

"THE NIGHT LAND" by WILLIAM HOPE HODGSON

CLASSICS OF SCIENCE - FANTASY FICTION

CANADIAN FANDOM 17

Edited
by —
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CONTENTS

FEATURES

Editorial...	Ned McKeown	4
Conventionally Yours	Convention Attendees	5
The Maelstrom	Readers' Reactions	13
Classics of Science-Fantasy Fiction	Bill Grant	Cover

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Editorial

In the hopes that younger fans will find in it a glimpse of things to come, and in the hope that it will remind old fans of fondly remembered bygone days, we would like to recount to you the rise and fall of one Ned McKeown, Fan.

Some years before World War II, a doting Aunt presented us with a five year subscription to a then popular boys magazine, "The American Boy" which, along with the usual diet of sports and adventure, featured some quite passable S-F stories by Carl H. Claudy. Once bitten by the bug we never looked back. Our favourite movie of that time was "Transatlantic Tunnel", don't ask why, it just was. We were just finding out that there were whole magazines devoted to our favourite reading matter when the import ban cut off our supply of S-F. From 1942 through to early 1945 our existence was brightened only by the discovery that the Toronto Public Library stocked "The Minimum Man", "Odd John" and such like.

With the end of the war in Europe the import ban was relaxed and we were once again able to purchase S-F magazines, among them a newcomer (to us) called Astounding whose letter columns hinted at the wonderful stories that had appeared before I even knew the magazine existed. By the simple stratagem of contacting returning Fanvets, many of whom were no longer interested in S-F, we managed to obtain an almost complete collection in the space of about eighteen months.

The contents of our library shelves held us enthralled for hours on end... Astounding, Unknown, Planet, Startling, TWS, FFM, and on and on, until we were reading S-F to the almost complete exclusion of other more generally accepted reading matter.

During all this time we had not bothered with the fan field as such, but during 1947 we finally contacted Beak Taylor and with our meeting there was formed the friendship which was to bring to Canada much fan fame and fortune.

After working with Beak on Canadian Fandom, we headed for the Philcon where

we first laid eyes on John Millard, soon to become co-founder of the Derelicts. We were into fandom up to our ears after the Philcon presented us with the Torcon and we were never so busy or thought we had so many friends as during that time. We were in our glory...but fame is fleeting and once the hue and cry of the Torcon had faded away we started to slip from the scene as had Wiggins, Reinsberg, Rothman, and others before us. In one last blaze of activity we completed the Torcon Report...that publication which above everything else we have done represents our attempt to create a permanent memorial to ourselves and our activities in the fan world.

We continued on, corresponding with an ever-decreasing circle of friends; writing the odd article and story for fanzines and even a bit for the pros; we tried our hand at bookselling but by this time Sex had reared its ugly head and it became impossible to devote our week-ends to S-F.

Our job was taxing our abilities to an ever-increasing extent and we finally reached the stage where we had to make a choice. Was it to be fandom as a way of life or would fannish activities have to be relegated to a very **minor** role in our existence? The latter course won hands down and with that decision came the even harder, "How to drop dead gracefully".

We stopped our publishing activities completely, limited our correspondence to only our closest friends, stopped subscribing to fanzines (as new crops of editors appeared our complimentary copies dropped off, but fast) and all in all, just kept away from anything concerning the fan field.

So it was with mixed feelings that we accepted an invitation from the CBC to do a coast-to-coast fifteen minute broadcast on science fiction. This broadcast and a short subsequent lecture tour created a short lived stir and then we were back in limbo again.

This past Spring we attended the Mid-western Conference, our first major fan gathering since the Cinvention in '49, and

CONVENTIONALLY YOURS

Up until a few months ago, it was thought that the four Canucks who would journey to Ohio would be John Millard, Ned McKeown, Bill Grant and Art Ludlam. All preparations were made on the basis of four going and when Bill and Art were forced to back out John and I thought we might be left holding the bag. However, who should appear one Sunday afternoon but Lyell Crane who announced his intention of going to Cincy. Shortly afterwards we heard from Alastair Cameron who also wanted to know how we were going. The delegation was four once again and we decided to fly to save time.

The other three were what you might call "seasoned air travellers" but it was my first flight and I faced it with a certain amount of apprehension. John flew down on Thursday and phoned to say that things were fine in Cincy. Al pulled into town that evening and we took off from Toronto right on the dot the next afternoon. My apprehension was still with us but the other two did wonders, making small talk, etc., so that by the time we got to London I was feeling fairly good. The first part of the flight was a little rough but the smoother air over the lake made the trip to Cleveland a honey. Somewhere between Toronto and London there took place an event of the utmost importance in the fan world. By unanimous approval of the attendees, the "First International Aircon" was called to order. The resolutions brought forth were many and wondrous not the least of which was the one that, "Saint Peter be mad honorary member in charge of extra-terrestrial immigration." and so on...bumpy air again when we hit the mainland but we slid into Cleveland Municipal Airport with hardly a bump. We changed from a DC-3 to a Convair and the heavier plane made the ride even more comfortable.

Who should we meet at the airport but Norm Stanley who had just stepped off the

New York plane. John met us at the Hotel Gibson and directed us to the Metropole and to our first sight of many old friends. Just gab and shake hands and visit the bar and talk and visit the bar and so to bed for the first of many almost sleepless nights.

For what happened in the formal sessions you can refer to the program that is printed on page 4. We understand that the Cincy group is planning a major publication containing the scripts of all the speeches plus a running commentary on same. Please see this for a documentary report.

Food, gab, shake hands, visit the bar and so on until Saturday night when the first session of the annual plot to take money from innocent fans from the Great North took place. 836, otherwise known as Bob Tucker's room, was inhabited by Fred Pohl, Ollie Saari, Niel de Jack, Frank Robinson, EEEvans, and Boob. They all smiled when I entered...they must have known for come midnight or so I was down a sizeable bundle. We were playing dealer's choice and on my first deal I introduced a game called "Stuke" a variation of blackjack. For several rounds it was ignored and then Ollie tried it. Gradually more and more people began to play it and by the time Mel came downstairs to see why we were not at his party, almost everybody had tried his hand at "Stuke". We moved up to Korshak's for a little refreshment and then on to Neil's room to continue the murder. Stuke is now known as "Canadian Roulette" thanks to Bob Tucker. It is very like Russian Roulette in that pistols are supplied to the participants after the evening is over. Seems to me that we closed off about three or four in the a.m. At this stage of the game my shirt was made of the finest silk with French Cuffs and so on...i.e. I was up!

The auction on Sunday afternoon was mad and expensive for many people including yours truly. The sum total came

out very close to a thousand clams which is a very nice pile of do-re-mi for the Cinvention. However, expenses will take a very big slice out of that (more than half) so it's not nearly as big as it seems. Highest price paid for a picture was the forty-eight bucks shelled out by Walter Cole for the original cover illustration by Howard Browne from the Feb. '39 TWS. This earned him a spot on the TV show that night. The highest priced book came home with me in the form of thirty-six dollars worth of "Weapon Makers" as revised in van Vogt's own handwriting for possible publication by Simon and Shuster. One thing should be cleared up before next year's auction...some plan must be formulated to speed up this part of the program or to shorten it sufficiently so that it no longer is so unwieldy and time-consuming. We would be pleased to hear any suggestions that you may have to offer and will see that they are passed on to the Portland group for possible use.

I went out to Darrel Richardson's Sunday night to see his collection...rather nice...and expected to find another poker game going full blast when I got back. However, there was no sign of anybody in particular so I ended up in bed...then the phone began to ring. "Where's the game?" was all that was asked. We finally decided to let it ride until Monday night and everybody got a fairly good night's sleep.

Suddenly realizing on Monday that we hadn't procured any material for this article, we spent the whole morning and afternoon scurrying around nagging people into saying their few words for posterity. John Grossman very kindly lent me his typewriter so that we were able to keep two typers going and thus get a lot more done in a short time than would otherwise have been possible.

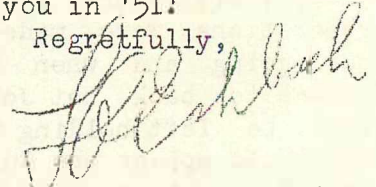
And thus we head into the report of the Cinvention as seen through the eyes of those who attended. It seems only fitting to start off with a few words from the Pro Guest of Honor, Lloyd Arthur Eshbach, Director of Fantasy Press:

The Cinvention, as almost everyone will agree, has been a huge success. Everything is over but the crowning touch — the banquet — at this writing. I've enjoyed it immensely, despite the fact that

I've forgotten what sleep is like. Just in case no one else thinks of mentioning it, the Cinvention produced a rather unusual "first" — the television interview on Sunday evening. Authors, fans, publishers and editors were represented. The entire show was adlibbed, and Dave Kyle did a wonderful job as MC. Surprisingly, no one was so badly scared that they blew up — probably because they figured no one was watching anyway.

Portland, Oregon in 1950, 'tis said. Well — I'll see you in '51!

Regretfully,



We regret very much that you won't be with us next year, Lloyd, but we certainly look forward to seeing you in '51. From an old-time fan to one of the newest, to the fan who is responsible for giving CAN-FAN the title for next year's article, Chicago book dealer, Ollie Butler:

This is my first convention but it will not be my last even if it is held in Saskatoon. You're a grand bunch of people and I am glad to join the ranks.

Ollie Butler

The convention hall abounded with fans of all types and ages...fans who were attending their first convention; some who had seen them all; and some who were rapidly making a name for themselves in fandom despite their short acquaintance with the field. One of the latter, Art Rapp, editor of Spacewarp, makes a few comparisons between the last two cons:

I came to the Cinvention with a slight apprehension that it wouldn't measure up to the Torcon. I'm happy to report I was wrong. Seeing the fans and pros for the second time is just as much of a thrill as was my first glimpse of 'em last year. And this con has been fascinating, every minute of it.

One of the main differences from the Torcon is that here in Cincy everything is concentrated under one roof — which is a bit hard, I suppose, on the employees and building maintenance crew of the Metropole. This makes it possible to meet more of the people you've been hearing about because not so much time is wasted in tramping from hotel to hotel.

Ned must be nuts to talk me into battling this out. The competition is too stiff. Rog Phillips is directly across from me doing the same thing, and I feel greatly outclassed in this literary swim.

The place is swarming with pros, now that I mention it. Doc Smith, Chan Davis, Lee del Rey, Ray Palmer, Arthur J. Burks, etc., etc. Being an incurable hero-worshipper, and regarding any person who has written a pro SF story as a hero, well...gad, do you wonder that I'm determined never to miss a convention?

Art Rapp

"AND IN CONCLUSION I
WANTA SAY I DON'T
LOOK NUTHIN LIKE THAT
LIL' HAMLIN
SHRIMP?"



Many thanks to Vince Hamlin for doing the illustration of Alley Oop that graces this page. He was up in my hotel room talking and reminiscing for over an hour.. one swell guy who we hope turns up at many more Cons!

Authors, young and old, fans and non-fans, were here in large numbers. One of the many better known authors (Nerves, And Some Were Human etc.) Lester del Rey, took time out from the discussions arising from his speech about "Sex In SF" to jot down a few words:

"Just say anything you want to." That seems to be all I hear before I start to put words down — and then they have to get that look on their faces when I start

to say it. Confidentially, I never have anything to say — I merely keep saying it.

Seriously, I'm surprised — because every convention seems to be better than the one before — and that's going some. And since I've always been a lot more of a fan than a writer, I kick myself for not getting to all the conventions. When Canada and England can find the time, effort and ambition to get here regularly, I don't have any excuse.

All I can say is the same old stuff, and a lot of trite things are the truest. I come to conventions to meet people I know in advance I'll like, because I've known their names for years. Then I find them nicer than they were as mere names. And while, as I've said, I have nothing to say — well, saying it with another fan or group of fans somehow makes the fun of saying it justification enough.

Hope I'll see more of you at the next convention; and I know I'll be there this time. See you in '50 — and meantime, if you couldn't get here, we missed you, we'll look forward to seeing you, and keep up the spirit that makes these things what they are — more fun than a barrel of Cartier monkeys mixed with Bok mice!

Lester del Rey

We missed you last year in Toronto, Les, and trust that when you say "See you in '50!" you really mean it.

Although he did not appear until sometime on Sunday, Arthur J. Burks soon made his presence felt with some speech-making that provided the greatest amount of ego-boof for fans since Heinlein declared at Denver that fans were "superior". Fans may have some power, Mr. Burks, but we fear that you are as guilty of over-estimating it as are some fans. However, we are perhaps the ones who are wrong in minimizing this control you say we exert over editors and authors...just returned from an expedition to South America which searched for remnants of ancient civilizations, Mr. Burks makes several very pointed observations about fans:

I am much impressed by my first experience with a science fiction convention, the

Seventh World Science Fiction Convention at Cincinnati Sept. 3,4,5. I found it an eye-opening experience for a science fiction writer. I have consistently thought of all fans as people who read through microscopes looking for mistakes. Having met a lot of fans I have found no reason to change my ideas but have found plenty to make me think perhaps I should change my way of writing in many respects. Fans of SF seem to know pretty well what they want and when they are not getting it. I was surprised to learn how much more they know about SF than I do, not only about the work of most SF writers back before I was born, but my own as well. It behooves all of us to heed this rapidly growing group. It also behooves this group to grow, for its power already is more than it knows.

Arthur D. Parks

No convention report would be complete without a few words from some of the members of the female side of fandom. For many years their representation at the annual gatherings was almost nil, but this year we noticed a very pleasant change... there were at least a score of beautiful damsels wandering around the environs of the Metropole. Although most of them were "attached" there were still enough single ones to make things interesting...could be, George? And so to a few words from "Ma":

Attending the annual conventions has always been the highspot of each year's vacation for me. This year has been no exception. It has been a pleasure to see so many old familiar faces again. I'm most pleased to see so many gals amongst the attendees.

Mary Ruth Wheeler

An Indiana fan who is rapidly making his name one of the best known in the pro field; co-editor of Fell's "Best" anthologies and one of the tope men in Shasta Publishers, Ted Dikty, proved to us that there is at least one fan in fandom who does not type with two fingers...he uses only one:

The last fourteen months were a long wait, but the Cinvention was worth it in every respect. To the unfortunate who couldn't attend, my deepest sympathies. I sincerely hope that 1950 will see them at the convention, wherever it may be!

Lee Dikty

When we arrived in Cincy we were faced with the vile rumor that The Great Boob had shuffled off this mortal coil. John had been in town since Thursday night and he informed us that the whole thing was a rather nasty gag on the part of one Ben Singer with an assist to Art Rapp. Tucker arrived later and promptly squashed the whole thing...he was understandably annoyed. As an aftermath of this hoax, come Tuesday afternoon and we returned to Bob's hotel room to find there a message to call Operator 26 at Los Angeles. Turned out to be Walter Daugherty trying to check this rumor which had already reached the coast. After assuring the LA gang that he was still hale and hearty, Bob informed them that the next Con was slated for Portland and they were justifiably overjoyed. Bob somehow manages to say more in the next few lines than many fans can in pages:

No sane man can talk well at a moment like this; therefore I will say something for posterity...nuts to posterity!

Bob Tucker

One of the many corny jokes engendered by the Tucker Hoax is quoted by Dale Tarr, fan and director of the N3F:

I cornered Bob Tucker and asked him if he was a relative of Gilbert Gosseyn. He admitted to being a half brother. Probably because he's only died half as often.

Like everybody else I just love conventions.

Dale Tarr

One of the most "interesting" characters to appear at recent conventions, has been an individual who purports to be Don Channing...claims the blood-shot eyes are caused by haemorrhages suffered while working on VE (think he means VO)...one of the aids to humor and fun at every con-

Cinventionally Yours

vention, George O. Smith was rescued from the arms of Wesley Long and Bea Mahaffey just long enough to pound out a few lines about his well-being:

I'm supposed to write something eulogistic about this convention. I am once more at a loss for words, my nerves are jittery, my system is slightly on the alkaline side and my eyes are bloodshot. I am a nervous wreck, fraught with loss of sleep, increased appetite, hoarse from trying to say 'No' to people who try to force likker down my protesting throat. The reason for my unhappiness is the fact that I am frustrated.

I don't know whether I've had a good time or not. I've been far too busy to worry about it. I'll let you know later as soon as I recover from the fray. I hope this convention does not kill me completely. I move that we have a quiet, intellectual type of convention in 1950!

George O. Smith

We trust that you'll be with us next year, George, and that we see you up here in Toronto long before then. From one extreme to another...the first person we met in Cincy was Norm Stanley who alighted from the New York plane at almost the same time as we arrived from Toronto. Norm is one of those quiet, sincere, intelligent fans who would be equally at home either in the present set-up or at the "Intellectual" type of Con George mentions above:

More people getting killed, more precedents upset, more damn fun...though it was confusing at times, these Cincy fen surely treated us to a remarkable exhibition of talent for improvisation and for keeping things moving despite a succession of unforeseeable protobolixes of the sort that shouldn't happen to a dero! The outcome wasn't apple-pie, parliamentary order, but it was never dull and to a person of my naturally disorderly disposition it was loads of fun.

And so much that was unusual even for a SF Convention — the TV show (which I missed), DAM's wirerecorded mystery shows (most of which I missed), that 60-60 vote tie (which I'd not have missed for anything) — well, it leaves me with the hope that the Cincy Fantasy Group will grow and prosper (like it did this time...umm! That convention profit!) so that not too many

years hence you'll be calling us back for another party in Cincinnati.

One final observation which poses a question. I wish I knew the answer to it. The auction is the money-making side of any convention, and while each year finds them increasingly successful from this standpoint, it also finds them becoming increasingly unwieldy and time-consuming. Suggestions...?

Norm Stanley

That's a good point you have there about the auctions, Norm, and we have already expressed our concern over the increasing amount of time the auction is consuming. Gone but not forgotten.... chairman of my first convention, The Philcon, the artist at the Steinway for that annual highlight "Ritual Fire Dance", and a generally swell guy:

Ho hum...another convention..I keep telling myself. Somehow, in spite of all the conventions to which I have been subjected there is always something new and exciting about each successive one. In particular, the meeting of such new faces as Doc Winter, Ted Carnell, and Fritz Leiber Jr... the discovery of Rog Phillips Graham and Ray Palmer as nice people...onto the next

Milton A. Rothman

Milt made some rather unfortunate remarks about the type of publicity we received from the cheesecake provided by "Miss S-F" not being the type fandom wanted. His opinion was not shared by the majority, however, and another femme fan, Judy Merrill Pohl, makes him number one on her parade of comments:

To Milt Rothman: As a purported authority of the women's angle, I'm deeply grieved, old man, to find you so opposed to the woman's curve...to Doc Winter: You should take Milt in hand, old man...to Erle Kershak: Them there glasses had the nicest curves of all...to Phil Stevenson: The angle on the TV show was the one I liked best...to Fritz Leiber, Jr.: I wouldn't have believed it if anybody had told me; an author can be almost as good as his stories...to Cincinnati: Gulloomy Sunday, but thank y'all just the same...

Judy Merrill

In a way we're sorry that the Con didn't go to NY next year, Judy, but perhaps '51 is for you. A member of another

disappointed delegation, Lou Garner of Washington, pays a high compliment to the Cincy boys:

One of my favourite fantasy stories, "None But Lucifer" postulates the idea that Earth is Hell. Well, maybe it is...but, if so, then the Cinvention is certainly heaven. My thanks to all the Cincy boys.

Lou Garner

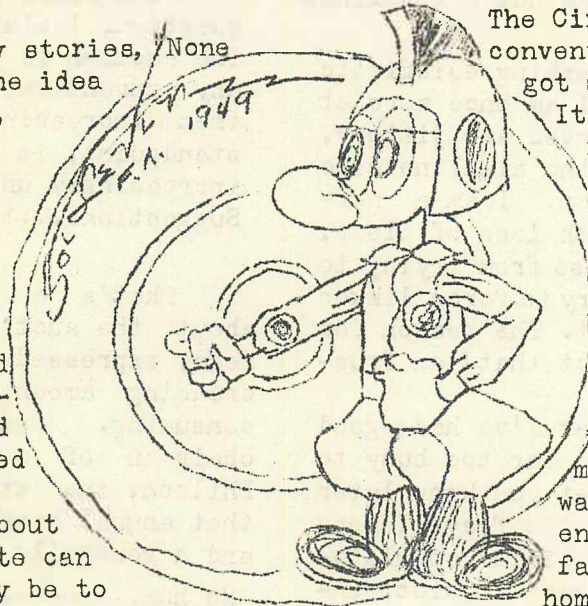
Washington was knocked out on the first ballot along with New Orleans and two more ballots were needed to decide the site of next year's Con. A few words about the memorable 60-60 tie vote can be found elsewhere. It may be to their advantage to keep fans happy, but some of the pro authors seem to go beyond business relations and enter into the spirit of things as fans. One of the many was Fritz Leiber, Jr. for we quite agree with Judy that he was, "Almost as good as his stories.":

I'm writing this on the third day of the Cinvention. The quality of the entertainment, curricular and extracurricular, is so sturdy that, very much as I'm enjoying it, I'm rather glad there isn't going to be a fourth day. (My doctor wouldn't approve.) Although I was in it, I thought Judy Merrill's panel on "Why Science Fiction?" was an idea worth repeating. Here's a notion for any fan group with dramatic ambitions: How about a science fiction skit or one-act play (satiric or serious)? This is my first convention — I'm impressed by everyone's energy and enthusiasm (fan and pro). Weakly, but happily,

Fritz Leiber Jr

Many people have heard for the past few years about a man in Covington, Ky. who was reputed to have one of the finest collections of fantasy in the world. We were privileged to visit his home twice during our stay in Cincy and we can say that without a doubt it is one of the finest. His exceptional collections of

Burroughs and Faust are truly wonderful... a few words please, Darrell:



The Cinvention was my first convention and naturally I got a real kick out of it.

It was a very satisfying feeling to meet many of your favourite authors and find them so cordial and friendly. I also met for the first time nearly a hundred fans and collectors with whom I had corresponded. Living in Kentucky but only three miles from Cincinnati, I was especially happy to entertain many dozens of fans and writers in my home...they even took time to look over my modest collection.

Darrell E. Richardson

Long time fan and book dealer of great repute, Jim Williams' prominence in the field of science fiction has been greatly enhanced by his articles in the AB. Jim's really a wonderful guy and he's one of the "swell people" he mentions here:

Cincinnati in '49 was a swell idea! This has been the best of conventions — swell people — swell entertainment. Lots of swells, but it's the way I feel.

Jim Williams

Number One on every convention membership list for the last few years, one of the oldest and most generally respected fans in fandom, lovingly known as "The Old Foo" ((pay me in Portland, Foo)) Everett adds a few words re the choice of convention sites:

Well, I've been to another convention, and it only makes stronger the thing I felt in Chicago in '40 — I don't intend to miss any of them from now on.

The Cinvention has been one of the best — a grand turnout and fine spirit, so many old friends to greet and new ones to meet.

While I have a typer and a place to print something, I'd like to put in a plug for a change in the method of choosing conventionsites. My own personal feeling is that all bids should be put in, in writing, at least six months in advance, and then all those who are members of the Convention Committee, using "committee" in the same sense as it was used in "Cinvention Committee", have a chance to vote in writing for their choice of the cities bidding for it. In this way everyone who is interested can have a vote, given by them after calm consideration of all the factors presented, and not swayed by impassioned oratory or other such momentary influences.

While I, personally, am voting and working for Portland in 1950, let me end this with a "See you at the Convention in '50!" and leave the city to be filled in later.

Edward D. Evans

Some few years back a new name began to appear in ever-increasing quantities in the S-F field. Rog Phillips has written some of the best stuff to appear in the Z-D twins and is apparently to be the bellweather of Rap's "Other Worlds" staff. Because of his rise to prominence in such a short period, Rog was in general demand as a talking and eating companion and we were forced to stand over him with a whip to get him to bare his innermost thoughts:

The Cinvention, my first fan convention, has been a most unusual and wonderful experience. The most amazing aspect of it all was the bidding for the originals in the main auction. I've never been to an auction where collectors were after things before. I listened with amazement as they bid. I began to realize that some things I had considered of no value really had a tremendous value to a collector. Phrases like, "In the handwriting of the author himself", made a worthless article a thing of almost absurd value, to my non-collector mind.

I've been called an egomaniac in print, and in conversation I often try to act like one just for the hell of it. But it left me a trifle dazed and not a little amazed to have people actually asking for

my autograph and giving every evidence that it meant something special to them, and meeting me something they had looked forward to, or even, as two boys said to me with evident sincerity, the sole reason they came. Knowing myself, it makes me have a guilty feeling because if I were not me I certainly wouldn't walk across the street to say hello to me!

The thing I will treasure most about this convention is the Cincinnati group itself. Each and every one of them is definitely a wonderful person. They've gone all out on this to make it a success. They succeeded beyond anything I would have thought possible. I love them all for it, and for the way they accepted me and made me feel at home with them.

I bought nothing at the auctions, feeling that those things should go to the fans who would treasure them more than I. But I'm carrying away something beyond price, a personal acquaintance with many people who had until now been just names to me. It's something that can't be bought for money.

And, at the risk of sounding a little out obnoxious, I'm leaving a big chunk of my heart here in Cincinnati, when I go, that will for a long time make me feel that I should be here rather than in Evanston or Chicago or wherever else I may be.

When I write my stories from now on my audience will not be the big nameless public, but the many people I've met here who have told me they read them. My audience will be sitting there across from me in spirit as I pound the keys of my typer. They are real people.

"Rog Phillips" Graham

Editor of fandom's leading newsheet, columnist in SSS, James V. Taurasi is an extremely well known fan. We're sorry that you didn't get to Toronto last year, Jimmie, but we hope to see you again next year:

This has been the second convention I've been able to attend, and I've found the Cinvention as interesting and as exciting as the original "New York Convention". I've really had the time of my life, and

only hope that all future conventions can be as good. One of the highlights of this convention was the TV show put on last night. It's the type of thing we need to make science fiction fandom the thing in the fan world. Keep up the good work, fans. See you next year in Portland.

James V. Taurasi

The first inkling we had that Chan and Mrs. Davis were at the Con came when George O. broke into our poker game to try and obtain room space for them. Although we were unable to help them room was eventually found for them and they became a welcome and valuable addition to the attendees:

A great deal happened at the Cinvention, they tell me. It's probably true, too, as far as that goes. All I saw were a few rubbers of bridge, a few bottles of rye, and four or five acres of fans. The more I think about it the more I like Forry's idea: a convention should supply no dress, no gingerbread, no trimmings, and (I add hesitantly) no cheesecake, just rooms where fans can gather, regard each other's unworthy faces and intellects, and boost their respective egos by considering the rest of the jerks. I'd come! At conventions of the usual sort I don't get up till the scheduled program is half over anyway — even when I'm on it.

Chan Davis

Many big time authors were there for their first or second convention. One of the many to provoke hero-worshipping glances from the younger fans was old-time writer Jack Williamson. We were glad to note that Mrs. Williamson came along with Jack and that she didn't get too bad an opinion of fans:

My first convention since the Nycon in '39 — but I don't mean to let it be so long until the next one. Writing is essentially a private undertaking, and a pretty lonely affair. And people in New Mexico interested in science fiction — or even not interested — are a good way between. Which comes to the point that I'm honestly having a wonderful time at the Cinvention,

meeting old friends and new ones, and enjoying everything — even Blanche's astonishment at her first meeting with the world of fandom, which I think is still slightly unbelievable to her. Ten lines would be far too little space to list all the people who have helped make the Cinvention such a memorable occasion.

Jack Williamson

One of the most interesting things to arrive at the Con was the advance copy of "Conquest of Space" that came along with Jay Stanton. He arrived just in time to make the New York bid for the '50 Con:

A G-R-R-e-eat Convention! (Which way is the bar, now?) And heartiest congratulations to the Portland group on being chosen to put on the 1950 Convention. (By the way, was anybody here from Portland?) We members of the various organizations in the New York area offer our support and encouragement, and hope the '50 Convention will top all previous efforts.

L. Jerome Stanton
Chairman, The Hydra Club

Charlie Tanner handled the chair very well with the exception of one rather amusing incident...when handed a personal invitation to Shasta's cocktail party he got up and read it into the mike...then on finding that it was intended for him alone he completed the mix-up by returning to the platform and asking the assemblage to ignore the invite. We sympathize with you Chas:

Well, it was all just wonderful. For fourteen months we had prepared, but no matter how much you prepare, you can't overcome a certain inexperience. For instance, I had never stood up in front of an audience in my life. You can't learn to do that in books. And I have always despised a long-winded introductory speech—I never did accomplish that.

But in spite of my own inexperience and the inexperience of the others, it all turned out just wonderful. We know more now. We could put on a splendid convention, now, because we have learned just what we must do.

How about Cincinnati in 2150?

THE MAELSTROM

JOE KENNEDY

84 Baker Avenue,
Dover, N.J.

CANFAN under your editorship seems to be holding to the same standards of neatness and quality material which Beak maintained. Issue #16 is well balanced editorially — and two lithos yet!

Your article on Utopian fiction is the meatiest chunk of reading matter in the issue, and is, I think, a valuable survey. Andreae's "Christianopolis", Harrington's "Oceana" and Mallock's "New Republic" I'd never heard of before. I once acquired a copy of Bulwer-Lytton's "The Coming Race" for the staggering sum of one nickel. It was worth it. Wonder if there are a dozen fans living today who've ever read Lord Lytton's "Zanoni", "A Strange Story", or his pseudo-Gothic romances which the Victorians thought were hot stuff. Incidentally, a couple of years ago, Moskowitz and several other local collectors were all hepped up over a book which they'd discovered and which nobody'd ever heard of before, and which Sam claimed to be the earliest known science fiction anthology. It was a fairly fat, green cloth bound volume entitled "Ideal Commonwealths", a collection of utopia novels including, I think, "Utopia" and "New Atlantis" and "City of the Sun" and one or two more. The book, however, can't be too rare, for even the Dover public library has a copy. Sometimes I'm almost attempted to agree with the fan who, in Wilson's Dream Quest, I believe, defined Utopia as, "One man's idea of a good time!"

The heading for "From the Editor's Chair" looks as if it were reproduced from a photoscope stencil. Was it? ((We have never heard of the word "photoscope", Joe, but we assume that it means the same as "Gestepint" which is what the heading is called. They are made from a photograph on a light sensitive stencil.))

Moe Diner makes the future look grim. Scientists had better hurry up and develop spacetravel before it's too late for a

rocketship version of Noah's Ark.

McCoy's "By Jove!" column you oughta hold onto. ((That we will, Joe, except that it's not "McCoy's"! Guess again.))

I have seen drawings in NYC's Museum of Modern Art which I liked much less than the Betts-ludekens "Combat" litho. The lower figure, with the scratchy looking black hide, seems to be getting the worst of the fight.

The letter section was most readable. Thanks to Ben Indick for recalling that old Gene Autry movie serial, "The Phantom Empire", which was truly a lulu. The thing has been revived more times than I can count, under at least three or four different titles. Right after the bombing of Hiroshima, for instance, it reappeared as a full-length feature under the name "Atomic Raiders". This version carried — believe it or not — a prologue dedication to, "Those dauntless writers of scientific fiction who have dreamed of worlds to come.", or something such. The film is memorable to me because of the weird way it mixes bang-bang-shoot-em-up wild western stuff with science fictional elements. One moment the heroes are sitting around twanging a geetar and yodelling cowboy ballads, the next they are shooting robots with rayguns. So many liberal cuts had been made to reduce "Atomic Raiders" from a fourteen chapter serial to an hour-long feature, that the continuity was baffling. The super scientific trappings are strictly from Buck Rogers — a fifty mile deep elevator that whoops merrily up and down, carrying the subterranean outlaws back and forth between the surface of the earth and the underworld (odd thot: could this be where Shaver got his ideas from?); a huge automaton apparently constructed of soap boxes, who laboriously churns a handle every time anybody wants the city gates opened; rayguns of the venerable zap-zap variety; long-distance television for spying on the enemy; and lots of other things. Highly recommended for laughs.

I won't make the Cinvention, Alas!

((We'll miss you, Joe!))

For this issue and next, here are a pair of Canadian dimes which I just found t'other week in the coat I wore to the Torcon!

ALASTAIR CAMERON

Staff Hotel,
Deep River, Ont.

The latest issue of CANFAN is slim but excellent. By far the best item in it is your article on Utopias. This looks like the beginning of an excellent series. I have read a few utopias myself, but I have found that in general this is a very unrewarding task, as usually the author is solely concerned with setting up society in the manner best suited to his own particular tastes, and the tastes of utopia writers very rarely agree with mine. The satirical utopias are but little better, for although the stories are usually more interesting to read there is a general vein of destructiveness in them, and the satirical distortion is usually carried to extremes. However, it is most interesting to read articles about the utopias, as one is thus spared the tedium of delving into this large but rather dull branch of fantasy. This is definitely an article of the first rank and you deserve umpteen extra pats on the back for it.

The Maelstrom was sparkling as usual. The only point I wish to comment upon was Oroutch's statement that one could not get a good radio for less than one hundred dollars. My own radio is a Hallicrafters Model S-38 communications receiver, which I would much rather have than any dolled-up radio-cum-piece-of-furniture with a five hundred dollar price tag that you could mention. I got this for \$47.50 in the U.S. and I think it costs in the neighborhood of seventy dollars in Canada so that this is certainly no question of sneaking in just under his price dividing line: it is far under it. How about this one, Les?

Eric Dorn's little yarn was well written, but it telegraphed its ending at about the top of the second page. Diner's little chat from Montreal was very interesting. I would like to comment upon a couple of the wilder possibilities that he mentions. First, the beams of lethal radiation. In order to produce one of

these you would have to transport a fair atomic pile around for application of same. This would be rather like killing flies with a portable stamping mill. Hardly applicable to a hand weapon. Remember too that one cannot obtain a parallel beam of radiation from such a device, the intensity of the beam will always fall off inversely as the square of the distance. It is possible to "collimate" gamma and neutron beams, but not by reflection as is done in a searchlight, but only by removing the gamma rays and neutrons that are not going in the direction that you want them to go. Needless to say this does not promise much for very great beam intensities at the distances that one would want to apply them. Second, about the matter of the harnessing of the cosmic rays. At present there is no method known or envisaged in which cosmic ray particles can be harnessed or their number increased. In the first place, the energies tied up in the cosmic rays are greater than anything that can be produced artificially at present, and secondly the only thing that controls the cosmic rays impinging on the Earth is the combined magnetic fields of the Earth and the sun. I cannot conceive of anyone doing much to alter the latter for some time to come, and I would also mention that the effect of these magnetic fields is to strain out a few of the weaker cosmic rays. It is probable that eventually the cosmic rays will be "harnessed" in the sense that similar particles will be produced on a much more intense scale in the laboratory, and that information derived from the study of cosmic rays will (and has already) contribute much to the understanding of fundamental-particle physics. This may lead to a fundamentally new kind of bomb, but it is impossible to forecast such for quite some time to come.

"By Jove!", Millard's profile, and the final two drawings were nicely done. Front cover not up to par for CANFAN but well reproduced.

Looks like you fellows have had rather a bad deal on The House of York business. One can of course see the point of view of the publishers on the matter: the fantasy publishers feel by the new deal they will have a greater outlet for their books in Canada. However, it is rather unfortunate

that they could not stick by an existing agreement.

I expect that I will see you at the Convention. ((You certainly did!!))

MILTON A. ROTHMAN 1825 N. Park Ave.,
Philadelphia, Pa.)

Received CANADIAN FANDOM and have enjoyed that which I have read up to now. The main inspiration for writing this letter is the article by Alastair Cameron on the nuclear forces problem. It's an unusually lucid description, and obviously written by somebody who knows something about the subject. I'd be interested to know who Cameron is.

However, just to stir up some excitement in your letter column, I might raise an argument concerning Cameron's claim that the question of the nature of the nuclear force is the fundamental problem of modern physics. It is, without doubt, the fundamental problem of that branch of physics known as nuclear physics, but in the broad, general field of physics there are problems remaining on a yet more fundamental level.

For example: Just what is force? What is an electric charge? How is force transmitted from one charge to another?

In present-day language we say that, "The force between two particles is a result of the interaction between the fields associated with the particles." But just what is a field? "A field is a region of space in which a force is exerted upon a particle." Merrily we go around the semantic circle.

In a sense the fundamental problem of physics is this: How can we determine what the fundamental entities of the universe are? Is the electron as far down as we can go? Does it make sense to ask what an electric charge is? Can we explain everything in terms of fields, and does it make sense to ask what a field is?

On a less philosophical level, we ask: In exactly what manner does radiation interact with material particles in absorption and emission? An entire field of physics known as quantum electrodynamics has grown up in the past few years to deal with this question. It is probably more fundamental than the question of the nucle-

ar force, for in order to determine what kind of nuclear force exists, we must have a consistent theory of radiation, and this we do not yet have.

And so, having baffled both you and myself, I bid thee farewell!

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Editorial Continued from page 4

we were overjoyed to renew our acquaintance with old friends, Bob Tucker, Doc Barrett, Ollie Saari, Bea Mahaffey et al. Resulting publicity brought absolutely no letters unsolicited fanzines, or requests for money to publish The Great S-F Novel. We were through...but definitely.

There now remained only the task of disposing of our collection and the accoutrements of publishing. This we are now engaged in doing, and rather successfully (financially) we might add.

Although no longer 'active' we are stillinall a fan in the true sense of the word. We intend to keep the better parts of our collection and will probably show up at many more of the larger fan gatherings. No more do we eagerly rush to the newsstands to grab the latest copy of "Supersonic Space Stories"...but we still read three or four of the present-day deluge of mags. After all the cutting remarks we made about old-timers who talked constantly of the 'Golden Days' of S-F, the 1939-42 period, we blush to realize that we have now joined their ranks. We gaze fondly at our complete set of Unknown and wish that it might be once more.

You might call this editorial our Swan Song except that you never know when we'll be bitten by the bug again. Look at Bob Tucker...he's been killed off at least half a dozen times and he's back publishing again.

So here we sit, enriched by our experiences as an active fan; happy and secure in the knowledge that we have made our mark, small though it may be, on the fan world. Fandom has been good to us; fans have been good to us. To all the wonderful people who have helped and befriended us we say, "Thanks!" and to active fandom we say not farewell but rather "Ad Revoir".

Red McKean

Sometimes known as Mr. Judy Merrill, James MacGreigh, Scott Mariner and so on, Fred is a truly swell guy and a wonderful addition to the convention committee when the Con returns to New York:

It's a good convention, with plenty of parties, plenty of poker games and every once in awhile a brief mention of science fiction. There is no reason to believe that its fame will be exceeded for years to come...at least, until New York gets its chance to put on a spectacular shindig in 1957.

Fred

One of the most famous names in the history of science fiction...a truly wonderful man and author of "Skylark of Space" the first modern, magazine-published science fiction novel, Doc is stillinall a fan:

Before this convention started, the boys told us that it would be a world-bester — that whatever anybody else could do they could do more of and better. Most of us, of course, thought this was the usual promotional bunk; but those of us who are here — and there seems to be more of us here than ever — are in good agreement that this is the best one yet.

I go to a lot of conventions; but I have more fun at these SF meetings than at any others I attend. We have all had a gorgeous time.

Edward C. Smith, Ph.D.

It would be impossible to set down in type all the things that should be said about Don Ford. The long hours of hard work, the skillful way in which he arranged the general set-up of the Cinvention... speaking personally, I can sympathize with you Don, and can appreciate what you have been through.

Never could see the point of dragging a person up to this typewriter to say something very witty and inspiring when after all, I've had exactly seven hours sleep in the last two nights. Just call me "The Benzedrine Kid".

Don Ford

A relative unknown in the general fan world, yet possessor of one of the finest fantasy collections, Doc Doreal turned out to be a likeable gent with an oh so attractive wife:

Having a Good Time...great convention... we want it in Denver soon!

M. Doreal

Dave MacInnes buttonholed everybody as they passed his room and sold them a chance on a copy of "The Outsider" at one buck. It looked almost fishy when Bob Pavlat who was his roommate walked off with the book, but we can assure you that it was pure coincidence:

This con started out fast, slowed down, and then sped back up. Despite its being one of the funniest cons I've ever seen, it's also one of the best. I hope the next one, whether in Portland or Washington is even bigger and better.

Bob Pavlat

There was one character at the Con who seemed to be filled with a boundless supply of energy. Everytime you looked at him he was bouncing somewhere or talking or signing autographs or making caustic comments on pro art as opposed to fan art and so on. Thanks for the mouse, Hannee, it looks better on the stencil than it did on Ricki:

This is my first convention, and I guess I don't like it because I'm not being a bit conventional. I'm having a whale of a time, except that too much is happening and I can't assimilate it all at once, so I go around in a glorious haze, calling folk by the wrong names and in general acting like the jerque that I am. I'm not very used to being with people (cuz I have to spend most of my time drawing pictures) so please accept my apologies if I hurt any feelings. I'm thrilled less by the

Hannee Bole

big turnout than by the wealth of talent shown by such youngsters as that great trio, Grossman, Kroll and Gaughan, all better than I'll ever hope to be, and whom I hope folks will plug like mad lest they get fed up with unremunerative fantasy efforts and turn to the source of real dough, toothpaste ads. My nicest surprise was Mr. and Mrs. Donnell, who are good examples of what it wouldn't hurt the world to have more of. And it's been fun looking goggle eyed at the biggies like E.E. Smith, Jack Williamson etc. and babbling inanities about, "I like your writings, gawrsh, heck, shucks, heh-heh . . . would you er maybe sort of kind of rather give me or your huh, duh, autograf???" I do wish I could have enough sense to relate the right names with the right faces. And I know that after I'm home a few days and back to scratching out my usual needle-point, I'll regard the experience as an amusing but perfectly impossible dream.

Hannes Bok

It seems only fitting that we sign off with a few words from that man who has been so eagerly awaited to these many years. When the big fan from across the water finally turned up he brought with him a continental charm and a manner which although thankful was far from the groveling attitude that so many American cartoonists hang on the typical Englishman. As long as there are men like Ted left in "Dear Old Blighty" you can't count England out. We're sorry that we won't see you for a couple of years, Ted, but we enjoyed that extra visit with you in Chicago. We know that you carried back with you the best wishes of fans from all over North America...and sincere wishes they were:

I have long been well aware of the American generosity which has helped British fans through many a lean time, but not even I expected the terrific reception accorded to me as the first British representative to visit an "American" Convention. So overwhelming has it been that I have decided to come back again sometime!

International relations now having been firmly established between our two countries by this visit of myself, it is a hope of myself and British Fandom that

before very long we shall see at least one American fan officially visiting Great Britain.

The Cinvention and all the swell people I met there will live in my memory as long as I do. Fandom may be nutty — but so am I!

Ted Carnell

My original intention had been to leave Cincy on Monday night and head for the West Coast by thumb, but what with the Con slated for the West next year and plans already under way for attending same I decided to stay over another day and go up to Chicago with the Tucker party. This decision left me free for a big poker do on Monday night at which I lost the collar and cuffs from my shirt. We saw the sights of Cincy (remember the "Purple Cow"?) until Wednesday and then headed for Chi aboard the NYC's Sycamore, one of the new stainless steel trains. It rode beautifully and made our journey extremely restful. Memories of Chi are tied up mostly with Museums, the Railway Fair, Shasta and that Great American Institution ...The Poker Game. I can still remember the queer looks we got from commuters on the IC when Bob and I returned to the centre of the city after an all-night session at Shasta...lost the rest of my shirt to Mel...in a recent letter, he quoted "It's better to be born lucky than brainy." the only difficulty being that Mel is both. With this compliment for friend Mel we write '30' to Cinventionally Yours!

It is almost two years since the foregoing words were written and yet it seems like only yesterday. As things worked out I didn't get to the Norwescon, the only Canadian representative being John Millard. However, this year (1951) things are going to be different. As this is being written (August 21) Bill Grant and I are only two days away from heading South by car. The following Wednesday, John Millard will leave by train, and about the same time a fan whose name we don't know, will leave from Saskatchewan. Along with these fans will go the best wishes of fans all over Canada who for one reason or another are unable to attend the Nolacon.

