in a near future America conquered by buck-toothed Asians, in which the ragged American survivors fight the modern Japanese military with bows and arrows while clad in loincloths. Our hero, who, as I recall, was named Jak and led "the Bunch," looked remarkably like Tarzan. These came with sensational covers with glowering slant-eyed fiends and headlines like "Will your children be slaves of the yellow horde?" Of course the original Buck Rogers stories have America conquered by 25th century Mongols. And there was a magazine called *Operator 5* in which our hero, secret agent Operator 5, saved America from a devastating invasion in every issue, many of them originating from Asia. So the Heinlein novel, or John Campbell's novelet "All," which inspired it, represented the tail end of a well-established pulp trope and needs to be understood in that context. Usually in such stories the Asians (or "Orientals" as they would be called then) are not inferior, just merciless and monstrous. They have, after all, conquered America or nearly conquered it at the outset of most such stories. Such a story is merely remarkably unoriginal for the early Campbell *Astounding*, which tried to break away from pulp clichés.

It's not just pulp. Colonel George Tomkyns Chesney wrote *The Battle of Dorking* (1871) about an invasion and conquest of Britain. It got him into Parliament. There were a succession of such works, such as *The Great War In England in 1897* by William le Queux (1894) and *The Invasion of 1910*, by le Queux and H. W. Wilson (1904). *The War of the Worlds* (1897, 1898) was the SF version of this. What put paid to them was the satirical *The Swoop!* by P. G. Wodehouse (1909). A French writer, Emile Driant, wrote a large number of invasion-of-France novels as "Capitaine Danrit". Ironically, he was killed in the (First) World War. In the U.S. there was the racial issue, so you had books like *The Valor of Ignorance* (1909) and *The Day of the Saxon* (1912) by Homer Lea. Lea had participated in the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty and was known as pro-Chinese, but anti-Japanese. And then there was *The Great Pacific War* (1925) by Agent H2O, er Hector C. Bywater. These were not "pulp" novels as we know them. There is an excellent book by Ignatius Fredrick Clarke, *Voices Prophecying*

War 1763-1984 (1966, 1992), that discusses such works.

—JTM



From: **George W. Price** . . . . Sept. 20, 2023  
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August *Alexiad* (#130)

In "Reviewer's Notes," Joe says he can't remember what was the first Heinlein book he read, but he does recall reading "most of the Tom Swift Jr. books" and "some of the Ace editions of Burroughs's fiction," along with many other SF items in his grandfather's house.

My own introduction to SF took a different path. As a small child, I loved the Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon comic strips in the newspapers and Big Little Books (remember those?). I moved up to tackling fiction books around age 9, reading the Westerns and mysteries my father got from the public library. Among my favorites were Clarence E. Mulford's Hopalong Cassidy novels (upon which the later TV series was loosely – very loosely – based).

Some library books – those from Grosset & Dunlap, as I recall – had advertising lists of other titles in their back pages, and that's where I learned of the existence of the Mars books by Burroughs. (There were no Ace editions in those days.) But they did not then interest me.

When I was about 13, a librarian at the local public library – where I was a very steady patron – lent me a stack of pulp science fiction and fantasy magazines. Someone had donated them, but of course the Chicago Public Library wasn't about to put trash like that on the shelves. But she thought I might like them, and she was right.

I have remembered only two stories from that stack: "Creep, Shadow!" by A. Merritt (*Famous Fantastic Mysteries*, August 1942) and "Crusade Across the Void," by Dwight V. Swain (*Amazing Stories*, October 1942). No, I didn't recall the magazine names and dates all these years later – I just now looked them up in the Day Index.

"Creep, Shadow!" was very erotic for a boy in the midst of adolescence. The Swain story was fast-action pulp trash, but I liked it then.

I returned those magazines to the librarian, and I don't know what she finally did with them – probably the trash bin. While I had enjoyed

reading them, I felt no wish to pursue SF any further.

My turning point came in 1947, when I was a senior in high school. My chemistry teacher recommended *When Worlds Collide*, by Edwin Balmer and Philip Wylie. I also found *The Best of Science Fiction*, edited by Groff Conklin, and *Adventures in Time and Space*, edited by Healy & McComas – and I was hooked. I noticed that most of the stories in those anthologies came from magazines, so I started buying them as well.

But I did not get into fandom until after I finished college and was in the Army. My first WorldCon was Chicon II in 1952. It was in my home town, but because I was stationed in Maryland, I had to take Greyhound 700 miles to get there.

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"Random Jottings" says that "The Seattle Museum of Popular Culture has removed all mentions of J. K. Rowling from its Harry Potter exhibition." An online check shows that she fell afoul of woke political correctness; she stands accused of "transphobic views."

By the way, can anyone tell me how she pronounces her name? Does "Rowling" rhyme with "howling" or with "bowling"?

\*\*\*\*\*

Rodford Edmiston's "The Joy of High Tech" covers the early development of commercial airlines. He concentrates on the technology of the aircraft, but does also mention the hiring of the first stewardesses in 1930, and the growing competition of airlines with railroads.

It amuses me to wonder, what if the airlines had instead copied the railroads' use of Pullman porters, and hired black men as "Air Porters"? (You would tip them when you got off the plane.) When the Civil Rights Revolution came along, would there have been pressure to make airlines also hire whites and women?

At the end of his essay, Edmiston says, "However, passengers don't take airplanes to travel slowly. (Which is likely the main reason airships haven't had much recent success despite repeated attempts at revivals.)"

Well, maybe, but a much more compelling reason is safety. The big dirigibles were far too slow to avoid storms, and far too lightly built to withstand them. I doubt if that's changed, even assuming long-distance storm-detecting radar, powerful engines, and the best modern light-weight construction alloys. It's like the old saying that a fat man has to be polite and peaceable, because he can't fight and he can't run.

This didn't stop magazines like *Popular Science*, *Popular Mechanics*, and *Science and Invention* from having annual articles on the Promise of Airships. Which never

quite, er, got off the ground.

—JTM

\*\*\*\*\*

I must thank Darrell Schweitzer for pointing out that the transgender controversy goes back much farther than I had remembered. He cites the case of Christine Jorgensen, to which I had paid little attention at the time, and I looked up the Wikipedia article on him/her.

One relevant fact jumped out at me: Jorgensen had his/her very drastic transition surgery as an adult. What makes the matter so ferociously controversial now is primarily that there is so much social pressure to allow – and even encourage – physical transitioning for minors, even prepubescent children. Now that's where I must draw a very sharp line.

It's fine to give youngsters psychological therapy to help them cope with what is most likely only temporary confusion about their sexual development. But there should never be anything irreversible. As I have said, I see it as very serious malpractice to give chemical or surgical treatment to anyone under the age of 18, and preferably 25 or maybe even 30. Taras Wolansky says, "troubled young women who were railroaded into transitioning are now suing their doctors: 'I needed therapy; you gave me surgery!'" May they win their suits!

As to the use of pronouns and other references to one's sex, that can be thorny indeed. I would say, go by biological sex on all formal documents – e.g., no birth certificate should ever be retroactively changed – since a transitioned person has not actually changed sex, but only physical appearance. In ordinary social intercourse, obviously, go by physical appearance. I gather that this was not a problem for Christine Jorgensen, since after transitioning he/she really looked like a woman.

Mr. Schweitzer says, "As for bathrooms, this is a phony issue, used by Republicans (or to be precise, Fascists) to sow fear, since such movements thrive on fear and need a dreadful 'other' to terrify the rubes."

Wrong on two counts!

First, it should not be necessary to point out that in our society it is an ancient custom that (apart from medical care, etc.) members of one sex should not show their sexual parts to strangers of the other sex unless they are trying to be seductive. Public washrooms and toilets are where this seriously matters.

Second, as one who nearly always votes conservative (which usually means Republican), I am very, very tired of seeing "Fascist" used to mean "anybody who is more right-wing than I am comfortable with." Incidentally, the real Fascists – the followers of Mussolini – were an outgrowth of Italian socialism – they have been called "socialists in a hurry," because they were tired of waiting for democracy to bring the collectivist utopia.

The word Fascism has now no meaning except in so far as it signifies 'something not desirable'.

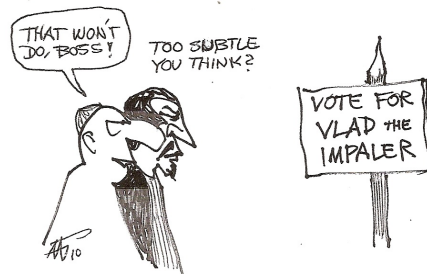
— EAB

Where I can whole-heartedly agree with Mr. Schweitzer is in objecting to using "they" to mean one person of unspecified sex. Traditional English, in usages such as "If someone cheats you, make him return your money," lets "he," "him," and "his" refer to either sex, apparently on the sexist assumption that of course we are speaking of a man unless we specify it's a woman.

Well, it does sound clunky to always say "he or she" or "him or her" or "his or hers." One possibility is to say "it" or "its" – we already use "it" to refer to animals whose sex we don't know or don't care about.

Another option is to telescope all these into a new compound word, thus: "she + he + it" becomes "sheit."

Say that as two syllables: "shee-it."



From: **Richard Dengrove** Oct. 2, 2023  
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I'm really late this time around. The issue says August and we are in October. I hope I finish this in time.

India's rocket success. Lisa cheered India's feat of getting a rocket to the region of the Moon with water. Russia failed to do that. Of course, America's attempt to put men on the Moon again isn't going too well either. On the other hand, I'm wondering if it isn't a blatant piece of spoils engineered by some Southern senators.

Reviewer's Notes. '50s science fiction. I remember a counselor at a camp telling me that sci-fi could drive us crazy. I thought he was the crazy one, but he was a nice guy.

J.K. Rowling. The problem with deleting her name from her books is that everyone knows who wrote the Harry Potter novels. Anyway, omitting a person's name from their books because you dislike them is par for that group.

Revolutionary Protector. No recent novels, like Joyleg's, about land grants. People would ask, "What's land?"

My comment on three articles: "Tajemniczy Henryk," "Cosmic Viking," "Under Pressure," and "Just Say no." It sounds like everyone has

problems like we do; but, in literature, they are magnified many times over. That's good for a book. It would drive me crazy in real life.

The Joy of High Tech. I was wondering why airliners in the '40s were built to float on water. Rodford Edmiston has an answer: few airports. Often you had to land on water. Also he has why they no longer exist: there are more airports and piston engines made it easier to travel to . Of course, piston engines for propellers have gone the way of high button shoes.

Letters, We Get Letters. Darrel Schweitzer. About Trans, being a Trans is a choice: with the operations and without them. I'm not so certain that makes either heroes.

On the other hand, I am impressed by your knowledge of the Crusaders taking over Constantinople. I should have looked something up, at least on Google, rather than taking someone's word for it.

Lloyd Penney. Doing something fannish at a convention and being told it isn't fannish? An example of the de-fannification of science fiction. Or was it a breakaway sect from fandom?

Actually, I've noticed web zines getting awards at Worldcon while few paper magazines have survived the internet. I suspect, to be a success, the web is the place to be. I understand old timers want any magazine to be paper but that's not how things are going. In fact, I wonder if you could get your money from ads and allow people to read the webzine for free? Maybe the webzine could finance a paper zine. Just a thought from someone who may not know what he's talking about.

George Price. The draft. Did I dodge the Draft for the Vietnam War or did the Draft dodge me? It wasn't too enthusiastic about taking me. By contrast, a friend of mine got the hard sell because he looked and acted all American.

Prejudice against the Japanese. Was there prejudice against Japanese when they were interned in World War II? You bet. It was a sign of it. A lot of people defended it. I hear Walter Winchell did. It didn't matter that they were considered intelligent. On the other hand, there was an economic reason for it: some people in California and Oregon coveted Japanese land.

Bill Mauldin did a cartoon where a man who had bought a fruit stand from an interned Japanese was gleefully commenting that the man in question had died in Italy. The cartoon seemed to have a basis in reality.

On the other hand, after a series of anti-Japanese heads who believed all Japanese were anti-US, a Dillon S. Myer was made head of the internment, and he believed it should never have happened. In fact, he was able to get the Japanese there some democracy in the camps and temporary jobs in far from flung



places outside it.

Provoking Nazis. I don't think trade embargoes would be a sufficient reason for war. Usually, dictators laugh at them. Also, I thought there was an agreement between Japan and Germany that Germany would go to war when Japan did. Then they would split America between them.

Garth Spencer. About names, I have a curiosity of a name, Dengrove. My uncle had it changed in the '30s and got the family to change it too. It had been Genderovsky. Once I called an area specialist at the Library of Congress. He said that originally the name had been Russified. It had originally been Gender. Which is a Turkic name. He asked me if anyone in my family had been Muslim. I told him not that I knew of.

Me. Why did Steven J. Zaloga say most nuclear doom tales were impossible? I could believe that if the leaders started an atomic war, their countries would be destroyed; and maybe they might be killed. I don't know of any other reason.

He described the organization and equipment of Soviet strategic forces. They did not have any missiles that could reach the U.S. until the late sixties (hence the Cuban Missile Crisis) and their strategic bomber during the first part of the fifties was the Tu-4, a copy of the B-29.



DOBBIN'S MOM WAS SCARED BY A THOAT.

John Hertz. I suspect that you don't know you know something if you don't know how you know it. Things could be believed because the scientific method tells you you know it. Or it could be because all your emotions say you know it. Or you could know something for any number of other reasons.

You, along with Joe, are right. A lot of people interested in science fiction are consumers rather than doers. Especially since science fiction became OK for mundanes. Also, fans are often fans of only a part of science fiction. Taras Wolansky. I hear tranny can be an insult and a complement for a transgender person.

The little girl who was sad because she

was white. The problem here is nobody's perfect. Unfortunately, lots of people have to defend everything about themselves or they feel they're nothing. And it gets even worse: many believe they must defend their ancestors from having done something considered OK at the time and in their milieu, like slavery. Nobody's perfect; or, with enough ingenuity, everyone's perfect.

Those who go away. There are several reasons people have abandoned fandom. Growing old, for many people, makes them lose interest in lots of things. Even eating. Also, some lose interest because something is no longer the 'in' thing. Finally, a lot of fighting makes some people makes some people lose interest.

Japan, Inc. Japan is no longer going to be the center of the world. I don't know the reason for it. In fact, I hear they even have had a longterm recession since people were talking about Japan Incorporated.

Hurry Up Dreaming. I suspect those over six foot Nazis were trained by the "Tons of Fun." They didn't realize they came from 1920s comedies.

They came from Adolf Hitler's Hugo-winning novel *Lord of the Swastika*. I guess Sucharski hadn't read it.

—JTM

I guess that's it.

From: **John Hertz** Sept. 29, 2023  
236 S. Coronado Street No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057 USA

Always glad to see your reports of the Trotting and the Pacing Triple Crowns. "Not a wholesome trotting race, not but a race where they set down right on their horses!" (Willson, *The Music Man*, 1957)

The suffix "-man" is not masculine. It only means "person". A person could be male or female (or neither). There's no need to say "boat person".

Language changes with time. That's why breeding-persons say "boat person" and assign a gender to the boat.

So far no feminist I know of has taken up my invitation to regard *Glory Road* (Heinlein, 1963) as a feminist tract. Look at Rufo's "she conned you". Who or what is Star? Is she actually — or following her own approach, I'd better say "only"; she tells the truth but might not tell the whole truth — as she appears to our narrator? The book is written after its adventurers; Brother Gordon begins "I know a place where the women are willing" — he hasn't learned a thing. He really is a hero, that's not his failing. To me GR is *inter alia* a comedy and a loving (pun intended) satire on men's sex-romance follies.

The spanking bits seemed to militate against this thesis, but then *Fifty Shades of Grey* (2011) came out.

Indeed *Under Pressure* (Herbert, 1956) is a worthy book. I've never made up my mind whether I like that title better or *The Dragon In the Sea*.

Terminology can be our friend. Brother Edmiston would have taken note of "line" in "airline". And will no one but I, of all people, correct "File770.org" to "File770.com"?

The missing element in ""They want to see things but don't want the effort of doing them, so fannish activity is dying" is not what they won't do, but what we won't. Those who know won't speak, those who speak don't know. Or, leaping from Lao Tzu, Confucius, when asked for his teaching about government said "Lead them, encourage them"; begged for any further teaching, he said "Untiringly" (*Analects* 13:1). Or leaping to *Pogo*, we have met the enemy and he is us.

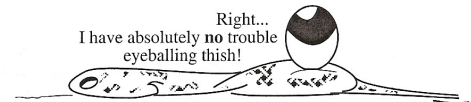
And what did his 75th generation descendant Kung Hsiang-hsi have to say of the matter? Something like "Gratuities are always welcome."

Always glad to see Gilliland and Schirm-eister fanart. Schirm's absence from *Vana-monde* is not his fault; as he well knows. Indeed nothing is as relaxing as "Mr. Tambourine Man" (Dylan, 1965) played on a tenor Sousaphone.

I'm worried about Gilliland. I haven't heard from him in some time. Does anyone have any news of him?

—JTM

**WAHF:**  
**Steve Green, Lacy Thomas, R-Laurraine Tutihasi**, with thanks.  
**Lloyd G. Daub**, with various items of interest.



## DAD'S TROOPERS

Captain Mannering was in his office at the bank when it began. He sat there, face wracked with pain, and then doubled over, gasping.

They delivered him to the hospital in the only vehicle available. The appearance of a delivery wagon with "J. JONES FAMILY BUTCHER" at the front door made *quite* the wrong impression on passers-by, and some of the nursing sisters did not take it at all well.

The Captain was diagnosed with gall bladder problems and had surgery. And Sergeant Wilson handled affairs. Mind you, he had commanded the LDV unit when it was formed, and before that he had served in the Great War.

Lance-Corporal Jones came to him with the news. "War Office's sending a temporary replacement. A regular, no less. Man named Rico."

Wilson said nothing. Later that evening, he got a call. "Sergeant? Lieutenant Rico here. I want the men on the bounce at oh-six-hundred tomorrow morning!"

"Do you think that's wise, sir?"

"Invasion won't let us wait!"

Wilson sighed. "I am told we will have notice. And the men have jobs." They finally compromised at 6 pip emma.

The Home Guard platoon was formed up when Lieutenant Rico came in. In the back ranks, Walker said, "Looks like a wog, all right."

Pike said, "He's a Royal Marine! A boot-neck!"

"They take the queerest people."

Lieutenant Rico stepped forward. He looked at the gramophone he had asked Wilson to have available, and set out a record on it. Then he turned and faced the men.

"I am your acting commanding officer, Lieutenant Rico of the Marines! I have just been to the hospital to see Captain Mainwaring! And he wants your names to *shine!*"

After this dramatic announcement he paused briefly. "The Germans are coming and the Walmington-on-Sea Home Guard will carry out the duties of line doggies to perfection!" The speech went on for a while, to the consternation and boredom of the Home Guardsmen.

Lieutenant Rico finished his address by stepping over to the gramophone and lowering the needle. The song began blasting out, "To the everlasting glory of the Infantry . . ."

When it finished, he dismissed the men. The only comment was by Frazer, who said in a dolorous voice, "We're doomed! **Doomed!**"

Lieutenant Rico called out Godfrey at a formation. "Soldier, where is your weapon!?"

"I am the medic, sir," he said.

Rico turned his attention to Wilson. "Sergeant, issue this man a rifle! This is an army without a mass of useless men in uniform, it is an army where every man **fighters!**"

"Do you think that's wise, sir?" Wilson said. "There is the Geneva Convention to consider. And Private Godfrey is a C.O. — that is, a conscientious objector. He won the Military Medal in the Great War."

"He should not be in uniform, in a combat unit! Put him in a civilian auxiliary! As I said, this is an army where every man **fighters!**"

Godfrey looked beaten down. "Do you think I might be excused, sir?"

"Get out!" Rico snapped.

As he was leaving Godfrey said to Wilson, "Besides, I have to get my grand-niece. She's been living in a rag and bone yard ever since her parents were killed . . ."

Rico said, "Have the men assembled on the bounce!"

About a week of exhausting field drills later, Wilson showed up in the morning to unlock the bank door. But Mainwaring had already done so, and sat at his desk, looking tired. "Doctor took a lot out of me. How have things been going?" he said.

Wilson gave him several earfuls. When he was done, Mainwaring said, "Stupid boy."

— Not by Jimmy Perry and David Croft, much less RAH

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This is issue **Whole Number One Hundred and Thirty-one (131)**.

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