

CANFAN

LAST MINUTE NEWS -- March 15th, 1955

In the late Summer months of 1954 a magazine called "Escape" went into the planning stage. Fred Woroch, the editor, received Grade A material from many well known names in fandom for his first issue.....A series of "money draining" events befell Fred and Escape, thus the magazine went into the mothballs..... About the first of February 1955, Fred phoned Bill Grant and things started to hum again. In fact, Willie, the co-editor was so sure of publication that he informed a few friends that Escape would be in the mail by the end of the month. March 1st it was learned that Fred had vacated his job and his home and moved out of Toronto. "Escape" when last seen was completely printed, but not assembled. Even if this one issue had appeared it would have been an event in fandom. Fred was in charge of a modern printing plant, plus colour.....Some of the material which was slated for the above will appear in Canadian Fandom, now, and in the very near future.....Fred Woroch at this writing still remains a question mark as to his whereabouts.

Twelfth Year Of
Publication
MARCH 1955

RC

CANADIAN FANDOM #24

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Again let us repeat, if you haven't filled out your questionnaire for the Second Tucker Fan Survey, please do so. The more you participate in this project, the better the end results will be. If you haven't received a questionnaire please get in touch with Gerald A. Steward, he will be glad to oblige.



It's almost as interesting as it is futile to speculate upon the relative prowess and merits of two different things, each a champion of its day, which are forever separated by a number of years.

Countless sportswriters have denuded whole acres of Canadian timberland with the paper they've used in trying to establish, for once and for all, whether the Rocky Marciano of today could stand a chance against the Joe Louis of the late 30's and early 40's in the Bomber's heyday when it was a rare heavyweight championship fight that ever heard the bell for the end of the first round. And millions of words more--just as delightfully pointless--have wondered if Dempsey, or Sullivan or Corbett could have trimmed the winner of such a bout when each fighter was poised at his fleeting moment of prime.

So it goes.....how would an XK-120 Jag stack against a Stutz Bearcat? Or a Mercer Raceabout? How would Herb Shriner look beside Will Rogers? And does La Monroe have as much of that intransigent quality as had Clara Bow and Carole Landis?

Such discussions shall forever be with us. It is fairly well-known precept of psychology that pleasant memories last far long-

Past and Present

er than the others. The reason is that they're dragged out and fondled in our mind's eye once in a while and the less agreeable aspects of the past are not.

That's why you'll find your childhood memories all sadly-sweet and almost unbearably poignant; if you're long out of school you doubtless recall your scholarly era with eyes fondly misted. You forget the end-less quizzes and the petty tyranny and the ineffable boredom and your memory prefers to dwell on the time you cut classes and went fishing or the Junior Prom or that time you made the winning touchdown. Only a maladjusted person takes pleasure in painful memories.

That's what makes a discussion of the comparative merits of Beyond and Unknown so difficult. Most of us who knew and read and loved Unknown during the pathetically short years of its life span have long since beautified it in our minds. It is bad taste to speak ill of the departed and all that. We tend to continue chuckling over the frantic hilarity of "Indigestible Triton" and "The Case Of The Friendly Corpse" while we have long, long since tactfully forgotten those supremely godawful Kramer illustrations. Forgotten, too, are the occasional stories of somewhat less than ripe perfection that cropped up in Unknown.

Take, for example, a yarn called "Hell Is Forever". Publish this today, without the author's magic name, and you'd get a storm of criticism for your pains. Alfred Bester was, even in 1942, subscribing heartily to the theory, "If you can't amuse 'em, confuse 'em!" But in those days he hadn't the jets to swing it. What might have been a precursor of "The Demolished Man" came out as a weak melange of quasi-Joycean obscurantism.

No, say what you will, Unknown had its moments of paucity just as Beyond does today. But let's see if we can establish a few points of similarity and a few of divergence.

Take format. Unknown experimented with a number of different sizes although it ceased publication some little while before its sister magazine ASF settled upon the size it appears, until this day. The ubiquitous "digest-size" which has proven so popular. This is the format used by Beyond and maybe half a hundred more, many of which have already joined Unknown in that hazy limbo from which there is no returning--well, hardly ever any returning--a few have tried resuscitating a once-folded magazine but rarely with any success. So Beyond's format is and doubtless always will be smaller than anything Unknown appeared in. The latter, you'll remember, tried the conservative pitch and appeared with plain, pseudo Readers Digest type of cover; just a few spot-illos and the listing of the contents. Whether this added to the news stand appeal is dubious. That is subtracted the price of a painting and colour-plates from the cost of putting out the issue is self-evident. It is doubtful if Beyond will ever go to the table-of-contents cover.

As a matter of fact, it is fairly doubtful if Horace Gold is consciously trying to accurately reproduce the Pre-Pearl Harbor Unknown with his offering. If he is trying, then he's having remarkable little success. Beyond bears only the most superficial resemblance to Unknownjust as the New York Times resembles the Daily Mirror. Both discuss a fairly similar subject-matter but the editorial slant is totally different.

Beyond is not Unknown brought back, zombie-like, from the grave. Instead, it is Galaxy with all the stops out. Rare indeed is

the story that sees print in Beyond that might be expected to appear in Unknown if it were still being published. The same is true of F&SF and it was true of the ephemeral 'del Rey' offering that all but died a-borning. Ditto, to, for Howard Browne's Fantastic.

And here's the clincher: the same would be true of Unknown if Campbell were to re-launch it today! Conditions in the closing years of the 30's were entirely different than they will ever be again. The crop of authors who blossomed briefly in that period and then were gobbled into the war effort hit a high-water mark that may well never be reached again. What new writer of today can you put forward to fill the shoes left vacant when Heinlein discovered money and turned pro? I don't mean 2-cents-a-word pro, I mean Colliers and Winston pro with payment jingling into the dime and quarter-a-word class. You say Heinlein rarely wrote for Unknown? Granted, though you'll find his pseudonyms there in the later issues. But who can you dig up to write like Ted Sturgeon used to? Certainly not Sturgeon himself. Except for a few noteworthy spurts of effort like "More Than Human", the 1940 Sturgeon is rarely seen today. The 1940 Sturgeon was a happy, whimsical, irrepressible guy who took almost childish delight in showing off a bubbly, effervescent writing style. His stories teemed with impossibly precocious moppets, impossible beautiful and enchanting women and engagingly stupid masculine hero-narrators. Rarely seen was that durable Sturgeon Stock-Player of later years, the "Super-Grandma". Unknown, too, the Heroine That Nurses The Hero Back To Health and the Hitherto Undreamed-Of Supervisor On This World Of Ours (usually of a tertiary sex and great personal charm). Nope--Sturgeon was different in those days. If you don't believe it, go back and read some yarn like "Derm Fool" or "Shottle Bop" or "The Hag Seleen" in some anthology. Those were an integral part of the Unknown flavour.

Another ingredient you'd have to supply if you were out to re-capture the Unknown effect is a pre-Dianetics L. Ron Hubbard. And you'd have to free Horace Gold from his editorial duties, free him (somehow) of his memories left from the Phillipines and set him back to writing stuff such as "None But Lucifer" and "Trouble With Water". Trace down, if you can, Jane Rice for her matchless touch with feminine-slanted fantasy that is keenly mourned today by Anthony Boucher, among others. Somewhere, in the interim between Unknown's folding and F&SF's appearance, Jane Rice slipped from sight, never to submit a fantasy-mss. again.

Yes, if Gold wanted to turn Beyond into a reasonably accurate facsimile of Unknown, he'd have to turn back a lot of clocks. He'd have to convince Edd Cartier anew that he should go back to accepting comparative pittances for his artwork. And he'd have to hunt down the Isips, inactive these many years, though he's still got the durable Orban on tap, more deftly skilled than ever. Kramer and Killiker could be dispensed with, unmissed.

If I had to put a finger on the difference--the basic difference--between Unknown and Beyond, I think it is this; Unknown, to a great extent, took its background of mythology pretty much as it found it. There was a greater emphasis on the firmly-established chimerae--werewolves and vampires and leprechauns and demons--and very little of the innovating we've seen so much of in F&SF and Beyond.

The two last-named seem predominantly bent on fostering a whole background of folklore and mythology. Which is a fine idea if you don't overdo it. No straight-fantasy publication has--or ever

had--the circulation necessary to implant fresh facets of folklore in the public mind. A nationally-syndicated comic-strip can do that, with its millions of readers. But rare is the fantasy magazine that reaches a quarter of a million readers...and that's a bare half of one percent of the country's population.

At this point I can warmly recommend that you go out and dig up a few copies of Unknown and you will perceive what I have just set down before you. If you have already read Unknown, go back and read them again, they are still as good today as they were back in the early Forties. DAG

STRANGE, but TRUE

by Roberta Carr

Ever heard of a snake swallowing a man whole, just as the whale swallowed Jonah?

Before American explorer Leonard Clark set out for the jungle east of the Peruvian Andes in search of El Dorado and the legendary Seven Cities of Cibola, he consulted a Prof. Caesar Rosell, who warned him:

"Senor Clark; you enter at hazard; there is a grave chance that you will not get out alive should you be so unfortunate as to penetrate even a little way after crossing the Andes."

In the last ten years, he said they had lost about 700 Peruvian explorers, soldiers, officials, bush-rangers who had tried to get off the rivers and "pacify" the Indians. The explorer Robuchon had been eaten by cannibals, and there were scores of others who had fallen into the hands of corpse-eating jaguars, tribes and headhunters of the area, also of man-eating animals, death from snake-bite, black crocodiles, pana (cousins of the little flesh-eating piranha fish), ten-foot cannibal tiger-fish, giant ray fish which could electrocute a man, even fresh water sharks 3,000 miles from the ocean. Then:

"We have just received a report from the mouth of the Morona River.....Juan Vargas is our mapper there. He has been found in the belly of a snake. Our Government launches have a heavy wire mesh carefully covering sides and roof so that the poison darts of the Indians will be caught in them. Vargas was sleeping on the boat. The crew was camped on a safe beach. The Anaconda Snake apparently hunting food came out of the river and entered the boat through a hole torn that day in one corner. After killing and swallowing Vargas it could not return through the hole, and was found in the engine-room next morning".

"Is it possible to swallow a man whole?" Clark asked.

"Those snakes are capable of swallowing not only a 150 pound man, but a 500 pound animal such as a tapir," Rosell replied. "You see, they crush the larger bones, lather the head and unjoint their jaws. When hungry the snake will take any kind of living food---marine, crocodiles, land mammals and even man himself. RC

The following text is a departure from our usual policy. Both of the letters should actually appear in the Maelstrom, but set up this way they make interesting reading. The subject matter does not actually pertain to our magazine, so we have taken the liberty to set this up as a pro and con article. WDG

Dear Mr. Lyons:

Though your comments in Canadian Fandom #23 were, as usual, highly interesting, you have made one particular comment with which I should like to draw an exception.

On page 24, you comment upon a story I wrote for Abstract entitled "Swamp Dust". You obviously did not like this story. That is quite all right, Mr. Vorzimer did; he printed it. A number of his readers did; they wrote in and said so.

Your dislike of "Swamp Dust" affects me not one whit one way or the other. However, your comments about the story do. With several of them I wish to take a stand, if I may.

You first indicate that "Swamp Dust" was neither science fiction nor fantasy. This is not true. There was a definite fantasy tie-in used----though the explanation which used the fantasy aspect was never disproved, it could be ascertained if the reader had the wish to look into it further that this was not a logical solution. But the point is nonetheless apropos: the fantasy angle WAS inserted.

This, in point of fact, has very little to do with the story, per se. "Swamp Dust" was originally written for Blue Book, not Abstract, and it was only after a number of rejects that it was sent to Mr. Vorzimer for possible publication.

If we are to arbitrarily condemn all stories in fan magazines because they are not science fiction or fantasy, or clearly labeled such, we will soon see ourselves atrophying and incysting like the movie fan magazines, choked with their own backwash and persiflage.

Good material, of any nature, should be open to publication in a progressive fanzine. But if we are to condemn "Swamp Dust" for lacking a STF or fantasy theme, then so must a good portion of Canadian Fandom #23 be censured, for articles like the excellent "That Old Movie Bug" or "World Tape Pals" which have very little--if any at all--connection with science fiction, save the fact that they were pleasant reading.

Your second statement that "It is in bad taste, also," causes me a good deal of consternation.

If you call deploring racial prejudice and mob psychology "poor taste" then, yes, I rather imagine it was. But if not, then I am amazed that you could call it such. My only conclusion is that you neglected to read the story very well, Mr. Lyons.

"Swamp Dust", for those of your readers who may not recall it, dealt with a negro who had been led on by a white girl in the Georgia swamp country, and when she turned him down, in a half-crazed state, killed her. The story went on to relate the thoughts of the men as they tracked down the negro in the swamp.

The "message"---if that term may be applied here---the story was trying to put across that the negro had been steadily maltreated and snubbed, lonely and inward-seeking all his life in that town, and that the burden of his death rested on the heads of those too prejudiced to treat him as an equal.

The story, I have been told, was tastefully--written and quite subtle in parts. This is not back-patting, I assure you, but the words of any number of people, quite competent enough to recognize a story's worth. This includes both professional writers and editors,

Mr. Ellison and Mr. Lyons

and a brace of rather excellent English professors.

But the initial worth of the story is neither here nor there. We were discussing the "good taste" of the story. I could quote here from any number of letters I personally have received in reference to "Swamp Dust"--knowing nothing of what the complete reaction was insofar as Mr. Vorzimer is concerned--but that is closely akin to "cigarette-advertisement testimonials" which I heartily despise, so I will not descend to that level.

I will only re-state my belief that "Swamp Dust", aside from any disagreements as to its story value, was a decorous presentation of a subject which is in no way decorous.

If I were to be writing of garbage, no amount of savoir-faire could remove the unseemliness of the subject matter. So it is with racial prejudice, whether it be, logically, past, present or future in presentation. Intolerance is a dirty business. Rub your nose in it sometime and you'll see what I mean.

And so, with nothing but my own opinion to refute your comments, I feel I must contend that "Swamp Dust" was as tastefully written as I was capable of doing. Being neither a Faulkner nor a Wright, my limits may be considerable narrower, but let us say that I did the yarn with as much politeness as a basically filthy topic would allow.

HE

Dear Mr. Ellison:

I like your writing. I have gone to considerable trouble to obtain back issues of Science Fantasy Bulletin. I even went so far as to subscribe in August of 1953. I might mention that I have received one copy of Vector (#24) and one issue of Dimensions, but that's another diatribe.

In fact, this isn't a diatribe at all. It's an answer to your letter, in the style of the new Lyons--calm, cool, collected, dull.

My original comment in Can Fan #23 was: "Harlan Ellison contributes some anti-anti-negro fiction which is not fantasy, or STF, and is out of place here. It is in bad taste also."

I won't argue whether it was fantasy or STF. Instead I will withdraw my objection to its presence in a fanzine. In a moment of weakness I felt that fiction at least should be either of those to appear in a fanzine. I do not feel that way this evening. Anything off-trail should find a place in a fanzine. This was off-trail.

Your comment, to wit: "it was only after a number of rejects that it was sent to Mr. Vorzimer for possible publication" is unbearably naive and bears no comment.

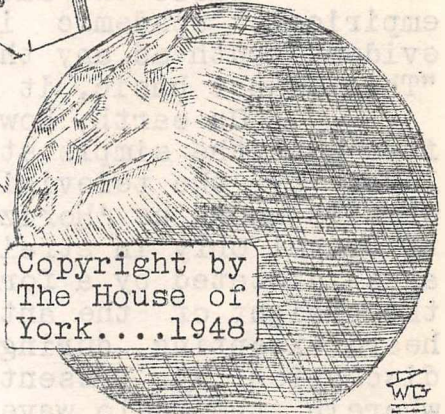
And then you deplore my deploring your bad taste in deploring racial prejudice. Just because your views coincide with my own does not mean that I must accept your presentation as decorous and restrained. I think you would be offended if anyone applied those adjectives to your writings. An old propagandist like yourself must realize that the prime requisite of "coloured writing" is bad taste and plenty of it (as Homer would say). The thought of savoir-faire in your writings must cause much laughter in Bloomington and were it not for the possible insult in the Greek root of the word, I would say that the prime source of your writings is hysteria.

Hoping to hear from you soon and to receive my much paid for copy of Dimensions number 2 (or 15 as you prefer to call it), I remain your buddy, Howard Lyons, A derelict as distinct from a derelict insurgent. P.S. You will note I have not really answered your letter. It comes down to this: You have your opinions, I have mine. I trust you will grant me this.

HL

GEORGE O. SMITH'S

INTERPLANETARY BARRIERS



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Some time ago the subject of interplanetary communications as a topic for an article was suggested to me and I dismissed the idea with a mere wave of the hand. Why, I argued, talk about a problem that has already been answered? Frankly, I know right now that if the need arose today, I could design a system that would communicate at will with any of the planets, so therefore, why bother to ruminate the problems.

The thought of a firing squad or writing this decided me on the latter choice, but then how do I know that all the questions, about interplanetary communications, have been already answered, and if they have, there are a hell of a lot of people who know little about the problem. Ergo, why not let you, the reader, know how these surmountable obstacles could be surmounted by the brilliant engineer.

Now, frankly, the problem of communicating with the other planets is not truly solved; there remains one large problem. This is a problem so vital that I am going to use up some space by approaching the point like the proverbial master of ceremonies--which is to embroider all around the edges until everybody knows all of the possible approaches and the reasons of how and why.

Any means of communication--to reduce it to its fundamentals--consists of two active factors. These two factors are a sender and a receiver, to use simple terms, or respectively a generator and a detector. In simple communications, the vocal cords are the generator of the communicating device and the auditory nerves are the detecting device.

In the telegraph system, a key interrupts an electric current, which interruptions are measured in length and announced by a sounding relay. The telephone accepts the various densities of air pressure caused by sound and produces a varying electrical current proportional to these air densities; the receiver re-converts the currents back into air-densities.

Heliograph and blinker-lights can all be placed in the same

Interplanetary Barriers

category, and the radio follows right along. The only difference between two men yelling across the street at one another is the medium employed and the means used to convey the information.

The distance across which communications can be maintained is a function of two inter-related things. As a man with a loud voice can be heard at a greater distance, so can a radio transmitter hurl its message farther when its output of power is greater.

Secondly, a man with more sensitive ears or a radio with more sensitivity can receive any given signal from a greater distance.

These two factors are a flat statement of fact. They are empirical, academic intrinsically honest and as close to the self-evident truth as any that I have encountered. As Adolph used to yell, "This is not basic, it is fundamental!"

On earth, however, there are disturbing factors that interfere with the simple statement of fact. On the very short waves employed by the television and frequency-modulated services, there is what is known as 'Horizon Effect' which causes these very short waves to travel only in straight lines as light does--so that beyond a distance dictated by a formula including the curvature of the earth and the height of the antenna above ground, the transmitter can not be heard excepting during freak conditions that have no place in this discussion at present. On longer waves there is a 'Skip Distance' wherein the radio waves are reflected from ionized layers of atmosphere far above the earth. These waves bounce back to the earth at a considerable distance, and often a station a hundred miles from the transmitter can not be heard while the transmitter is talking quite affably to a fellow radio operator in New Zealand. These ionizing layers are well-known and charted, and there are graphs and figures that will permit the technician to predict with alarming accuracy just what his chances are of covering half the earth at such and such a frequency at such and such a time of the day at what part of the year.

Radio engineers are all a bit whacky, I must admit, and this includes the amateur radio fan. I used to know a fellow in Chicago who went to bed at five or six o'clock every evening so that he could arise about three o'clock ayem because the skip was right at that time to talk and maintain a daily schedule with an old schoolboy chum in Australia. Now I've been up as late as three ayem but seldom that early and one night I was with this character and listened to the schedule. About five o'clock when dawn was beginning to break, the ionized layer changed its shape due to the solar activity and the angle of reflection changed--and Mr. Australia was as dead and gone as Aunt Mary's cat when the cat decided to chew on the high voltage lead.

Broadcast frequencies do not act like this, but instead, their character is such that they tend to stick to the ground, modulating the earth surface itself in many cases, so that the broadcast stations can surpass the horizon effect but seldom enjoy the ultra distances found in the so-called short wave reception.

Now, the reason why radio waves shorter than a few meters in length do not reflect from the heaviside layers is because they penetrate. And once out in space, where there is neither earth to cause refraction nor ionized layers to cause reflection, the power of a radio wave is a dictating factor in the distance of transmission.

The development of higher and higher power in radio transmitting equipment is a rather long story that covers almost a hundred

years, believe it or not. Heinrich Hertz made his first experiments with a crude apparatus consisting of a loop of wire and a spark gap. With this gear he was able to transmit across the space of a few yards, a radio wave. This is interesting but eminently impractical, and it served only to demonstrate the principles suggested by Maxwell. The receiver Hertz used was far less sensitive by comparison than his transmitter. He took a similar loop of wire of the same size and in place of the spark gap he left a tiny opening which, when the transmitter was sparked, took enough of the energy from the transmitter to cause a tiny spark to jump the gap in sympathy.

The first real successes in radio transmission employed no such true brute force methods, but means whereby far less energy was required to cause a response in the receiver.

Now I am not going to trace the rise of radio from Marconi to Fred Allen. De Forest invented the radio tube, and, from that moment on, the transmitters were designed to have greater power and the detectors required less energy to excite them. Radio, the wireless as some erudite peoples term it, evolved from an amazing collection of junk and wire to the present day furniture, and then went on to more specialized services as the necessary technologies were developed. Means and methods were invented and devised to handle the microwaves and wire became an almost unused number; the radio waves progressing down a chunk of rectangular guide that looks as though it would carry beer ad infinitum but not a radio wave or any other electrical circuit.

With the development of radar came the multiple cavity magnetron and the klystrons and other techniques for the generation of radio power. This plus the fact that microwaves are very well suited for beam transmission places the radio transmitter in a fine position to hurl its intelligences out into interplanetary space. Only in a very few times during my engineering experience has a number of interlocking factors been mutually beneficial; but the ultra-short waves are also well suited for beam transmissions, which means that you can pack your signal into the wanted area instead of spraying the entire universe with it.

Now the sensitivity of the receiving equipment has progressed to the point where the limiting factor is the noise generated in the equipment itself. The electrons passing through the wire, the electrons emitting from amplifier tube cathodes, create a random racket the level of which is difficult to keep low. I have seen the day ten years ago when packing a coil of wire in dry ice to lower the thermal agitation of the electrons in the wire itself lowered the noise in a radio set and made a hitherto impossible signal useful.

So granting the available factors of transmitting and receiving equipment of practical power and sensitivity, let us get along to the problem remaining in hurling a message to Mars.

This, of course, would be in code of some sort. There is little sense in using speech when more than a minute must elapse between question and answer, rebuttal and rejoinder. Asking how the weather was on Mars might take a quarter hour, and the usual, "I'm Joe, who's this?", might take up a half hour. Now code might be the simple dot-dash system of the telegraph and commercial radio, or it might be the more complex code of the teletyper. In either case, the usable signal distances are greater for legibility than is the case with voice frequencies. This is due to the fact that voice frequencies require the ability of the medium to transmit audio frequencies cover-

Interplanetary Barriers

ing the middle register of the human voice. Code signals require no such bandwidth, but only the ability to accept and use the single frequency emitted by the transmitter. Naturally, a wide door able to admit a hundred men at a time will also permit a large number of unwanted men to enter, if all you want is men exactly six feet tall, of the hundred entering you will have all sizes, the other sizes might be considered noise. If, on the other hand, you have a gauge of some sort with a single doorway, the odd-sizes will not be permitted to enter. Ergo, a narrow bandwidth prevents the entry of unwanted noise.

Now let us examine the necessary power levels and compare them with the available equipment.

I am indebted to Arthur C. Clarke of the British Interplanetary Society for the following figures.

First-off, to send a usable signal to a spacecraft operating in the region near the moon, a bit of high-powered calculation shows that the required power would be in the general neighborhood of sixteen watts. Enough power, to light a couple of christmas tree bulbs to full brilliancy. There is no use in worrying about that in this day of half-million watt transmitters and million watt magnetrons, for this sixteen watts is for voice transmission!

We'll wait awhile, until the spacecraft gets out a bit farther, remembering that radio waves are radiant energy and inclined to diminish as the inverse square of the distance. The ship goes in a long orbit to Mars and we find the time of transmission has increased, from a matter of a couple of seconds to about five minutes, which makes speech impractical. We use telegraphic code which requires less power to a value of about one hundred to one.

The figures show that for a spacecraft operating near Mars, the necessary transmitting power must be a least 6,000 watts.

This is not peanuts but it is no great problem. 6,000 watts is six toastmasters or six electric flatirons worth of operating power, and radio stations considered first-class broadcast service, deliver a shade more than eight times that amount. Broadcast transmitters are limited by law but not by technology to 50,000 watts.

So we wait a while longer, the ship arrives at the orbit of Jupiter. At this point the time lag runs up to 35 minutes, and the necessary power for code transmissions amounts to forty thousand watts.

This begins to present a problem, but there is one redeeming feature. If we insist upon getting farther and farther away from home, we can build an antenna of larger dimensions so that the beam is less divergent. Increasing the size--area--of the reflecting area of the radiator by a factor of one hundred would reduce the necessary power by a similar amount, so that at Jupiter, with an antenna of about one thousand square meters, only 400 watts would be needed. This, of course, would present another problem, since the success of beam-transmission depends upon the ability to direct the beam accurately. Just exactly how to hang an antenna-array of that size on gimbals to be rotated would be a problem I'd gladly hand to a mechanical engineer with experience in the designing of telescope mountings. However, the smaller array would not be difficult.

And so, we return to the main problem of interplanetary communications. This question I can not answer. I don't see Willy Ley around anywhere, and so I can not ask the man who might know just when we can expect a customer to listen to the other end of our very simple system of interplanetary communications.

GOS

THE MAELSTROM

REDD BOGGS
Minneapolis, Minn.

I like the cover this time, the general idea more than the execution thereof--if the artist will allow me to separate these aspects which really perhaps are one. Artwork and layout are as usual superb through the whole issue....."Tape Topics" read like an ad....."Tisn't completely true that "The Great Train Robbery" was the film that "started the ball rolling" in regards to telling a story on film. I saw a brief film once called "Washday Trouble", made in 1896, that told an improvised story of sorts, and there were probably scores of similar attempts. George Melies' "Trip To The Moon", shown on TV's Omnibus a year or two ago, made a more successful attempt to tell a story. As a story it is just as involved, or uninvolved, as "The Great Train Robbery". However, the latter film was perhaps the first to get away from stage technique; it uses movement toward and away from the camera; the camera follows the action in a few scenes; parallel action is well-used in the chase scenes; and changes of locale and lapses of time are indicated by editing the film. These developments of cinematic technique are "The Great Train Robbery's" real achievements, I think.....I've seen that film three and a half times (I came in during one showing and sat through the next showing, at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago), and it is still an amusing picture.....

BILL CONNER
Chillicotte, Ohio

Pat Patterson is hereby proclaimed the best artist in fandom. This is the best cover I have ever seen on a fanzine--congratulations!.....Now I have a beef to make. Maybe I should keep my mouth shut (because I am a new fan), but there is something that disturbs me. It's science-fiction's relation to fandom. I'd like to see more on the general subject of STF in fanzines! Does this sound ridiculous?.....Fanzines concentrate on fandom itself too much. They forget what this is a fandom of! Look at the last issue of Can Fan. There isn't even one little article about STF, and in the whole issue, pros and prozines are scarcely mentioned. What's the matter with fandom? Isn't STF good enough for it anymore?.....More space is given to Pogo and Mad Comics than STF, I hate, detest, and despise Pogo, but I'm mad about Mad. Pogo is peasantish hogwash and a sorry satire. It has nothing to do with STF. Neither does Mad.....Fans used to criticize STF in the zines--this was fandom, but now they just criticize the other fellows zine and the other fellow! Fandom is the offspring of STF and it can't exist without it. Some "fans" are too busy with "fannish" activities to read STF. This is a ridiculous situation! How can one be a science-fiction fan if one doesn't read the stuff?.....STF is being shoved out of the zines in favour of other crud. Just look at the last issue of Can Fan. There are two hobby reports--one about Tape Pals--the other about movies. Next thing you know those damn stamp collectors will work there way into fanzines! If William Grant is thinking about stamps for his next

The Maelstrom

hobby report please stop him! The last issue of Can Fan wouldn't have been so bad if there had been something about science-fiction in it. There was plenty about fandom--but the fandom of what? It's all right to discuss other things in a zine so long as STF is mentioned too!

ARTHUR HAYES
Matachewan, Ont.

That "World Tape Pals" affair is good. I have been trying to get one that does not have its own amplifier. Why have an Amp when you can use the radio phono plug. It would make the price lower. I think I can get hold of one in the USA, but I have been trying to get one in Canada without success.....I have often been involved in religious discussions and while I'm not on one now, I don't think I'll be without one for long. I am getting almost fed up with them, because no matter how you argue or discuss, you haven't a chance of getting anywhere.....Outside of the Browne fiasco I agree that possibly a little personality material might help Can Fan but try to go a little less than some. Too much can be corny and while corn is good in moderation too much can reduce the rather high rating Can Fan has.....It's too bad there isn't more artists of the Patterson type. Dutch Ellis can put out some fair material too, but on the whole, there isn't enough to go around.....

ORVILLE E. MOSHER
Dallas, Texas

Well, I'm located and started a fan club. And you'll notice, nearly all in the same week. No slow poke, I.....I'd like you to play up this club, so a good turn in Can Fan would do. The first meeting was held at the home of Randy Brown and was composed of four fen and one "fringe-fan" who left early. It was decided to start a club and I outlined several methods of advertisement. Officers were elected. I was elected President and Randy Brown was elected Corresponding Secretary as meetings will be held at his home due to the convenient location and bus service. All other members have elected themselves vice presidents..... After the meeting, several fen were contacted by telephone--the addresses coming from back issues of prozines and from a couple of fan address lists which were given to me by Raleigh E. Multog and Dottie Hansen. All but one address proved of value, and that address didn't pan out because the fan had given up reading STF, the reason was that he was taking his bar examination to become a lawyer on the day of our next meeting. Anyone having any Dallas, Texas fan addresses can contact any of the following members and he or she will be warmly welcomed.

Randy Brown (Corr. Sec.) -6619 Anita St-Dallas 14, Texas

George Jennings-11121 Tascosa Drive-Dallas, Texas

Mike May-9428 Hobart Street-Dallas, Texas

Nathan Dodge-2009 W. 10th Street-Dallas, Texas

Benny Sodek-1415 S. Marsalis-Dallas, Texas

John C. Young-9915 Meadow Brook Drive-Dallas, Texas

Orville W. Mosher (Pres.) -429 Gilpin Ave-Dallas 11, Texas

RON ELLIK
Long Beach, Calif.

I yanked Can Fan (like the abbreviation better, by the way--confuse the whole title with Canadian fandom as a group of fen) out of the envelope, and was blinded by the cover flashing on and off like a neon-sign. Stared at the illo--and was gently amused. 'Twarn't until I'd read half-way through and then looked at the illo again that I realized "Pappy Time" there was a characa-- er --satire on Harlan Ellison. Laughed my head off.....Grant might have mentioned the afternoon TV show down

here in the States called "Movie Museum". They present several old shows daily at about five here in California--I don't know if it's a national. Comments on the actors, producers and vintage are added.

DON WEGARS
Berkeley, Calif.

Good old P. Howie wrote me some time ago that when I took a look at the coming Can Fan cover I would immediately recognize myself as the one on the right (not the far right, he cautioned; the one holding the birdbath). So I am writing the NFFF to voice my complaint, and I fully expect that the lawyers will call in the morning.....I really like the switch in personality that you've initiated and think it's a change for the better. There was something lacking in the earlier issues, but now it's there. More like A'Bas, if you like. Do you like?.....The editorial on the Insurgent problem was good, and, like I say, showed off your personality.....I read "No One Can Prove It To You?" with some interest, but couldn't find out what Loomes meant unless he was just trying to prove what the title implied. I wouldn't call it wasting space, because it was well written (anything well written is rather rare) but I wouldn't recommend it to any one.....The Flying Saucer deal was better and milder (much milder). It had a certain ring of authenticity to it--I mean such details as the water dripping down the leg and such things. I notice that the word Keyhoe was pasted on--does this have any special significance? If it doesn't, who goofed?.....Fog should have gotten there by now, as I mailed it the 29th and I expect that this will reach you somewhere around the 5th or 6th. I'd appreciate any comments you'd like to give on it, because I plan to have a 'big' letter section this next time.....Are the questionnaires going along okay? Last time you wrote only about 100 had been received and you were hoping for about 50 percent. I received 2 or 3 of the things, and if the same holds true for the rest of fandom I doubt if you will receive 50 percent.....

NORMAN G. BROWNE
Toronto, Ontario

Actually, as far as this fued is concerned we did it all the wrong way or at least you people didn't plan it out right. You see, my activity and interest in fandom was tied directly with my interest and activity in the club. My interest in fueding with fans depends upon my interest in fandom. So, you lose one and the whole relationship breaks down.....You fellows gave me the cold shoulder treatment too heavily and thus I left the club. Once out of the club, I lost interest in fandom. And having lost interest in fandom and lost contact with you people, there was really very little incentive for me to fued.....The situation has changed quite radically since you last had contact with me. I got laid-off work about 3 days ago. I'm moving out of this apartment and into a room downtown. I'm not going to look for another job for awhile and instead I'm going to bum around and collect unemployment insurance. I'm also going to try my hand at free-lance writing since now I have all the time in the world to spend at writing. Have an idea for a couple of novels and a short story and a couple of articles. I don't know, but there is no harm in trying.....I'm going to drop out of sight almost completely. Any mail sent to this address (33 Lyonsgate Drive) will be held at the P. O. for me to pick up. Very few people will know my real address. Of course, in an emergency, I can be contacted at my "office" (sic). Simply phone or ask for me or if I'm not around leave a message and your name. On second thought, maybe you hadn't better!.....

By Jove!

BY JOVE! by S.H.M.

"I want some good illustrations, a better type style, one easier to read, and a few good departments. Also a lessening of the Campbell trait in almost all stories and titles, and a little less smugness, also more flare and less conservatism". So said Sam Moskowitz in "Take Back Your Blarney" an article published in the January 1940 issue of Harry Warner's Spaceways, Sam continued, "I readily admit that your Campbell's knowledge of the fantasy field is infinitely superior to mine. I am but a child attempting to push open the door of fantasy knowledge. I've only dabbled in this business seven out of my nineteen years. I've only compiled and read a trifling collection of fantasy whose total numbers run up into many thousands. I've only met about 1000 readers of fantasy in person. I've only directed the two largest STF conventions ever held. However, all this dwindles into nothingness beside the knowledge of one who has edited a pro mag for less than two years". And on and on, for five pages of the very same blarney he wanted JWCJr. to take back.

This juvenile ranting would get nowhere today, for the editors, from the same JWCJr. to Senora Goldilocks down in sunny Mehico, have learned from experience to stay out of personal fueds with hotheaded young fans. But in 1940 Campbell was new, young, and easily upset by what he thought was unjust criticism. Editor Warner very thoughtfully sent fellow editor Campbell a copy of the article and the next issue of Spaceways featured Campbell's two page reply. For a page and a half he neatly and skillfully cut Sam and his article into bits and pieces. At this point he could have retired from the battle and left his critics discomfitted and wordless. But, alas, with his now famous penchant for putting his size twelves in his mouth, he made one last remark that brought down the house. "Having the backing of Street & Smith's great reserves, I could put out a series of departments that would make any fan magazine extremely sorry. It could employ the best writers in the country. Naturally, it would be a form of competition no fan magazine could match or withstand. You boys want it?"

We never did find out whether the "boys" wanted it or not, but they certainly didn't like the way he held his mouth when he said it. Said Moskowitz in the next issue, "Also that 'threat' of your publishing a pro fan mag and running the fans' publications out of business who are already losing money by publishing a fan magazine, and continues to publish despite that fact". Sam, we don't know how he intended to do it, but we are eternally sad that ASF's famed editor never turned his hand to the amateur publishing field. The tag match continued with Miske accusing Campbell of adopting the attitude, "I think you'll like it so you will".

Moskowitz wrote his, "Clarification for Campbell" and Campbell wrote his "Clarification for Moskowitz" and Moskowitz wrote his, "Further Clarification for Campbell" just as I was getting tired of the whole thing, along came good old reliable, John Chapman Miske in his guise as the Star-Treader to say, "...there are certain fans not suited to issue fan magazines. Either they can't spell, they can't type, their grammer is poor, they can't devote enough time to their project, or they haven't suitable facilities. I mean such persons as Sam Moskowitz, James V. Taurasi, John Giunta, Louis Kuslan, Olon F. Wiggins, Bob Tucker, J. J. Fortier, etc." And so, for the moment, fandom left JWCJr. to lick his wounds, and the pack, lead by Hoy Ping Pong, turned their typewriters on Miske.....Next issue, Spaceway's first issue and Acolyte's first. SHM

Actually the following book review is more of an appreciation from one fan to another. Jean Carrol lives right in the heart of the professional and amateur STF field, New York, that is. So Miss Carrol, speaks with authority, as well as appreciation for Sam Moskowitz's very worthwhile book, which is now available in permanent form. WDG

BOOK REVIEW

by JEAN CARROL

THE IMMORTAL STORM - A History of Science Fiction Fandom
by Sam Moskowitz

Published by The Atlanta Science Fiction Organization Press, 713
Coventry Road, Decatur, Georgia. 269 pages (1954) Retail Price \$5.00

Someone important, I don't remember who, once said: "When a movement has a history, it becomes a culture". Rarely has any movement had a history written in so fascinating a style as "The Immortal Storm", and yet retained the scholarly approach.

If "The Immortal Storm" by its appearance means that science fiction fandom is now a culture, then by the same token it has become the 'bible' of the movement. For not only does Moskowitz in this packed 175,000 word chronicle detail the fabulous doings of science fiction fandom, but he also gives, as a background to his work, the history of the professional science fiction field, interpretation of the origin and the meaning of terms; background information on publishers, authors, editors and artists in the field, and a thousand little known juicy scientifiational morsels which have never been revealed elsewhere.

The importance and quality of this work is best judged by the vitality with which it has survived. It was begun as a serial in Fantasy Commentator in 1945, and ran continuously for nine years! In 1952 the serialized version was collected into one immense mimeographed volume and sold for \$2.00 a copy by Henry Burwell. It quickly sold out and aroused a mountain of interest. The present hard cover form could scarcely be improved upon. It is bound in the highest grade cloth and stamped on spine and front in gold. The jacket by Frank R. Paul superbly catches the spirit of the book. Fourteen pages of photos of the great and near great of the science fiction world have been included. Fifteen thousand words of brand new material, material which has never appeared elsewhere is included in this volume and 30,000 words more than the previous mimeographed edition. The publishers, Carson Jacks and Jerry Burge have compiled a tremendous cross-index in the book converting it in one stroke into the most valuable reference-works in the field. The printing and appearance of this book are far above the average standards of book publishing today.

This reviewer, living in the New York area, has personally heard such important men whose background is considered in this book

Book Review

as Frederik Pohl state that this book's objectivity, accuracy and careful detail of events in which he personally participated, is not merely commendable, it is almost supernaturally uncanny.

To appreciate the background of this volume one would have to be familiar with Sam Moskowitz and his "Working Collection". When it comes to facts and accuracy Sam is a perfectionist. He has every science fiction magazine ever published and has thousands of them bound into hard cover volumes instantaneously available for reference on his bookshelves. His library of fan magazines is probably one of the finest in the world. Many thousands of them are bound and on his shelves, and the remainder are alphabetically filed in a battery of office-type filing cabinets. Also filed are innumerable references to science fiction published in newspapers and magazines throughout the years. To top this off, Sam has a complete file of every letter and postcard ever mailed to him. Not satisfied with this he also has filed the correspondence of friends who decided to get rid of their letters. The story of Issac Asimov's consternation when as a result of an argument he had been having with Sam Moskowitz in the latter's Aerie, Sam went to his cabinet and pulled out a whole sheaf under "Asimov", is told with good natured humor in eastern fan circles.

The thing I liked best about this book is the fact that it reveals to the reader that the authors, editors, publishers, artists, etc. of today were at one time very similar in thought and action to the Science Fiction Fan of today. It gives a perspective to the fan of today and makes him realize that there is no reason why he, too, can't become what he wants to be, because fans do grow up and become writers, artists, editors and publishers.

You will find this book reads easily and if you have met some of the people mentioned and who in fandom hasn't, (at least by letter) it makes fascinating reading. Almost every one I have spoken to about the book has one universal thought, "Will I be in the next volume Sam is going to write, or is he going to write one?" It is obvious that each person who reads this volume immediately sees forth coming another in which they themselves might appear.

I was also struck by what an important book this is to the would-be collector. It carefully describes hundreds of obscure science fiction pamphlets and books and publications, giving a first hand idea of their approximate value and rarity.

With this book as a reference work, you can argue to your heart's content about SF people and things and use the book to back up your arguments. In one fell swoop, a newcomer to SF Fandom can become an authority on the field.

Another thing that must strike many people as peculiar is the fact that most of the people who are written about and discussed in this volume are not only alive, but are active in the professional or fan field today. How strange it must be for professionals described in this book such as Ray Bradbury, Cyril Kornbluth, Frederik Pohl, Donald A. Wollheim, Robert W. Lowndes, Richard Wilson, William Lawrence Hamling, Erle Korshak, Ted Dikty, Leo Margulies, James Blish, Forrest J. Ackerman, Otto Binder, Raymond A. Palmer, John W. Campbell, Jr., Walter Kubieli, David A. Kyle and hundreds of others to sit back and read about themselves moving through the events of history like characters in an historical novel.

This then, is "The Immortal Storm". A history book with characters who are still being characters.

JC

CONVENTION ROTATION

by Don
Ford

Lately there has been some discussion and mention in the fanzines about rotating the annual "World" con through some sort of a planned system. This has its faults, of course, and if there's anything a die-hard Science Fiction Fan hates is regimentation, rules, formality, etc.

The big trouble with our conventions is the fact that they keep getting larger. They'll stay about the same size for a couple of years and then take a jump in attendance. The more or less active fan, or the fan who is aware of fandom, clubs and fanzines is now outnumbered by the readers. The readers will probably become more active in time; but for the majority of them it's often their first convention.

Knowing nothing about previous conventions, and past history, or of traditions, they're going to vote for the city nearest to them: unless someone can take the time to give them a quick brush-up on fan history. This becomes impossible if one expects to have any pleasure at all in attending a con. One person couldn't hope to do it all; and if a city shows up in strength--intending to make a bid for next year's con site--they spend all their time politicking and should they lose, the defeat is doubly bitter.

Somewhere along the line, fandom should be able to work out a system agreeable and fair to all. The time to do it is at a convention, when the largest number of fans can be present to talk it over and decide what they want to do. Attempting to initiate such a plan, twelve others besides myself presented a suggestion at Philadelphia. This suffered from a lack of pre-con publicity and was given a short period of time on the program in the Business Session, hence the buck was passed onto San Francisco.

It could prove to be a hot item if allowed to run loose and a lot of side issues and irrelevant ideas tossed in. Essentially, all we need to do is decide that the conventions be rotated from one section of the country to the next each year, and then cut up the country into whatever sections deemed necessary. We suggested three sections. However, a couple of voiciferous fans from the South protested, and the suggestion was made that San Francisco consider four sections--the South being number four.

I think the greatest fear that some clubs may have regarding any rotation plan is the fact that they don't want to get cut out of their chance to bid this year for next year's con site. This can be taken care of quite simply by having a wide open bid this year and then having rotation follow through in its normal cycle from whatever city wins the 1956 spot.

The intent of any rotation plan should be a swing from the East Coast to the Middle West, and from there to the West Coast. The South could be brought in for the fourth position. However, right now

Convention Rotation

there doesn't seem to be enough activity in the South to successfully promote and run a convention of the size of these "World" cons. Thus, it might be better to provide for three general sections of the country at first and then later on, add the South for the fourth.

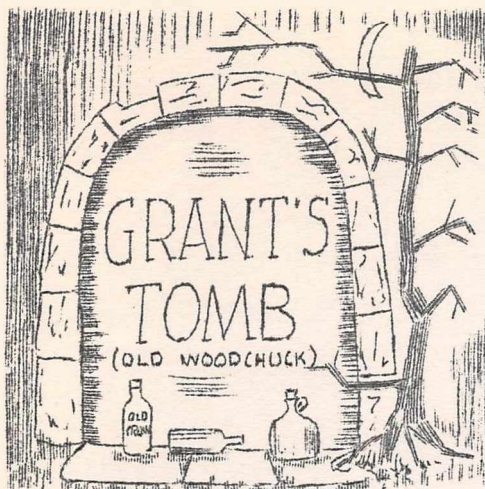
There is also evidence outside our borders of groups putting in bids for the "World" con. For example Canada pulled it off in 1948 and England made a bid in 1953, so actually we have an unknown quantity to consider. I think Canada, Mexico, England and others should be allowed to enter a bid any year that they desire, this in no way would effect our rotation system, all it would do is hold it up temporarily. The idea being to accept bids only from the Area section due its turn on the system. Thus, the East Coast, for example, could know two years ahead of time when to expect a convention under the normal rotation system and could play ahead and really be ready for a top convention whenever their turn came. Each section of the country would know when to expect a con and it would give them plenty of time to make preparations.

1955 is the year to do something about it. Let's not make it complicated, let's cut out the long heated discussions, keep it simple. A minimum of wordage and in fifteen minutes it is possible to agree on something long overdue.....See you in Cleveland. DF

FANZINE REVIEWS by G.A.S.

MIMI - Georgina Ellis - (Last Issue - no number or mailing address listed).....Again the letter section is the number one attraction. Just to give you an idea, here are some of the letter writers, namely, Denis Moreen, Bob Tucker, Marvin Snyder, Sam Johnson, Norman G. Clarke, Jim Harmon, Robert Bloch, Dean A. Grennell, Joe Keogh, Daryl Sharp, Terry Carr, Marion Zimmer Bradley and Redd Boggs. Which just goes to show you that Mimi has a small, but solid reader appeal, enough appeal to spark the above people to write a letter about what they think. Some of these missles are long and contain quite a bit of news. More news, in fact, that some magazines have in several issues. So with heavy heart we learn that "Dutch" is discontinuing her offspring. But soon she will produce another effort by the name of Wendigo. So be on the lookout, the price of entry is a letter, contribution or trade.

LE ZOMBIE # 64 - Bob Tucker - Box 702 - Bloomington, Illinois., USA (no price listed).....This one popped up out of the unknown, after being silent since the special Torcon issue of 1948. Dean A. Grennell put the stamps on the envelope and Bob Tucker cut the stencils, at least thats what I gather from this end of the line. The Bob Bloch report on San Francisco alone makes this a memorable issue, but on top of that Tucker has penned an article called "Dig That Crazy Detour", which goes on at a crazy speed. Walt Willis turns up with a short blurb and then Tucker comes in again with more humour. Dean has done some fine pictures of the two leading characters which sort of rounds off the whole production. At this point I can only say that I hope the perpetrators can find enough time in the future to turn out another issue of the same kind of humour, which is sadly lacking these days. GAS



Well, this is the last page and if you got this far, all I can say is good for you. This issue has been slightly delayed due to various circumstances. Originally we had hoped to surprise you by having Can Fan printed. but our good luck charm didn't hold out. There was even a plan to amalgamate "Escape" and "Can Fan" into one effort, but as you have read on the front cover things took another course. So about a week ago we went into production, actually about two weeks behind schedule and as you can see we made it.

Also in the midst of this Gerry declined his role of editor, which really threw things for a loop. Gerry has been working on so many other projects, one of them being The 2nd Tucker Fan Report, that he felt that time was catching up with him. At present GAS will print Can Fan, which is a stroke of good luck for me at this end of the line.

I would like to apologize to those of you who like humour in a fanzine, there is none in this issue. After all you have to have the humour to print and there just wasn't any. In the June issue this point will be corrected.

I would like to announce the marriage of Pat Patterson and Howard Lyons, this took place about four weeks ago, they both look happy in their new venture. Also a son arrived at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Greenberg on February the 13th in New York. Up in Minnesota Mr. and Mrs. Ray Beam also added one to the family, making it a threesome.

That's it for this trip, the deadline date for the next issue will be May 21st, 1955. And once again we sign off and we'll be seeing you at the Mid-West Con. (March 18, 1955) WDG

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