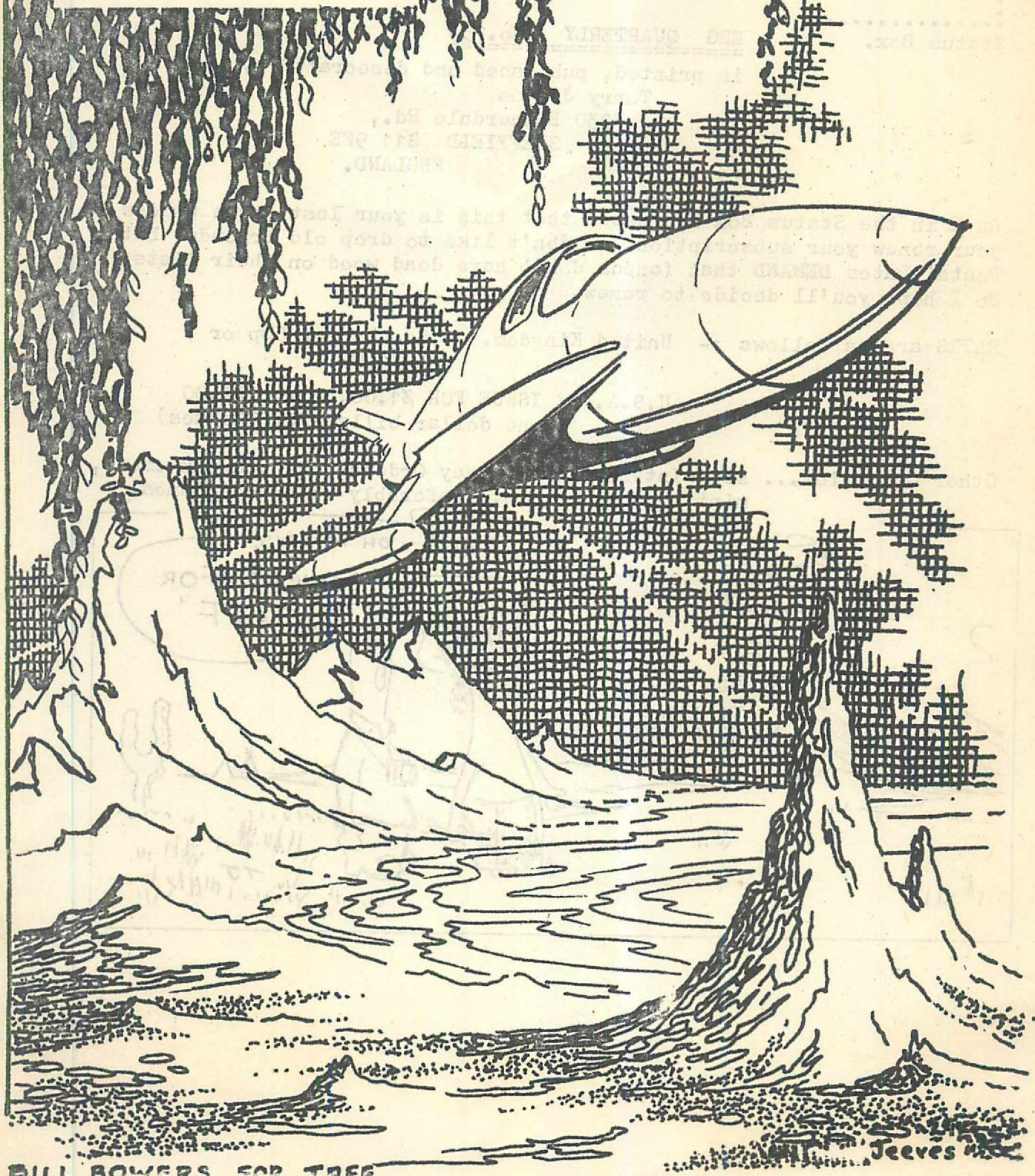


ERG

QUARTERLY

No 53

JANUARY 1976



BILL BOWERS FOR TAFF

JEFF JEEVES

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.....
Status Box.

ERG QUARTERLY No. 53

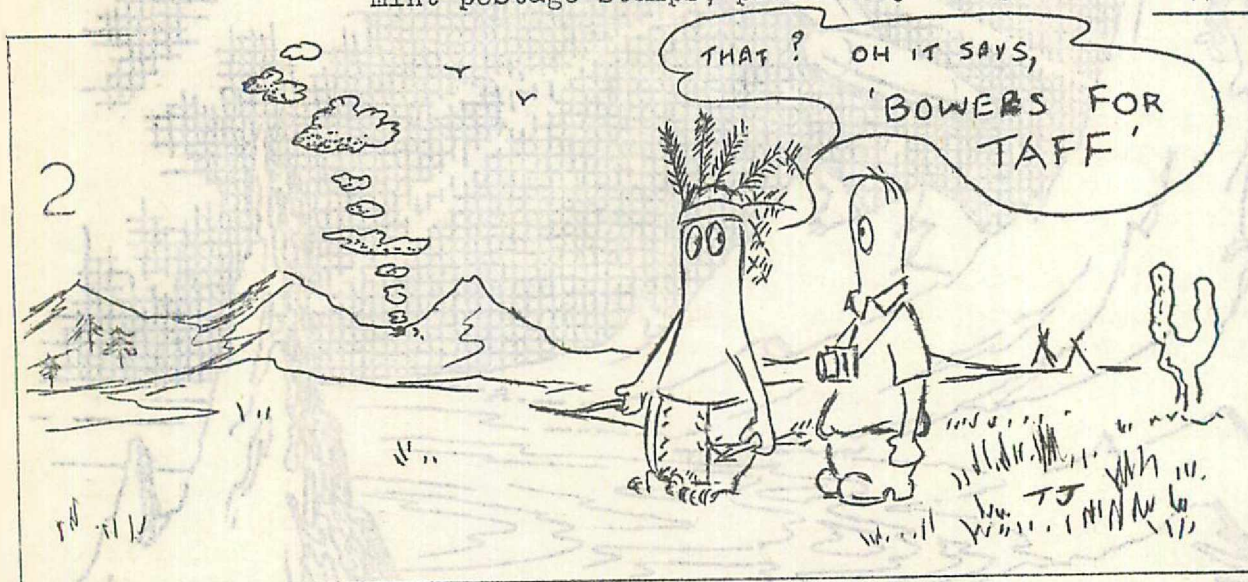
is printed, published and desecrated by
Terry Jeeves
230 Bannerdale Rd.,
SHEFFIELD S11 9FE
ENGLAND.

An X in the Status Box indicates that this is your last issue unless you renew your subscription. I don't like to drop old friends, but Postal Rates DEMAND that faneds don't have dead wood on their lists. So I hope you'll decide to renew.

RATES are as follows :- United Kingdom. 3 issues for 50p or 7 for £1.00

U.S.A. / ISSUE FOR \$1.00, 7 for \$2.00
(send dollar bills, NOT Cheques)

Other Countries... send International Money Orders, or by arrangement, mint postage stamps, preferably on Space themes.



ERGITORIAL



Greetings ERGbods,

As mentioned in the letter section, I'd like to thank all those people who wrote in about the Jupiter/Earth paradox. Virtually everyone suggested that the final velocity would be in the region of the sum of the escape velocities, (which is the sort of idea I had in my own noddle) Only Keith Freeman made the point I was really after..namely that the feather and weight we started with DON'T fall at the same speed, that actually they DO vary, but since they are so near each other from a mass point of view (as compared with the mass of the Earth, the difference is negligible. Which is what I have always suspected...BUT...my copy of Intermediate Physics by C.J.Smith says on page 25...'All bodies fall towards the earth with a constant acceleration, g , which is equal to 32ft/sec^2 ' No mention of slight differences there, just the dogmatic statement..which Galileo and that astronaut feller both demonstrated....and that's how you meet the statement in virtually every text book. If that isn't glossing over a vital difference, what is? Might just as well ignore Einstein as well, since he only differs in small amounts from Newtonian physics.

On a happier note, let me get on the soap-box and shower blessings on the head of Eddie Jones. I have long had a yen to own an airbrush, so finally took the plunge and dropped a line to Eddie asking him for any help he might be able to give. Not only did he give good advice on three models, he also sent some sample work and a brochure on the Conopois airbrush. A good man. So now, I have lashed out £25 on a Conopois and have an air-compressor on order..as several happy hours doodling with air cans as a source, has convinced me that I have made a wise investment. I hope to be exhibiting some of the results at the Mancon.

4 Bear with me if you not only read ERG, but also have the uncommon good sense to read TRIODE, inevitably, I tend to overlap a bit with my comments. This time, it is to mention that AT LAST ! After two years in the making, I have finally completed my latest film :- 3001 - A Space Oddity, which features Captain Birk, Doctor Zspok and that infamous mad robot, Heinz 57. The film is about 100 feet long and runs for eight minutes...and I have thrown away more than that in scrapped footage. The sound track alone, took about three weeks to get near right...and still leaves something to be desired...but I have other fish to fry, so all being well, I hope to bring it along for the Delta film competition at Owens Park.

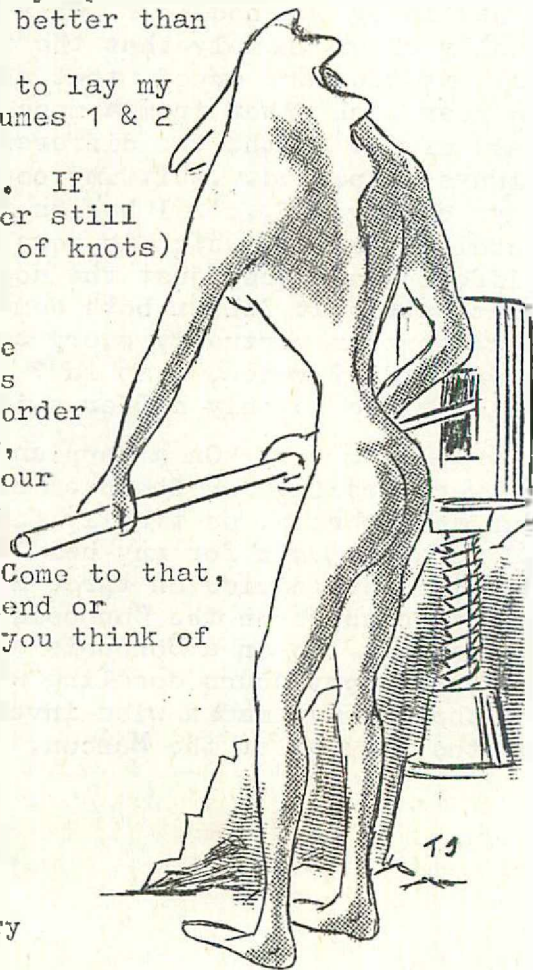
Also in Triode, I happened to natter about the deplorable (to my puristic ears) increase in the use of the abomination 'Sci-Fi' to describe science-fiction. I see that I'm not the only one who takes a dim of this latest 'ghastly-talk'. In the December ANALOG, Lester del Rey also takes a few swipes at the use of the term. More power to his elbow says I. Now how about a campaign to bring back words such as 'golf', 'revolve', 'solve' and others which have become next to gibberish in the tongues of the jargon-makers. Scratch a would-be-with-it pseudo intellectual, and he'll use, 'soulve' 'goalv'..or even Gofe' along with 'revoalver' and I suspect, even 'loave' instead of 'love' Makes yer sick. While on the topic of hamstrung English...our head assistant, a delightfully ineffecient lady, was chewing a strip off the lower school the other day ((Basic English for 'telling 'em off' and ended with the lovely phrase of condemnation for the way they spoke... "and some foreigners come over here and speak English better than what you do"

Time for an S.O.S. I'd like to lay my hands on two hardcovers from Gollancz. Volumes 1 & 2 of THE SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME, edited respectively by Bob Silverberg and Ben Bova. If anyone out there would like to sell or better still trade (for mint hardcovers at a goodly rate of knots) I'd appreciate hearing from you.

And a final plea to Stateside readers. One of the aims in publishing this wonderful magazine, is to raise dollars in order to pay off my dues for such items as Analog, FAPA and the like.....SO, I'd appreciate your passing this issue along to a friend, along with the hint that I'd love to have a dollar (or even two dollar) sub from him. Come to that, why not give someone a sub for Xmas ? Friend or enemy, it cuts both ways depending on what you think of ERG.

Bestest,

Terry



A. E. VAN VOGT



" I came to know and enthuse over S-F long after the Golden Age, when the Null-A stories were long out of print, along with The Wizard of Linn and others accounted among his masterworks. I'd heard a lot about Van Vogt through various means and was quite prepared to put him up there as one of the Star Names along with Heinlein, Clarke and the rest as proof of what S-F was all about, without having even read a sentence ! So, when I came across a pile of mouldering magazines in a second-hand shop and found on the top a magazine cover which proclaimed THE EXPENDABLES: 1st Van Vogt story in 14 years ! or some similar editor's hyperbole, I just had to reach in and buy it...and that's probably the first time I felt a Sense Of Wonder. My view of the writing world may have changed since then, but that first Van Vogt story set my enthusiastic attitude to S-F on its way; for which I'm very grateful.

I can't really give a critical evaluation on how Van Vogt has developed, tracing his career from Black Destroyer; or try to compare his output before and after that long gap. As my Sense of Wonder has gradually submerged beneath the sheer weight of S-F and my critical faculties have come into play, there's been a growing unease with those later works. It crystallised really with the infamous Darkness On Diamondia; one-dimensional characters and sentences, not only paragraphs which ended up in a totally different place from where they started. Now unfortunately, each time I pick up a new VanVogt my Sense of Wonder is not goshwowing at a great author, but wondering just how he can possibly carry it off, how can those once-shattering concepts jell together sufficiently to form a believable novel ?.

I haven't researched enough at this stage, but the over-riding impression I've been getting of Van Vogt is that he's less and less interested in the art and craft of building a novel, and more and more concerned with putting forward the bare idea; and, dare I say it?? trading on the Name that he once had to sell that idea. I see Van Vogt as an almost tragic figure adrift from the Golden Age, offering his galaxy-shattering, planet-plundering ideas to an audience that has lost that youthful enthusiasm necessary to accept them. There's a new audience now, wanting to be entertained rather than stimulated and I don't think there are enough intellectuals around to sensure him a comfortable, well-off existence. ... Though I for one will be cheering as loudly as the rest if he can carry this last breathtaking concept off.

Roger Waddington
4 Commercial St.,
Norton, Malton
N. Yorkshire
YO17 9ES

6

Eric Dentcliffe
17 Riverside Cresc.
Holmes Chapel,
Ches.

Van Vogt is an author who started out by entertaining me vastly; with his excellent novelettes and short-stories in ASTOUNDING, but who now, alas, bores me equally with his current, inept novels. Basically, he is, I think a short-story writer (as are so many of the ASF scientist-ideas men), and is unable to successfully sustain an idea once he has propounded it, because of lack of writing ability. Those early 'novels' with which he had success were basically tied-together novelettes.....'World of Null-A', 'The Weapon Makers'...the Linn stories, all fall into this category if closely examined.

His novelettes, 'Discord in Scarlet' and 'Black Destroyer' were, together with his Rull stories, his best work in my estimation. Taut, well-told action stories. However, like most writers, he couldn't resist 'writing a novel', and being somewhat lacking in the skill of characterisation and true plot development, he would state his basic premise, and then repeat, and repeat it, obfuscating wherever possible. Certain of his 'novels' were acclaimed as masterpieces of their time because nobody could understand them after one read, but were given the impression that they would make sense with re-reading, and re-reading. As far as I am concerned, several of them wouldn't make sense after an eternity of reading, and I can think of few fates worse than being forced to read and re-read them !

Hummm. I haven't mentioned SLAN have I ? It was perhaps his best attempt at a longer story, but more notable for adding a new word to the s-f fans vocabulary than for sheer brilliance. The idea was good, the execution mediocre....and that is my estimation of the majority of Van Vogt's work.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

Alan Burns
19 The Crescent
Wallsend on Tyne

Whilst being the first to say that A.E. Van Vogt deserves a place in the Hall of Fame, I often feel that there are times when his imagination

is rather badly disciplined. I have a few Vogt titles like 'The Changeling' and others, which quite frankly I can't get into but there are others, like 'Pawns of Null A' and 'Wizard of Linn' which I reread frequently. Loathed to John Campbell, Vogt was excellent, let free, he isn't too entertaining an author. Under Campbell, he did some magnificent stuff. His 'Space Beagle' was memorable and superb s-f. 'Mixed Men' was just as good, and 'Wizard of Linn' was one of the best dying-Earth type novel I've read. Vogt has a marvellous sweep of scenery in his books and his characters really live. Ixtl in 'Discord in Scarlet' was magnificent and yet tragic. Gassey of Null-A was a Bond type to make Fleming's hero look like nothing, and finally, long before the invasion of SF by the fair sex, van Vogt's women characters were truly believable, more so than any of his brother writers at that time.



COLOUR

7

Opinions differ as to the value of colour work in fanzines. However, for those who are interested in its use, these notes may be of use. Admittedly, they are not complete, as being based on my own experience, they miss out on machines and their techniques when considering machines such as Roneo or multilith. Even so, if you want to use colour....read on.

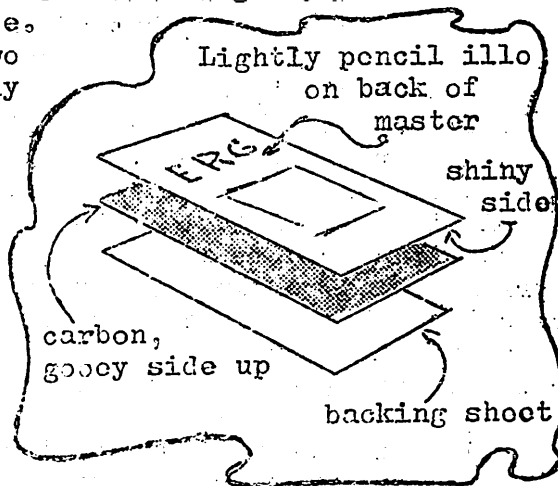
BANDA - The trade name of Messrs. Block & Anderson, and termed 'ditto' in the U.S.A. This method is indubitably the most flexible for multicolour work, the simplest to prepare and run off, and there are no colour registration problems. (For the uninitiated, 'colour registration' refers to the accuracy with which various colours can be printed in an illustration.) On the edit side, Banda colours are usually weak..indeed, brown and yellow are almost invisible unless you take care to surround them with a contrasting colour. Print run is limited to less than 200, and there is a strong tendency for the colour to seep through the paper to the reverse side. The technique is as follows :-

1. Take a 'white' master sheet, and on the back, lightly sketch in the art work. For identification, the back is not as white or glossy as the front...and the chalk covered front can be easily erased or corrected by scraping. Actually, any smooth paper may be used, but then you lack this correction facility by having saved on the cash outlay.

2. Lay the master shiny side down on the gooey side of the first colour carbon you wish to use. Put a backing sheet beneath the two sheets - backing sheets are usually supplied in the box of carbons - then, using a hard 2H pencil, or ball pen, draw over the part you want in the first colour.

3. Change carbon for your second colour and continue until all colours have been laid.

4. Place master on machine, and run off. Since all colours are on one master, there are no registration problems. Start printing with minimum fluid flow and lightest pressure. Increase both as you go, and you will be sure of a maximum print run.



If you DO buy the proper masters, and wish to economise, cut off any unused section before 'running' and save it for later use. Unlike an ink duplicator, the missing portion does not plonk ink everywhere.

STENCIL COLOUR WORK (mimeo)

Since my experience in this line is limited to a rather ancient Gestetner 230 T, bear with me if your own equipment differs in any way...much of the information will still be of use. Advantages of mimeo are.. good clean colour and an unlimited print run, but in most cases, if colour is desired, they are enough to outweigh the more numerous drawbacks :- 1. A separate tube of ink, a separate silk-screen, and a separate pair of ink spreader rollers are needed for each colour used. 2. Changing silk-screen and roller is MESSY ! 3. The paper has to be put through the machine once for each colour used. 4. Registration is only as good as your duplicator, and at best you can expect a drift of at least 1/8" from page to page in the vertical plane. Lateral drift, provided you 'knock up' your paper well before each run, is usually minimal. This is because paper feeding is not always the same, depending on paper texture, humidity, pad friction and so on. But with a well shaped stack, and taut guides, the paper cannot slip sideways.

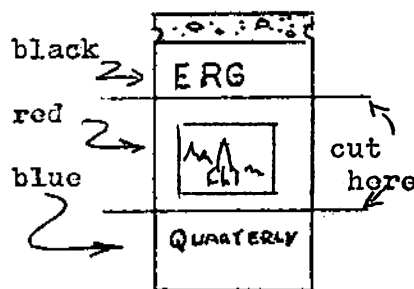
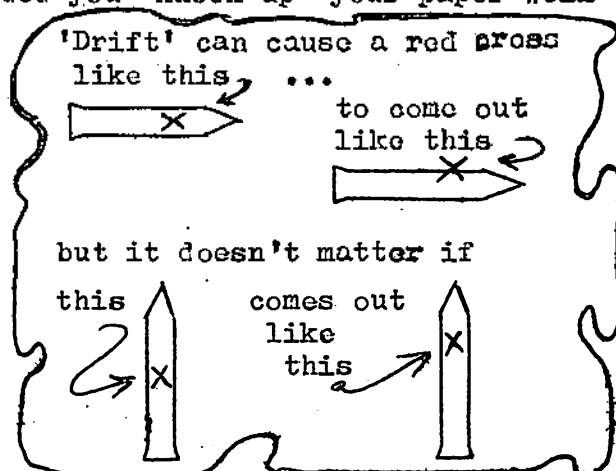
So, if you want a red cross on a rocket, arrange the design so that the rocket is rising vertically, not moving across the paper, and then any drift will not be noticed.

The technique :- 1. Prepare a master drawing, this need only be a rough layout sketch, but helps to ensure that each colour ends up where you want it to be. You need a separate stencil for each colour, but often, you can save money here by the 'Topping and Tailing' method described earlier. Dave Jenrette calls this 'antediluvian', but then he doesn't use mimeo, and try to economise on stencils. One skilfully 'top/tail stencil can do the work of THREE, and at a third of the cost.

2. Cut each part of the illo on its relevant stencil..making sure that each bit is in register. This is best done, by keying the master illo to a specific mark in reference to a point on the heading. This can be tricky for a multiple colour picture, but easy if you simply keep each colour element in its own area. Thus the layout on the right can be produced in three colours by cutting it direct onto ONE stencil, then separating the three pieces as detailed in Topping and Tailing.

3. Run all pages of one colour, change over the machine, and run colour two, change again and run colour three. (Each change requires changing silk screen & rollers and wiping away all surplus ink, before using a new colour.

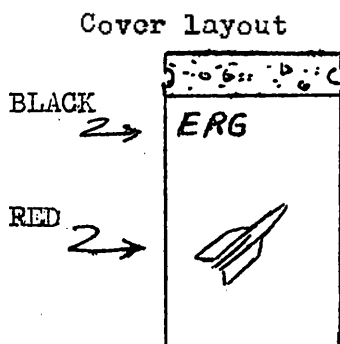
DON'T change back at the end, leave the set up on (say) red, and start the next issue by running all the red pages first before changing back to black.



Now there is a way to run two or three different colour illos in one go, without all that messing about. To be precise, I have heard of this method, but haven't tried it. You may be a bit more venturesome, so here it is.

MIMEO MULTICOLOUR AT ONE PASS.

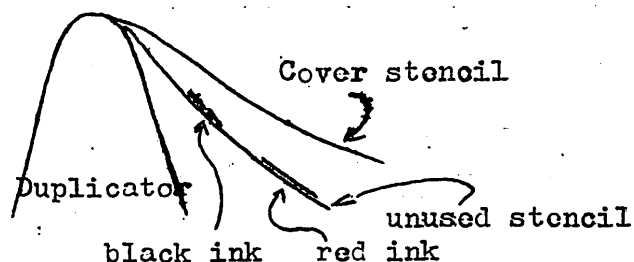
To keep the explanation simple, let's assume we only want to run a front cover with Heading in BLACK and a cover illo in RED. First, prepare a single stencil, and keep the two colour elements well separated as in the sketch.



When you are ready to run, FIRST put an UNUSED stencil (or plastic sheet which is impervious to ink) on the dupe.

Then lay your prepared cover stencil on top of this in the usual way, but first spread some black ink where the black heading will go, and some red ink to correspond to the red patch is to come.

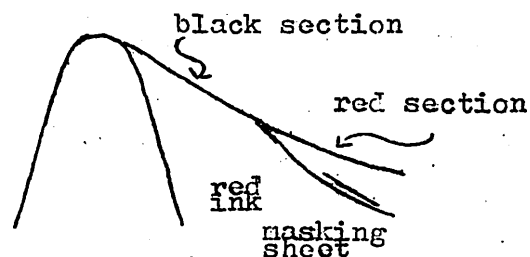
Side view of this set-up



Smooth down the top (master) stencil and run off copies until one colour thins out. When this happens, lift the top stencil, re-ink, and carry on.

A variation on this, might be to mask only the lower half of the master stencil. In this case, instead of putting a blank stencil on the machine first, omit this stage, but stick a piece of masking sheet to the rear of the master cover stencil attaching it below the black heading. Out this on the machine in the ordinary way, and lift the lower section to add red ink. The top, black portion, will get its black ink in the normal way from the silk screen.

In theory, Method 1. could be used for up to four colours, provided they are well separated on the stencil. In the case of Method 2, the second colour must be used at the lower end of the stencil...you might get two different coloured illos here, but I'd be inclined to settle for just the one...i.e. Top section black, and a one-colour illo at the bottom.



So much for mimeo colour. But there are other ways of getting colour into your fanzine.....

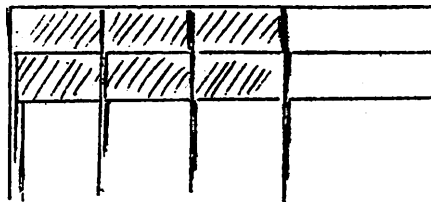
MORE ESOTERIC METHODS OF ADDING COLOUR

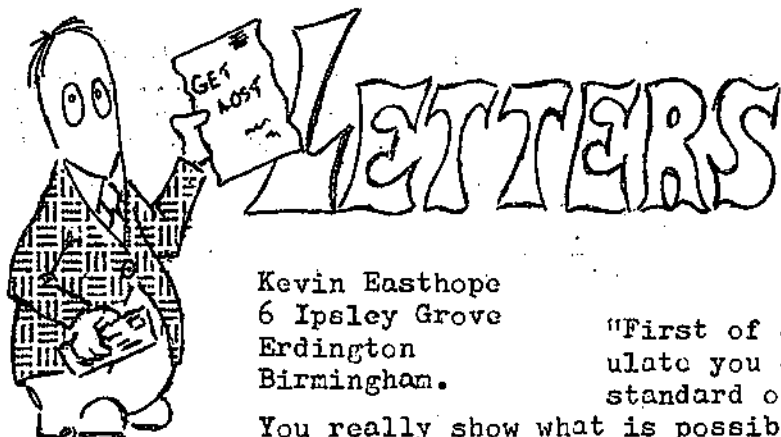
Probably the easiest, especially if you happen to be a schoolmaster, is to emulate Ken Cheslin. Having duplicated your fanzine...using nice, clear line-illos, cart it off to school, hand out the pages and let one of your wlasses do the colouring, either with crayons, or water colours. This system was used quite often by Ken Cheslin on the cover of 'Whatsit'. A well organised class can whip through all your colour requirements in a surprisingly short time...naturally, if you have no such slave-labour available, it will take you much lonher on your own...but the method is there if you want to produce a lovely multi-colour fanzine.

HAND STAMPING is a method which I have used in ERG. This started off simply as a means of quick illos. I acquired (from my son's junk box) a supply of small rubber stamps, each bearing a line sketch totally unrelated to s-f. However, it was a speedy method of laying out the illo before cutting it with a stylus, so I used one or two. Obviously, the next step..which I never descended to, was to leave a space on the stencil, then, after running off the page, to go through slowly and using a contrasting colour, hand impress those tiny rubber fillos where needed.

LINO-BLOCKS and SCRAPER BOARD Since the above rubber stamps had obvious possibilities, I cast about for means of producing my own...fannishly orientated, stamps. I couldn't make my own rubber ones (although I did have a few ideas in that line), I came up with the idea of using lino blocks. I cut one for a heading.... ERG, and this was duly printed in red by laborious hand stamping on the cover of an early issue. On the inside, I used a lino-block-cut of a space ship, again laboriously done in red. For those wishing to emulate this system, I must point out that all this hard work and pioneer activity aroused exactly zero comment from the Great Unresponding Silent Readership. At the same time, I also experimented with mounting pieces of scraper-board on blocks of wood and also using them (with a deeplycut illo) as stamps for putting in art work.

SPRAY PAINT I don't seriously advocate the use of aerosol cans to brighten up your fanzines, but if you really insist on experimenting, you might consider cutting a female stencil from a sheet of paper and laying it on each fanzine sheet in turn before spraying with an aerosol. You might have to solve a registration problem (not very tricky), but the main objection is that the resulting colour job would simply be a one-colour silhouette. It might be OK for a background to the title heading though...even if rather on the expensive side. In a case like this, you could almost dispense with a masking sheet, and simply let the pages be self-masking by careful layout before spraying as on the right....then all (all ?) you need to do is to run in the title or whatever it is you want to have a colour background.





11
With Ergitorial
interjections marked
thus ((()))

Kevin Easthope
6 Ipsley Grove
Erdington
Birmingham.

"First of all, I'd like to congratulate you on the continuing high standard of your hand-cut illos.

You really show what is possible with a few simple tools.

Where do you get your shading plates from? (((Messrs. Gestotner)))
Regarding your attack on fan poetry. I must admit that poetry in fanzines doesn't particularly excite me, but even so I suspect that a different type of mentality is necessary. (((You can say that again))) Nartaz Rides Again. Great Ghu, what an awful pun. It's a good thing you can't hear the collective groans of your readers, you'd probably be deafened! (((It's my response to poetry...Nartaz needs a different type of brain.. a warped one preferably))) I found the review column very interesting. With me, its main function is to alert me to any book which is so good that I should go out of my way to read it. Something I found really useful was the article on 'patching-in'. This is the sort of knowledge which should get wider circulation. Too many fans go straight to offset reproduction without even bothering to find out what is possible with mimeo, (((Part of the too-much-cash, and not-enough-effort syndrome which pervades society these days))) I look forward to buying a copy of the finished booklet.

David Griffin " I don't like poems much either, but have you actually
83 Maple Rd., considered the possibility that a lot of people my enjoy
Horfield them? (((My thesis was that not many people DO like 'em,
Bristol. but that because of the 'Emperor's New Clothes' desire
to appear 'with it', they are afraid to pan the stuff)))

Your idea of enjoyment may not be getting up at 5am on a freezing cold morning to look at 3 or 4 stars, but I enjoy it. (((Why not contact Kevin, above? He made a similar point, and has his own 6" reflector. Incidentally, since both you and he made interesting points about the Jupiter/Earth gravity problem, I'm thinking of making a symposium of all comments...if enough more come in...meanwhile thanks for yours))) I can't say that Nartaz was the funniest thing I've ever read (((Oh, have a go, it's amazing what you can do if you try))) Incidentally, do any paperback publishers send you hardbacks when they want you to review paperbacks? (((Nope, they send a copy of the actual item))) and how long does it take a publisher to reply when you send him a copy of your fanzine? (((Never less than three weeks, but the key factor is when a review book is ready. If none are to hand, it may take months to get a response)))

(((David also included a lovely list of improbable Ace Doubles, such as .. 'The Lost World' / 'The Forgetful Robot' and The God Killers / A Case Of Conscience. Such pairing could become addictive, how about Under Pressure / The Great Explosion ??

Rog Pile
46 Trenoweth Estate
North Country
Redruth
Cornwall TR16 4AH

"Just received ERG 52, I think I've moaned on previous occasions on Erg's thickness...or lack of it, but have come to the conclusion that a prefer $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour of ERG every three months, to 50+ lithoed carefully bound, 'do-you-like-ournew-typeface', remarkably uninteresting pages of nothing in

particular by people with good intentions and deep pockets, but little else. (((Thanks, you sum up my own views exactly. Little, regular, but interesting is what I aim for))) Cover was striking, colour would have lessened the impact. I've praised your cartoons before, but haven't the least intention of sparing your blushes. The mark of a good cartoonist is his ability to convey a convincing image with least possible line. By the same token (and speaking from personal experience) I've found that one of the surest methods of eliminating graphic errors is to bury the sketch in a dazzling and totally superfluous mass of art-nouveau detail. Agree entirely with you on fan-poetry...speaking as a sometime fan-poet. Rhyming verse isn't born of inspiration. It comes line by bloody frustrating line. (((When I panned fan poetry, I had fully expected a storm upon my head...but instead, virtually EVERY letter has agreed with me on the so-called fan poetry...I'm amazed))) You haven't ticked my status box and I'm sure my sub is up. You'll be receiving my money in the near future. (((You are a good man .. I hadn't boobed, but you get an extra issue for having contributed to 'What I Think Of...')))

Sam Long
Box 4946
Patrick AFB
Fla 32925

The cover was good, and so of course, were the comments. I agree wholeheartedly with you on the subject of fannish poetry. Most of it, unless it's 'light Verse', that, meant to be funny, like for example, my 'parodies lost & parodies regained' is just so much hot air. The DORSAI review caught my eye. For the last year or so there has been a group of Midwest fans who wear battledress and berets and hire themselves out to concons as a sort of fannish security force, standing guard over artshows and huckster rooms. They have no 'police powers' and may not use force. Their main advantage is they provide a ready-made security force of fans. Their disadvantage is they sometimes let power go to their heads. They call themselves The Dorsai Irregulars. As to the article on rockets, I'll try to get it to you by late November. (((Thanks a million...and now everybody will know what happened if it isn't in this issue.)))

Alan Burns
19 The Crescent,
Wallsend on Tyne

A good workmanlike issue, free, thankfully from Jeeves experiments in artwork (((Rotter.))) The cover subject was a bit hackneyed, but well drawn. I note your editorial re poetry. It should be necessary for a poet to prove he knows something about his work and the mechanics of it. Eric Frank Russell I note, and swiftly take myself away from the hideous pun in Nartaz. (((Shun the pun if it ain't fun))) Recent Reading was good an informative, I really think you do everyone a service with this as apart from the odd column in the Sunday Times there is no adequate review of all new s-f coming out regularly. A pity that publishers can't be approached to run RECENT READING in print as a joint effort. (((Any PUBLISHER out there listening ??XO



Regretfully, I must open this time with an apology. How the error arose has me puzzled, but nevertheless, I incorrectly attributed **THE WRONG END OF TIME** by John Brunner, to Messrs Sidgwick and Jackson. The publisher was in fact, Messrs EYRE METHUEN, and I hope that this will set the record straight. My apologies to all concerned, plus my thanks to Mr. Stephen du Sautoy of S & J, who pointed the error out to me.

And now for the GOOD NEWS. ORBIT have decided to institute two new annual s-f awards :- **THE BRITISH S-F AWARD**, to the publishers issuing the best novel during 1975. The Award is not for reprints, and the author gets a nice little pick up of £500.

THE ORBIT AWARD is for a hitherto unpublished novel of more than 50,000 words, which must be submitted to the judges by January 31st. 1976. This too is worth £500 and the winner will be published by ORBIT.

Judges are :- Martin Amis (Assistant Literary Editor of The New Statesman), Philip Strick (Lecturer in S-F), and Peter Weston (Previously editor of 'Speculation'). So now you get writing. On to reviews.

THE SCIENCE FICTION BOOK by Franz Rottensteiner Thames Hudson £2.50

'Founded in philosophical naivete', 'a readership untrained in the subtleties of literary exposition', 'to justify its existence, s-f should concentrate on the absolute novel'. Comments such as these could indicate a historian (the subtitle is 'An Illustrated History') not unduly fond of that which he chronicles. Happily, the chosen style makes up in large measure for this down-the-nose approach. Rottensteiner concentrates on one author or topic at a time, thus making for a more nostalgic and interesting reading, even if it does disjoint the strict chronological sequence. The text is accompanied - and certainly overshadowed by, a multitude of excellent illustrations, many in full colour. Taken from every corner of the s-f field, and even taken alone, well worth the book's cost. For extras, you get an excellent bibliography, a listing of Nebula/Hugo Awards, plus brief bits on fanzines and high points in s-f history. Apart from the author's occasional gem-such as, "E.E. Smith was a doughnut connoisseur", and "Famous Fantastic Mysteries was one of the pioneer s-f magazines", this is a well-researched and highly readable contribution to the field of s-f commentary. Don't miss it, even if this makes you wince..."The popularity of Sturgeon's stories is a sure indication of the emotional immaturity of the whole s-f genre."

VIOLENT UNIVERSE

Nigel Calder

(Futura Publications) Omega 95p

This is a re-issue of the 1969 book based on the superb, evening-long BBC documentary. Among the many topics covered lucidly in layman's language are quasars (with 7 theories), pulsars, black holes, and an assortment of universe-creation theories...including the Big Bang, Steady State, and even a side glance at God's efforts. There are several explicit line diagrams, and a small but awe-inspiring section of black and white photographs of nebulae. Explanations are here, but this is less a text-book, than an outline of current theories, ideas, and lines of research which really succeeds in getting across the concept of just how big, wonderful and strange is the cosmos around us. Definitely a must for anyone with half an ounce of sense of wonder in him.

2000 A.D.Illustrations From The Golden Age Of Science Fiction Pulp
By Jacques Sadoul

Souvenir Press £4.50

This large-sized, 175-pager opens with a Van Vogt introduction, and a brief but delightful history of the s-f pulps. Then comes page after glorious page of artwork culled from 1926 up to 1953, many in full colour (and none of your Victoriana padding). Material is grouped into sections :- Great Galactics, (Amiable Aliens), Robots, Space Ships, Women (a lovely section where Finlay romps happily) Weapons, B.E.M.s, Machines, and Cities, each with its own brief introduction. Almost every illo is credited by artist, story, author, and magazine, (but was it a translation which credited two to Campbell's 'The Supreme Machine'?). Finally, you get a brief synopsis of facts on the Solar System and our Universe.

I defy you to put the thing down once you pick it up. Packed from stem to stern with nostalgia, Sense Of Wonder and sheer delight, for my money this is THE book of the year. A must for everyone who, to paraphrase the author, 'loves the pulps because they find them beautiful. Even the cover by Miller, is a neat montage of interior art by Finlay and Hinton. I fancy this collection will become a collector's item in short order, so get yours now!

THE MIDNIGHT PEOPLE

Edited by Peter Haining

Everest 50p

An 18 item collection based upon the vampire menace and including work from Bram Stoker, Ray Bradbury, M.R. James, August Derleth, Sydney Horler, Schuyler Miller, Matheson, Bloch and Lieber to name only a few. Opening with an account of a real-life 'Vampire' and then going on with the fictional variety. One or two of the older items seem a bit naive by modern standards, but overall, this is an anthology which will appeal to all devotees of the Gothic horror - both in ancient, and more modern guise.

THE WAR GAMES OF HELOS

Richard Avery

Coronet 50p

Third in the 'Expendables' series, in which they set out to prepare Zelos for colonisation, only to find it already populated by Viking-like warriors. Much blood spilling in the skirmishes, one Expendable suffers a gang-bang, but a display of force plus a good display in the death-games smoothes things over. As usual, Kwango gets fined numerous booze-rations..rather pointless, since booze seems to flow as freely as blood in these encounters.

THE DYNOSTAR MENACE

Kit Pedler & Gerry Davis

Souvenir Press £3.50

1986, and all fossil fuels are exhausted. A last space flight project orbits a satellite on which it is planned to develop the fusion generator, 'Dynostar'. Calculations show that this will strip the ozone layer and devastate Earth, so the task of de-energising the automatic count-down is begun. Murder and sabotage foil every step, and tension mounts as time runs out while the scientists strive to halt the test and discover the saboteur. In some ways, a close parallel to Frank Herbert's superb, 'Dragon In The Sea', this is real, hard-core, tension sustained science-fiction, and one of the most gripping, exciting stories in a long time. I spotted the saboteur very early, more by his innocence than by his guilt, but this didn't detract one little bit from a story which deserves a Highly Recommended tag. Don't miss it if you go for the highly accurate, hard-core quality in your reading.

ON THE SHORES OF ENDLESS WORLDS.

Andrew Tomas

Sphere 50p

In Part.1, the author details various types of life, great and small as a basis for showing the variety it can take. In Part.2, he sets out to examine Earth and the Galaxy for signs of e.t. life. However, fascinating as are his concepts, the facts are rather erratic: 'piezoelectricity is a property used in transistors' (which it isn't), or 'a hexagon is the shape which encloses the largest volume for a given surface area'..apart from the obvious fact that a hexagon bounds space as an area, NOT in volume, what happened to the sphere? The author tends to cite speculation as fact, and to quote famous people out of context in support of his thesis. Nevertheless, this is a book bubbling with idea provided you take considerable critical care in the reading

MIRROR IMAGE

Michael G. Coney

Sphere 60p

'Colonisers of planet Marilyn encounter the telepathic 'amorphs' which can shape themselves into anything or anyone. They prove useful helpers until the big boss creates a composite superman. Sadly, the fascinating byway afforded by the clergyman who creates his ideal Deity is not followed up, and what set out to be an intriguing and entertaining yarn, tends to lose pace and direction.

TOMORROW LIES IN AMBUSH

Bob Shaw

Pan S.F. 60p

A scintillating, eleven-story collection which covers hard-core, humour, computerised spiritualism, parallel universes, matter transmission and a bushel of other goodies - and every one a winner. Bob has the enviable knack of writing to just the right length for each tale... no padding, just darned good s-f. A good buy.

NATURAL STATE and Other Stories.

Damon Knight

Pan 60p

This is a three story item. 'Rule Golden' concerns an alien visiting Earth ends all violence by ensuring that anyone who uses it, also feels the pain along with his victim. 'Natural State' tells of how the city-states give way to the back-to-nature dwellers who tailor plants and bacteria to suit every purpose. 'The Dying Man' is the only one to age in a world of immortals. All well-told main-line s-f, and each a little gem in its own way.

THE EIGHTY-MINUTE HOUR

by Brian Aldiss

Pan 50p

World War III is over, a Computer Complex controls the planet and the skull implant of the Schally-Chaplain relay immediately after birth ensues good behaviour. However, the fabric of time and space has been strained by the war, and is breaking down, causing time slips and other nastiness. A plethora of highly unbelievable characters, (would you believe Monty Zoomer or Myrtr Tydvil ??) mesh in improbable actions and situations. Aldiss is here in pyrotechnic mood, never mind the story, feel the labyrinthine action. I would have preferred a more direct clash between Computer Complex and its minions, but we can't have everything.

FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND

by Brian Aldiss

Pan 50p

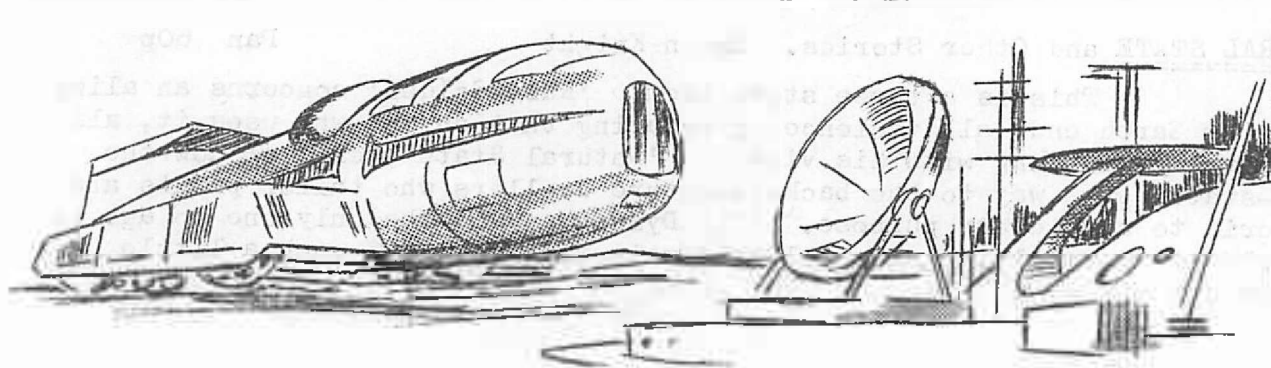
Again, the era of the Computer Complex and a world ravaged by timeslips, one of which takes Joseph Bodenland back in time to encounter and bed, Mary Shelley. By some strange quirk of the time warp, Joseph also encounters the monster she is yet to create in her novel. Bodeviled by flickering time changes, he seeks out the monster..and its newly-created mate for a forceful climax in the frigid lands of the North.

100 YEARS OF SCIENCE FICTION ILLUSTRATION

by Anthony Frewin

Hart-Davis / MacGibbon, Panther 32.50

The paper back version of the earlier hardcover, and right away I'll don my raving hat to say it is the biggest bucketful of nostalgia it has been my pleasure to wallow in for many a long day. Oh, there are a few nit-picking quibbles; 'ammends' (p.59), the irritating psychedelic-style chapter headings, and the boo-boo of including an 'Astounding' illo in the 'Amazing' section. For the record, the illo at the foot of page 53 is by Elliot Dold, and illustrated part 2 of 'Jason Sows Again, in the April '38 issue. Quibbling apart, this is a superb collection of illos and covers (loads of 'em in colour). After a selection of work from the pre-pulp era, we dive into delightful sections on Amazing, Astounding, the British mags, Gernsback publications etc., and even a brief section on the ads. Notably absent are such stalwarts as Finlay, Schneeman or Bonestell, and the emphasis is more on the spectacular than the artistic. Squeezed in among the artwork, the text is slightly apologetic (No doubt Frewin was one of those who backed his mags in brown paper) and often nauseatingly twee. Despite this, it is a pleasing counterpart which well catches the period without making much by way of artistic commentary. This is a superlative collection, miss it at your peril if you have any pretence to being a pulp lover.



THE OUTPOSTER

by Gordon R. Dickson

Sphere 60p

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Originally an 'Analog' yarn, this tells of Outposter Mark Ten Roos (cast from the same typewriter as Dorsai, Donal Graeme) who nurses a bitter hatred for the alien race of Meda V'Dan. The aliens specialise in raiding colonies and killing off the handful of Outposters defending them. Ten Roos sets out to alter all this in a highly entertaining and fast moving yarn. Apart from a few stereotyped characters and the omniscience of Ten Roos, this chunk of space-opera will appeal to all lovers of the Dorsai series.

THE BEST OF CLIFFORD D. SIMAK

Ed. by Angus Wells

Sphere 60p

This is the paper-back version of the Sidgwick and Jackson hard-cover reviewed here last issue. For your money, you get ten vintage ('39 to '71) pieces, each with its Bradbury-like touches of the good old days - even when set in the future. You'll not find any of the usual, stereotyped thud-and-bluner here; the tales hinge on idea and what evolves logically therefrom. Personally, I enjoyed the lot, and I think you will too. For a bonus, it has a superb Eddie Jones cover, far better than the cover of the hardback.

THE SIRENS OF TITAN

by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.,

Coronet 50p

Winston Rumfoord and his dog head for Mars, but get trapped in a space-time singularity which not only spreads them across the universe, but also reconstitutes them back on Earth every 59 days. During one such appearance, Rumfoord predicts a hectic future for his wife and billionaire Malachi Constant ..which they both try to avoid without success. At this point, things bog down a bit as Constant gets mixed up in the implausibly abortive Martian invasion, gets side-tracked to Mercury, and a few other near-humorous adventures. Vonnegut writes smoothly and well, but just isn't my style of author.

98.

by Christopher Hodder-Williams

Coronet 50p

Complicated as a spy-tinged detective novel is this high speed investigation by security man Nigel Yenn as he probes the activities of 'Group Three',... these include a cybernetic-brain in control of a sub (why does Yenn board it, why does it sink ??), nerve controlled ballistic missiles, and a huge underground complex. Events hurtle towards a hectic climax involving large-scale power station sabotage in order to foil a sinister (if inexplicable) TV menace. Many of the plot nuances, (Not to mention Yenn's actions) evaded me, but, loose-ends apart, this is taut present-day s-f mystery fiction, with plenty of cliffs for you to hang over as it charges along in all directions. Not a Hugo, but highly entertaining.

PRIME NUMBER

By Harry Harrison

Sphere 60p

A delightful assortment of nineteen stories culled from some ten year of prozines. Often light-hearted, frequently barbed and always highly entertaining in the inimitable Harrison manner. There are no Hugo-winning Earth-shakers, but each one is a workmanlike job, and the whole forms an ideal gift, or bedside companion for s-f lovers..... and there isn't a bad one in the lot !

THE STILL SMALL VOICE OF TRUMPETS Lloyd Biggle Jr. Sphere 60p

Cultural Survey Officer Forzon is appointed to bring democracy to the planet Kurr. One of the hazards, is the ruler's pleasant habit of cutting off the left arm of anyone who offends him. Further hampered by treachery - and by a female lead who repeatedly mucks things up, Forzon solves the problem by the use of trumpets. Lightweight and not really gripping, but pleasantly written. Forzon is the kind of character who finds problems just solve themselves when he is around.

TRIPLE DETENTE Piers Anthony Sphere 50p

Earth and Kazo are poised for conflict but by exchanging conquerors and harshly culling each other's surplus and unfit population, war is averted and a sane population balance achieved. (just how the exchange is arranged is never actually explained..and even the actual euthanasia is virtually off-stage). At this point, a third star-hopping race comes loaded for bear, and is offered a share in this 'fair-cake-sharing' tit-for-tat system, and things get complicated.

THE HALF-ANGELS **Andrew Lovesey** **Sphere 55p**

Edward Harris acquires a sorcerer's book. It bears a hypnotic pattern, and a strange, slowly moving picture. From the pattern he learns the language in which the book is written and decyphers a spell which allows him to enter the world of the picture. Arriving in the land of magic, Harris loses his memory and becomes 'Jeron' with the task of finding the missing daughter of the dead withc-king.

THE BEST OF E.E. 'Doc' SMITH Ed. Philip Harbottle Orbit 75-.

In its 286 pages, this little goody packs a preface by the editor, a foreword by Walter Gillings, a Bibliography, and an article on writing s-f by the late Chief Skylark himself. Then of course, you also get eight stories (including two excerpts).

Admittedly, the stories creak somewhat by today's lights, but for Smith buffs and old-timers, not to mention those who like a good rollicking space-opera, then this is not to be missed. My only quibble is that a 'best of Smith'. Should, ought, must and indubitably demands (etc.) at least an extract from a proper Lensman tale ...Grey Lensman for preference. Sadly, there ain't no such animal here, the nearest approach is a piece from 'Triplanetary'. Nevertheless; this is an excellent buy...don't miss it.

THIS WAS ERG 53

from

Terry Jeeves

230 Bannerdale Rd.,

SHEFFIELD S11 9FE