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PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE, a quarterly for inquiry and reflection on science fiction, is produced for limited free distribution by Graham Stone, GPO Box 4440, Sydney 2001, Australia.

= 57 = PROBLEMS IN THE WORKS OF EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, and I do believe this is the first time Past, Present and Future has discussed him.

Louis Russell Chauvenet (Detours, NS no. 8, May 1980, FAPA 172, p. 8) comments on one of the least believable occurrences in the Mars novels of ERB (and that's saying something), John Carter and Dejah Thoris' interplanetary hybrid offspring.

Norm Metcalf takes up the issue (The Devil's Work 1/47, Feb 1981, FAPA 176, p. 8): "Ah, but you're making the implicit assumption that John Carter was an Earthman. Yet you realize that Carthoris and Thuvia were improbable results of a union between Carter and Dejah Thoris. Try re-reading the stories looking for evidence. A more probable theory is that Carter was a Thern who had projected to Earth several centuries earlier and had suffered amnesia. He had such Barsoomian characteristics as genetic identity, extreme longevity, worship of Barsoomian gods (remember that when in peril of his life at the beginning of A Princess of Mars he prayed to Mars, not to the God of the Baptists) and the enigmatic ability to teleport between Earth and Mars (as did Ulysses Paxton, another possible Barsoomian). What real evidence is there for his being a native of Earth? None. His 'nephew', Edgar Rice Burroughs, assumed him to be of Earth, and yet was compelled to remark on these oddities."

Well, it's a thought. Carter certainly doesn't appear to be a mere Earthman, and by his own account he can't remember when and where he was born. But a Thern? This is ruled out in his first encounter with them. In chapter 4 of The Gods of Mars, Carter and friends are in the underground stronghold of the Therns and the immediate objective is to get out of it. Thuvia has a suggestion: Carter should pose as the high-ranking priest whose opposition has just been forcibly ended.

"...Notest not the remarkable resemblance between this Holy Thern and thyself?"

"The man was indeed of my precise stature, nor were his eyes and features unlike mine; but his hair was a mass of flowing yellow locks...while mine is black and close cropped."

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Problems in the Works of Edgar Rice Burroughs

"What of the resemblance?' I asked the girl Thuvia. 'Do you wish me with my black, short hair to pose as a yellow-haired priest of this infernal cult?' The answer is simple -- the yellow hair is a full head wig. "...I noted that not a hair grew upon his head, which was quite as bald as an egg.

"They are all thus from birth,' explained Thuvia, noting my surprise, 'The race from which they sprang were crowned with a luxurious growth of golden hair, but for many ages the present race has been entirely bald.'"

So, unless we suppose that Earth's salubrious clime induced hair to grow on a Thern's shiny pate, black hair at that, this explanation will not do. Suggestions, anyone?

Writing of Burroughs' appearances in *Amazing Stories*, Metcalf remarks (*ibid.* p. 189): "The *Amazing Stories Annual* for 1927 had the first appearance of *The Master Mind of Mars*...Gernsback must have outbid *Argosy* and *Blue Book* to get that one."

On what compulsion must he? Here we can turn to *Porges** for details of the events leading to this printing. Originally titled *A Weird Adventure on Mars* and completed on 16 Nov 1925, this novel was first submitted to *Argosy*, where acting editor Matthew White promptly rejected it on 27 Nov. Amazed and discouraged, Burroughs made little effort to sell it elsewhere, putting the manuscript aside till Sept 1926 when, asked by Charles A. MacLean of *Popular Magazine* for a new Tarzan story, he offered this instead. MacLean rejected it on 30 Oct as "too bizarre and shocking," showing how much he knew about his business. Burroughs was not impressed with this objection, rightly arguing that *The Chessmen of Mars* was all of that, yet had sold well. After some correspondence he offered to waive payment if *Popular's* circulation suffered on running the story. (Was he serious? Probably.) Early in 1927 the title had become *Vad Vare of Barsoom* (not much improvement) and it had also been rejected by the *Elks Magazine*. I'm not sure how desperate an author had to be to send a story there, but it sounds like the end of the line.

Then came a request for a contribution from Gernsback, who was about to run *The Land that Time Forgot* in *Amazing*, Feb-Apr. Burroughs offered him *Vad Vare of Barsoom* for \$1250. This was about 2c a word, but it was a modest figure compared to what he was used to getting from *Argosy*: \$3500 for *The Chessmen of Mars*, \$4000 for *Tarzan and the Golden Lion*, \$7560 for the *Moon Maid* trilogy. Clearly he had little faith in this story. But it was too much for Gernsback to pay with^{out} protest and some thought as to how he could manage it. After consideration he suggested not serialising it but featuring it in a 50c *Annual*. He had already had vague plans for producing an occasional supplementary issue and even announced the idea generally once, but Burroughs' price of \$1250 may well have led him to the final form of the *Annual*, bulkier than the monthly and double the price, and filled out with a few reprints that cost him little or nothing to compensate for the extra expense of the lead novel. But then of course its success meant the *Quarterly*, and SF was here to stay. Before publication the title was changed to *Xaxa of Mars*, then the more appropriate present title.

Burroughs did get competitive bids on his works at times, though. He submitted *Tamar of Pellucidar* to *Argosy* and *Blue Book* simultaneously on 24 Nov. 1928: their best offers were \$6000 and \$7500 respectively (which also makes \$1250 for *The Master Mind of Mars* look inadequate)

A mention of Carson Napier, Metcalf writes (*ibid.* p. 189): "...reminds me of something. No one ever travelled between Earth and Barsoom by mechanical means. Carter and Ulysses Paxton made it by astral projection. Carson Napier tried and ended on Venus. The voyagers to the Moon got there by rocket power, but they couldn't go to Barsoom. (But didn't Carter reach Jupiter by rocket?) There must be some significance to this."

Napier (typically) forgot to allow for the Moon in his orbital calculations and was thrown off-course, luckily making it to Venus eventually. But if his navigation

* *Porges, Irwin. Edgar Rice Burroughs, the Man who created Tarzan. Ballantine, 1976. v. 1, p. 634-40, 720.*

had been better and he had continued as planned? Barring further accidents, and he was of course notably accident-prone, he should have reached Mars. But here's the rub — are we sure that Mars is Barsoom? Carter always supposed it was. But all we now know about the Martian environment is hard to reconcile with Barsoom as Carter reports it. I have heard it suggested that Barsoom is not in fact the Mars we can observe, but is a planet in the corresponding position in an other-dimensional universe — or possibly is the Mars of the remote past. Why not? Astral projection could just as readily traverse time or the fourth dimension as normal space. Communication with Barsoom via Gridley Wave? Well, that might pass through time or the fourth dimension too, due to the same unknown cause that diverted Carter and Paxton. As for Carter taking a spaceship to Sasoom, and indeed many such voyages between these planets, that presents no great problems. They are in the same universe, which may not be ours -- and Sasoom does not seem much like the Jupiter we observe either.

The Julian expedition (that's not the right word, an expedition should be on foot: exvolition?) got no further than Luna or Va-Nah. But it stopped there due to sabotage, and lost sight of the original plan to go on to Mars in the following vicissitudes. So how it would have gone we can't say.

== 58 == IS NOTHING SACRED? (You want a real horror story?)

Redd Boggs writes (The Cosmic Glitch, Aug 1981, FAPA 176, p. 6), recalling Jack Williamson's concept of using an artificial satellite to create a celestial (or should we say infernal?) advertising spectacle, in One Against the Legion (*1) "...John W. Campbell, in an editorial, advanced the idea of painting 'Coca-Cola' in luminous paint on the surface of the original moon, and I have no doubt that they will get around to it. Or else a hammer and sickle will be emblazoned up there on that white surface."

A horrifying prospect, and one of many predictions we can only hope are never realised. I can't place the Campbell suggestion, so can't say about priority. But this appalling idea was raised in Heinlein's The Man who Sold the Moon (*2) Remember, Harriman plays off one soft drink manufacturer against another by threatening each with the use of the Moon for advertising by the other. Arthur C. Clarke improved on the simple method of marking the surface in his Watch This Space (*3) As for the hammer and sickle, there was a story — I think it was 240,000 Miles Straight Up, by L. Ron Hubbard (*4) in which the Russians beat the good ol' USA to Luna and marked it visibly with not the H&S but the letters USSR (why not in Cyrillic was not explained). See also Asimov's Buy Jupiter (*5). Fredric Brown's Pi in the Sky (*6) proposed a technique for using the stars, or selected stars. I can't believe that anything of the kind will be socially feasible when the technology becomes available.

== 59 == SCIENCE FICTION IN THE BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY (for instance)

Daniel McPhail (Phantasy Press 19/3, 64, Oct 1981, FAPA 177, p. 13-14) recalls that there was little-known fiction of interest in the British juvenile periodicals (not comics, which existed but were aimed at a younger age group) of the 1930's. The American distributors' advertisement he paraphrases here cannot be earlier than 1931 and is probably not much later.

Some of the titles in the Boys' Friend Library mentioned here are recognisable. This long-running series of paperbacks aimed at approximately 10-year-olds were usually (at least in the period when I read some of them, the best part of five decades ago) serialised in one of the juvenile weeklies, the Champion or Triumph or maybe others, some time before appearing as a fourpenny paperback.

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- *1. 1st in Astounding, Apr-June 1939
 - *2. 1st in The Man who Sold the Moon. Shasta 1950
 - *3. 1st in Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction Feb 1957
 - *4. in Thrilling Wonder, Dec 1948
 - *5. 1st in Venture SF, May 1958
 - *6. 1st in Thrilling Wonder, Winter 1945

SF in the Boys' Friend Library

It was a regular dated series, but I am not sure of the frequency. Memory is notoriously unreliable, but my impression is that new titles were not advertised in the weeklies every issue. The Curse of Ka is one that I read: lost race I suppose, but only just so, no SF element that I remember. When the Great Apes Came, yes, I think I can identify that with another one. Passably intelligent, armed and trained by some naughty person in a remote African locality, they invaded England. Did pretty well, too, but in the end a turncoat ape sold out to the humans and wrecked the operation. The World of Darkness -- I think that should be The World in Darkness. A light-absorbing vapor blanketed the globe, whether natural disaster or dastardly plot I can't say. Lord of the Incas? There may have been several on this theme, but I can remember as a serial The Red God of the Incas. Similarly, I don't know about The Cave Boy, but Cave-Boy Ereka was one of those I once owned: the first one I bought -- I think they weren't generally on sale in Adelaide but had to be ordered -- because I had missed parts of the serial. Nonsense, I now realise, with dinosaurs and pterodactyls contemporary with early man wandering through giant horse-tail forests.

But what I really want to remark on here is the book illustrated, The Man from Space by Maurice Lincoln. This is evidently a version of The Man from Up There, published in hard covers by John Hamilton -- my copy is undated, but Bleiler II (*1) gives (1928). So here we have a phenomenon. These were two quite distinct publishing fields, and I wonder how many works from one reappeared in the other.

PREWAR EDITORIAL STAFF

= 60 = HAROLD HERSEY, editor of The Thrill Book Mch-June 1919; publisher of Miracle Science and Fantasy Stories, Flash Gordon Magazine, Mystery-adventure etc.

Born Bozeman, Mont. 29 Mch 1893, died New York 17 Mch 1956. Edited innumerable magazines, and never quite got the hang of it as far as I can see. Wrote some books of which Pulpwood Editor (1937) appears the only one of interest. (*2)

Tom Cockcroft writes: "Incidentally, was the final part of the article, or autobiography, by Hersey, of which the first part appeared in the Golden Atom special issue, ever published, by Farsace or anyone?" A good question. Does anyone know?

= 61 = MALCOLM B. REISS, senior editor of Planet Stories throughout its life

Born 1905, Died Norwalk, Conn. Dec 1975. Managing Editor of Fiction house for a long period, then an agent. After operating his own agency he joined Paul R. Reynolds Inc. in 1960. Obituary in the New York Times, 18 Dec 1975, describes him as "literary agent and writer" and does not mention Planet Stories. Such is fame.

ADDENDA

= 62 = MIRIAM BOURNE, associate editor or managing editor of Amazing Stories, Oct 1928-Nov 1932 (see Topics 23 and 42/43)

Here is further evidence on the timetable of events at Amazing discussed previously in relation to Miriam Bourne and Florence Bothner. In Mort Weisinger's column The Ether Vibrates, in Science Fiction Digest, Jan. 1933 we read: "Miriam Bourne, of Amazing, returned from her vacation to discover that she had been bounced from the staff." As mentioned earlier, her name was last credited in the magazine's November 1932 issue, so we can take it that she had departed well before the end of 1932. Looking at the magazine one sees that something drastic began to happen to the editorial standard at just this time.

In his Feb 1933 column Weisinger tells us: "That unfounded rumor that Miriam Bourne will blossom forth with a new SF mag may be dismissed as that much thin air."

*1. Bleiler, Everett F. The Checklist of Science-Fiction and Supernatural Fiction. Firebell Books, 1978, p. 124

*2. The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography. J. T. White. v. XLV, 1962, p. 262. Port.

Miriam Bourne contd.

A new science fiction ^{mag} at the beginning of 1933? That was optimism indeed. "Miss Bourne tells me that she is now associated with the editorial board of New Masses." A bit of a change.

= 63 = TITLE AND CONTENT (see Topic 1)

Roy Tackett writes (Notes from Arinam, Summer 1981, FAPA 176, p. 5): "Despite its reputation FAPA is hardly the place to seek solutions to the great mysteries of the stf field." Where else, then?

= 64 = FILLYLOO (see Topics 1, 2, 24, 25, 27, 35)

Art Widner writes (YHOS 17, May 1980, FAPA 171, p. 18): "Fillyloo would have been most apt for a title." See? He knows, all right. He left the fun of explaining it to someone else, that's all.

Art also reacts to my remark, "No one could improve on The Reader and Collector as a title...", commenting: "Perhaps not, but you overlooked one that was at least equal -- Claire P. Beck's SF Critic, a definite landmark..." This excellent title didn't come to mind, I think, because I have never sighted a copy. I'm not a real old-timer, and haven't much first hand knowledge of most of the amateur field of the 30's. But recently I noticed two SF Critics, Feb 1936 and Aug 1937, in a dealer's catalog and ordered them forthwith. Who has any others? Yes, this is another title that was right on.

= 65 = WHO WAS WEDE? (see Topic 6 and Addenda 30, 37)

Roy Tackett writes (ibid. p. 5): "Well, there is always the possibility that Wede was simply Wede." That possibility seemed ruled out from the beginning: in our culture single names occur only, and rarely, as professional personae; Wede does not appear to be an established family or personal name, so we conclude that it is a pseudonym and look for clues to its user's identity." Who was Wede?

= 66 = STELLAR PUBLICATIONS' SCIENCE FICTION SERIES (see Topic 9 and Addenda 39, 49)

Tom Cockcroft writes: "You say...that the third group of six were offered in Nov 1932; this is certainly true, but I think they were first offered in the June 1932 issue of Wonder Stories. But you can reasonably reply 'Do I say otherwise?!'"

On going back to Wonder Stories to check on this point I see what happened. Working back I found the third group advertised in Nov 1932; then Oct 1932 has the ad for the first twelve on the inside front cover, so I assumed I had found the date. What I missed was that while still running the previous ad on the inside cover (no doubt these were printed well ahead of publication) the editor, as soon as the new ad for the six new booklets was ready, inserted it on p. 480 where I missed it. Take nothing for granted. So this puts the date of publication of nos. 13 to 18 back to June 1932.

He also asks: "How did you find out about The Moon Mirage being included in no. 18? So far as I know this was never mentioned in the advertisements printed in Wonder -- but the title was given when (I think in 1940) Standard Magazines discovered that they had a stock of some of these booklets...they made it look as though The Moon Mirage was a separate title; I didn't think it was, but wondered for at least 30 years what booklet it shared with the title tale. Perhaps I learned the answer from one of Don Tuck's Handbooks. No, that would be sooner than 30 years later! Perhaps only this year, from PP&F." I'm not certain, but my source for this point was probably Bleiler II.* This seems to be the only printed source I might have seen, and the booklet is not one of those in the series catalogued by the Library of Congress.

I am pleased to find that the series is evidently not as rare as I supposed when I introduced the subject. I have been looking for them, and have managed

* Bleiler, Everett F. The Checklist of Science-Fiction and Supernatural Fiction. Firebell Books, 1978. p. 155

Stellar Publications' Science Fiction Series contd.

to acquire three of them so far. No. 14, *The Flight of the Aerofix*, by Maurice Renard, is much as expected. It is a 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " booklet on good quality paper. The text runs onto the inside and outside back cover, or to be precise onto p. 23 and 24, since these booklets do not have a proper cover. The outer sheet is part of the same printing, same paper: the front "cover" is merely a title page. Cataloguers have been known to describe such a format as "self-covered". No. 18, *The Ship from Nowhere* by Sidney Patzer and *The Moon Mirage* by Raymond Gallun (no middle initial) plainly shows both stories on its "cover", although as we have seen only the first was advertised. Again, text runs right onto the back "cover".

No. 9, *The Thought Translator* by Merab Eberle and *The Creation* by Milton Mitchell is the first I have seen of the first two groups, which are illustrated. The second author is Milton Mitchell, though the advertisements have him as M. Milton Mitchell. There are two other unexpected points here. Firstly, both stories are illustrated with full page drawings. Secondly, neither is by Frank R. Paul whom I have innocently assumed so far to have been the artist. The first is credited to Fisher, the second to Butterfield. Again, there is no true cover, the text runs over onto the back page; but there are 28 pages, not 24 as previously thought.

== 67 == STELLAR PUBLICATIONS' SCIENCE FICTION CLASSICS (see Topic 10)

Having now acquired the only title in this unsuccessful series of one, *Between Worlds* by Garret Smith, I have little to add to what I had gathered from the usual sources. I do notice that there is no attempt in the book to establish the work's credentials as a "classic" or to put the case for reprinting such works. If you or I had been launching such a project, quite a radical scheme in 1929 when we had only been plugging *Scientifiction* for six years at the most, with one and then a few magazines featuring it, and calling it Science Fiction instead only since June, I think we would have been excited about it and anxious to communicate some of that excitement. With any of Gernsback's usual optimism I'm sure we would have listed another half dozen proposed future titles. Instead, take it or leave it. It is a 93 p, 9" book on standard book paper, stapled and given a battleship-grey paper cover. The front cover is framed in an appropriately classical design of fluted columns and lintel, ornamented with some typical pictorial symbols of science and learning in the same spirit Gernsback's magazine title pages went in for. Well, it was a failure. Too early.

== 68 == HARRY BATES, Editor of *Astounding Stories* Jan 1930-Mch 1933 and of *Strange Tales*, Sep 1931-Jan 1933 (see Topic 40)

Hiram Gilmore Bates III (his full name not reported till recently) born Pittsburgh, 9 Oct 1900, died in New York in Sep 1981. See obituary in *Locus*, 253, Feb 1982 p. 13. As noted earlier he wrote some SF, some as A. R. Holmes, Quien Sabe, Anthony Gilmore and H. G. Winter (the last two with Desmond W. Hall) but his importance is as a pioneer editor. He was the first man to start a new science fiction magazine after Gernsback, and thus the second to put an independent concept of science fiction into effect: he created *Astounding*. He changed the character of science fiction in general by his example, and it is possible that without him the movement would have failed.