

entire
contents
copyright
1960
by
a.j. budrys

no kidding

Sweet friends, I pray you press
no subscription monies, in cash
or kind, upon us. The last time
we folded one of these, certain
funds remained unaccounted for,
and remain so to this day. We
are here but for a moment of
infinity, and may be gone again
any second now. I warn you....
when we go, we leave no tracks.

dubious volume 1, number 1
a wlistzine press publication

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Marr Vellam stencils,
Olympia portable typewriter,
courtesy Lawrence T. Shaw
and the makers of Fox's U-Bet
Chocolate Flavor Syrup

Our editorial policy is simpli-
city itself. You are going to
get copies of dubious as long
as new ones are produced, until
such time as we enter FAPA. Re-
quests for removal from our mail-
ing list, if received through
the U.S. mails, will be acted
upon with commendable dispatch.
Meanwhile, be welcome into the
sweet, simple, somehow loveable
mind of y'r complicated servant
a.j. budrys

croggle:

It is not necessarily true that a professional writer, in order to be convincing, must be himself convinced. We speak now of Robert Heinlein. Even if he says, at some point, somewhere, that he always has an axe to grind, this is the kind of thing writers are always tempted to blurt out at library luncheons. However the case may be, in this case of which we speak, the fact remains that almost nowhere outside the--loosely defined--Anglo-Saxon countries would his thesis have brought about much furor, even when taken to be an exact, complete statement of a policy intended to be put into immediate effect. England and her children seem to share a cultural optimism which denies the possibility of war in our time--whatever that particular time might be. Those of us who know what it is to live in cultures governed by a perpetual, overt need--real or faithfully believed-in; it makes little practical difference--for the systematic application of power politics, seem to be unable to find anything particularly outrageous in the philosophy of this book. Extreme, perhaps, but not outrageous, and certainly not unrealistic. This is not to say that this corner earnestly hopes the next administration makes Heinlein its Secretary of State; I would be happy to have him for Lithuania, if there ever is one again, but I fear there'd be very little to work with. Whatever moral may be drawn from all this, let me rapidly say that if we ever get out into the stars under conditions which place an appreciable degree of power in our hands, we will certainly go through an epoch in which Mr. Heinlein's philosophy will prevail, and in that light this book must stand as an excellent example of that neglected sub-form, political science fiction.

And, incidentally, the cutting this book received in its magazine publication had probably little to do with either a lack of integrity or any other moral question. I fear that F&SF has never been able to get its readership to take to long serials, or even long serial installments. Bob Mills is merely applying a lesson Tony Boucher learned. Furthermore, it is time we reconciled ourselves to the fact that Tony, however much we may miss him, is not coming back--and that since no one could hope to assume his individuality, it is only normal that Bob Mills, an individual in his own right--and a literate and interesting one--should take the magazine on new tacks. Now and then he seems to be accused of not being Tony Boucher. He can hardly deny it, but if any of you out there are thinking of hitting him, why not hit him someplace where it hurts, instead?

memoirs:

Late in 1947, I climbed aboard the East Coast Champion at 30th Street Station in Philadelphia. I kissed my mother and father while standing in the vestibule, then went to find my seat. There was a foul-up about it, and we were on the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac before the conductors stopped moving me around from one vacant spot in the coach to the next. I was on my way to the University of Miami.

Once in Miami, I caught the bus to Coral Gables--only to find that I had to re-trace my way to downtown Miami, and there take a South Miami bus which deposited me, after twenty miles, a thousand yards down U.S. 1 from the Coral Gables bus line terminus. There I caught a University bus to North Campus--five hundred yards from the you-guessed-it--and registered. Thence to another University bus, and down U.S. 1. And down U.S. 1. And down... At Rockdale, an hour's ride out of South Miami, the battleship-gray Navy surplus bus took a sharp right over a grade crossing, and pitched down upon a narrow coral-rock road heading straight into the Everglades. We passed, ultimately, through a gate guarded by armed men in khaki uniforms, to be confronted by a sign:

U.S. GO'T PROP
--All damage to premises under
F.B.I.
Jurisdiction--

This was N.A.S. Richmond, or, in University parlance, South Campus.

N.A.S. Richmond had been a lighter-than-air base. It consisted of a score of weathered, dry-rotted barracks, warehouses, sheds, and service buildings housing a cafeteria, a fire house but no fire company, a recreation hall, and a Bachelor Officers' Quarters, which had become the women's dormitory. All these things stood under towering turpentine pines, exactly as they had been left by the Navy after the war. Out beyond the buildings lay the longest, broadest expanse of blazing white concrete I have ever seen, lightly streaked by rubber from the landing gear of blimps gone by. Surrounding it, like the palings of a fence for monsters, towered pylons of silvery gray concrete. Once, these had been the gateposts of airship hangar doors. But during a hurrican in the early 1940's, some tidy officer had ordered the doors of all the hangars tightly closed. The air pressure dropped. The hangars did not--they

rose, with a great wrench of sound, and then fell only in the form of their component parts, which lay dissolving in the rain, strips of roofing sailing forlornely into the air, borne off by the storm in a windrow which, they tell me, was distinguishable from the air for years afterward as a fan-shaped coarse black snowfall stretching for miles across the pine barrens and hydroponic tomato farms.

Now only the pylons and the pines remained, and the sun burned into my eyes so that all this expanse around me danced with blazes of colored light and washes of unformed shadow. I put my hand on a celotex warehouse wall for support, and the humid mass parted like fresh bread, so that my arm disappeared into it up to the shoulder. I clutched a bannister, and the wood crumbled into powder under my fingers.

"My God!" I said, "my God, where have I come?" My eye fell on the footlocker piled next to mine. Lettered on it was the name Austin Hammel. I clutched at an aquilinely handsome young man standing with one foot on the trunk. "Austin Hammel!" I cried. "I read your letters in Planet Stories, and I had a letter of my own published, and I want to be a science fiction writer, and I never dreamed I'd actually be going to school with a big-name fan, and you are the Austin Hammel I mean, aren't you?"

"Sure," he said. "But, say, listen--are you hep to Dixieland jazz?"

I shook my head and went back to staring at the pylons. I wondered if anything could ever make them fall.

When Ellison goes by at night
 The haunted fans arise,
 And all lost, wild perjoratives
 Are staring from their eyes.

-- S.V. Benet &
 A.J. Budrys

big brother is watching you:

- No, Bob Silverberg does not have sandy hair and was not at that long-ago fan gathering. I do, and I was, and how do you do, Astra? The tall, lanky fellow with glasses next to Silverberg--that is, next to me, if you follow me--was Joe Kennedy. O.K.?

- 8000 words and a novel are not a serious attempt to earn a living in any case. They are particularly not so when they're done for the hell of it, simply because I want to do them. I enjoy writing whatever I write, but I don't always want to write what I'm writing. Clear? The novel is, by the way, a Gold Medal book to be called either THE DEATH MACHINE, THE ARMIGER, HALT, PASSENGER!, or else something else entirely, and will be at your second-hand magazine store late this year. Also, thru no fault of my own, Ballantine has cobbled together a collection of my short pieces, to be called THE UNEXPECTED DIMENSION (sic) and released about June, but I can hardly be blamed for that, and it is emphatically not an attempt to earn a living. ...Come to think of it, I don't know what I'm doing to earn a living this year.

- A Propos du Borean means 'Let's all have a drink, quick, before she notices her pelisse has slipped.'

- Anybody around here got a copy of the Galaxy Novel by Randall Garrett and Larry M. Harris forced to make love to ... I can't go on. Go get one.

- Austin Hamel is spelled with one 'm', and he's now Austin Hamel Associates, of New York City. How many 't's in Garrett?

- Does anybody out there know whether Stuart Lake's Bantam-issued biography of Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp is to be taken as definitive? He's made to sound exactly like Hugh O'Brian, and it worries me. Also: Was Wyatt Berry Stapp an ancestor of the Colonel Stapp who works in aeromedical research these days? Anybody who can give me crisp answers to these questions is entitled to ask me two soggy questions in return.

- I don't know as Analog will be as doomed to disaster as all that. What in hell, after all, is a Galaxy science fiction?

--- You would think this was just a page of fillers, except that you know I'm too tricky for that. Actually, I suppose this page is as close to mailing comments as I dare to get, because, after all, like, whose mailing? Of course, somebody could send me some fanzines to read--somebody aside from the nice people who are already doing so, that is. I write infrequent letters, particularly of thanks, but--thanks. aj

dubious

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Your name either is
or is not mentioned
herein. That's the
way I am, and there
is no help for it.

Cut:
March, 1960