

# ERG 102

QUARTERLY

April 1988



(over) IN THIS 29th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE  
**Robot A. HINDSYTE,**  
**Izak AZZITOF, Ben DOVA,**  
**Arturo C. CLUCKE** and many others

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QUARTERLY

29TH. ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

No. 102  
APRIL 1988

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=====SSSSSSSSSS=====

IF you you enjoyed this issue and would like to get the next, there are three ways :-

1. Write a LOC on this issue and enclose TWO second class stamps. (Outside the UK, you can skip the stamps)
2. By trade with me. NOT for fanzines, I can't manage any more of those, but for magazine SF (not Analog), Model Aircraft, Military Aircraft or old pulps. Drop me a line and we'll dicker.
3. By cash sub. Sorry, but postal raises and the now increased printing costs mean you pay £2.00 for four issues UK, or \$1.00 an issue USA (and pro rata), in dollar bills please, NOT cheques.

A cross at the top of this page indicates that sadly, this will be your last issue unless you DO something. A question mark means "Are you interested? if so, let me know. Remember, the name of the game is **RESPONSE**

====SSSSSS=====

## MINI-ERGITORIAL

ANNISH time is here again, this being the 29th of that ilk. Read, hopefully enjoy, sit down and write a LOC, and if you don't save your issues, please pass to a friend. Anyone wanting SF paperbacks and hardcovers, magazines, cig cards or Astronautics titles, drop me a line for a list (say which).

Medical news. October saw the gall bladder trouble return. Saw the quack and after five months, an ultrascan and endoscopy (tube down throat, the man said he wouldn't operate except in a life or death situation as it would be a very nasty op. I am to soldier on and hope it gets better again. Meanwhile, permanent gut ache so I take life easy.

I lashed out £80 for STOP PRESS unit and 'mouse', dismantled the Beeb to fit it, and to my dismay found only 1 spare RAM socket (the others being filled with my Wordwise+ and Solidisk RAM/DFS. So now I'll have to buy a sideways RAM board and am waiting to hear from Watford Electronics as to cost and suitability. Hopefully, ERG 103 will show the results of the expansion.

Printing of ERG is done by P Hooks, 22 Needham Place, Parkside Chase, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 9RG (Ph. (0670) 716962. Speed? I mailed him the ERG101 Ms on Friday, and got the mag back Tuesday 8am!!! Prices? ERG size .. 50 copies-£13.20, 100 copies-£22.50, 200 copies-£40. Plus postage.

"I'M AGAINST CENSORSHIP  
IN ANY SHAPE OR  
FORM"

3.



One or two recent fanzines have pitched in against the concept of censorship, the press have raved over 'Spy Catcher' suppression' and the Bishop of Ripon was slagged off for refusing to ordain practising homosexuals -- all linked in that strange way which equates personal views with the immutable laws of the Medes and Persians. Ever being one to chuck a hat in the ring, may I present a few idle thoughts on such topics.

Let's open with the Chambers definition:- Censor .. 'one with powers to delete material or forbid publication, delivery or showing', 'an unconscious inhibitive mechanism in the mind that prevents what is painful to conscious aims from emerging into consciousness'. From this, I gather that 'Censorship' must be the act of doing the above

I recall meeting the 'I'm against censorship in any shape or form' syndrome, (henceforth called IACIASOF) in a video magazine. The editor opened his leader with IACIASOF then went on to explain how video 'nasties' should be suppressed. In other words, he wasn't against censorship provided it suppressed only the items to which HE objected. I wonder how many other IACIASOF advocates are the same?

Let's take a few other oft-cited examples. Some say TV violence affects its watchers. Others howl equally loudly, "Rubbish, no link has ever been established" Well, I for one have quite a few newspaper clippings detailing 'copy-cat' crimes where the perpetrator said, "I got the idea from TV". Not conclusive? How about advertisers? Do you really believe they spend millions on TV adverts if they CANNOT affect viewers actions?

As for the effects of what is seen on box or screen, once a record gets on TOP OF THE POPS, it sells umpteen more copies. Moreover, teenagers (and others) emulate the dress fads and hair styles of their idols. For my own part, I recall that in my teens I saw a film in which the hero (Humpty Gocart??) wore an open jacket over a white shirt and black tie. From then on I did my best to do the same, even though I nearly froze to death in Winter.

The Press howl loudly about Government suppression of 'Spy Catcher'. Such action may well be over the top, but consider the other side of the coin. Officials sign the Official Secrets Act and promise not to reveal what they learn. Presumably 'Spy Catcher' would be such a breach of trust. Some (not all by a long chalk) items need to be kept

secret and if one man breaks his secrecy agreement, then you have a precedent for others to do so, and pretty soon your Secrets Act will resemble a colander. Such censorship may not be 'good', but at times I can see a need for it. Should a bank allow ex-employees to reveal its security arrangements or publish lists of customers Credit Card numbers?

Then there's the Bishop of Ripon who wishes to censor practising homosexuals from his churches. More power to his elbow say I. Likewise keep 'em out of teaching, youth movements and the like. Anyone involved in un-natural practices seems unfit to be given the care and guidance of others. Would you employ a practising embezzler in a bank, or put a practising thief in charge of your household while you holidayed?

Feminists also employ a spot of censorship .. I see that the Prometheus Award is for the SF story which best plugs their cause. The winner may be a lousy story, but even the best yarn gets censored out of the contest if it doesn't thump the party tub.

Anti-nuclear groups would apply a total veto to bombs, fission and even fusion power plants. This is a perfectly legitimate (if in my view misguided) viewpoint, but it's still a form of censorship.

Should an inventor disclose his invention or a company its secret process before fully patent protected? Should a dress designer's assistant publish house secrets before show day; a football manager publicise his team's planned strategy or Customs officials issue lists of where they plan special anti-drug watches?

Censorship comes in a variety of forms, would you defecate, urinate or copulate in full public view? Would you use all those nice juicy curses before your young toddler, or feed him a diet of pornographic films and picture books? If the answer to any of the above is NO, then you DO favour censorship in SOME SHAPE OR FORM. The question is only where to draw the censorship line. I submit that we all practice and believe in SOME form of censorship and all the argument is only over where and when to blow the whistle.

Generalisations are dangerous, and so is sweeping condemnation. Let's chuck IACIASOF out of the window and admit that we all have different likes, dislikes and views on what should and what should not intrude upon them or on what should or should not be made public. Circumstances alter cases. I draw my line at one point, you draw yours elsewhere. Instead of saying that NOTHING should be controlled, let's argue over specific cases. To me that seems a much more sensible approach than IACIASOF. Or do you disagree?

=====

WANTED by the editor:-

THE PULP JUNGLE Frank Gruber 1967

CHEAP THRILLS: An Informal History of the Pulp Magazines

Ron Goulart 1972

OF WORLDS BEYOND The science of SF writing

L.A.Esbach Advent 1964 USA

SF BY GASLIGHT Sam Moskowitz World 1968 USA

THE UNIVERSE MAKERS D.Wollheim Harper & Row 1971

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS H.Warner Advent 1969

ASF..Jan,Mar,may,Jun,Jly,Aug,Sep,Oct,Nov,Dec..1930

Jan,Feb,Jly,Oct,Dec..1931

Oct,Dec..1933 Jan,Feb,..1934





WHAT BETTER WAY TO OPEN THE LOC-COL THAN WITH THE FOLLOWING  
TARAL WAYNE writes:-

I found the idea of a series of cards from the 30's about the future to be more interesting than the article about them was. I suppose it's because you went to little trouble to put them in context. You might have written about buying them as a kid, trading them, playing with them, how you never got No.49 @> I might have, but I only got 'em in 1970 <@

The Chief weakness of your book reviews is that they only describe the contents. Rarely do they discuss the book's merits or faults, or even reveal whether you enjoyed it. I suppose brevity is to blame. But I wonder what purpose such short and uninformative reviews have? @> Well you can't please some people ANY of the time .. but with a deep sigh, here goes once again to explain 'RECENT READING'. They are NOT reviews i.e. critical assessments. The purpose of RR is to let people know WHAT new titles are on offer with some slight idea of the contents. If I know a new Clarke or Heinlein book is available, I will try and buy it. I will try and avoid new titles from other authors as I don't like their styles or subjects. Many RR readers have their pet likes and hates, all they want is title and author. As for discussing merits or faults .. these are too subjective. I can't abide Tolkien yet others love him. Should I slate him for my personal tastes? My aim is to tell people what books are around and leave them to decide whether they want to pursue the matter further NOT on my say so, but simply as an information service ...phen! <@

MIKE ASHLEY 4 Thistlebank, Walderslade, Chatham, KENT

I'm now hard at work on my book about Hugo Gernsback and the Gernsback days of the SF magazines, 1926-36. I'm working my way through all the writers still living who used to contribute to them, or the writer's estate. Some while back, you kindly sent me a copy of the First Fandom Roster and I wonder if there's been an up to date one with current addresses. The one I have is dated Jan.1977 and contains names no longer with us. I wondered if Conrad Rupert was still around, amongst many others. I wish I could trace living relatives of people like Charles Cloukey, G.Peyton Wertenbaker, Isaac R Nathanson Joe Skidmore and others.

@> Hello out there Don Franson, Ray Beam and other FFers, can any of you help Mike? <@

ETHEL LINDSAY 49 BARRY RD. CARNOUSTIE, ANGLS DD7 7QG

As I grow older, I find more and more things changing and returning rapidly. Whoever would have thought miniskirts would have come back! So it is a consoling thought that ERG does not change. Even when I disagree with an opinion of yours, I still like the way you stick to them. How I agree with you about the way the SF field has been flooded with fantasy and horror. It is just too much, and I wonder when it will end. @> When people stop buying the rubbish <@ The best SF I have read lately was by Orson Scott Card. This is what I call SF. @> Agreed, but I suggest you try Charles Sheffield, Ben Bova and Robert L Forward too.<@

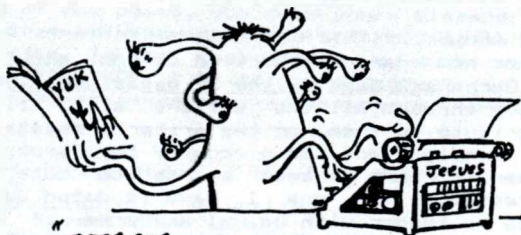
ALAN SULLIVAN 53 ECCLESTON SQ. LONDON SW1V 1PG

LETTERCOL, I'm in accordance with what yourself and Pam Boal had to say. All too often the business of slagging each other off can get out of hand. A 'zine I used to subscribe to had a letter column where two characters would write in each issue and disagree with each other with violence, vitriol and venom - usually taking up most of the loc-col in the process. OK, disagree, write in and comment - but must they bring their war of words to us all? @> Agreed, if 'civilised' people can't disagree without such nastiness, what hope is there on bigger issues. Sadly, so many 'protesters' seem to fall into this category and thus get ALL their supporters a bad name. Personally, I dislike the proposed new abortion law. I feel that only the woman concerned should have the right to decide .. but I can see the points raised by its supporters.<@

TED HUGHES 10 KENMORE RD. WHITEFIELD, MANCHESTER M25 6ER

Exceedingly impressed by the cover, your artwork is bucking up lad. I see you got your printer man to use a screen for Santa's hat and coat, but I suspect you ruled the lines for the elf's costume yourself? @> No, both were done by Letratone tints sheets> You lay a piece over the illo, cut round it, remove surplus and burnish down.<@ What impressed me though, was the message: it's quite pointed for B.T.J. Have you been flooded with fem-lib communications? Your inside art is good too, I liked the treatment of Recent Reading's illos. I'm glad to report that ERG's 'chummy' feel is back. Maybe it's your Mini Ergitorial or the numerous illustrations. Dunno, but I hear Terry Jeeves plainly again. @> Thank you Ted, that chummy feel is what I always strive for, even if I don't always achieve it<@ As usual, Carry On Jeeves was amusing and memory stirring. Beats me how you can recall everything -- unless you keep diaries?

@> Quite a few people ask that. No, no diaries -- and not a great memory either, but some things in one's life just stick even when actual dates and sequence of events get lost or muddled <@



"DEAR SIR, ON CASTING AN EYE  
OVER YOUR PAMZINE ..."

VINCE CLARKE 16 WENDOVER WAY, WELLING, KENT

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I've been using a duplicator, collating, stapling, etc for so long that I don't really fancy changing - to me, it's all part of the pleasure of publishing. @> Fair enough, and for a quick run off of thirty or forty copies, very handy. However for fan pubbing, I find this word processing cum printer so much easier, cleaner and less hard graft .. and IT'S STILL FUN! @> Agree with your comment to Pam Boal, like the majority of fans, I'm Left Wing, but that doesn't stop me liking you or ERG. It'd be a dull old life if we agreed with each other on everything. The stuff about Pterodactyl aircraft was all new to me - in fact I looked it over once or twice thinking there was a hoax afoot. Fascinating, I take it that one of the later articles will cover the Flying Flea? @> If I can find enough data. I once saw one trying to take off, and the model I had actually flew, but so far that sums it up. Next issue I hope to cover pick-a-back flights. @> Of course, in the RAF I found there were all sorts of experimental models scattered around airfields. I seem to have a dim recollection of a jet-assisted Lysander. @> Now that would be something - there was a version with an extra wing and a gun turret, and one with a tracked (caterpillar) undercarriage .. but jets !! Anyone out there know of it?

MILTON F STEVENS 7234 CAPPS AVE., RESEDA, CA 91335 USA

Many thanks for ERG99. I've been letter-hacking pretty regularly over the last three years, but I haven't been able to attract many British fanzines. @> Fanzeds please note @> I don't know if there are fewer British fanzines than there once were, or whether economics is dictating that fewer of them are reaching this side of the pond. Alan Burns asks, "Would any of our womenfolk enjoy the embraces of a Neanderthal man, or would menfolk enjoy going to bed with a Cro-Magnon wife?" If Alan spent a little time hanging around bars at closing time, he wouldn't have to worry about this subject any more. Local groups have determined that toys like model aeroplanes lead to militarism and warfare and wage an anti war-toy war at Christmas. I played with war toys when I was a kid, but I never noticed that it increased my desire to be shot at in later years. I've sometimes said I played with them because I wasn't aggressive enough for Little League Baseball .. about the most aggressive activity I've ever encountered.

The courts have found it necessary to publicise that parents can, and WILL be prosecuted for physically assaulting Little League Umpires.

@> I don't think war toys bring as much aggression as does an aggressive parental environment .. and a diet of TV violence and horror.

Kids know toys are 'play', but TV or wife-bashing is 'real'.





## PART 5

Juhu aerodrome boasted a small canteen where one could get such delicacies as tea, egg sandwiches -- and lemonade. I stopped drinking the latter the day I ordered a bottle and the Indian bartender uncorked a bottle and slapped it on the counter before me -- and floating inside the bottle was a huge winged insect the size of my thumb. When I pointed out this unwanted addition, he very kindly scooped out the corpse and handed me back the bottle!

It was at Juhu that I experienced my first monsoon -- an event to be placed high among things to avoid. Imagine the most torrential rainstorm you have ever met, add ferocious thunder and lightning, then let the whole affair run for several hours and you can (palely) imagine what the first day of a monsoon is like. This near-endless rain continues on and off for a couple of months. The sun is seldom seen, clothes, bedding, papers get clammy and damp and unless you keep turning out your kit bag, everything gets covered with a green mold. It may look romantic and exciting on films, but in practice, a life of gumboots, wet clothes and endless mud is not a fun thing.

Once the monsoon ended though, life resumed a more pleasing tenor. Strolling on the beach, one could pause and purchase a fresh coconut. These were not the small, dry, whiskery affairs one gets in England, but large, green and undried. For two annas, a native would wield a wicked looking machete and slice off the top to give you access to about a pint of tasty milk before it had formed into the white of the nut. Then there were snake charmers who would let you handle their snakes (a cold, clammy feeling) and monkey trainers who would let you pose for a photograph whilst holding one of their pets. There were also numerous beach shanties where assorted beverages were dispensed.



Of course, service life kept intruding on all this jollity. Although we Signals Wallahs avoided such entrancing games as 'Guard Duty' (for ten or more players on a 24 hour rota) and 'Fire Piquet' (a smilar set up, but bring your own matches), we did have our own esoteric activities such as 'Night Flying'. No we didn't go zooming around in the Rapide, the CO did that, but since Juhu aerodrome possessed



no runway floodlighting, he needed assistance in getting down again. This is where we intrepid Signal Bods came in. When Duty 'Night Flyer' I had to acquire a 12v accumulator, an Aldiss Lamp, and a weird device called a 'Glide Path Indicator'. This was a box on legs, about the size of the average tea trolley. Inside was a lamp which shone through a sheet of glass coloured in three bands .. red, green and amber. The idea was to bring the aircraft in so you saw green. If you saw red, you were too low, and amber meant your approach was too high.

So, having collected all this junk, I would be driven to the end of the runway where I would level up the GPI using its built-in spirit level, wire it and the Aldiss to the accumulator, and wait.

Sooner or later, the CO would find his way back to the vicinity from as far as half a mile away, and he would begin to orbit the aerodrome. Whilst performing this intricate manoeuvre he would flash his landing lights,

whereupon, I would send him an OK on the Aldiss, switch on the GPI, cross all my fingers and wait. From off in the distance, a blinding landing light would show the Rapide was floating in.

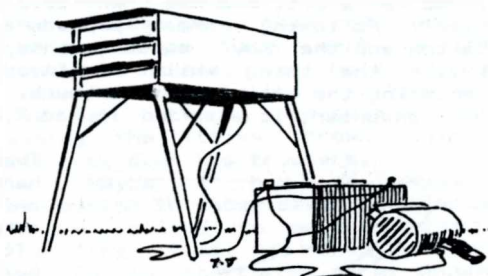
This aircraft had a very low sink rate, and would seem to zoom along forever just one foot above the surface. Usually, all went well, but inevitably there was one time when the Jeeves bugaboo factor crept in -- a stray dog meandered up and down the runway as the Rapide was on finals. A frantic chase ensued, ending only seconds before the Rapide floated by.

The landing strip was not overlong by the way .. OK for our Wapiti and Rapide, but came the day when 9 Hurricanes escorted by a Hudson arrived on a ferry flight. The Hudson got in nicely, but three of the Hurrybirds overshot into the post-monsoon mud.



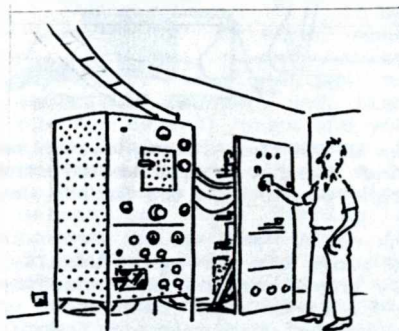
Our signals section boasted three Wireless Mechanics, myself, Jack Hazell and Pete Foster. Between us, we worked a three shift system to keep the transmitters operating.

Despite being some 18 miles out of Bombay, we operated their signals station with rather limited equipment. A small, ex-aircraft T-1155, a battered old T-1087, and in a trailer outside, two brand new T-1190s. The 1087 and 1190s stood nearly six feet tall and had similar sized control units. Apart from keeping the things in working order and repairing faults (which usually occurred in the wee small hours of the night shift, we had to keep adjusting the transmitting frequency at the operator's phoned-in whim. At dusk, each had to be shifted to night frequency .. and



retuned back to day frequency at dawn. This not only involved doing complicated things to the transmitters. but also demanded that one change aeriels over. Tedious, but normally routine - apart from the hazards involved in clambering around on top of signals cabin and trailer in pitch darkness.

Then for some reason, the Signals Officer and Station Sergeant decided the Transmitters needed modifying and they began to play. One such mod involved (unbeknown to me), the shorting out of an essential condenser which kept the HIGH Voltage of 2,000 volts off the aerial. At this stage, I arrived on duty, watched them fiddle around inside one of the 1190s for a bit, and was then told to 'Change the aerial over'. Following normal procedure, I flicked off the HT Switch and the 'Key' switch, thus preventing an operator keying the thing whilst I played, and -- as I supposed -- rendering the aerial safe to touch. Thanks to that shorted out condenser, it wasn't. It had 2,000v on it!



There was a big flash, my hand wrenched itself back off the aerial terminal, and screwed up against my chest.

It was several minutes before it began to unwind again. I had been lucky, inasmuch as my forearm had been touching the metal case as I reached up. The current went in my fingers and out at the forearm. Otherwise, it would have gone straight through me, and written finis to Jeeves.

As it was, I had some nasty burns which took several weeks to heal.

Occasionally, we would walk to the nearest rail station, Ville Parle .. (pronounced 'Villa Parla' though it was pretty vile, boasting half a dozen mud huts, several dozen beggars and the perennial smells of India - woodsmoke and cowdung.) From here, we would pay the huge sum of 14 annas (just over a shilling) and ride into Bombay proper where the Women's Guild Canteen dispensed such delights as iced tea and coffee. One of my first stops was always a bookstall on Colaba Causeway where, believe it or not, I was able to purchase a monthly copy of the American ASTOUNDING!

Sometimes we would hire cycles and tour Bombay, visit Malabar Gardens. or ride out for a swim either at the (Europeans only) Breach Kandy, or the less pretentious Back Bay Baths. Occasionally we would attend the Metro Cinema and this was where we finally turned the tables on our stereotype Scotsman, Ian MacLean. Ian never had change. Whenever the char wallah came by, Ian would always say, "You get 'em Jock, I've only got a ten rupee note. I'll pay ye later". Later, like tomorrow, never came -- until one day four of us went to the Metro. As we approached the pay-desk, Ian began his recitation .. "You get 'em Jock, I've only got a ten rupee note" Immediately, we shoved him up to the pay desk saying, "Now's the time to get it changed then." Ian was shattered .. but it didn't stop him starting to dun us for

his money before we could even get to our seats.

After these shows, on emerging around 9pm it would be a case of picking one's way through all the sleeping bodies along the pavements to catch the train back to camp, and around the stations one always had to run the gauntlet of begging children wailing, "No father, no momma, no sister .." etc.

Incidentally, Ian Maclean was a drum addict. Given two sticks and he would batter out drum rolls, riffs and what not as if he were Gene Krupa. So keen was he on the pastime that on one occasion, lacking a cymbal, he punched a hole through



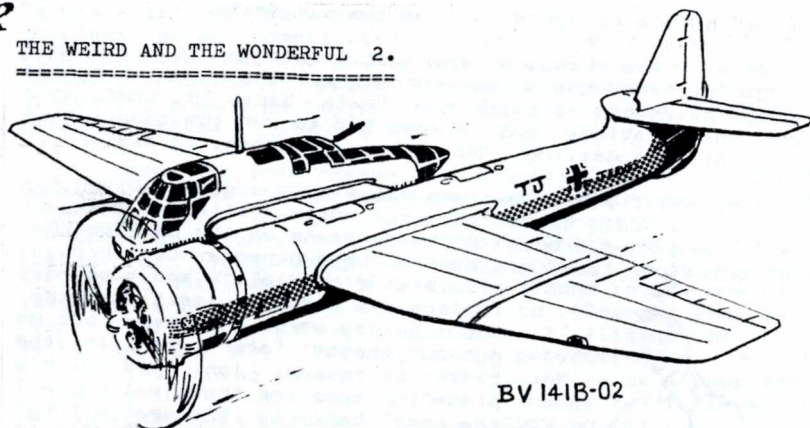
his metal dinner plate and suspended it from his mosquito netting wire. The row was worse than ever, but we got our laughs later when in the cookhouse queue, Ian held out his plate for soup and then walked all the way back to his seat without seeing the sticky brown liquid draining down his trousers.

Maybe I had an innocent expression in those days, but twice I was invited to be a chaperone. The first time was when I was sitting in the corner of my second class seat waiting to travel back to Juhu. An Army Captain poked his head in and asked if I would move to a first class seat and accompany his lady back to Santa Cruz. Naturally, I obliged and this later resulted in my being taken out by the Captain and two other officers, for dinner at a prestigious (and officers only) Bombay hotel.

When they saw a humble ranker in their hallowed precincts, the resident Blimp-types turned a gentle purple. Coincidentally enough, a similar chaperone mission was handed to me much later when travelling on the Frontier Mail.

Juhu's pleasant life couldn't last for ever -- we soon got a couple of extra mechanics, then the RAF in its infiniteiggereance posted 'em all away again save myself and a bloke called Budd. Whilst the Signals Officer ran around in small circles tearing out hi remaining hair and struggling to get the postings cancelled, Budd and I worked 12 hours on, 12 hours off to keep the transmitting station operating .. and in that 12 off, we had to eat, sleep and relieve each other for meals! Happily, the postings were cancelled and our lives settled down for a while -- until a new transmitting station was built for us, and we all moved into Bombay proper.

We were billeted in one of two luxury blocks of flats near Churchgate station and backing on to Brabourne cricket stadium. Inevitably, there was a catch. Everything -- but everything in the Astoria had been removed. We lived in bare rooms with only the inevitable wooden charpoys to sleep on. Plenty of exercise, as there were no lifts. There was no cookhouse either, so we got the magnificent sum of three rupees (4/6d, or 22p) a day 'eating out' allowance, but as a meal in the only places not out of bounds could swallow that for one meal, we had to add some of our own lolly. It made for a nice flexible life style -- while it lasted.



BV 141B-02

A chronic shortage of aircraft engines was probably the inspiration for the design of the lop-sided Blohm & Voss 141 reconnaissance machine of 1939. It was in effect, a single engined monoplane of some 57 foot wingspan, but inset into the starboard wing was a large nacelle housing pilot and gunner. To further improve the latter's field of fire, the tailplane was offset to port, giving the whole aeroplane the appearance of a machine constructed from a set of plans from which half were missing.

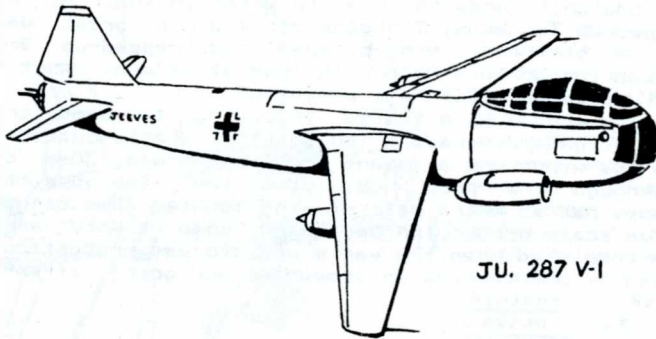
Powered by a BMW 801 engine of some 1,600 hp. vibration was such a problem that speed had to be limited to 280mph. Flight testing was beset by troubles, engines ran rough, the undercarriage and airframe had to be strengthened, the propeller didn't arrive, and when guns were fitted, firing them filled the aircraft with cordite fumes. When further models were ordered, another non-delivery of airscrews held up production, and then before work was completed, the factory was bombed out and though having finally flown well, the BV 141 never became operational.

For history buffs, it is interesting to note that Germany actually had the world's first four-engined jet bomber in 1944 before the Gloster Meteor saw combat! Moreover, it had a swept wing - the unusual feature of this, was that it wasn't swept back, but swept forward!

Designed by Hans Wocke, the Junkers 287 had this strange feature to get round the snag that with a sweep back of greater than 15 degrees, such wings became riddled by compressibility effects and at low speeds, were troubled by Dutch Roll. Wocke's idea was that by having a forward sweep, these problems would occur at the high speed end of the flight envelope, and would thus be easier to handle.

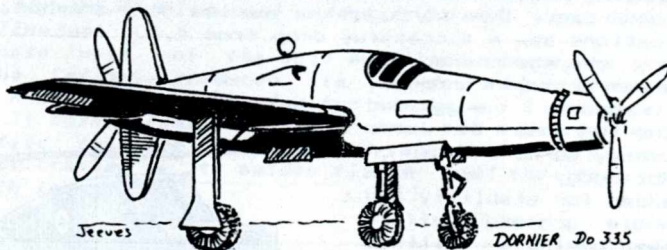
The design aim was for Mach 0.85. As an economy measure, the first model was cobbled up from a Heinkel 177 fuselage and a fixed undercarriage salvaged from a crashed American B-24. This latter feature limited flying speed, but 400mph was achieved in a dive. Four engines of 2,000lbs thrust each were fitted - one under each wing and one either side of the fuselage nose. (A later, Russian version had four turbojets fitted in underwing pairs). Work was stopped on the first model in order to meet an urgent demand for more fighters.





In 1945, work began on a second prototype with a retractable undercarriage and this aircraft would have carried some 4,000lb of bombs over a 2,700 mile range at a speed of 550mph. Test flying continued in Russia, where over 600mph was achieved in a dive. Luckily, by this time the German aircraft industry was being hard hit by air raids and shortage of materials. Had the revolutionary bomber gone into service. Allied fighters would have been left standing.

Another unusual aircraft was the Dornier Do335 'Pfeil' or 'Arrow' which was almost ready to enter squadron service when the war ended. It was powered by two Daimler Benz engines of around 1,800hp each - (by comparison, the early Spitfire's lone Merlin was rated around 1,030hp) - but unlike most two-engine machines, the Arrow's were not stuck on the wings, but arranged in tandem fashion with one before and the other behind, the pilot.

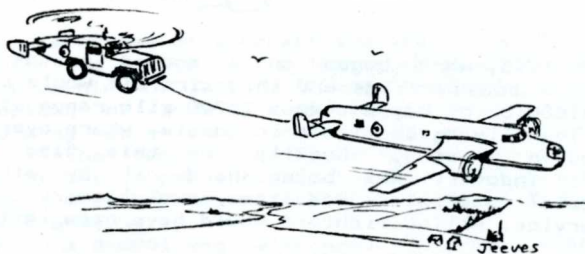


Not only did this reduce frontal area drag, but allowed single-engine flying without asymmetric thrust .. and made for fuel economy on long missions with a range of some 2,000 miles. The Arrow was Germany's fastest piston-engine fighter, being capable of 474mph. It's a great pity some rich

Americans couldn't unearth one to enter in their Air Races, where souped up Tornados, Typhoons etc are in great demand. Remember, a stripped, wing-clipped and pepped-up Grumman Bearcat took the World's Record in 1969 at 483mph. What might a similarly treated D0335 have achieved?

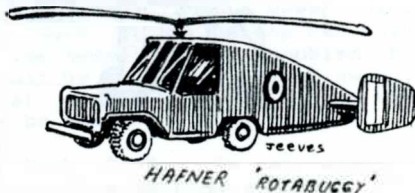
Various models were tested including two-seat trainer and night fighter versions (D0335 V10). Cable cutters were fitted on the wings and armament consisted of a 30mm cannon firing through the prop hub, plus two 15mm nose cannon. Later types had an extra pair of wing mounted 30mm cannon.

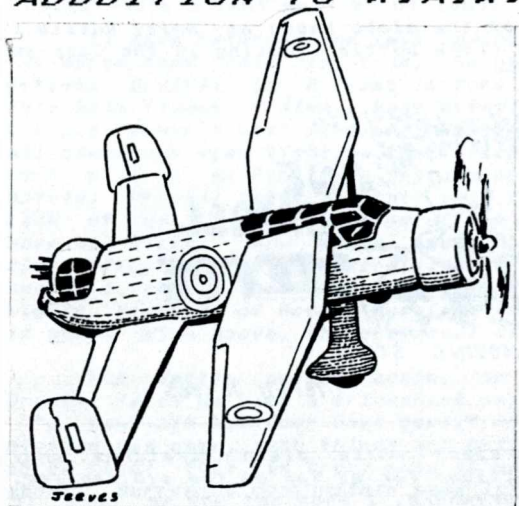
Large scale production began and some twenty aircraft had been completed when the war's end stopped production. I still dream of one turning up somewhere and going after that record.



Anyone looking skyward in search of UFOs during late 1943, might have been slightly croggled to see a Whitley bomber homeward plodding its weary way - hotly pursued by a flying Jeep! This strange project began in 1940 as a new form of parachute for landing agents in enemy territory. Titled 'The Rotachute', the first model was little more than a two blade rotor with suspended seat and large tail fin. Scale models were dropped to test its feasibility and in 1942, a large model made a safe descent from 2,000 feet. A man-carrying model was built and tested by towing it behind a truck or a car. This brought a series of crashes, until modifications saw a successful drop from 4,000 feet.

However, the agent dropping scheme was itself dropped, but someone suggested applying the idea to Jeeps and tanks, so work began on the 'Rotabuggy'. Twin fins were added for stability and the whole grotesque affair air-towed behind a Whitley. Stability was marginal and the flights wereb traumatic for the pilots -- but it DID work, so if you want to fit rotors to the family jalopy and drive off Beachy Head -- well, you know it CAN be done. Happy landings.





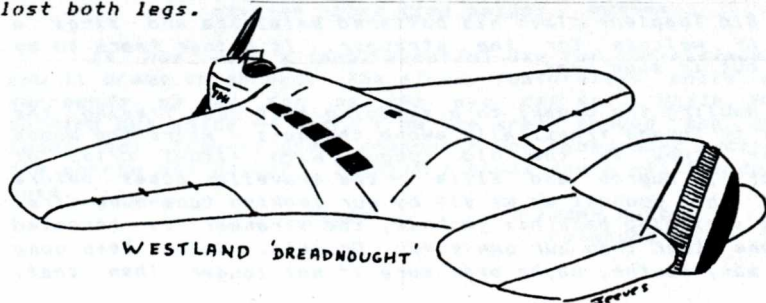
In the letter column, Vince Clarke mentions a Westland Lysander fitted with jets. I've hunted around, but can find no word about such an aircraft. However, I did come up with details of that one with a turret. In essence it was a biplane. Well, I reckon it should qualify as a biplane as the De Lanne wing that was fitted augmented by two large fins didn't really class as a

tailplane.

Indeed, the whole modification was so cumbersome that the rear gunner must have been in constant danger of shooting bits off his own aircraft -- or else hoping that any attacking pilot would be considerate enough as to fly into his very narrow cone of fire. Despite its ungainly appearance, it made several flights and was reported to 'handle well', but the machine never found its way into production.

There was another bizarre version of the Lysander created when the wheeled undercarriage was replaced by caterpillar treads to allow for operation from unprepared landing grounds - an idea that was later tried on a B-29 bomber. To make cross-wind landings easier, another Lysander got fully castoring Dowty main wheels, the idea being that even if the aircraft was pointing diagonally across the runway because of wind drift, the wheels would castor round and run down the centre line.

These were not the only Westland weirdos, as back in 1924 the Company produced its 'flying-wing' Dreadnought Postal Monoplane (meant for two pilots and 8 passengers or mail). It wasn't really a flying wing, but a design with a low-profile fuselage which merged into the broad mainplane. Sadly, it crashed on its maiden flight and the test pilot lost both legs.



WESTLAND 'DREADNOUGHT'

This touching account comes to us from that crater-filled and pock marked part of the globe known as 'Holey Russia'. It was found in an empty vodka bottle floating in the Caspian Sea.



The sleek, featureless white plain stretches away around me in all directions for as far as the eye can see. White, white, white - everywhere. I know not why we call it 'The Black Steppe'. The grey gull circles high above and we exist.

=====

Today, great excitement! Ivan has opened one eye and the unmentionable Olaf has stuck a finger up his nose. Moreover, far out across the plain, someone can be seen hastening towards us. He will be here within three days.

Who knows what tidings he may bring. But still the grey gull flies.

-----  
Time passes  
-----

At last, the traveller arrives. A team of wolf hounds haul the hissing runners of the dogski as it tears into the village, filling the air with the merry crackling of mukluk flaps, the jingle of harness buckles and the happy gurglings of Mad Olga. Such eventfulness. I think I shall whistle down my nose. All is movement and confusion. Ivan has opened both eyes and Olaf now has three fingers up his nose. It is not every day that a new face is seen in our village. I have decided. I will whistle down my nose.

Old Toppleov plays his battered balalaika and sings a song of welcome for the stranger. It brings tears to my eyes, but is soon over.

Hauling the dogski to a skidding halt and freeing the hounds to forage frantically among the huts - where the women welcome them in the old tongue with ritual cries of 'Gerrart', 'Bugrov' and 'Elfia' - the traveller comes before me of the Council as we sit by our smoking tuna-dung fire. Deftly stripping back his yoshnik, the stranger is revealed as none other than our own envoy, Druskli. He has been gone these many months, maybe even more if not longer than that.



on a mission so secret that not even he who sent him, know what it was. Perhaps he can tell us.

"I have returned" he says bowing to each of us in turn. We agree that this is true, he has returned. Nikolass motions Droskli to a seat before handing him The Bottle. This holy flagon is always kept brimming full of Ponglivov the pig farmer's best schnopf. Preserving the old ritual, we all close our eyes tightly, then stick one finger firmly into each nostril as Ponglivov tiptoes near, ready to refill The Bottle. Droskli takes a mighty swig then passes it along. Each of us in turn partakes of the searing brew. Soon, we have all drunk. Now ritual must be observed, our eyes close, fingers creep up nostrils, and Ponglivov moves silently nearer to refill The Bottle. Ponglivov withdraws, we all draw mighty breaths of Mother Russia's free Socialist air. Life is good. High above, the grey gull circles.

The Bottle passes again, so does Ponglivov, then Droskli faces us with a triumphant smile.

"I saw him but four days gone," he tells us. "I will not mention his name, such things are best left unknown." We agree that this is true, none of us know who he is talking about. Burrowing deep within many layers of thickly matted furs, Droskli produces a small leather bag, looses its neck and scatters a handful of withered beans on the table before us. One for each of the Council, and one for Droskli.

"He said we should know what to do with them," our envoy tells us. We look at the beans and meditate for an hour or so. The Bottle passes, Ponglivov passes, Mad Olga passes out. It has been a long day, yet a decision must be made.

"Let each man place a bean in his mouth, then take a draught from The Bottle, and when I rap my galinka on the table, then all must swallow." says our Patriarch. "This must be a concerted movement." He follow his bidding, the galinka descends with a crash and a ripple of motion runs round the table as we swallow as one.

There is a long silence, broken only by a few unmentionable sounds - then, with one fluid motion Council and Droskli rise and head for the communal privy. The fastest among us manage to reach it. Sadly, 'tis but a meagre four-seater and lacks room for all. One day, perhaps when the white swallow returns to join the grey gull, we must build a bigger privy against such occurrences. It would be a great convenience.

\*\*\*\*\* More time passes \*\*\*\*\*

It has been a long, eventful day for our village, but now it draws to an end. The sleek, featureless white plain surrounds me as far as the eye can see. White, white, nothing but white -- apart from the area around the privy. Today has brought great changes - who knows what excitement the morrow may bring? I think I shall again whistle down my nose.

Finis

Iyama Nutta  
Motanoda



**BLOOD MUSIC** Greg Bear Legend £2.95

When researcher Vergil Ulam injects himself with a strain of intelligent bacteria, he first experiences better health, vision and fitness as his body is rebuilt - but then the bacteria reach his brain and discover a whole new world to conquer. This has all the ingredients of a 30s pulp yarn, but in a taut, gripping modern style. I couldn't put it down until the end - I fancy you'll find the same.

**WYRMS** Orson Scott Card Legend £2.95

Patience is the daughter of Lord Peace, true Heptarch of colony world Imakulata now ruled by usurper Orac. When her father dies, she flees the Palace and follows the mental call of the hideous 'Unwyrms' which seeks to breed a new race from her. Aided by Angel, dwelfs and gribblings, she must overcome the monster to regain her throne. Despite its sound, this is excellent, straight SF with a background and characters to rival Vance or Aldiss. Recommended.

**TIME OUT OF MIND** John R Maxim Legend £4.50

Corbin fears snow, as it brings him visions of an earlier era. Aided by girl-friend Gwen and psychiatrist Sturdevant he seeks to unravel the mystery as it gains a greater hold. Meanwhile, he is menaced by financiers who want him dead. A good yarn, but wordy. Cut to half the length it would be much better.

**THE LOST BOYS** C.S.Gardner Bantam £1.95

Divorcee Lucy Emerson brings her two boys to Santa Carla beach where Michael, the elder falls for Star, a member of a bike gang. Seeking to join them, he becomes enmeshed in the toils of vampires before a bloody denouement. A novelisation of what seems a rather ugly film.

THE COMING OF THE KING Nikolai Tolstoy Bantam £12.95

When King Ceneu rests on a burial mound, Merlin appears and relates his story. Midwife at his own birth, then cast into the sea by a fearful king, the babe Merlin lives as a fish until rescued by Prince Elfin - whose wife he saves from a fate worse than death. He joins perilous games, gains great powers, has adventures real and magical, and becomes confidant of kings as events escalate to a final mighty battle. This 'first Book Of Merlin' is a mammoth 600 pages but the Welsh names make for heavy going. Interleaved 'side stories' add diversity to a richly descriptive tale which should appeal to fantasy lovers and students of Welsh lore.

A BLACKBIRD IN AMBER Freda Warrington N.e.l. £3.95

400+ page follower of three earlier 'Blackbird' novels. The slaying of the serpent M'Gulfn has not rid the world of evil, so now Mellorn must use her powers against Sorcerer Xaedrak ruler of Gorethria, who seeks to build a cruel empire. He is aided by demon Ahag-Ga who plans chaos for the world. Sword, sorcery and fantasy with another 'Blackbird' title to follow before good finally (?) triumphs.

THE CHILDREN OF ASHGAROTH Richard Ford Grafton £3.50

Book 3 of the 'Faradawn' Trilogy sees the bucolic villagers of Haark abandon their god Ashgaroth and follow tribesman Barll (pawn of evil god Dreagg) in killing animals for food. Bracca opposes the slaughter and is forced to flee. He is saved by a badger, meets magic, gnomes and agents, is given a strange casket as he becomes enmeshed in a conflict of gods. Plenty of sex and violence before victory and a lover are won

THE BURROWERS BENEATH Brian Lumley Grafton £2.50

Disturbances within the Earth presage the emergence of giant tentacled monsters - the Old Ones of the Lovecraft mythos. Occultist Titus Crow and aide Henri de Marigny must summon all their powers to defeat the slowly escalating menace - but a loophole is left... Written in classic Weird Tales cum Lovecraftian style, so if you enjoyed those yarns, this is for you.

VISIBLE LIGHT C.J.Cherryh Methuen £2.95

This six-story collection opens with a rather twee Introduction which also interleaves the stories. A visioner of holocaust, a trapped time agent, and a fragment of winter are lightweights, but the marooned spaceman and the robot is excellent, the predicament of a thief nearly so and the final feud and patricide item could be either depending on your taste.

THE DREAM CATCHER Monica Hughes Methuen Magnet £1.95

During the Age of Confusion five 'Arks' were built to preserve knowledge. Ruth seems a misfit in the telepathic web of Ark 3, but her ESP powers develop and she goes on a mission to another Ark - where things are terribly different. A girls' juvenile, ideal for 'hooking' new SF readers.

THE KRUGG SYNDROME Angus McAllister Grafton £2.50

The Krugg trees begin their invasion of earth by mental take over and one of them enters the body, of young Arthur Montrose. Losing his telepathic powers in the process, and is unable to contact other Krugg - a task which loses its charm as he becomes enmeshed in Arthur's expanding interests as a lad about town. A striking cover leads to a lovely bit of humour on the difficulties of being an alien invader.

BETWEEN THE STROKES OF NIGHT Charles Sheffield Headline £2.95

A 4 part Analog serial in 1985. A bombs devastate the Earth, but several self-sustaining starships escape and embark on a long slow journey. 25,000 years later, they have reached and colonised other worlds - and have an elimination contest, the winners of which may join the 'Immortals'. A winning group seeks to unravel the truth behind the Immortals and meets a threat to the galaxy. Taut, gripping and well-plotted hardcore.

SOULSTORM Chet Williamson Headline £2.95

An ex-cop, a mercenary and a businessman are offered a million dollars each to spend a month sealed in an isolated mansion with billionaire Neville and his wife. It seems simple, but the powers inhabiting the place soon begin their attacks. An unusual yarn, but one which grips you from the start.

THE BONES OF GOD Stephen Leigh Headline £2.95

In the 25th Century, the all-powerful Zakkai religionists plan to undermine the opposing religion of the alien Sekoni by luring them into accepting Trader Fairwood as their promised Messiah, then killing him. But Fairwood has powers from his FTL 'Veil' travel and the Zakkai plans go awry as believers flock to him. A different and enthralling yarn.

THE MAGE-BORN CHILD Jonathan Wylie Corgi £2.95

Final part of trilogy where the evil Alzedo brings ghostly armies and Yve is forced to use drastic measures to save her world. Dragons, swordfighting and magic aplenty before good triumphs.

DAUGHTER OF THE BEAR KING Eleanor Arnason Headline £2.95

A faulty electric plug moves Esperance to an alternate world where she can assume a bear shape at will. She must face the Bear King and other perils before winning her way back to Minneapolis. Sword & Sorcery fantasy.

THE FALLING WOMAN Pat Murphy Headline £2.95

Archaeologist Liz Butler sees visions from the past and whilst on a Mayan dig is joined by her daughter. The viewpoint bounces between them and past visions until the dust gets in your hair.

ROBOCOP Ed Naha Corgi £1.95

Another film novelisation, even bloodier than the last. Cop Murphy is trashed by sadistic gangsters, then rebuilt as a mindless cybernetic law enforce by Omnitron. Then his personality starts to return and blood and guts fly in every direction.

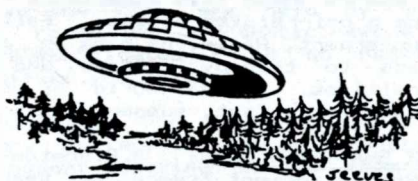
THE HARVEST BRIDE Tony Richards Headline £2.95

Ex-reporter Auden's investigation of the murder of a friend leads to an Oriental gang and more sadistic killings. The affair climaxes in violence and mayhem as the pencil-slim plot sorts itself out.



THE TOMMYKNOCKERS

Stephen King  
 Hodder & Stoughton  
 £12.95



When Bobbi Anderson stumbles on an alien craft in the backwoods, it drives her to obsessive digging and invention. Alcoholic friend Gardner comes to aid in the uncovering, whilst the compulsions and physical changes spread to the local township bringing telepathy, violence and horror as a ruthless isolation policy is enforced. I could do without the intimate details of menstruation, alcoholism, brand names and T-shirt slogans, but otherwise King juggles characters, side stories and his main plot superbly in what is one of the best SF/Horror stories I've read in ages. Highly recommended.

STARQUAKE Robert L Forward New English Library £2.95

Sequel to Dragon's Egg. The tiny race of time-accelerated cheela living on a neutron star have far outstripped their human observers. The latter are about to leave when double disasters occur, the first threaten the humans, the second may wipe out the cheela. Fascinating as 'Mission Of Gravity' as generations of cheela struggle to save their world. A real treat of hardcore SF

THE PIMPERNEL PLOT Simon Hawke Headline £2.50

Third in the Time Wars series has Lucas ordered back to the French Revolution to become the Pimpernel. Old Rival Mongoose arrives to complicate things along with sword-play, poison rings and general swashbuckling.

THE BONES OF GOD Stephen Leigh Headline £2.95

In the 25th Century, the all-powerful Zakkai religionists seek to destroy the rival faith of Molitor Ab. When Trader Forward develops strange powers, they lure their rivals into accepting him as the promised Messiah so they can kill him and undermine the cult. But Forward's powers are greater than they thought .. Intriguing and multi-layered, but rather lacking in pace.

THE CLOCKS OF IRAZ L.S. de Camp Grafton £2.50

Second in the 'Reluctant King' sees of Jorian who fled his kingdom to escape decapitation. This time, hunted by Xlarian solidery, he becomes clockmaker in Iraz, acts as the king's deputy stud and foils an invasion plan. A lighthearted adventure yarn in the old style.

STAR KING Jack Vance Grafton £2.50

Re-issue of the 'Star Kings' series (original Galaxy 1963) in which Kirth Gersen seeks out, one by one the five 'Demon Princes' who slew his parents. This time he follows a winding trail of peril to trap 'Malagte the Woe'. Inimitable Vance style with exotic characters and situations.

THE SENSITIVES Herbert Burkholz Headline £10.95

Gambler Ben Slade is a 'sensitive', one of the U.S team of telepaths whose life expectancy is only 32 years before death from a psi-related disease. Falling in love with his Russian counterpart, Nadia, he goes on an unsavoury mission which leads to tragedy, escape and the terrible truth about the sensitives. 'Real world' SF using only one 'impossible' as a base for a taut, suspenseful and gripping narrative.

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ARAMINTA STATION Jack Vance New English Library £6.95

Araminta Station administers the planet Cadwal which has a stratified society with the untrustworthy Yips at the bottom. Glawal Cladduc's girl Sessily vanishes in strange circumstances, investigations lead to an attempted rape, assorted vicious crimes and preparations for a Yip uprising. The 480 large sized pages are crammed with Vance's delightful characters, customs, activities and anecdotes. Always good, I'd rate this as one of his best.

THE ALIEN DEBT FM.Busby Orbit £2.95

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THE INFLUENCE Ramsey Campbell Century Hutchinson £11.95

When her tyrannical grandmother Queenie (real name 'Victoria') dies, Alison and her husband Derek think they can now live peacefully with their daughter Rowan. But then the mysterious Vicky (who seems invisible to most people) appears. She seems possessed of Queenie's spirit, and brings trouble to the family. The menace escalates, causes two deaths and takes over Rowan's place as events reach a frightening climax. An excellent 'frightener' which may well make the big screen.

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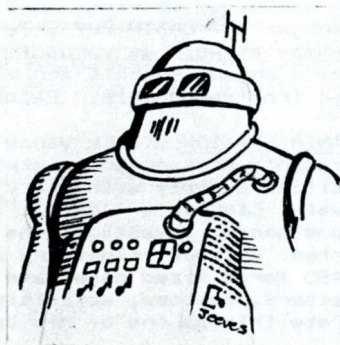
Once again, the overgrown, quarrelsome pussycats roam the spacelanes. Tully and Halpy of the hani are held by the treacherous kif as Pyanfur races to a dramatic rescue - whereupon things get even more complicated - as do names, plot and dialogue. Great stuff if you like it.

ESCAPE PLUS Ben Bova Methuen £2.95

A scintillating, 11 story collection from an ex-Analog editor opening with a delinquent seeking escape from a computer run prison. There's a twist-tale of an earthquake; a dying Sun threatens Earth; then dangers of Lunar battle. Street gang violence, alien visitors, Computer war-simulation and other goodies. No literary pyrotechnics to hide lack of plot, but just entertaining and comprehensible SF

SENTENCED TO PRISM Alan Dean Foster N.E.L. £2.50

Top troubleshooter Evan Orgell dons an infallible protective suit to check out a non-responding base on Prism. He is forced to survive unprotected when his suits succumbs to incredible life forms - one of which becomes very attached to him. His fantastic surroundings bring greater surprises as events progress. A trace of tongue-in-cheek adds spice to an excellent tale of exploring a new world. Highly readable.

WAY OF THE PILGRIM Gordon R Dickson Sphere £3.50

The jacket credits 'First publication to Ace 1987, but Analog readers will recognise the novels, 'The Cloak & The Staff' (1980) and 'See There A Pilgrim' (1985). The Aalaag conquerors rule Earth harshly. Linguist Shane Evert, sickened by their deeds, initiates subversion. The tension-full development and alien insight make this an even better read than it did in separate story form.

QUEEN MAGIC, KING MAGIC Ian Watson Grafton £2.95

The kingdoms of Bellogard and Chorny vie in a magical war proscribed by the rules of chess. Young (pawn) Pedino falls in love with Sara, a Chornian agent, then meets her again when on a mission in Chorny. The game switches through Snakes & Ladders and a Monopoly world before an end is in sight. A lovely fairy-tale which makes a refreshing change from quest and sorcery.

ALWAYS COMING HOME Ursula Le Guin Grafton £5.95

A massive 500+ pages, (with over 100 devoted to glossary, customs, artifacts and the (illogical) number system of Kesh. Crammed with assorted stories, fragments, verse and free writing, together with charts, diagrams and line drawings. Le Guin has devoted considerable effort to creating a solid background to her fictional world and I am sure this will become a 'cult' classic and Award winner, but for me it seemed lacking in story substance. However, you may find it the best thing since sliced bread.

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