

# ALEXIAD

(ΑΛΞΙΑΣ)

\$2.00

Another Worldcon is over. For us, it was a long exhausting trip and we were glad when we finally stumbled back into our house. After a telling of some of our adventures in Montreal I was asked if I would go back there if the Worldcon was held there again. My automatic answer was yes. The followup question was why. My answer was because it's Worldcon. It means being a fan among other fans from all over the world. For a few days you can actually see the people who are usually just names on emails or paperstuffs which arrive at the house. Nobody at a Worldcon lacks a sense of wonder. Worldcon is not just about the fabulous panels. It is about renewing our sense of fannish communities.

— Lisa

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The 84<sup>th</sup> Running of the Hambletonian (1st leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) was **August 8, 2009** at Meadowlands Racetrack in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Muscle Hill won by six lengths, setting a new record.

The 55<sup>th</sup> Running of the Yonkers Trot (2nd leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) is **August 29, 2009** at Yonkers Raceway in Yonkers, New York.

The 117<sup>th</sup> Running of the Kentucky Futurity (3rd leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) is **October 3, 2008** at the Red Mile in Lexington, Kentucky.

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Deadline is **October 1, 2009**

## Reviewer's Notes

I suppose it's time for the annual Hugo Voting Process Discontent Editorial. As usual, people from all over complained about how inadequate the voting process was. Strangely, there was no indication that the complainers had nominated. At which point the standard complaint that the voting fee is too high was brought forward, and proposals for a lower, or no voting fee were advanced. To which the spectre of Hugo-buying was invoked. In addition, there were the uninformed opinions, people who thought the awards were juried.

This goes round and round every year.

I wonder . . . is this part of the shift from participation to consuming? Someone whose con experience is going to see the blooper reel followed by a purchase of an autographed photo of Nonspeaking Klingon #6 is going to have a hard time imagining the idea of voting for an award. Or for that matter, actually writing for a publication. Yes, even the days of Mary Sue and slash may be seen as prodigies of pubbing!

I've found out how setting up a ladder can produce interesting results. That is, the cut and bruise I got when the ladder toppled and gave me a whack in the face. Home maintenance is a problem, and there is also the prospect of cutting the grass.

Meanwhile, I worry about being riffed out of my current position to become, say, a commuter counter, standing at the Salt River bridge rain or shine, sun or snow, with a clicker, counting all the cars that enter the county (6 am to 10 am shift) and leave (3 pm to 7 pm shift).

I can imagine some people would be pleased to hear of that.

— Joe

## RANDOM JOTTINGS

by Joe



The Senior Surviving WorldCon Guest of Honor is **Richard Matheson**, GoH at SoLaCon, the 16th WorldCon at South Gate in '58.

Who comes next?

**John Berry** FanGoH, Detention 1959  
**Brian Aldiss** ProGoH, LonCon II 1965  
**E. C. Tubb** UKGoH, HeiCon 1970  
**Robert Silverberg** USGoH, HeiCon  
**Herbert W. Francke** GerGoH, HeiCon  
**Elliot K. Shorter** FanGoH, HeiCon  
**Frederik Pohl** ProGoH, LACon I, 1972  
**Juanita Coulson** FanGoH, LACon I  
**Jay Kay Klein** FanGoH, Discon II 1974  
**Ursula LeGuin** GoH, Aussiecon I 1975  
**Mike Glickson** FanGoH, Aussiecon I  
**Donald Tuck** AussieGoH, Aussiecon I  
**Harlan Ellison®** GoH, Iguanacon 1977

Fred Pohl is also the Senior Surviving SF Writer.

We regret to report the death of **Elizabeth Ann "Jackie" Maslin Ronne** on **June 14, 2009**, in Bethesda, Maryland, of complications of cancer, Alzheimer's Disease, and old age. Born **October 13, 1919** in Baltimore, she married fellow explorer Finn Ronne (né "Rønne") on March 18, 1941.

Jackie was best known as being one of the two First Overwintering Women, on the Ronne Antarctic Expedition of 1946-1948. The Ronne Ice Shelf (formerly known as Edith Ronne Land) in Antarctica is named for her. She herself made fifteen trips to the Antarctic, being the seventh woman to land at the pole, in 1971, and half of the first married couple to do so.

(Brenda Clough, author of "Might Be Some Time", the story of the rescue of L. E. G. Oates, was present at the memorial service.)

<http://www.ronneantarcticexplorers.com/index.htm>

We regret to report the death of **Dr. Jerri Lin Nielsen FitzGerald** on **June 25, 2009** at her home in Southwick, Massachusetts. Born March 1, 1952 in Youngstown, Ohio, Dr. Nielsen, as she was better known, was best known for her dramatic bout with cancer while being herself base physician at the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station in the 1999-2000 season. She recounted her story in *Ice Bound: A Doctor's Incredible Battle for Survival at the South Pole* (with Maryanne Vollers, 2001). She

had remarried after her return from the Pole.

The cancer returned in 2005, spreading to her liver, bones, and eventually brain. She remained active until three months before her death.

Clarification on Matters Officially Heinlein: It seems that the first half of the Virginia Edition is out from the new publisher, and the first half of the Official Biography has been dispatched to the publisher, for publication sometime in 2010. In a discussion on the Heinlein Forum, Bill Patterson revealed that the planners for the V.E. had more enthusiasm than ability.

There was a news item about a birfer (one of those people who thinks that the President was actually born in Kenya and that his parents engaged in an expensive and complicated deceit for reasons that could not have been to any point at the time), an Army Reserve Major, who used his belief to argue that he couldn't be legally sent to Afghanistan by a non-President. He wasn't, apparently, but perhaps the Army realized that wackos don't do well in combat zones. What was really interesting was his name:

**Stefan Frederick Cook**

Not a descendant, since the doctor only had a daughter, who only had a daughter, but possibly related.

Ruth Downie's third novel about C. Petronius Ruso has been published in the States: *Persona Non Grata: A Novel of the Roman Empire* (2009; Bloomsbury USA; ISBN 978-1596916098; \$24.00), which takes Ruso and Tullia to Gaul to deal with family matters. Being in the Petronii seems to be as hazardous as being an old friend of Jessica Fletcher. While I seem to have missed John Maddox Roberts's latest *SPQR* novel, *Oracle of the Dead* (2008; Minotaur Books; ISBN 978-0-312-38093-9; \$24.95), where D. Caecilius Metellus tries to get as far away from his wife's uncle as possible, only to find that spree killing does not respect oracles.

While the Flashman Papers lie in limbo after the unfortunate demise of their editor, the esteemed George Macdonald Fraser, a more contemporary version portends. *Coward on the Beach* by James Delingpole (2007; Bloomsbury; ISBN 978-0-7475-82747; \$14.95) has the somewhat unfortunately-named Dick Coward, scion of an old family, plunged into the first tale of what portends to be about every disaster sustained during the Second World War. In this case, having barely survived an unrecounted (this volume, anyhow) adventure in Burma (and there are other references, some of which make him look like a veritable Lanny Budd), in order to be considered for the inheritance of his estate he has to prove himself a hero, which means he becomes a private in the Royal Marines, being sent against one of the more heavily defended parts of the Normandy Beaches. (His brother has the Military Cross with Bar, and the only way to outdo that is

usually fatal.) Bloodshed, death, bizarre romantic encounters, and much muddling through ensue, with the promise of much more to come . . .

## OBITS

We regret to report the death of **Ken Moore** on **June 30, 2009**, at home in Nashville. Khen had been a leading figure in Nashville fandom ever since the seventies, having organized the first convention there, Kubla Khan, and having been president of the local club. He had been in declining health for the past two years.

The funeral was July 5, with a memorial service at which all and sundry were invited to recall their memories of Khen.

I didn't go to the first Kubla, but I started going afterwards. Khen was quite the character, particularly as he grew older, rangier, paler, and so on, going about in shorts and a short-sleeved shirt, delivering opinions and chat. He was energetic, friendly, convivial (ask anyone about his swill), and in the end all too self-destructive.

When I saw that gaunt, pale figure at ConCave this spring I was amazed. I hope he had a good time there. We'll miss him.

We regret to report the death of **Charles N. Brown** on **July 12, 2009** on the way home from ReaderCon. Charlie was best known for having founded and continued the fanzine-become-semiprozine *Locus*, the key information source for professionals in the field.

## MONARCHIST NEWS

In the name of God, the Mighty, the Omnipotent. Blessed be His Majesty al-Malik 'Abd Allāh bin al-Husayn bin Talāl Banu Hashim, of the blood of the Prophet, upon whom be Peace. His Majesty has, in accordance with the constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, proclaimed his eldest son **Prince Husayn bin al-'Abd Allāh** as Crown Prince of the Kingdom. May Peace and the Mercy of God be upon them.

## DAVID EDWARD JONES

November 3, 1947 — August 8, 2009

by Lisa Major

My cousin was a good husband and father. He was also a talented architect and his funeral was held in a church he himself had designed. At family gatherings he was always pitching in until his health prevented him. He hung on until his daughter returned from summer camp. His presence will be much missed at our future family gatherings. David suffered the tragic loss of his son and came through with his personality unchanged. Afterwards he and his wife Betty adopted a Chinese orphan they gave the apt name Amie Joy. David held to his life until his daughter returned from summer camp and then died peacefully after a long illness. There are no real words for the loss his death is to our family.

**A TRAGEDY OF CUSTOMS**

Review by Joseph T Major of  
*THE LEGEND OF SIGURD AND  
GUDRÚN*

by J. R. R. Tolkien,  
edited by Christopher Tolkien  
(Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; 2009;  
ISBN 978-0-547-27342-6; \$26.00)

Sometime in the early 1930s, at a point where his attempt to write a great poem of the tragic and beautiful romance of Beren and Lúthien had fallen by the wayside (as a good Catholic, he wouldn't use the "a" word), Oxford's professor of Anglo-Saxon took to his uncredited side-line. He was, you see, also lecturing on Ancient Norse. And so, he set out to write a lay, in Norse style but in English, about the life and death of Sigurd, and of Guðrún.

So many will say, "Ah, Wagner!" Not quite. This is an attempt to go back to Wagner's sources. There's no room for "When does the next swan leave?" and other such raillery here. Tolkien is presenting the grim Norse life of violence and betrayal, where no one, not even the Gods (or perhaps *particularly* the Gods) could be trusted. Robert E. Howard might have liked this.

And it's not a translation. This is original work, a poetic rendition, done in alliterative verse. This was where he got some practice for some of the verses in *The Lord of the Rings*. L. Sprague de Camp described writing a little Spenserian verse and wondered how the man had been able to compose six books, much less considered the two dozen he had in mind for *The Faerie Queene* (and when it came time to do his own approach to that, *The Castle of Iron* (with Fletcher Pratt; 1941, 1950) did it in prose). Tolkien did this, evidently without any problems beyond his usual always fiddling with just another bit to get it just so. (He really needed someone to steal his manuscripts and take them to the publisher.)

As for the content, what happens is that Sigurd quests for the most beautiful woman in the worlds, Brynhild. Rescuing her from her magical wards, he resolves to marry her once he has a proper kingdom to support her in the style which she deserves. However, the easiest way to do so involves the old trick of getting half the kingdom, namely the princess's hand in marriage. His marrying Guðrún does rather disappoint Brynhild, particularly when she gets tricked into marrying Atli the ruler of the Huns. Sigurd is killed in an ambush, Brynhild kills herself to be cremated at his side, Guðrún kills Atli in a fire and then drowns herself.

Obviously this is not "and they all lived happily ever after", much less "oh the embarrassment". This is the fictional reflection of the real world of the Norse, where nearly everybody did die violently and prematurely.

*The Legend of Sigurd and Guðrún* is not for everyone; some don't like Tolkien's verse, some don't care for alliterative verse in general, and some prefer an ending where someone is around to tell the tale. It provides a window into

Tolkien's mind, the way that *For Us, the Living: A Comedy of Customs* (2003; NHOL G.004) does for Robert A. Heinlein.

**THE PHÈDRIAD**

Review by Joseph T Major of  
*NAAMAH'S KISS*  
by Jacqueline Carey  
(Grand Central Publishing; 2009;  
ISBN 978-0446198035; \$29.99)  
A *Kushiel* Novel

"Give her forty lashes with the whip!"

As the constables tore down the barbarian woman's clothes, Judge Dee noted the disgusting fishbelly-white appearance of her skin, the loathesomely abundant hair on her body, and most of all the tattoo on her back, which reached from her buttocks to the nape of her neck, and was as intricate as those etched into the flesh of the courtesans from the ugly little islands of Jih-pen, off the coast of Korea. As she knelt to accept the flogging, the woman spoke, and Master Lo, her master, translated.

"Most excellent magistrate, this unworthy person states that she is accustomed to receiving two or three times as many lashes, on a daily basis, in the exercises of her inferior religion."

— Not by Jacqueline Carey or Robert van Gulik

At least she got far enough out of her comfort zone to have all the characters of the previous works, Phèdre, Imriel, and their consorts, concubines, and customers, be legendary figures from long ago. And looking at it, sometimes I wonder if Carey, having bombed at copying Tolkien, is instead emulating David Eddings. That is to say, the plot of this and the presumed successor works is much the same, an innocent person becomes sexually empowered through a series of encounters, which in turn lead him or her to political intrigue and foreign adventure.

Moirin's family has fallen on bad times; something to do with bears and breaking up marriages (see also *Kushiel's Justice* (2007; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 6 #4)) and she has to live in a cave. However, they can't pin a thing on her and she ends up getting to go to Terre d'Ange. Or perhaps having to go, after her first lover is so tragically killed.

There she ends up getting into the sort of entanglements that tend to end up with someone being killed. Or is it being simultaneously the lover of the Queen, the Dauphin [her stepson, fortunately], and the Queen's lover means having a very full and very complicated appointment book? Fortunately for Moirin's schedule, Master Lo, a visitor from the mysterious East has come to Terre d'Ange, and his bodyguard Bao turns out to be curious about the configuration of lo quan women.

Before Moirin can find herself being conveniently used as the one at fault in a romantic entanglement, someone comes to rescue her. Well, not her directly, but it seems

that the Emperor's heiress, Princess Snow Tiger, has some rather serious problems. Like, killing people with superhuman fury. Master Lo, absent in barbarian lands, may know how to cure her.

Moirin is quite glad to go with them. Not that all is well under heaven. In fact, the Emperor is thinking he has lost the Mandate of Heaven. Lord Jiang, the former father-in-law of Snow Tiger, was just a little put out that his son didn't quite survive the wedding night, and has risen up in rebellion against Emperor Zhu. (Now if Lord Jiang had had a banner with, not a white dragon on blue, but a white sun on blue, and his top counsellors were his brothers-in-law Lord Song and Lord Kong, not to mention his wife Lady Meiling . . .)

To avert the rebellion of Lord Jiang, Moirin has to take Snow Tiger to White Jade Mountain so she can be cured. Since this involved going through the territory Lord Jiang controls, the trip might be met by a few inconveniences. At least Carey is aware that traveling with the means she describes is a little more inconvenient than other forms of travel are.

And if Snow Tiger can be healed, Lord Jiang and his sinister subordinate Black Sleeve stopped, and the entire memory of the Divine Thunder erased from its users' minds [be fun when the next tribe of nomads overruns the place], Bao can set off to find his background and Moirin hers when this is . . . **[To Be Continued]**

**SHARE OF GLORY**

Review by Joseph T Major of  
*CONTACT WITH CHAOS*  
by Michael Z. Williamson  
(Baen; 2009;  
ISBN 978-1-4165-9154-2; \$24.00)

I've noted that science fiction writers, across the political spectrum, even those who denounce governmental activism, will write well of covert government agencies formed for the purpose of destabilizing planetary governments that are insufficiently progressive. Not surprisingly, there is a counteraction, where researchers investigating a newly-encountered planet strive mightily to prevent the newly met aliens from becoming aware of any technology more advanced than theirs, if having weird beings who come from another world isn't proof enough. And then you get things like *Xenocide* (1991) where after long and elaborate efforts to persuade the piggies that humans were Just Like Them, the investigators wondered why the xenanthropologist ended up being treated like a dead piggy.

The planet 107 Piscis 3 shouldn't have been of particular interest to the surveying ship that found it. The ship was from a mining group, looking for exploitable ores, and that particular planet had almost no surface ores to speak of; a low density crust.

On that low density crust, however, were intelligent beings.

Humanity seemed determined to export its own problems, or at least carry them along as they went. The official contact team that was

formed to meet the aliens of 107 Piscis 3 had to represent a profoundly diverse spectrum of beliefs. One might call this fantasy, as Williamson does not have the mission being blocked for years if not centuries by legal action. The principal conflict is between the statists of the Terran United Nations and the exploiters of Freehold. (The book is set in the universe of Williamson's previous work *Freehold* (2004), incidentally, but is not a direct sequel, surprisingly.) This is by far not the only one among the human First Contactors, and indeed the contrast between the two societies is as interesting as the detailed description of an a-metallic society.

Not that any of the sides is too foolish; only greedy, conceited, cocky, and so many of the other weaknesses that sapience falls heir to. The aliens struggle for understanding of, well, the aliens (so to speak).

Williamson has created a diverse, varied human interplanetary society (all too often it's "it was raining on Quatloo IV"), trying to understand an exotic, alternative nonhuman society. It's nice to see that he doesn't have Virtuous Capitalists having to prevent Greedy Statists from exploiting a unmarred society without a state.

### THE OIKUMENE

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**THE EDGE OF THE WORLD**  
by Kevin J. Anderson  
(Orbit; 2009;  
ISBN 978-0-316-00418-3; \$14.99)  
"Terra Incognita: Book One"

A confession is in order: I had been curious if Anderson, having written works "in the exciting universe" of so many other writers, had had originality expunged from his soul. Apparently not.

In this series, Anderson has created a complex world trembling on the verge of a great release of exploration, if only it can survive the forces of those whose faith is more formal than real. Yes, oddly enough, he has included genuine religious beliefs, religious entities that serve to hearten and sustain people, not vast cruel conspiracies of hypocrites that mock and exploit their naïve followers. And which all the same have people who believe too well, and too violently, slaying from divine right.

He tells a tale with many intertwining threads, of a careless act that creates a great destruction which engenders an even greater war, with even more destruction, world without end. Caught up in this too terrible force are the great and the small, we see royalty and commoners, merchants, beggars, scholars, and sailors, striving to survive, or being killed by the forces of nature or man.

Beyond the mere war — and there is a almost dire focus on the loss and the cruelty, as well as the necessities, of this — there is adventure and exploration. Whether it is a vast ship *almost* making it around the globe, or a simple hot-air balloon crossing a far desert, Anderson's characters pursue knowledge of the world for the sake of knowledge.

This seems almost too much of a gush, and there are blandnesses and inadequacies. This isn't a perfect novel, but maybe, just maybe, Anderson has picked up the right things from the works of others, and made something of his own that stands on its own. We'll find out when this complex saga is . . . **[To Be Continued]**



### SLEEPING GIANT

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**1942: A NOVEL**  
by Robert Conroy  
(Ballantine Books; 2009;  
ISBN 978-0-345-50607-8; \$15.00)

In prewar days imaginative Japanese writers had drawn lurid pen-pictures of the invasion of Hawaii by the all-conquering legions of Nippon . . .

— Hector C. Bywater, *the Great Pacific War*, Page 149

The question has been often asked: "What If Japan invaded Oahu after the Pearl Harbor strike?" This certainly was a fear at the time, and the two-division garrison of Hawaii (the Hawaiian Division, a "square" division with four regiments, had been split into the 24th and 25th Infantry Divisions with the addition of the two regiments of the Hawaiian National Guard, two "triangular" divisions with three infantry regiments each) was sent to the beaches. Including many *nisei*, who were later pulled out and after various adventures became the 100th Battalion, the core unit of the famous 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and today's principal Hawaiian Army Reserve unit.

As with his previous books, Conroy shows the battle from the perspective of both the high command and the "little people". He has been criticized for presenting an overly brutal picture of the Japanese occupation of Oahu, but if anything he has them being particularly restrained. Not to mention whatever the Japanese version of "chutzpah" is, as when he has the occupation forces demanding that relief supplies be sent to the American population.

With various scenes recounting the decisions on high and some auxiliary items, the principal narrative deals with various leaders of the nascent resistance, an intelligence officer back on the mainland, and . . . a collaborationist.

The relationships of the various characters include a good bit of the vertical; Conroy describes their love affairs in a mildly graphic fashion. Men, and even women, about to go into battle, or just out of it, want to live until

they die. (And Conroy even has the results of this [Page 355].)

One does wonder, though, after the Battle of the Coral Sea (same as in Our Time Line [OTL]) why does the *Yorktown* head back to the West Coast when she could get patched up in Sydney [Page 239]?

As said, Conroy describes the horrors of the occupation in rather more detail than some would like. I suspect it would be even worse. The response is even more striking. The Japanese plan to annex the Hawaiian archipelago in a ceremony on August 1, 1942. The *kido butai* will be there, after which Yamamoto himself will lead it in a strike against the American mainland, which will presumably bring about the desired loss of will.

However, the Americans have some plans of their own. Not the least of which is the Doolittle Raid — flying boats rigged as bombers, to re-damage the oil tanks. (He'd rather be flying B-25s from carriers to China, bombing Japan along the way, but one does what one can with what one has.) And then there are the navy fighters flown in to the Big Island of Hawai'i itself, to strike at Oahu from a field operated by guerrillas. Not to mention the American fleet itself . . .

For all that the book is 350 pages long, it sometimes seems a bit pinched. And as I've said (at some length) the situation has problems. What comes next does follow, so to speak, at least until there are just too many lucky shots at the end. Conroy is able to juggle different and disparate plot elements consistently and have references to a world beyond the events, as it were.

**WARNING**

### HISTORY GEEK SECTION

Conroy's principal Point Of Departure, the dispatch of the "third wave" against the fuel storage at Pearl Harbor, is problematic. The launching of a third wave from the Japanese carriers was rejected by *kaigun chūjō* Nagumo for many good reasons. For one, the strike would have to land on the carriers *at night*. For another, there was not enough fuel for either the planes or for the ships to carry out that attack and then go on to fulfill their other orders. (I suspect that Fuchida made up the story somewhat after the fact. History isn't so much written by the victors as it is by the survivors.)

To be fair, the on-line alternate history community has been suffering from a prolonged barrage from one very well-read but not very well-informed poster proposing a similar scenario, but one with even more effort put into it. (Not only a third strike, but a battleship bombardment, a blockship blocking the channel, even more aggressive minisub ops, paratroopers landing in the mountains, and a full-scale amphibious landing, all on December 7.) Like most monomaniacs, he wouldn't shut up.

A landing on Oahu would entail diverting army units and transport, the latter needed elsewhere, the former requiring high-level and acrimonious negotiations. It's not clear which the Japanese army thought the more important foe, the Allies or the Japanese navy. And any beach on Oahu would have problems. (In Harry Turtledove's series, he had the Japanese landing on the best surfing beach in Hawaii. The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles could cry "Cowabunga!" as they came in to shore on a twenty-foot wave, but Special Naval Landing Force men would be saying "glug glug" as their landing craft capsized.)

A work worth reading in this context is *Hawaii Under the Rising Sun: Japan's Plans for Conquest After Pearl Harbor* by John J. Stephan (2002). It is a somewhat scattered work, with chapters dealing with such diverse peripheral matters as Japanese future-war books (pace Bywater) and the reaction of Japanese and Japanese-Americans in Hawaii, as well as both actual and fantasized plans for the invasion. The Army could spare three divisions, one of which was in the process of being formed, for an invasion of Oahu in July, after a presumed successful result of the Midway Operation. What strategic plans existed called for taking Palmyra Atoll as well as Midway, and using them as advance air bases. One planner wanted to land on the Big Island, Hawai'i proper, and make that into another base.

That's right, three (smaller) divisions landing over beaches more suited for surfing and attacking two divisions plus whatever Marines are to hand. Some people are optimistic. (And the *kido butai* had no at-sea refueling available, was needed elsewhere . . .)

When the time comes to strike back, Conroy states that "the American carriers had returned to the Pacific." [Page 261] He mentions the *Hornet* (CV-8) [Page 291] and the *Enterprise* (CV-5) [Page 331]. Then, in a desperate measure, King offers to send the *Saratoga* (CV-3), *Wasp* (CV-7), and *Ranger* (CV-5) [Page 240] to join Admiral Spruance, Halsey having the same problem with shingles that he did in our world. (Which makes it odd that they'd call the strike Operation WASP [Page 240]; Nimitz even refers to the same story that Eric Frank Russell cites in his novel *Wasp* (1958).)

But wait! There's more! There is also a reference to "other carriers" [Page 261]. And one of the parts of the plan involves the delivery of a dozen F4F Wildcats to the Big Island, launched from . . . a British carrier [Page 248]. There is also a reference to the Indian Ocean campaign being dropped in favor of the landings in Oahu. Which means that the British East Indies fleet might be available, with HMS *Indomitable* and HMS *Illustrious*, though whether they would be carrying the slow biplane Albacore and Swordfish torpedo bombers would be another matter.

Questionability of a landing:

<http://www.combinedfleet.com/pearlops.htm>

British carriers:

<http://www.fleetairarmarchive.net/Ships/>

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### ISAAC NEWTON, C.I.D.

Review by Joseph T Major of  
*NEWTON AND THE COUNTERFEITER:  
The Unknown Detective Career of the  
World's Greatest Scientist*

by Thomas Levenson  
(Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; 2009;  
ISBN 978-0-15-101278-7; \$25.00)

*Handwritten note on the first page*

ACD:

The Americans have tampered with the title again.

JHW

"Now Watson, this is where the ideal reasoner of your romances lies buried. He was somewhat before our time, but his efforts are still an inspiration to me," Holmes said. I had never imagined Holmes being the sort of man to visit Westminster Abbey, but he had insisted upon doing so after having taken this peculiar case.

We stood before the tomb. Holmes took off his hat and translated the inscription. "Indeed, 'Mortals! Rejoice at such an ornament to the human race!' He prospered in not only my line of work, but even in the work we are proceeding to investigate."

"Alchemy?" I said, amazed.

— Not from "The Adventure of the Philosopher's Stone" [American title, "The Adventure of the Sorcerer's Stone"]

It seems utterly bizarre to imagine a senior government official engaged in personally conducting a criminal investigation and prosecution. The boundaries were looser in the old days, and some did. It seems even more improbable that the senior government official should be not only a significant figure in the academic world, but *the* greatest scientist of the time, and perhaps of all time. Add to that dabbling in alchemy, and the result is something too improbable for fiction.

Fiction has to make sense. Levenson has described a little-noted phase in the life and career of Sir Isaac Newton, F.R.S., Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, Member of Parliament for Cambridge University — and Warden, later Master, of the Royal Mint.

He begins with a short biography of Newton's life up to his appointment, focusing on his lesser-known activities. Yes, alchemy, and Levenson ties in his alchemical practices to his personal beliefs and activities.

There was a financial crisis in England in the 1690's; small change was disappearing. It seemed that the ratio of silver to gold was more advantageous on the Continent, so people were melting down silver coins, selling the bullion abroad for gold, at a profit, and using the gold to get more silver. Even the coins that were in circulation had the problem that the older ones were clipped.

The Mint installed new machinery, powerful

new coining equipment that would, among other things, mint coins with features that would betray their being clipped. But all the silver coinage in circulation (such as there was) would have to be called in and recoined.

A testimonial to Newton's universal genius emerges even here. He did a time-and-motion study and devised a means for increasing the production of coins. Even his alchemical researches proved relevant here, in that he had gained an understanding of chemistry.

Beyond that, he studied the problems of world cash flow, including the ultimate problem, which was that all the silver was going to China. All the while, Newton kept some connection with the world of natural philosophy, holding on to his professorship until he was promoted to Master of the Mint, which gave him a sufficient income to in fact get rich. (The Master got a fee for every pound of coinage. In Newton's first year on the job he got 3500£ this way, on top of his 500£ salary.) When he lost 20,000£ in the South Sea Bubble, it annoyed him, but did not bankrupt him. Levenson points out that here Newton did not do proper research, he failed to apply the same standards here that he did in the rest of his life.

All this money gave him leave and incentive to investigate counterfeiting. The existing English law on counterfeiting would be considered extreme by later standards; it was treason, and punished as such. Levenson cites a case of a woman who was convicted of coining and sentenced to be burned at the stake. (A search in the Old Bailey on-line records indicates that her sentence seems to have been remitted, but still . . .)

The "Counterfeiter" of the title was a smaller-bore figure, William Chaloner. Going through contemporary records (and I suspect there was a great deal to fill in), Levenson recreates life in the criminal society of Restoration England. Chaloner was a skilled craftsman and a careful planner, but faced the inevitable problem of unreliable underlings. Completely loyal henchmen seem only to exist in fiction.

The Warden (appropriate title) built a complex case against Chaloner, and after one misfire finally had him brought in and put on trial. Speaking of social differences, it is more than a little shocking by modern standards to realize that defendants then were not allowed to have counsel **at all**. The result seemed about as good, or bad, as the result produced by today's standards. Chaloner was convicted and sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered.

How exactly did Newton become so successful in so many different fields of endeavor? The answer was uttered by Holmes in *A Study In Scarlet*: "They say that genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains."

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### EXERCITUS UNI

Review by Joseph T Major of

*LEGIONARY:*

*The Roman Soldier's (Unofficial) Manual*

by Philip Matyszak

(Thames & Hudson; 2009;

ISBN 978-0-500-25151-5; \$24.95)

*conscribe te militem in legionibus. perevagare orbem terrarum. inveni terras externas. cognosce miros peregrinos. eviscera eos*

Join the legions, see the world, travel to foreign parts, meet interesting and exotic people, and disembowel them.

— *Legionary*, Pagina VI

Lucius Vorenus and Titus Pullo may be found on Pagina XCI. Iunio and Gaius Philippus are not included here, though to be fair, nowhere in Chapter VI “People Who Will Want to Kill You” [Paginae XCIV-CXIV] can Xena be found.

Matyszak has written an informative, witty guide to life in the Roman army of the principate of Trajan. This is, after all, the guy who said, “*ho dē Homēros ontōs ēn ho Simōnos*.” [“Indeed, I assure you that Homer’s family name was Simpson.”] He describes recruitment, training, day-to-day life, work, combat, and the rewards of battle. The picture that emerges is one that resonates with later soldiering; some things never change, it seems.

Discussed are the potential enemies, some of which are actually on the other side, but others including centurions, tribunes, and the like. Other points raised include the equipment you never think about, like the *patera*, the soldier’s all-in-one ration equipment:

*A good patera is important. You might need to use your sword in anger only once or twice in a campaign, but you will need your patera two or three times a day.*

— *Legionary*, Pagina LXVII

In addition, Matyszak discusses the other arms of service, their equipment, employment, and pros and cons. An army is not just one kind of soldier, and there are sections on cavalry, auxilia, and the Praetorians. As said above, there is talk about the enemies; Parthians, Germans, Picts, and yes, even those turbulent people from that little province that’s more trouble than all the rest of the empire put together, the *novoconservatorii* or Judeans.

As the back notes indicate, “Matyszak has a doctorate in Roman history from St. John’s College, Oxford, and is the author of *Ancient Rome on 5 Denarii a Day*, *Ancient Athens on 5 Drachmas a Day* [both mentioned in *Alexiad* V. 8 #2] . . .” and many other interesting classical history books. He must also have some military connections. Where else would you learn that in a helmet, “Convex internal protrusions become concave indentations in the skull.” [Pagina LVIII]?

The book is copiously illustrated with good drawings of equipment and men, as well as photographs of recreators in full (and heavy!) gear. Matyszak has produced a work that is both useful and amusing. As shown by the insightful chapter heading quoted above. Or his final advice on the legionary’s tombstone:

With the sculpture, make the bas relief

as precise and accurate as you can, paying particular attention to items of armour and weaponry.

Future historians will be so grateful.

**Finis**

— *Legionary*, Pagina CXCV

### NEW LIES FOR OLD

Review by Joseph T Major of

#### TREACHERY:

#### *Betrayals, Blunders, and Cover-Ups: Six Decades of Espionage Against America and Great Britain*

by Chapman Pincher  
(Random House; 2009;

ISBN 978-1-4000-6807-4; \$36.00)

I was somewhat surprised to learn that Pincher wasn’t able to pin the Pemberton-Billing trial (over a supposed German blackmail dossier), the Trust (the Soviet deception operation creating a spoof anti-Soviet movement), and the Venlo Incident (the capture of two British intelligence officers by a fake anti-Nazi movement) on the cunning mole Agent ELLI, also known as Sir Roger Hollis.

Harry Chapman Pincher, intelligence writer for the *Daily Express*, has had a long career of chronicling the dubious dark deeds of the intelligence services. Heretofore he was best known for being the co-author (and sole credited author) of *Their Trade Is Treachery* (1981), an earlier discussion of the explosive topic of Soviet penetration of the British Intelligence Services (the other writer was Peter Wright, who later found another co-writer and did *Spycatcher* (1987)).

Pincher’s thesis, inherited from Wright, is that Roger Hollis, sometime Director General of the Security Service (also known as MI-5) from 1956 to 1965, the counterespionage agency of the British government, was a Soviet agent. In the course of recounting the history of the less than energetic efforts of MI-5 in pursuing Soviet agents, Pincher puts forth some unusual theses.

For example, the defection of Burgess and Maclean was considered an example of spies escaping retaliation. Pincher says that in fact the defection of Maclean was allowed, because prosecuting him would have been an even greater embarrassment to the government. (Their having ignored for example his telling all and sundry, while in the depths of inebriation, that he was the English Hiss; *in vino veritas*.)

Not all of the book focuses on the failings of Hollis. Pincher discusses the strange case of Commander Lionel “Buster” Crabb, the diver who, contrary to Anthony Eden’s naïve orders, attempted to do an underwater inspection of a Soviet cruiser visiting Portsmouth. (Eden made some noises about their being guests; a ship from the Main Ally of the Main Adversary visiting Leningrad or Sevastapol would be thoroughly spied on.) It could be mentioned that Crabb was in poor condition; Pincher discusses the problems consequent upon his disappearance and the subsequent finding of an unidentifiable corpse that could have been his. [He gives no credence to the bizarre claim put forth by “Christopher Creighton” in *The*

*Khrushchev Objective* (1988) that he himself killed Crabb during an underwater fight.]

One point to be noted is that there is no mention of this matter in either the Mitrokhin (*The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archives and the Secret History of the KGB*, by Christopher Andrew and Vasilii Mitrokhin (1999)) or the Vassiliev papers (*Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (2009; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 8 #3). One would think that the recruitment of the chief of British counter-intelligence would be well remembered and exuberantly recounted throughout the organs of Soviet state security. Mitrokhin and Andrew say that ELLI was Leo Long (*The Sword and the Shield*, Pages 90-91), and neither book even mentions Hollis in the indices.

### THE RIDE OF . . .

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**WIR WOLLTEN HITLER TÖTEN.**  
**Ein letzter Zeuge des 20. Juli erinnert sich**  
(VALKYRIE:

*The Story of the Plot to Kill Hitler, by Its Last Member*)

by Philipp Freiherr von Boeselager with  
Florence and Jérôme Fehrenbach,

Translated by Steven Rendell

(Knopf; 2009;

ISBN 978-0307270757; \$24.95)

After reading such incisive and informative wartime books as Louis Nizer’s *What to Do With Germany* (1944), Henry Morgenthau’s *Germany Is Our Problem* (1945), and Emil Ludwig’s *The Moral Conquest of Germany* (1945), one would conclude that a member of the Rhenish aristocracy would be a whole-hearted supporter of Hitler, a devoted Aryan who despised the Jews as the authors of the temporary defeat of the Teutonic Conspiracy for World Domination. Thus Baron Von Boeselager the Elder would have cooperated in the Final Solution to the Jewish Problem.

For some values of “cooperation”. To wit:

. . . There were three Jewish families in our little town of Heimerzheim. Our father, seeing the danger, advised them to flee the country. He even offered to pay their travel expenses. Two of the families followed his advice and emigrated to the United States. The father in the third family, whose name was Moses, elected not to go. He thought the Iron Cross he had been awarded for service in the trenches in 1914 would ensure his safety. He was sadly mistaken. A few years later, he was arrested along with the rest of his family. We never saw them again.

— *Valkyrie*, Page 21

The title, even the German title (“We wanted to kill Hitler”) is a little misleading. This is as much a story of a serving soldier as it is a story of conspiracy. Boeselager entered the army because, well, it was his responsibility. He didn’t find out the horrid stuff until a few years

on.

Indeed, the circumstances under which he found out were striking. He was aide-de-camp to a senior commander, when the SS officer responsible for the section of occupied Russia behind their part of the front sent in a report that mentioned that five Gypsies [Roma] had received "special treatment". The original is *Sonderbehandlung* and now we know how special that was, but when the commander asked the SS man what that was he said, "Those? We shot them! . . . All the Jews and Gypsies we pick up are liquidated — shot!" [Page 79]

The SS officer was Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski (he was of Kashubian ancestry, some Aryan), later to demolish Warsaw. The army commander was Field-Marshal Gunther von Kluge, not known as a particularly oppositional sort, although his headquarters was full of them. (Kluge was called "kluge Hans", a pun on his name and the performing horse Kluge Hans "Clever Hans".)

Boeselager was a cavalryman, and became commander of a cavalry regiment. This could be put down to the technical retrogression of the German Army in Russia as the war continued, as trucks and other mechanized equipment was concentrated in the *Panzerwaffe*, but under those circumstances sometimes cavalry had more mobility.

Boeselager's role in the conspiracy was very direct. He was supposed to shoot Hitler. Indeed, until he died he retained the pistol he was supposed to use. Things didn't work out. Indeed, there were three attempts on Hitler's life in a very short period, all of which failed to work out.

With such inspiration, Boeselager nevertheless fought on in an orderly manner. He demonstrated a noteworthy concern for the men under his command. The book describes the grueling and cruel experience of ordinary combat in sufficient detail to avoid the appellation of armywank.

And yet he survived. There is another book here in the tale of how the survivor rebuilt his life after the war, and the writers should be encouraged to tell it.

The translation often slips up on military matters. Thus the photograph on Page 174 with the caption "Georg presents the Iron Cross First Class to his brother." No, it's the *Ritterkreuz des Eisernen Kreuzes*, the Knight's Cross. Which he received on of all days July 20, 1944. Boeselager had both the Knight's Cross and the Legion of Honor.

As for Why . . . Nizer, Morgenthau, Ludwig, Rex Stout, and the others of their sort do not seem to have had much concern about these people. I wonder if they ever met Boeselager, Axel von dem Bussche, Rudolf von Gersdorff, Fabian von Schlabrendorff (a prominent German lawyer!), or any of the other remnant. The popular argument then was that this was rats leaving the sinking ship, if not the true masters discarding another front, and that they wanted Hitler's conquests without Hitler.

The discontent seems to have been very high-up. Boeselager reports on a discussion that

two of the leading personalities in the conspiracy, Gottfried von Bismarck (yes a descendant of the Iron Chancellor) and Wolf Graf Helldorf had with an ambassador, over the new potentialities of the coup, now that a reliable military force was to hand in the form of Boeselager's cavalry regiment [Page 110]. Since the ambassador was the notorious Franz von Papen, who seemed to have a foot in every camp, this may help explain why (for example) Papen was exonerated at the Nuremberg Trial.

Before the 20. Juli Gersdorff and Busche had tried to blow up the Führer. Abroad, not only did Operation FOXLEY consider his death (see *Killing Hitler* (2003; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 8 #3)) but Eddie Chapman, Agent ZIGZAG, volunteered to blow Hitler up, and he knew from explosives, having been the best cracksmen in London (see *Agent Zigzag* by Ben Macintyre (2007; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 6 #5)). It's enough to make one a Manichean Gnostic, thinking that the world is indeed run by the Evil One.

As for the post hoc explanations of "wanting Nazi conquests without the Nazis," Boeselager delivers a powerful response. It's rather like the justification given by the BBC's panel of experts in *Killing Hitler*, or the reason J. G. Ballard was grateful to Harry Truman. Arch-conspirator Henning von Tresckow (whose suicide is painfully described on Pages 166-169) said:

"Gentlemen, every day we are assassinating nearly sixteen thousand additional victims. We have no choice."  
— *Valkyrie*, Page 104

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### THE UNINCORPORATED MAN

by Danni Kollin and Eytan Kollin  
(Tor; 2009;

ISBN 978-0-7653-1899-2; \$25.95)

Review by Lisa Major

Recently I checked a very interesting book out of the library. It was titled *The Unincorporated Man*, by brothers Dani and Eytan Kollin. The blurb on the back marketed it as being in Heinlein's style but it was actually a modern retelling of H.G. Wells' *The Sleeper Wakes*. It is not really in Heinlein's style. There was only one Heinlein. The Kollin brothers have their own fresh voices. Their sleeper is put at odds with the future culture, which is not the usual dystopia. The antagonist is very well presented.

We got a good Borders coupon along with Borders bucks, which I used for a hardback copy of this book. It came out this year, making it eligible for next year's Hugo. I would like to see it at least get nominated. Read it for yourselves and see if you agree with me.

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### COCONUT M&MS

Candy Review by Johnny Carruthers  
<http://chocolatescifi.livejournal.com/>

I was just a little surprised when I saw this M&Ms variation at Dollar Tree yesterday. Cybele May of Candy Blog had written about

them recently, in an entry about upcoming releases. But if I'm remembering correctly, she said that the Coconut M&Ms wouldn't be out for another month or so. That was the thing that surprised me.

First, let's get the obvious bits out of the way. This is a variation on the milk chocolate M&Ms candy — what used to be called "Plain M&Ms." The inside is milk chocolate which has been infused with coconut flavor. No coconut, just the flavor. This coconut-flavored chocolate is covered in the M&Ms sugar shell makes it . . . well, I think you all know the slogan.

The shells for this limited edition have a different color scheme than the usual M&Ms. There are only three colors — brown, white, and green. Brown and white to represent the outside and inside of a coconut, and green because, well, the M&M spokescharacter Green is featured on the bags. (That's the conclusion that first comes to mind, anyway, and Occam's Razor would seem to apply.) While most of the shells have the usual "M" imprint, a few of the candies bear imprints of the "M" with an umbrella, a palm tree, or a sun. This seems to be in keeping with the tropical theme of this candy.

The coconut flavor is stronger than some of the other flavors Mars has used in previous M&Ms limited editions. This is good; in some of those other variations, the infused flavor was too subtle, almost to the point of it barely registering on my tastebuds. Not here. The coconut and chocolate flavors are on equal footing here. Neither overwhelms or dominates the other.

As I said, there is no actual coconut in these M&Ms. When I tried my first candy, I thought there might have been some coconut in the chocolate, but I quickly realized that any texture I was encountering was the crunching of the candy shell.

As I said, this is a limited edition, so the usual disclaimer applies. I have no idea how long these will stay on the shelves. The tropical theme of both the flavor and the packaging would make it ideal for an annual release every summer. Whether Mars thinks this is a good idea is another matter.

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### STRAWBERRIED PEANUT BUTTER M&MS

Candy Review by Johnny Carruthers  
<http://chocolatescifi.livejournal.com/>

The Snickers Nougabot Bar isn't the only tie-in that Mars is producing in conjunction with *Transformers: Revenge Of The Fallen*. Mars is also bringing us the Strawberried Peanut Butter M&Ms.

I must confess that this particular edition leaves me just a little puzzled. As I mentioned in my review of the Nougabot Bar, it at least has a connection of some kind to the Transformers through the yellow color of the nougat. There doesn't seem to be any particular connection between this M&Ms variation and the Transformers universe. But as I have mentioned previously, I am not a Transformers fan, so there could easily be a connection, and I am not aware of it.

This edition is a variation on the Peanut Butter M&Ms. It starts with a core of peanut butter, which is covered with milk chocolate that has been infused with strawberry flavor. This is covered with the M&Ms sugar shell. And since I have probably gone through every possible joke on the M&Ms slogan by now, I think I will let you make up one of your own.

The shells have a slightly different color scheme for this edition. There are only three colors for the Strawberry Peanut Butter M&Ms: Red, brown (both of which can be found in the regular M&Ms bags), and a red-splotched yellow. The last one gives the appearance of something yellow that has been splattered with red paint.

The strawberry flavor in the milk chocolate is pleasant, but almost too subtle for this edition. It might have been better if Mars had made an M&Ms edition that was just strawberry-flavored milk chocolate. When the peanut butter is added to the mix, the strawberry flavor is almost too subtle, becoming almost overwhelmed by the flavor of the peanut butter. It isn't a bad combination of flavors; it's just that the strawberry flavor need to be a little stronger to make it a better balance of flavors.

Unlike the Nougabot Snickers, the Strawberry Peanut Butter M&Ms didn't come with any Transformers Bits & Bytes. I was a little surprised, because after last year, I was rather expecting some interesting bits of trivia on the packaging of both movie tie-ins.

And since this is a limited edition, the usual disclaimers should apply. This should be around for at least the first few weeks of release for *Transformers: Revenge Of The Fallen*. After that, I have no idea if Mars will ever plan a re-release. So enjoy them while you can.

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## THE JOY OF HIGH TECH

by Rodford Edmiston

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

### Skylarking

The original, magazine serial version of *The Skylark of Space* has been in public domain for a while. You can download it from Project Gutenberg.

Reading the first version, you realize why Doc Smith wanted to re-write the story when the novel was printed. His style had grown by then, and the original version — which often reads like one of the original Tom Swift stories — had some uncomfortable features. However, for some reason he left out a number of important details in the re-write. Reading the original provides answers to several questions about technical details and some story elements.

One of the more interesting of these technical details is that one notch is consistently about half a g. This is true in both the smaller ship DuQuesne flies and in the *Skylark*. The *Skylark* has a double drive with each capable of providing thirty notches. That's thirty g total. Yet Seaton remains conscious at 16 g, and the whole crew survives seventy-two hours at

maximum throttle. In spite of "special chairs" and suits and breathing pure oxygen at plus pressure, that's not really possible... unless there's something else going on.

Let's take a look at what Seaton says about the effects he discovers:

"First: That it is a practically irresistible pull along the axis of the treated wire or bar. It is apparently focused at infinity, as near-by objects are not affected.

"Second: I have studied two of the border-line regions of current we discussed. I have found that in one the power is liberated as a similar attractive force but is focused upon the first object in line with the axis of the bar. As long as the current is applied it remains focused upon that object, no matter what comes between. In the second border-line condition the power is liberated as a terrific repulsion.

"Third: That the copper is completely transformed into available energy, there being no heat whatever liberated."

So, we have a pure thrust force, a pure attractive force, a pure repulsive force and a source of whatever form of energy we want, all by direct conversion of matter at very close (as noted in later stories, it's not perfect) to 100% efficiency. Any competent engineer could revolutionize the world with any of these. Even if the first three had to be externally powered any of them would still world-changing.

As a space drive, the copper bar would open up the solar system. Unfortunately, there just isn't enough energy in matter to push a ship very close to the speed of light. Even using Newtonian mechanics (which we could excuse Doc Smith for doing, since Einsteinian mechanics were less than twenty years old when he wrote this, only he doesn't seem to have done the math; or maybe just didn't like the results) you use about a third of the ship's mass getting to 0.9 C. That's far more mass than it takes in the books. Using relativistic equations, you need 130% of the ship's mass equivalent in energy to get that fast.

This is not an interstellar drive, at least not for humans for anything but the closest stars. Using some sort of staged process this could be used to send probes to other stars. However, for such short distances as inside the Solar System this technology works great.

At closest approach, Mars is a little over a day away at a constant one gravity of acceleration, turning over halfway. Naturally, you also have to take into account the velocity difference of the two planets, besides just covering the distance. The maximum difference between the orbital velocities of Earth and Mars is less than 8,000 m/s. At one g that's just a bit over thirteen minutes. Depending on the exact geometry of the situation, you would almost certainly add less time than that, simply by

adjusting your direction of acceleration and turnover point.

Likewise, at closest approach Jupiter is just about five days away at one g.

It's obvious — especially reading the original published version — that copper-powered craft accelerate far harder than humans should be able to withstand. Even with the "special" floors and seats, the occupants should be killed in minutes several times in the first story. In the second novel we learn that there is a way to apply the accelerative force uniformly to the entire contents of the ship. Many people have theorized this effect is inherent to the copper drive. That in the basic form Seaton developed, this effect only partially affected what was outside the bar. So it's possible to use higher accelerations without deleterious effect. That *really* opens things up.

The trip to Mars described above takes 19.6 hours at two g, contrasting with the 29.1 at one. The higher acceleration means a higher copper consumption, though. The way the math works out the increase in energy required is roughly proportional to the increase in acceleration (though for long trips high accelerations cause relativistic effects to become significant, increasing copper consumption). So this trip uses about twice as much copper.

Let's really bump things up, to forty g. The near Mars trip time drops to 4.6 hours. However, this high acceleration uses *forty times* as much copper as the one g trip. Keep in mind, though, the concentration of energy in matter. For a ten tonne spacecraft (hey, we're talking about Doc Smith, here; of course it'll be big) the one g Mars trip uses just one thirty-one grams of copper. The two g trip takes fifty-six. The forty g trip takes a bit less than one and a quarter kilograms of copper.

The second effect appears to work in a manner similar to quantum entanglement. This is a subatomic effect where two particles can be associated in a way which persists and is instantaneous no matter how far the particles are separated. This is impressive, especially when you realize Einstein didn't come up with the idea until 1935, and it wasn't definitively demonstrated until 1980. (Mention this long-verified faster-than-light effect to most physicists and they'll shuffle their feet and mutter things like "apparent but not real" and "can't send information." Actually, there's a lot in quantum mechanics which produces that effect.)

Using the attractive effect to move things at a distance has a vast array of uses. Couple that with the compass effect, and you have something which could be applied in myriad ways. Track items and individuals. Measure distances to astronomical objects. (There's no clue as to whether the act of locking on to something is an instantaneous quantum effect or is limited to the speed of light. Even if the latter, we could lock onto the nearer stars with a little patience.)

Where the attractive effect is obviously purely linear, the repulsive effect appears to be radial. I believe it is only described as being applied through the copper strips or plates on



the exterior of a spherical craft. The shields mentioned in later books for ships of other shapes are something different. This still allows for some interesting uses.

First, of course, is protection. However, there's also the frictionless aspect. Imagine evacuated transport tubes, filled with spherical vehicles with copper repellers on the outside. No friction, no air drag. No collisions, either.

Doc keeps describing the effect of the X-plosive bullets in ways which seem to indicate that it doesn't involve the emission of any radiation, including heat. (He mentions flame at least once, but that could be shock-induced combustion.) Perhaps they work by using the repulsive effect. Just drive a small sphere of treated copper to disruption and you get a sharp, hard shock, shoving outwards, like the wave of an explosion. Or maybe they do work from heat. I can't find enough clues to tell, either way.

Finally, we have energy generation. The fantastic thing here is not just the amount, but the concentration. With the conductors to handle it, you could have a multi-megawatt power plant in a steamer trunk.

Keep in mind that you can generate any energy with this. Electricity. Heat. UV. In *Skylark Three* they meet people who have had copper energy for a while, and who have hand weapons which utilize the direct liberation effect to create destructive beams. (This could actually meet my goal of having a flashlight with a perceptible recoil! :-)

The attractive effect actually seems to be the most flexible. There are plenty of extrapolations which might be possible with this effect. An atomic force microscope uses a very fine conductive needle to map the positions of individual atoms. It can even pick up atoms and move them around. A few years back one was used to spell IBM in letters only a few atoms high.

Imagine if you could do that with needles of activated copper. Now, imagine three arrays of thousands of such needles, in a half cube, picking up and placing individual atoms. Building things.

There might even be a way to record the "set" of an attractor, rather than keeping the power on all the time. Among other functions, you could use this to find and pull whatever material you wanted. Just tune your attractor to gold, and fly a close grid pattern over international waters.

Better yet, tune it to X, to make sure you keep your monopoly. I mean, you don't really want this stuff in unsupervised hands, right?

*The Skylark of Space*

<http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/20869>

## ROSCOE ARBUCKLE

by Steven H Silver

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000779/>

This is the third of a series of six articles on silent film comedians. Other articles will be appearing in other fanzines, including *Chunga*, *Askance*, *The Drink Tank*, *The Reluctant Famulus*, and *Challenger*. Eventually, all six

will be combined, along with "DVD Extras" in the 2009 issue of *Argentus*.

Roscoe Conkling Arbuckle was born in Kansas on March 24, 1887, the youngest of nine children, and named after Republican political boss Roscoe Conkling, a strange choice considering that his father, William Goodrich Arbuckle, was a staunch Democrat. Apparently, William was convinced that Roscoe was illegitimate and hated him, naming him after a man he also hated to confirm that feeling. Throughout his youth, William beat Roscoe.

The family moved to Santa Ana, California when Roscoe was a year old. His mother died when he was 12 and his father abandoned him shortly after. Arbuckle survived by taking odd jobs in restaurants and hotels in San Jose, eventually being discovered when he was singing in a restaurant kitchen. The Vaudevillian who found him persuaded him to perform at a local amateur night, where he was heard by David Grauman, who recruited him to perform in Vaudeville as a singer and dancer for his brother Sid Grauman, who would go on to build Grauman's Chinese Theatre and Grauman's Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood. When opera singer Enrico Caruso heard Arbuckle sing, he told the comedian to "give up this nonsense you do for a living, with training you could become the second greatest singer in the world."

By 1904, he was touring the American West as part of the Pantages Theatre circuit, including a stint in San Francisco which coincided with the Earthquake of 1906. He toured in Vaudeville for several years before making his first film, *Ben's Kid*, for the Selig Polyscope Company in 1909. While continuing to tour, often in the company of actress Minta Durfee, Arbuckle made several films for Selig until 1913, when he left the company, which had gotten its start in Chicago in 1896 and later became the first permanent film studio in Los Angeles.

At Keystone, Mack Sennett not only hired Arbuckle to replace outgoing comedic star Fred Mace, with whom Arbuckle appeared in his first film at Selig, but he also hired Durfee and Arbuckle's nephew, Al St. John. At the time, Keystone was making madcap comedies that didn't focus too heavily on plot, instead taking the general running-around and pratfalls from Vaudeville and recreating them on the much larger stage that film allowed, adding props, including cars, planes, and crowds.

Sennett was adding numerous comedians to his company, including Mabel Normand, who made numerous films with Arbuckle, including the popular "Fatty and Mabel" series, and Charles Chaplin, who made seven films with Arbuckle in 1914. During that time, Chaplin borrowed a pair of Arbuckle's oversized pants and adopted them in the creation of a character of his own, the Little Tramp.

Most of the great silent film comedians had their own trademarks, whether it was Ben Turpin's crossed eyes, Chaplin's can and moustache, or Buster Keaton's pork pie hat. In Arbuckle's case, he wisely played off his youthful looks and adopted a pair of pants that

was too short for him. The look exaggerated his youthful looks by giving the appearance of a boy who had just gone through a growth spurt.

Arbuckle also tried to keep his weight above three hundred pounds throughout his career. Despite this, he was quite agile and had a grace about him while performing pratfalls and other physical stunts. When paired with other, smaller, actors, like Buster Keaton, Arbuckle used his size and strength to good effect to effortlessly throw his partners around. On the other hand, he never played being fat for a laugh. Chairs wouldn't break under him and he wouldn't find himself in unnaturally tight spaces.

At Keystone, Arbuckle began to work as a director as well as an actor. The first comedian to also direct, Arbuckle created the path that other comedians, such as Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Harold Lloyd, would eventually follow. As a director, however, Arbuckle still found himself limited by Sennett's influence, and eventually moved his productions off the main Keystone lot to shoot in New Jersey.

Normand left Keystone after discovering that Sennett was having an affair, and by late 1916, Keystone looked like it was in trouble. Arbuckle decided it was time to leave Keystone for the newly formed Comique, which Arbuckle insisted was pronounced Comeekay.

In late 1916, Joseph Schenck approached Arbuckle and offered him \$1,000 a day salary, 25% of the profits, and creative control of his films. Arbuckle figuratively jumped at the chance, although he was grounded literally by a carbuncle that almost caused the doctors to amputate a leg, and an addiction to morphine. By 1917, however, he was ready to start work again.

Comique's first film was *The Butcher Boy*, which starred Arbuckle, St. John, and Josephine Stevens as the love interest. As filming was beginning, Lou Anger brought a young Vaudevillian he had bumped into on the street into the studio. Buster Keaton agreed to appear in the day's shooting, but, wasn't particularly interested in leaving Vaudeville for film. Nevertheless, after taking home one of Arbuckle's cameras, disassembling it and reassembling it, Keaton returned the next day taking a \$40 weekly salary from Arbuckle, which meant giving up the \$250 he was making weekly on Broadway, and proceeded to make numerous films with Arbuckle's group before branching off on its own.

Between 1917 and 1920, Arbuckle and Keaton released sixteen films, at least a dozen of which are extant and available. For many of the films, they aren't partners in the way later comedic duos are. Frequently, rather than interacting together or responding to each other, the two men perform their own gags, almost as if in competition with each other to see who can do the most outrageous stunts or falls. In addition to pratfalls, one area of comedy in which both Arbuckle and Keaton excelled was the use of props. Perhaps more so than the other actors I'll be discussing in this series, Arbuckle had a way of turning everyday gadgets into pieces of comic art.

Arbuckle was also much more likely than Keaton, Lloyd, Chaplin, or Turpin to show up in films in drag, possibly because of the concept that a large man dressed as a woman was more humorous than a smaller man dressed in drag. Not only did Arbuckle appear in his shorts like this, but in many of his films, such as *Miss Fatty's Seaside Lovers* (1915) or *Rebecca's Wedding Day* (1914), saw him spend the entire film in drag playing a female, rather than a male character who dresses in disguise.

Arbuckle didn't last with Comique for very long. By December 1919, Paramount was making overtures to him, with Adolph Zukor offering a million dollars a year and feature length films. Arbuckle took the offer, despite the fact that it meant ceding creative control. After one period when Zukor had Arbuckle working on three films simultaneously, Arbuckle turned down an invitation to celebrate Labor Day with Keaton and instead decided to take a vacation to San Francisco.

On September 5, 1921, Fred Fischbach, who was sharing the suite with Arbuckle, hosted a party in his room, suite 1220 of the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. Despite Prohibition being in full swing, the party included alcohol, which would eventually net Arbuckle and Fischbach a \$500 fine. That, however, would be the least of Arbuckle's legal problems resulting from the infamous party.

At one point, Arbuckle went into his adjoining room to change clothes and saw a young actress, named Virginia Rappé, with whom he had been on a few dates, passed out on the floor of the bathroom. He helped her to the bed and got her a glass of water. After changing clothes in the bathroom, he found her lying on the floor again. He went into the suite and brought others back to help Rappé, at which point she started to scream that she was in pain. With the help of the hotel management, Arbuckle carried Rappé to a room down the hall, where a friend of hers, who had been drinking heavily at the party, Maude Delmont, joined her. Once a doctor arrived, Arbuckle left the hotel.

On September 9, Rappé died of peritonitis. Delmont claimed that Rappé died from injuries she sustained when Arbuckle raped Rappé, although Delmont changed her story often and on at least one instance claimed that Arbuckle had sexually assaulted Rappé with a Coke bottle. On September 11, 1921, Arbuckle was arrested and charged with murder.

As soon as Arbuckle's arrest was announced, theatres began banning Arbuckle's work, much as they would do a year later for Arbuckle's frequent co-star, Mabel Normand. Mayor J. Hampton Moore banned the showing of Arbuckle's films in Philadelphia on September 11 on the grounds that they would offend public morals due to the charges pending against Arbuckle. Similar actions were taken in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Washington, and other cities.

There was immediate public outcry, with the Heart papers, especially, playing up the most lurid accusations against Arbuckle. However, the legal evidence was otherwise. Judge Sylvain

Lazarus ordered that the charges be decreased from murder to manslaughter. While public opinion was against Arbuckle, his wife, Minta Durfee, from whom he had separated in 1917, came out to support him. Other actors and producers who supported him were asked by his attorneys to stay away, fearing a wave of Anti-Hollywood sentiment in San Francisco.

The trial began on November 14, prosecuted by Matthew Brady. Early in the trial, the fact that Brady had threatened one of his witnesses in order to get her testimony damaged his case. Furthermore, Delmont, who raised the initial outcry, did not appear on the stand for either prosecution or defense. On November 28, Arbuckle took the stand and told his story, which was more consistent than Delmont's. Brady was unable to poke holes in Arbuckle's testimony. Furthermore, medical testimony from both sides agreed that Rappé's punctured bladder was not caused by an external agent. On December 4, after 22 ballots, the jury was declared hung, 10-2 in favor of Arbuckle's acquittal.

Brady decided to bring the case back for a second trial. Arbuckle's defense team decided not to allow Arbuckle to take the stand, in theory to show their contempt for the prosecution. They also refused the chance to make closing arguments. Once again, Arbuckle found himself with a hung jury, although this time, taking his refusal to testify as a sign of guilt, they voted 10-2 to convict.

Brady once again brought the case to trial, Arbuckle took the stand, the prosecution's star witness, Zey Prevon, who had been threatened into testifying before the first trial, fled the country before she could be brought to the stand, and on April 22, 1922 Arbuckle was acquitted. The jury released a statement in support of their belief in his innocence:

Acquittal is not enough for Roscoe Arbuckle. We feel that a great injustice has been done him. We feel also that it was only our plain duty to give him this exoneration, under the evidence, for there was not the slightest proof adduced to connect him in any way with the commission of a crime.

He was manly throughout the case, and told a straightforward story on the witness stand, which we all believed.

The happening at the hotel was an unfortunate affair for which Arbuckle, so the evidence shows, was in no way responsible.

We wish him success and hope that the American people will take the judgement [*sic*] of fourteen men and women who have sat listening for thirty-one days to the evidence, that Roscoe Arbuckle is entirely innocent and free of all blame.

However, four days before the jury made their statement, Will Hays, in consultation with Nicholas Schenck, Adolph Zukor, and Jessy Lasky, announced that they would no longer be showing any Arbuckle films. The blacklisting,

the first in Hollywood's history, would officially be lifted in December 1922, but Arbuckle wouldn't work openly in films for a decade. Will Hays, who had previously served as the chairman of the Republican National Committee (1918-21), and served in Warren G. Harding's cabinet as Postmaster General from 1921-1922, had only recently become the President of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America in an effort to introduce clean, decent values to films. In 1930, he ushered through the Production Code (usually called the Hays Code) which introduced strong censorship into films.

Unable to get work in Hollywood, and beset with heavy debt, Arbuckle's friends, led by Buster Keaton, helped him pay off his legal bills. Arbuckle also went on a trip to the Orient, paid for by friends and upon his return, James Cruze gave him a cameo in a satire, playing himself in *Hollywood*. Keaton tried to get Arbuckle to direct *Sherlock, Jr.*, but the stress proved too great for Arbuckle, who backed out. Nevertheless, Keaton apparently used Arbuckle in several of his films, although uncredited and frequently with his familiar features obscured.

Beginning in 1925, Arbuckle was allowed to direct films, although in a nod to the public outrage against him even three years after his acquittal, he had to use a pseudonym, adopting the name William Goodrich, after his abusive father. Arbuckle and Durfee also got an amicable divorce, which allowed Arbuckle to marry Doris Deane. His marriage to Deane, however was hampered by Arbuckle's alcoholism and broke up in 1928.

One of Arbuckle's major attackers during the trials of 1922 was William Randolph Hearst, whose Hearst Newspapers worked to keep the scandal alive and in the public eye. Hearst once bragged to Buster Keaton that he had made more money of the Arbuckle Scandal than he had off the sinking of the *Lusitania*. However, Hearst apparently didn't have a personal animosity towards Arbuckle. In 1925, Arbuckle and Deane vacationed at Hearst's home, San Simeon, where according to Arbuckle, Hearst told him, "I never knew anything more about your case, Roscoe, than I read in the newspapers." Arbuckle's most successful film during his blacklisted years was *The Red Mill* (1927), which starred Heart's mistress Marion Davies, and Arbuckle was apparently asked to direct by Hearst, himself.

In 1928, still directing under the Goodrich name, Arbuckle opened Roscoe Arbuckle's Plantation Club, a nightclub which featured many of the comedians Arbuckle had known for years, including Keaton and Chaplin. However, the club was not able to survive the Great Depression and closed shortly after the stock market crashed.

When he had been blacklisted for a decade, *Motion Picture* magazine ran an advertisement entitled "Doesn't Fatty Arbuckle Deserve a Break?" signed by dozens of film stars. The result was that Arbuckle was offered a six film contract by Jack Warner in 1932. Arbuckle married a third time, to Addie McPhail as his career was about to relaunch. None of these films, Arbuckle's only talkies, although he

directed some talkies under the Goodrich name, have been released to DVD/video.

By June 28, 1933, Arbuckle had finished the first of the last of his films for Warner. They had done well enough that Warner Brothers signed him to a long term contract. The next day, after a night of celebrating the contract and his first wedding anniversary with Addie McPhail, she found Arbuckle had died in his sleep.

Of the six comedians I'm discussing, Turpin, Normand, Arbuckle, Lloyd, Keaton, and Chaplin, Roscoe Arbuckle is the only one who worked with all five of the others during the course of his career, ranging from his two films with Turpin to the forty he made with Normand. With regard to Chaplin, Arbuckle commented that he wished he could have made more, and longer, films with him.

Between 1909 and 1933, Arbuckle appeared in 163 films, with 153 before his blackballing in 1922. Unfortunately, spending ten years out of the public favor and dying at the very beginning of his comeback meant that Arbuckle didn't have the fan base or the resources to maintain his films. Both Chaplin and Lloyd managed to gain the rights and preserve their legacy. Although Arbuckle's friend Keaton did not, collector Raymond Rohauer did preserve the Keaton canon, including the shorts Keaton made with Arbuckle, although Rohauer gave Keaton top billing, turning Arbuckle into a supporting actor. For this reason, many of Arbuckle's films have been lost or severely damaged in ways that the other actors' have not been.

Virginia Rappé

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0710915/>

## IRISH HORROR

Review by Rodney Leighton of  
*NOCTURNES*

by John Connolly (2004)

John Connolly was born in Dublin in 1968. He has contributed to newspapers; written short stories to be read on radio and written some novels. The novels tend to be longish; with a certain characteristic: bad, evil people. Many of the novels feature on Charlie Parker, a former New York cop turned private eye and vigilante. There are about six novels featuring Parker; of those I have read he changes from a good guy who is tortured by the brutal murder of his wife and daughter to a cold blooded murderer, no different than the beasts he chases. The novels proclaim themselves to be thrillers; well, the blurbs in the front do. Each one has a horror element and that element grows with each novel.

*Every Dead Thing*, published in 1999, is a thriller the element of dead folks staying around; Charlie sees his murdered wife and child from time to time. *The Black Angel*, the last true Charlie Parker novel I have seen, is pure horror and not that good; I kept the other books I have gotten to possibly read again but donated that one to a secondhand store.

Some of the blurbs in the books compare Connolly to Stephen King; there is some validity to this. Parker lives in Maine and a number of the novels are based there; I have

seen some similarities to Robert Parker's *Spenser* in Charlie Parker and the earlier novels. In *The Reapers* he emulates a latter day Dean Koontz and puts his characters into life threatening situations and then meanders off into the past or arcane trivia for pages and pages. That one only has Parker part of the time; mostly his friends, a couple of gay guys, one a black former hitman for hire, still a cold blooded murderer and his partner, a ragamuffin former burglar. Lots of folks die. Some of them deserved to.

Zellers sells novels for \$4.99 plus tax. I don't usually buy many from there; that is a cheap enough price but still higher than free. However, on my latest excursion to that store, I spied *Nocturnes* by John Connolly.

It contains 18 stories; 2 novellas, whatever that means, and 16 short stories. Being that one of the long stories is a Charlie Parker novella, I read that first. It comes about the middle of the Parker saga as I know it; he is still a good guy and doesn't kill a single person in this story, which was a credible mix of thriller and horror, quite good story of child abduction and possession and an evil being living in mirrors.

The other long story, entitled "The Cancer Cowboy Rides", is a truly sick tale, pure King like. A creature infects a man with a being which gives him the ability and the need to infect people with super cancer; two or three days from infection and you die horribly. Rather a gross story but it did have a good ending.

These two stories start and finish the anthology per se; there are about three shorts following which were originally available only on the website which are all ghost stories with horrible aspects and all set in England or perhaps Ireland. "The Inn at Shillingford" is a pure old style English Horror story except perhaps a bit more yucky. "The Bridal Bed" doesn't really have a locale; it was sad and ridiculous and love carried to an extreme.

The thirteen short stories in the main part of the book are good, if you like ghosts and evil beings. The vampire tale was funny; most of the evil creature tales were typical of their kind but good to read and the ghosts ranged from sad to funny. Most of these are set in the United Kingdom.

Website can be figured out even by a Luddite like me:

<http://www.johnconnolly.co.uk>

**And as year follows year,  
More old men disappear,  
Someday no one will march there  
at all.**

Report by Joseph T Major

We regret to report the death of **Henry William Allingham** on **July 18, 2009**. Born in Clapton, a district of London, on **June 6, 1896**, Allingham became an auto body engineer, working for various companies including Ford Motor. He joined the Royal Naval Air Service in 1915, remaining with it until it was merged into the Royal Air Force in 1918; he was

discharged in 1919. He married Dorothy Cator [1895-1970] in 1918; they had two daughters (who emigrated to the States), six grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, 14 great-great-grandchildren, and one great-great-great-grandchild.

Since 2001 he had been one of the foremost public faces of the WWI veteran, having participated in many activities including the ninetieth anniversary wreath-laying ceremony at the Centopath in London on Remembrance Day 2008. At the time of his death he was the oldest living man in the world and the oldest British man ever. He was the last survivor of the Battle of Jutland, the last survivor of the Battle of Ypres, the last surviving member of the Royal Naval Air Service, and the last surviving founding member of the Royal Air Force. He received a funeral with full military honors, at St. Nicholas's Church in Brighton, on **July 30, 2009**. Among those present were his great-grandsons Brent Gray and Michael Gray, petty officers in the U.S. Navy.

Thanks to **Evelyn Leeper, Martin Morse Wooster, John Purcell, Guy H. Lillian III, and Robert S. Kennedy**,

We regret to report the death of **Henry John "Harry" Patch** on **July 25, 2009**. Born in Combe Down, Somerset on **June 17, 1898**, he was an apprentice plumber (with his father) when he was conscripted into the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry (now part of The Light Infantry) as a Lewis gunner.

After the War he returned to plumbing. He married Ada Billington in 1918; they had two sons (who predeceased him) before she died in 1976. His second wife, died in 1984 and his third in 2007. Along with Henry Allingham (above) he participated in the Remembrance Day 2008 ceremony. His autobiography *The Last Fighting Tommy* was published in 2007, making him the world's oldest author.

At the time of his death he was the oldest man in Europe. He was the last surviving man who had been at the Front, the last surviving wounded soldier, the last surviving British soldier of the War, and the last survivor of the Battle of Passchendaele.

Thanks to **John Purcell, Grant McCormick, Martin Morse Wooster, and Robert S. Kennedy**.

## FOR THE FALLEN

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for  
her children,  
England mourns for her dead across the  
sea.  
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her  
spirit,  
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august  
and royal  
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,  
There is music in the midst of desolation  
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they

were young,  
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and  
aglow.

They were staunch to the end against  
odds uncounted;  
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are  
left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years  
contemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the  
morning  
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing  
comrades again;  
They sit no more at familiar tables of  
home;  
They have no lot in our labour of the  
day-time;  
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes  
profound,  
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from  
sight,  
To the innermost heart of their own land  
they are known  
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we  
are dust,  
Moving in marches upon the heavenly  
plain;  
As the stars that are starry in the time of  
our darkness,  
To the end, to the end, they remain.

— R. Lawrence Binyon

And the band played "Waltzing Matilda" . . .  
we regret to report the death of **Edward  
"Ted" Kenna, VC, on July 8, 2009**. Born **July  
6, 1919**, Kenna enlisted in the Second  
Australian Imperial Force, and was assigned to the  
2/4th Battalion of the 6th Australian  
Division.

On May 15, 1945, at Wewak in New  
Guinea, his unit was assigned to capture a well-  
defended Japanese position. Private Kenna  
stood up and while under heavy Japanese fire  
delivered cover fire, firing a Bren light machine  
gun from the hip, then silencing the Japanese  
defenders with rifle fire. He was wounded in a  
later battle and spent more than a year in  
hospital, but recovered, marrying his nurse. He  
is survived by her and three of their four  
children. He was the last surviving Australian  
VC from the Second World War.

There are now nine surviving holders of the  
Victoria Cross. Two are Australian: Keith  
Payne, VC, a Vietnam vet, and Mark  
Donaldson, VC, the first recipient of the  
Victoria Cross for Australia, for actions in  
Afghanistan.

Remaining are:

#### Australia

Claude Stanley Choules (108) Royal Navy

#### Poland

Józef Kowalski\* (109) 22 Pulk Ułanów

#### United States

John Henry Foster "Jack" Babcock (109)  
146th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary  
Force

Frank Woodruff Buckles (108) United  
States Army

\* "WWI-era" veteran, enlisted between the  
Armistice and the Treaty of Versailles

National totals: Canada, U.K., U.S. 1 each;  
Poland 1 WWI-era. British Empire 2.

### IS MAKING ME WAIT — Part 1

Anticipation, the 67th World Science Fiction  
Convention

Trip report by Joe and Lisa



I had begun saving my pocket change again  
after NorEasCon. For some reason, I didn't feel  
the need to tap that resource going to Denver.  
This time was different. After some excavation  
(it had been surrounded by books in the long  
time since then), I unearthed the jar the change  
goes in. Then there was a lot of counting  
involved. The change-counter I had bought was  
missing, the plastic coin tubes broken, I think.  
I'd found a coin-collectors' tube at the flea  
market, and it did hold a proper (\$10) roll of  
quarters. Buying paper tubes was another  
bother and I ended up going to Office Depot  
(where this fine publication is printed) to get  
quarter tubes, lots of them. Then I had to heave  
a great mass of metal into Branch Banking &  
Trust to get bills, and another down to ValuMart  
to get rid of the pennies. The total came to  
\$593.31 — which did not include what I spent  
on tubes and the 8% or so cut the coin counter  
takes.

Next involved getting Canadian currency.  
The bank offers a service, which is available  
over the Internet. The assistant I talked to said  
I could use my bank card for such purchases. I  
don't think it's particularly feasible to give a  
motel employee my bank card as a tip. Well,  
desirable anyway. I got Can\$400. It came by  
FedEx and Grant kindly received the package.

After last time (2003 again) I figured I  
needed to be prepared. Amazingly, I could find  
the book I'd bought: *Gettysburg: A Battlefield  
Guide* by Mark Grimsley and Brooks D.  
Simpson (University of Nebraska Press; 1999).

It gives a driving tour, explains which way to  
look and what happened where you look, and so  
on. It does not include information on the site  
where "Melvin" Bean was wounded, where  
Lieutenant Haggerwells was killed by his own  
troops, the advance of Longstreet's troops  
taking the road to Winchester before the Battle  
of Union Mills, the address of the house where  
Harry Flashman bedded his latest conquest  
during a crucial moment in the battle, the place  
where General Stuart recovered after driving the  
tank through the bath house during his Ride of  
1963, and so on. Inadequacies everywhere.

When we went to Borders the Friday before  
I bought two books on the Battle of Gettysburg,  
to go with the guide. Background stuff,  
understand.

Then there came laundry. Lots and lots of  
laundry. That took up most of a Sunday,  
followed by intermittent additions as Lisa got  
her clothes selected.

On Thursday I went to the doctor to get my  
B-12 shot. That night I didn't sleep, for two or  
three different reasons. On Friday we had a big  
dinner with Grant and Carolyn Clowes, Tim  
Lane and Elizabeth Garrott, and Jack & Susan  
Young at Lee's Korean. We had a good time  
reminiscing about old times and new, talking  
about things from Classical History to next  
week.

#### Saturday, August 1, 2009

#### Louisville, KY — Madisonville, KY — Hopkinsville, KY

Grant had to get out early that day, too. We  
swung by the main library to drop off the last of  
Lisa's books (Had We But Known . . .), went  
down to Elizabethtown and had breakfast at the  
Golden Corral there, and made our way to  
Madisonville for lunch at a Cracker Barrel with  
my brother Tem and his wife, Julie.

My niece, Sarah, was not well and staying  
with her father, so we went to Tem's and Julie's  
to talk and also to wish her well. On the way we  
had a hair-raising experience when a black and  
white collie jumped out between two cars and  
we nearly hit it. Then, behind us, the dog dared  
fate again.

Tem & Julie had to go do something, so we  
left and drove down to Hopkinsville, where we  
checked into the motel. Once we had our things  
in, we went out and saw several relatives,  
including Lisa's aunt Daphne and her husband,  
my cousin Howard, and cousin Jim, who had  
kept the raincoat we had left at his house last  
time we were there. We also did a little  
shopping at Fred's, the local branch of a low-  
cost chain. I checked in with Grant and all was  
well at home.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 222.5

#### Sunday, August 2, 2009

#### Hopkinsville — Cadiz, KY — Louisville Thomas-Bridges Family Reunion

In the morning we indulged in the hotel  
breakfast. I also began reading one of the books  
on Gettysburg I had bought. We checked out  
(our room was on the first floor, which made

moving easy) and drove off to Cadiz. We drove through town, all the better to have fresh memories with which to compare it to Goshen, New York. The fabled Hamtown, the first place I ever ate ham biscuits, has reopened.

The reunion is at a wonderful facility on Lake Barkley (named after Alben Barkley, President of the U.S. in *To Sail Beyond the Sunset* and other offices in other timelines) and we got there early enough to see the table decorations before dinner was set up. Other Thomas-Bridges family members arrived, including Brenda Lile, whom we'd seen at the Garrott Reunion in July, with her husband David, who is a Garrott. Then, Edison Thomas arrived, 97 years old, and looking better than he had last year. The reunion was cheery enough, and I got to commiserate with Lisa's cousin Charles Bridges, the editor of the Thomas-Bridges family newsletter, who had had a really spectacular encounter with the Post Office. After the reunion, we went down to the Jolly Dairy Bar and Grill at the Lake Barkley Marina, where we saw cousin Ellen, Jim's daughter (see above about Jim). Ellen and her husband Scott are the biggest cattlemen in Trigg County, if that says anything, or even much.

Driving back to Louisville was uneventful for me, but Lisa's tooth was bothering her. I went out and got dinner at Bunz, washed the few clothes that had been used, packed the car, and caught up on mail after everything else was done.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 239.8

### Monday, August 3, 2009 Louisville — West Bloomfield, MI

Monday morning was bothersome. We had been planning to leave as early as possible, but a diversion was essential. We got to the dentists' when they opened and they managed to fit in Lisa at 8:30. In fact, they saw her before then, and said that she could get through without any emergency work. With that dubious reassurance, we set off for the north.

The Bob Evans restaurant we ate lunch at was a very congenial place. Now we used to eat at a Bob Evans in Louisville on Friday nights, but the place has been torn down now. If it had the features the Bob Evans in Tipp City had, I suspect Grant would regret it more. The Bob Evans in Tipp City had Wifi, you see. I sent some email and worked on my Facebook page.

We got some nice pictures of the Islamic Center of Toledo, a strange Arabian Nights building transported by the jann to the green fields of Ohio. It's visible from I-75. But I think that getting there set the stage for another problem, of which more tomorrow.

We hadn't seen my cousin Kathy and her husband Paul ever since, well, TorCon. In spite of being separated from my branch of the Major family by 200 years, her branch is remarkably like ours. Except for Cousin George, who is a Kiowa. Thanks to the wonders of modern technology we managed to get to their house without becoming lost. It is in a hard to find subdivision outside of Detroit.

Kathy and Paul were so hospitable it's impossible to believe. In return, we offered to find out about Paul's ancestors. His family came from Belarus, and you can imagine the tsouris involved in finding out about there. But seeing his parents' dates displayed made him a believer, and that was with our working with a Mac. He also showed us his guitars.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 396.9

Books read: *A Home for Our Heritage* by Geoffrey C. Upward

### Tuesday, August 4, 2009 West Bloomfield — Dearborn, MI — Kitchener, ON

Kathy went out to walk the dog that morning. When she came back in, she observed that the rear passenger side tire was flat. I had to unload the car to get at the spare and the jack, and jacking the car up left me wheezing. Fortunately there was a tire repair store not too far away. They wanted to sell me at least two and preferably four new tires. Let me be the judge of that.

So we left around ten and got on the road for the . . .

#### Henry Ford Museum

My cousin Charles Cook used to haunt flea markets, garage sales, and Uncle Don's salvage store in the old firehouse in Hopkinsville. He filled his house down in Locust Grove with all sorts of eccentric, unusual, and obscure things. Henry Ford was like that except he was a billionaire (by modern cash values, but still . . .).

When Ford said "History is bunk", he did not mean it the way Mustapha Mond interpreted it, that all the past needed to be wiped away. His complaint was that history as taught was a compilation of extraordinary events as done by the ruling class, completely ignoring how ordinary people lived. This view has become more popular, since then, though I don't think it was because of that.

The Henry Ford Museum is a museum of technology and of ordinary lives. I wonder why Asimov didn't ever go there. Thus there are exhibits showing typical working-class residences, or the sort of tools and items that ordinary people used.

Or would have used. We toured the Dymaxion House, Buckminster Fuller's ingenious plan for the use of airplane-construction capacity for housing for returning soldiers. It was very Fullersh; for example, the shower is most comfortably usable for someone about Fuller's height (he was rather short), and needs to be stepped up into. And imagining how a subdivision of them would look after a tornado hit . . .

The Arctic exploration plane *Josephine Ford* is on exhibit, a reconstruction of the takeoff site, together with a discussion of the controversy, one mildly pro-Byrd. (Bernt Balchen, who would work with Byrd later, had some doubts. He is buried two or three graves over from Byrd in Arlington National Cemetery, which would make Resurrection Day interesting.) The South Pole plane *Floyd*

*Bennett* is also on exhibit. As part of a display on passenger flight.

Having already had our disaster, we left and drove north. We were braced for a prolonged siege at Douane Canada Customs about why we were coming to their wonderful country, eh? The border control officer asked four questions, didn't even need to look at our passports, and we zoomed off into Canada.

The hotel in Kitchener was not all that bad. I thought I was lost and as usual was on the right road to there. We ate a bit late, which meant that we got to Chapters about ten minutes before it closed, but I did get a copy of *Hitler's War*. Since Chapters is likely to get British books before they get into American stores, I had hoped to find a copy of *Coward at the Bridge*, but there wasn't enough time to look under "D" in fiction.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 243.4

Books read: *Gettysburg* by Stephen W. Sears

### Wednesday, August 5, 2009 Kitchener — Montréal, QC

Up early enough, breakfast at the Tim Horton's across the street, and we were off. The trip was nice, with views of remarkably home-like country. In more ways than one, for we drove through a serious rainstorm at one point. Meanwhile, a far more serious one had hit Louisville, causing flooding. The main library was flooded out, as was Churchill Downs.

(The last estimate I heard was fifty thousand books, a huge cultural loss. Lisa)

Then we entered Québec. Most of the people one has contact with do speak English, so perhaps the worst effects of identity politics have receded. However, so do the police.

The last length of the trip was a profound traffic jam, in which I found myself unable to reach the turnoff, had to work my way through a maze of twisty little side streets, all of them alike, and ended up turning left at an intersection where, apparently, turns were forbidden. So welcome to Montréal, and here's your traffic ticket.

The hotel was interesting. They put us in a handicapped-access room. I had doubts about getting a wheelchair into it. And then they brought up the refrigerator. At least they had a refrigerator. With that and all our gear it was pretty cramped.

So we went to register. Registration was very fast and efficient. On the way we ran into **Mark & Evelyn Leeper**. They wanted to eat in Chinatown, I couldn't, so they went their way and we ours. We ended up eating at the Steak frites, a restaurant between the Palais de Congres and the party hotel, the Delta.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 401.1

Books read: *Hitler's War* by Harry Turtledove

. . . To Be Continued

**YOU'RE SO VAIN**

by Joe

On July 22, 2009, a total eclipse of the sun took place. The path of totality ran from India through Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, China, the Ryukyu Islands, the Marshall Islands, and Kiribati, ending in the Central Pacific. The maximum totality was six minutes and 39 seconds, seen in the ocean south of the Bonin Islands. This is the longest totality of an eclipse this century, with a longer not coming until the eclipse of June 13, 2132.

The eclipse was part of Saros 136, which began on June 14, 1360 and will end on July 30, 2622. The next eclipse in that saros will be on August 2, 2027 and will be a total eclipse. It will be visible in Spain, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. The maximum totality will be six minutes and 23 seconds.

The next solar eclipse will be on January 15, 2010 and will be an annular eclipse, visible in India, Sumatra, and Borneo. It is part of Saros 141, which began on May 19, 1613 and will end on June 13, 2857. The next total eclipse will be on July 11, 2010, visible in Chile and Argentina; the maximum totality will be five minutes and 20 seconds. This eclipse is part of Saros 146, which began on September 19, 1541 and will end on December 29, 2893.

<http://www.hermit.org/Eclipse>

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

**FANZINES***Askance* #15

John Purcell, 3744 Marielene Circle,  
College Station, TX 77845-3926 USA  
[j\\_purcell54@yahoo.com](mailto:j_purcell54@yahoo.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*Beyond Bree* June 2009, July 2009, August 2009

Nancy Martsch, Post Office Box 55372,  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-5372 USA  
[beyondbree@yahoo.com](mailto:beyondbree@yahoo.com)  
Not available for The Usual; \$15/year, \$20 overseas.

*Challenger* #30 Summer 2009

Guy H. Lillian III, 8700 Millicent Way  
#1501, Shreveport, LA 71115-2264 USA  
[GHLIII@yahoo.com](mailto:GHLIII@yahoo.com)  
<http://www.challzine.net>  
**Best Fanzine Hugo Nominee**

*Claims Department* #10

Christopher J. Garcia  
[garcia@computerhistory.org](mailto:garcia@computerhistory.org)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>  
**Best Fan Writer Hugo Nominee**

*The Drink Tank* #214, #216, #217, #218, #219, #220

Christopher J. Garcia  
[garcia@computerhistory.org](mailto:garcia@computerhistory.org)

<http://www.efanzines.com>  
**Best Fanzine Hugo Nominee**  
**Best Fan Writer Hugo Nominee**

*eI* #45 August 2009

Earl Kemp, Post Office Box 6642,  
Kingman, AZ 86402-6642 USA  
[earlkemp@citlink.net](mailto:earlkemp@citlink.net)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*File 770:156*

Mike Glycer, 705 Valley View Avenue,  
Monrovia, CA 71016-2446 USA  
[Mikeglyer@cs.com](mailto:Mikeglyer@cs.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*Fish Out of Water* #339, #340, #341

Marty Helgesen, 11 Lawrence Avenue,  
Malverne, New York 11565-1406 USA

*Journal of Mind Pollution* #34

Richard A. Dengrove, 2651 Arlington Drive  
#302, Alexandria, VA 22306- USA  
[richd22426@aol.com](mailto:richd22426@aol.com)

*The Knarley Knews* #134

Henry & Letha Welch, 18345 Skyline  
Boulevard, Los Gatos, CA 95033-9562  
USA  
[knarley@welchcastle.com](mailto:knarley@welchcastle.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>  
<http://tkk.welchcastle.com/>

*Hell I'm Still Here!!*

Rodney Leighton, 11 Branch Road, R. R.  
#3, Tatmagouche, Nova Scotia B0K 1V0  
CANADA

*Luna!* #4 April 2009

C. D. Carson, Luna Project, Post Office Box  
1035, Fort Worth, TX 76101-1035 USA  
[ed\\_luna@lunarcc.org](mailto:ed_luna@lunarcc.org)  
<http://www.lunarcc.org>

*MT Void* V. 27 #50 June 12, 2009 — V. 28 #6 August 7, 2009

Mark and Evelyn Leeper, 80 Lakeridge  
Drive, Matawan, NJ 07747-3839 USA  
[eleeper@optonline.net](mailto:eleeper@optonline.net)  
[mleeper@optonline.net](mailto:mleeper@optonline.net)  
<http://www.geocities.com/evelynleeper>

*Opuntia* #67.1F June 2009, #67.5 July 2009

Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta  
T2P 2E7 CANADA

*Pablo Lennis* #261 August 2009

John Thiel, 30 N, 19th Street, Lafayette, IN  
47904-2950 USA

*The Reluctant Famulus* #70 Summer 2009

Thomas D. Sadler, 305 Gill Branch Road,  
Owenton, KY 40359-8611 USA  
[tomfamulus@hughes.net](mailto:tomfamulus@hughes.net)  
[thomassadler101@yahoo.com](mailto:thomassadler101@yahoo.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*Royal Swiss Navy Gazette* #18 June 2009

Garth Spencer, Post Office Box 7422,  
Hillcrest Park, Vancouver, BC V5V 3P0

CANADA  
[gspencer@shaw.ca](mailto:gspencer@shaw.ca)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*Science Fiction/San Francisco* #87 June 10,  
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#90 July 22, 2009. #91 August 4, 2009  
Christopher J. Garcia and Jean Martin  
[SFinSF@gmail.com](mailto:SFinSF@gmail.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>  
**Best Fan Writer Hugo Nominee**

*Southern Fandom Confederation Update* V. 1  
#6 June 2009, V. 1 #7 July 2009  
Warren Buff, 22144 B Ravenglass Place,  
Raleigh, NC 27612-2936 USA  
[warrenmbuff@gmail.com](mailto:warrenmbuff@gmail.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*Visions of Paradise* #142  
Robert Sabella, 24 Cedar Manor Court,  
Budd Lake, NJ 07828-1023 USA  
[bsabella@optonline.net](mailto:bsabella@optonline.net)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

**FUTURE WORLDCON NOTES**

We note that there is now a Nippon 2017  
WorldCon bid organizing. If you want to see  
their placeholder website, for what it's worth:

<http://nippon2017.org/>

For the record, other existing bids:

**2012**  
Chicago  
<http://www.chicagoin2012.org/>

**2013**  
Texas  
<http://www.texasin2013.org/>

Zagreb

**2014**  
United Kingdom

