

TYNDALLITE

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**The New Port News** #207 Jan 2003 -  
Ned Brooks

p. 3 While coal and igneous intrusions aren't compatible with commercial coal mining there are volcanoes in coal fields. There are several examples in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico of volcanoes erupting through coal fields. It ruins the coal. So I'm skeptical of Captain Nemo mining useable coal from the interior of a volcano in the Canary Islands. I know that the Canary Islands are volcanic. While I don't have handy any geologic reports on the Canary Islands I doubt that they have coal fields.

p. 4 Your notion that we can't disprove cavourite has some problems. Where would its constituent elements fit in the periodic table of elements? How would you explain its ability to repel ordinary compounds? Granting its properties why hasn't the world's supply taken off for the other end of the universe during geological processes?

**Variations on a Theme** #18 Dec 2002 -  
Rich Lynch

p. 3 Thanks for your opinion that only the third novella in David Brin's *The Postman* is inferior to the first two. Did he fail to put enough postage on it?

You point out that it would have been easier for Captain Nemo to have bought his supply of mercury from a commercial source. You also point out the fallacy of using electrolysis to distill sodium and mercury with which to operate his batteries. But Nemo was trying to be completely independent from the nations of the land. Thus instead of using electrolysis to distill his supplies of sodium and mercury he used coal, which he mined from the inside of a volcano in the Canary Islands. Thus Jules Verne avoided the pitfalls you detail. So the *Nautilus* wasn't a 'perpetual-motion' machine.

**SPIRITUS MUNDI** #193 1 Jan 2003  
- Guy H. Lillian III

p. [5?] You wonder if Alfred E. van Vogt is still alive. He was born 26 Apr 1912 and died 20 Jan 2000. Edna M. Hull (his first wife) was born 11 Jan 1911 and died 3 Oct 1994. His second wife may still be alive. He was a nice man who wrote some excellent fiction (and some so-so ho-hum fiction).

p. [7?] No, *Fantasy Commentator* wasn't the first "fanzine" nor the first publication thus designated, which may be what you had in mind. As Rich Lynch cited in this mailing the first usage of "fanzine" found by Sam Moskowitz was by Louis R. Chauvenet in the Oct 1940 *Detours*. *Fantasy Commentator* didn't begin until 1943. It was a top fanzine then and incredibly enough it is still is. It's also long overdue for a Hugo.

I'm glad that you enjoyed reading Eric L. Davin's and my article in *Fantasy Commentator* concerning the contributions female science-fiction authors made to the 1927-1949 science-fiction magazines and rebutting the erroneous claims about their presence (or lack thereof). We feel that women deserve credit for their science-fiction.

If you wish to consider Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* as science-fiction you have to redefine science-fiction, misrepresent what Verne wrote (which is facilitated by the mistranslations) or deny the history of science and technology, etc. We've seen all of this.

As for Raymond A. Palmer turning a western into science-fiction it may well be. There's a lot of stuff in Palmer's magazines that I've had no desire to read. Chester S. Geier's western on Mars ("Outlaw In the Sky") was in the Feb 1953 *Amazing Stories*, which was edited by Howard Browne, Paul W. Fairman and Lila E. Shaffer. Palmer's last issue was Dec 1949.

pp. [7?-8?] I can't find my copy of Herbert G. Wells' omnibus novels but he had an introduction explaining his attitude towards his "science-fiction". I may be wrong but as I recall he termed them "scientific romances" and had pretty much the attitude that you ascribe to him. He was using his imagination to describe non-existent events rather than trying to accurately predict what may yet be. In fact, some of his stories were obviously warning against what he hoped would not be. *The World Set Free* warns against the use of atomic bombs, however the world is saved by Socialism. Salvation by Socialism was

one of his hobbyhorses, often to the detriment of his fiction.

pp. [10?-11?] Yes, Jules Verne does read much better in accurate translations. Walter J. Miller's Annotated Verne series apparently ceased but Fred Lerner recently mentioned that further faithful translations are being published. What most English-speaking-and-reading people have read are Mercier's pseudo-translations, which deleted Verne's style, satire, characterization, scientific content, etc. and turned them into juvenile travelogues.

p. [13?] You say that Robert Bloch "...put down fanzines from the dais of a Nebula banquet, showing that, even in SF, the message depends on the audience."

What did he say? This seems strange. Bloch was an active fan for many decades, published fanzines, was a member of the *Fantasy Amateur Press Association* from May 1955 until Feb 1960, wrote letters of comments upon fanzines, etc. He also published "A Way of Life" in the Oct 1956 *Fantastic Universe*, a science-fiction story about science-fiction fandom.

**PETER, PAN & MERRY #47** – David Schlosser

p. 2 To quote you:

"The claim that aluminum foil would protect you from flying saucer rays was a false trail to trap the unsuspecting into acting as guideposts for the invasion. "Ack-ack-ackack-ack.""

As far as I know the little green men haven't yet arrived so apparently the

invasion was foiled. And as far as I know the most famous “flying saucer ray” was the editor of *Flying Saucers* – Raymond A. Palmer.

### **Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette**

#80 Jan 2003 – Richard  
Dengrove

p. 11 You say that *The Scarlet Empire* was ostensibly by David M. Parry, whom you believe to have been head of the National Association of Manufacturers and that the book was supposedly ghostwritten. What is your source for this? I’d like to find out more.

You also comment on small events changing the course of history in science-fiction. One famous example is Nathaniel Schachner’s “Ancestral Voices”, *Astounding Stories* Dec 1933. A time-traveler kills a Hun, who happened to be an ancestor of Adolf Hitler. So, no more Hitler. The story was anti-bigotry, and one of which science-fiction fandom can be proud.

p. 16 As for science-fiction novels by Lafayette R. Hubbard in the science-fiction magazines there weren’t that many. There were “Final Blackout” *Astounding Science-Fiction* Apr-Jun 1940 and “The End Is Not Yet” *ASF* Aug-Oct 1947.

He did have quite a few novelettes and short stories published. Some of the novelettes were expanded for book form or published as short books, such as the following.  
“The Tramp”, *ASF* Sep-Nov 1938  
“The Ultimate Adventure” *Unknown* Apr 1939  
“Slaves of Sleep” *Unknown* Jul 1939

“The Ghoul” *Unknown* Aug 1939  
“Death’s Deputy” *Unknown* Feb 1940  
“The Indigestible Triton” *Unknown* Apr 1940 (as by “Rene Lafayette”)  
“Fear” *Unknown* Jul 1940  
“Typewriter In the Sky”, *Unknown* Nov-Dec 1940  
“The Case of the Friendly Corpse” *Unknown* Aug 1941  
“To the Stars” *ASF* Feb-Mar 1950  
“The Masters of Sleep”, *Fantastic Adventures* Oct 1950 (it’s a sequel to the fine “Slaves of Sleep”, but marred by Dianetics propaganda)  
“The Kingslayer” *Two Complete Science-Adventure Books* Win 1950 (abridged from a hardcover original)

He also had these short stories:

“The Dangerous Dimension” *ASF* Jul 1938  
“Danger In the Dark” *Unknown* May 1939  
“The Professor Was A Thief” *ASF* Feb 1940  
“The Idealist” *ASF* Jul 1940 (as by “Kurt von Rachen”)  
“The Kilkenny Cats” *ASF* Sep 1940 (as by KvR)  
“The Devil’s Rescue” *Unknown* Oct 1940  
“One Was Stubborn” *ASF* Nov 1940 (as by RL)  
“The Traitor” *ASF* Jan 1941  
“The Crossroads” *Unknown* Feb 1941  
“The Mutineers” *ASF* Apr 1941 (as by KvR)  
“Borrowed Glory” *Unknown Worlds* Oct 1941  
“The Drop”, *Astonishing Stories* Nov 1941 (with Lyon S. de Camp)  
“The Invaders” *ASF* Jan 1942  
“The Rebels” *ASF* Feb 1942 (as by KvR)  
“He Didn’t Like Cats” *Unknown Worlds* Feb 1942

"Strain" *ASF* Apr 1942  
 "The Room" *Unknown Worlds* Apr 1942  
 "The Slaver" *ASF* Jun 1942  
 "Space Can" *ASF* Jul 1942  
 "The Beast" *ASF* Oct 1942  
 "The Great Secret" *Science Fiction* Apr 1943  
 "Ole Doc Methuselah" *ASF* Oct 1947 (as by RL)  
 "The Expensive Slaves" *ASF* Nov 1947 (as by RL)  
 "Her Majesty's Aberration" *ASF* Mar 1948 (as by RL)  
 "The Obsolete Weapon" *ASF* May 1948  
 "When Shadows Fall", *Startling Stories* Jul 1948  
 "The Great Air Monopoly" *ASF* Sep 1948 (as by RL)  
 "240,000 Miles Straight Up" *Thrilling Wonder Stories* Dec 1948  
 "Forbidden Voyage" *SS* Jan 1949 (as by RL)  
 "The Magnificent Failure" *SS* Mar 1949 (as by RL)  
 "Plague" *ASF* Apr 1949 (as by RL)  
 "The Conroy Diary" *ASF* May 1949 (as by RL)  
 "The Incredible Destination" *SS* May 1949 (as by RL)  
 "A Sound Investment" *ASF* Jun 1949 (as by RL)  
 "The Unwilling Hero" *SS* Jul 1949 (as by RL)  
 "A Matter of Matter", *ASF* Aug 1949  
 "Beyond the Black Nebula" *SS* Sep 1949 (as by RL)  
 "The Automagic Horse" *ASF* Oct 1949  
 "The Planet Makers" *TWS* Oct 1949  
 "The Emperor Of the Universe" *SS* Nov 1949 (as by RL)  
 "A Can of Vacuum", *ASF* Dec 1949  
 "Battle of Wizards" *Fantasy Book #5* (1949), reprinted *Spaceway* Feb 1954  
 "Ole Mother Methuselah" *ASF* Jan 1950 (as by RL)

"The Last Admiral" *SS* Jan 1950 (as by RL)  
 "Beyond All Weapons" *Super Science Stories* Jan 1950  
 "Greed", *ASF* Apr 1950  
 "Battling Bolto" *TWS* Aug 1950  
 "Final Enemy" *SSS* Sep 1950  
 "Tough Old Man" *Startling Stories* Nov 1950  
 "Battle of Wizards" *Spaceway* Feb 1954 {reprinted from *Fantasy Book #5* (1949)}

You say that Hubbard filled most of one issue of *ASF*. Which issue do you have in mind? The only issue in which he had more than one story was the Oct 1947 issue, in which he had one installment of a serial and one short story. He wasn't as prolific in science-fiction as some people would have us believe. And in the non-science-fiction magazines he had a fair amount of stories, but again nowhere the volume of Henry Bedford-Jones or Frederick S. Faust.

His peak year in science-fiction was 1949 with fourteen stories in *Startling Stories*, *Astounding Science-Fiction*, *Thrilling Wonder Stories* and *Fantasy Book*. Since these magazines published a total of twenty-five issues during 1949 it means that in his peak year he averaged 0.56 stories per issue (ignoring the other magazines to which he didn't sell stories).

Beginning in 1948 Hubbard was on record as making public statements that he wished to found a religion so as to make money. Even his other pulp sales weren't making him much money and in 1949 the pulp market began collapsing.

I think that you've made a fair assessment of Verne vs. Wells when you say:

*"OK, maybe Verne was more scientific than Wells. He recognized problems and tried to have a good alibi for why his technology worked. And I won't fault him too much for having a coalmine near a volcano."*

Actually Nemo's coal mine was **inside** a volcano. Verne was fond of Nemo having sanctuaries inside volcanoes. If you've read *The Mysterious Island* you know that the *Nautilus* was trapped inside the volcano on Lincoln Island **before** the events of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*.

p. 17 I agree with you more than I do A. Langley Searles about Isaac Asimov's Foundation series. Certainly there was sand in the basis but they were readable. However, I agree with Langley that they're over-rated. Apparently the concept is sufficiently grandiose so as to more than compensate for the deficiencies in style and characterization. But this is true of a lot of science-fiction.

**REVENANT** #16 Jan 2003- Sheila J. Strickland

p. 4 I have all of the Doc Savage books but I've read only a few. Apparently they varied in quality and peaked early on and gradually deteriorated. Most of the ones by authors other than Lester Dent I've been told don't have his tongue-in-cheek attitude. Apparently some of them are actually science-fiction.

**Trivial Pursuits** #105 – Janice Gelb

pp. 3-4 Thanks for the movie and book reviews.

**GUILTY PLEASURES** #27 [year]  
2003 – Eve Ackerman

p. 2 You have my best wishes for the success of your stories "Smuggler's Gold" and "Captain Sinister".

pp. 3-4 Thanks for the book reviews.

p. 3 You're so enthusiastic about S. M. Stirling's alternative-history novel, *The Peshawar Lancers* that I'll have to find a copy.

LETTER

From Harry B. Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown MD 21740  
22 Nov 2002 {Harry, my apologies for the delay.}

Dear Norm:

I almost fell earlier this evening when the envelope containing three issues of *Tyndallite* from you toppled off a stack of unlocced fanzines and landed at my feet as I walking by. Obviously, this was an omen that I should write to thank you for them. I think there are other apazines from you I haven't written about but I'll need to wait until I can sort out the backlog. It grows bigger all the time because ill health and other problems have cut back my loc production to perhaps six to eight per month. I must have averaged between twenty and twenty-five per month just a couple of years ago.

I was impressed by the discovery via your mailing comments that the personnel in *SFPA* are virtually unchanged since I dropped out several years ago. I no longer remember how in the world I was able to be active in a bi-monthly apa in addition to *FAPA* and *SAPS* obligations.

I think Dicken's *A Christmas Carol* had an alternative universe character, Scrooge is shown and told by the spirits that he will die in miserable circumstances, Tiny Tim will die, and other unpleasant things will happen in the future. But he asks if the future can be changed and when he changes his thinking and behavior, the child gets well and he gains much happiness and many friends. (I suspect that the Spirit of Things To Come cheated by showing Scrooge in a graveyard the big stone marker over a grave that bears his name. Who would have paid for this memorial to such an unloved person?)

Just recently I found at Goodwill Industries a couple of A. E. van Vogt paperbacks I'd never heard of. I have read one of them, *The Silkie*, and found it even more extreme in unexpected things happening, abrupt shifts of time and place, and such events as the Sun acquiring more than one thousand new planets without apparently causing much attention from anyone. The other paperback has already vanished into the piles of recently acquired and unread used books.

I would rather be ignorant than own a computer. Chester Cuthbert should remember that a computer-free home is protection against all the dishonest things that computers propagate. E-Bay seems to be swarming

with criminals peddling stolen merchandise. Pornography is all over computer screens. Mail order firms may not exist but are just one grifter pocketing checks and money orders from suckers who order his fictitious merchandise advertised on the Web.

How did the casting director for *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* decide on how to cast the first stone?

Yrs., &c.,

Harry Warner, Jr.