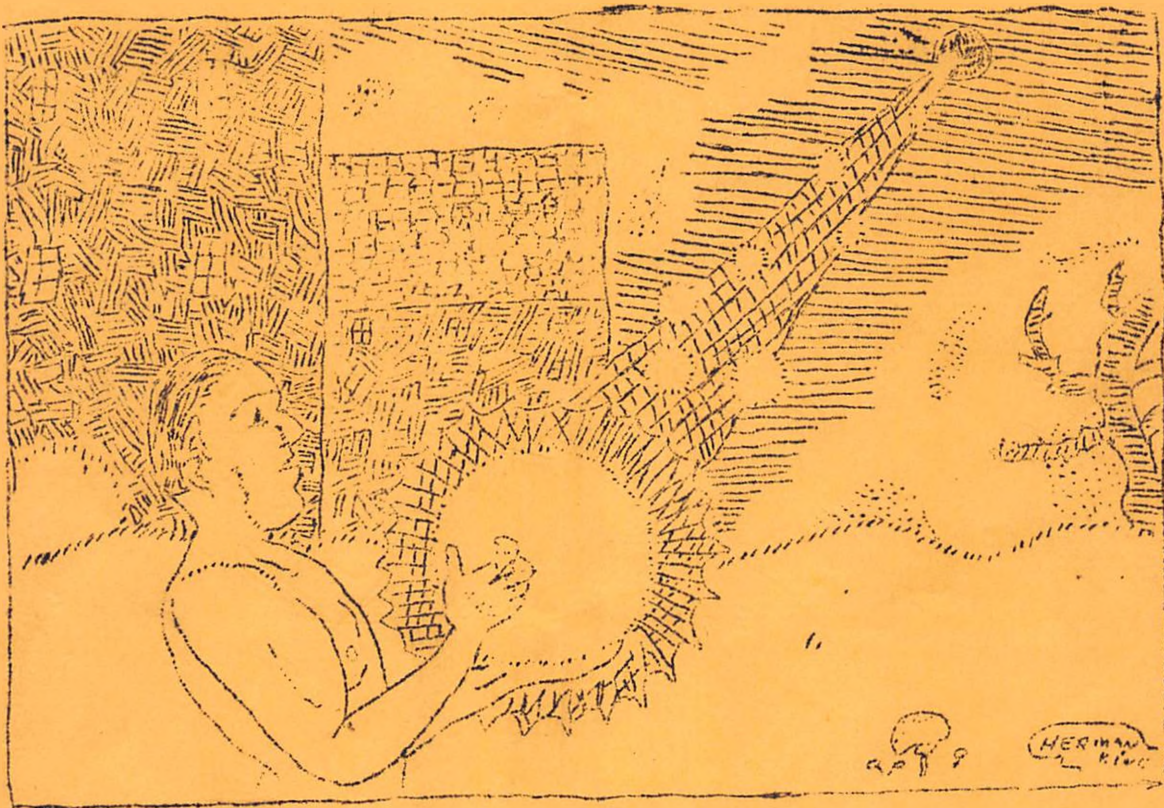


# spearhead

Volume I

July

Number 2



An amateur publication of material, critical and otherwise,  
concerning science-fiction & fantasy....

TRACK - KENNEDY - KING - RAPP - BLYLER - HUDSON - CARSON - PEDERSON - GORDON





# SPEARHEAD

Volume I, Number 2.

July, 1948

EDITOR ----

Tom Carter

ASSOCIATE EDITOR --

Clarence Fair

ART EDITOR ----

Claude S. Turner, Jr.

ASSISTANT EDITOR --

Nelson Teague

=====

COVER by  
Herman King

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## EDITORIAL ---

Science-fiction seems to give the impression, in nearly any futuristic story, that after a few centuries our country, as such, simply will not exist. In a few cases, it and the rest of the world have been enveloped either by atomic flame or atomic war. In the majority of times, however, there has been an alteration of world boundaries and states. The two most generally used themes would seem to be new countries in existence, or a world state has swallowed up the individual nations.

At any rate, no matter what the details, the United States as we know it is done for. This is a frightening thought, and the accurate prophecy often shown by s-f writers does not help to alleviate any uneasiness. We are apt to feel that these writers are better informed than we are, and therefore can accurately forecast the future; more accurately than we can conjecture, anyhow.

But, speaking personally, I find that I cannot agree with these conclusions; nor do I think that all the stories should create, as they seem to do, the impression that our country is but a walk-on actor on the world stage.

The first thing to consider, I believe, is that these men are trying to tell a story; to do this they must create interest; therefore they alter existing conditions. A world in flame and ruin is undoubtedly more exciting than placidity!

Furthermore many of them honestly believe that the only way the human race can continue, is to band together in a world government. That I reluctantly concede; but it seems that this desirable condition is very far in the future. As long as so many different radical political beliefs exist, there can be no combined state.

All right, then should there be nothing for the U. S. but total destruction? I don't think so; I think the U. S. has possibly the greatest future of any world state, and is the one most likely to endure.

And this, I think, is due to our form of government. In the first place no previous country has lasted more than a few centuries; they have not had true democratic government. Without entering into moral values or the desirability of freedom, it has been too often demonstrated that one-man ruling bodies invariably fail. Perhaps the first generation may be fortunate enough to have a wise ruler, but before long a very bad one will crop up, and, since he has total power, there goes the country. In the U. S. the president, normally, limits himself to eight years; the people can oust him at any time, and his power is controlled by congress. Again aside from the freedom aspect, this is very important, for no man can be always right, and when elevated to a high position, his chances of correct thinking decrease, I believe, proportionately. Therefore our country will continue to bumble along, swaying from one policy to another, but always swerving from the brink of disaster. Or at least coming closer to it than those whose course is determined by one man.

And since the people are in control, and the people pretty generally look out for themselves, there shouldn't be any wars for personal conquest or gain. Of course, there is always the dread possibility of the total destruction of civilization, or attack from space, but aside from these, I feel that it is reasonable to suppose that our country has the best chance of being around longest. How does it strike you?

--- The Editor.



## H. P. LOVECRAFT: an appraisal....

by WILLIAM T. TRACK

Before starting, it might be wise to state this reviewer's limitations. Of the works of the late H. P. Lovecraft, we have read only the World Book, "Best Supernatural Stories," edited by August Derleth. However, since this book is supposed to contain his best efforts in the shorter lengths, we consequently feel it not unfair to comment on him.

That Lovecraft is extremely important, in the limited field of the weird, cannot be denied; his influence is perhaps greater than that of any other single writer, and his impression so lasting that his series work is carried on by various other scribes.

Despite whatever his detractors may say about him, Lovecraft was first of all a craftsman. This is obvious even to the casual reader; only one or two authors care to expend the same amount of labor that he did on each story.

Every writer must naturally have disadvantages that hinder him; the very qualities that make him so outstanding in one respect often keep him from perfection in another. Therefore, if we may make such a distinction, we believe that Lovecraft possessed a "negative" talent; by that we mean that his talent lay in his truly outre atmosphere; and not in the real-life characterization that results in positive strength. As a matter of fact, it is to Lovecraft's credit, very much so, that this lack of sharply etched characters does not detract from his writings. Let us clarify that by saying his characterization is easily sufficient, but it seems to this reviewer that he dealt more in types than in individual persons.

Perhaps that explains why some people have such a strong dislike for Lovecraft. One's taste is governed by what one searches for in his reading. In consequence, some literal-minded people find Lovecraft, who represents to a certain extent the ultimate goal of the weird tale, notably lacking in those story values which they demand. Nevertheless, that should not account for their repugnance completely, for Lovecraft was primarily a fine writer.

However, this reviewer must confess that he has a very small addiction indeed for the pure horror story; gore piled on grue in senseless profusion strikes us as pretty silly. And, admittedly, Lovecraft's accomplishments in that field, although we admire them from a purely artistic standpoint, do not impress us very much.

But in our opinion, his best work did not lie in the unrelated horror incident; our chief affection is for his famous Mythology, which concerns the attempt of certain unworldly beings, banished from earth before the dawn of history, to



return. That, we contend, is his greatest achievement, his strongest claim to permanent fame. For Lovecraft brought order from the chaos; he gave a groundwork to what had formerly been plotless brutality and terror. Any story, if it is to pass the test of literature, must at least appear to have coherence; effect must follow cause; and there must be a reason for everything.

That then is what Lovecraft has given to the weird tale, and in so doing he has produced some of the most fascinating reading we have ever encountered. He was unquestionably a master at creating that alien atmosphere that seems like a breath of cold air from a dead and distant world. To the general reader, who may have little use for fantasy, Lovecraft's talent may seem on a minor scale; but we honestly believe that he comes very close, in his chosen field, to reaching a peak of accomplishment, and that his work, in regards to that particular type of fantasy, remains unequaled.

oOo

One curious attestation to Lovecraft's fame is the sort of reflected glamour that the works of him imitators share. This business of imitation is at best a trying affair, both to the perpetuator and the reader; but such imitations of Lovecraft are nevertheless generally devoured avidly by Lovecraft's followers (ourselves included), who are usually forced to admit that the material in question is not up to the late Mr. Lovecraft's standards.

Much better effect has been secured by those writers who have carried on his Mythology without attempting to emulate his style; in other words, carried on his literary tradition.

As a matter of fact, we have come across only one present day author who can successfully precede with --- not imitate --- the series, much in the same integral spirit as Lovecraft. He is August Derleth, of Sauk City, and as reference we cite his "The Lurker at the Threshold", a little book issued by Arkham House not too long ago.

Although not given to strong enthusiasms, we must confess that we consider this book practically on a par with Lovecraft. Derleth himself does not consider the book of any importance; nevertheless we regard it highly. It is possible that this is due to the fact that we had not read any of Lovecraft's original work for some time; however, we don't usually over-evaluate a story --- rather in the opposite direction, so we'll hold to our previous judgement.

Derleth is in reality a very talented writer in his own right, and a gentleman of practically unbelievable energy.



Although his strong opinions are sometimes irritating to the science-fiction adherents (among whom we number ourselves), Derleth's worth as an author is obvious. His versatility is demonstrated by the Judge Peck mystery books; many fine novels bear his by-line.

All of which is leading up to one thing. We believe that Lovecraft's Mythology is far too good a thing to moulder in an undeserved grave, and we believe also that August Derleth is the man most capable to shoulder his tradition. That he has decided to do so, is shown, we hope, by his "The Whippoorwills in the Hills" in the current issue of WEIRD TALES. In just a moment we are going to give ourselves the pleasure of reading it.

The End.

#####

### The SPEARHEAD Times!

This starts a new department that we'll use to pass along any news we happen to have that might interest you. This time it concerns Nelson Bond, the popular author, whose old time stories in the pulps were well-liked to the extent that many of them are termed "classic" today. He had a book published not long ago, and our "scoop" is that he'll have two more, at least, in '49.

The first of these is a complete novel dealing with the time when Earth was, in the remote past, struck by a comet --- a tale of Ragnarok. This novel first appeared in Blue Book magazine under the title of Exiles of Time; it will in book form with added chapters and a new title (as yet unselected), and published by, I understand, Prime Press. Your editor has read the magazine version and considers it very fine indeed. Next issue, we'll carry a review of the magazine version.

The other is a second collection of his fantasies. It will include such proven favorites as the Man Who Walked Through Glass, Pilgrimage, and The Monster From Nowhere, and many more tales which --- since they appeared in such magazines as Blue Book, Esquire, Scribner's, etc. --- have never been seen by the majority of fantasy readers. They include such titles as The Cunning of the Beast, The Enchanted Pencil, The Ring of Iscariot, The Sportsman, and The Five Lives of Robert Jordan.

The latter mentioned story was the first piece in the first issue of Blue Book that we ever read, and you can be assured that we kept coming back for more. As a matter of fact, The Five Lives of Robert Jordan remains high on our list of all-time fantasy classics.

So we'd advise you to latch onto both these books when they do come out. They'll definitely be worth your while!



## Four-Eyed Fish Story

by JOE KENNEDY

Many an unsuspecting traveler in Guiana has been startled, while walking beside a jungle stream, to find himself being surveyed by a fleet of miniature submarines in the water, periscopes protruding like tiny mirrors.

Natives will tell you that this is a school of "four-eyed fish" which inhabit certain inland waters of South America. The world of nature contains some strange creatures, yet the perch-like fish that scientists call Anableps tetraphthalmus must surely be one of the strangest. The iris and cornea of its eyes are divided horizontally by ligaments, forming two pupils, one below the other. Since a different mechanism and focusing apparatus are needed to see clearly in the water and in the air, the anableps solves this difficulty in a manner that seems almost more incredible than science-fiction.

While it glides along just beneath the surface of the water, the upper section of its eyes protrudes in the air to watch for danger. With the lower half of the eye, it surveys the river bottom in search of food.

Four-eyed fish swim together in perfect formation, following the tide. Their ability to leap mud banks has earned them the nickname of "mudskipper".

Until the human race evolves double eyes, we'll have to face the fact that the little fish of the Guiana mudflats remains a jump or two ahead of us!

The End.

#####

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE: an article by Bill Track as to the morbidity of horror writers and such. You read Ray Bradbury; are you unhealthy? Read this and find out! ALSO some good poetry.

#####

We might as well use this space as a plug for Bill Kroll's new fanzine, which will be planographed. That type 'zine needs a lot of subscribers to succeed, so why not drop him a line? His address: 1031 W. 18th St., Des Moines, Iowa.



## The Mummy's Curse

by HERMAN KING

Strange indeed are the evil influences credited to Egyptian mummies. This is the incredible, true tale of a 3500 year old princess-priestess whose unearthing brought about dire results.

The woman, Priestess of the temple of Ammon- Ra at Thebes, was disinterred during the early years of the twentieth century. A few days afterward, a member of the expedition lost his right arm in an inexplicable gun accident. Another member died mysteriously that same year. Still a third died from a gun shot. And when the owner of the cadaver returned home to England, he learned he had been robbed of his fortune.

Coincidence? Perhaps, but the preceding events were not all that. Next came the most terrible and unexplainable aspect of the mummy's entire horror-crowded career.

After its arrival in London, the mummy was sent to a photographer. Several hours later, he reached the owner's house in a state bordering on mental collapse. He had photographed the priestess, developed the plates, and made the plates. No one besides himself had touched the equipment. Yet the finished photographs showed, not the withered features of a mummy, but the visage of an animate being with malignant shining eyes!

The photographer died a few weeks later; the illness which brought about his death defied the doctors' diagnosis.

Naturally, the owner was horribly frightened. He presented the mummy to the British Museum, hence ridding himself of a hideous threat. But the man who delivered it died the following week.

The mummy's presence at the museum brought on unpleasant aftermaths. Many people asserted that they had been injured by merely looking at it. Rumors concerning the weird phenomenon quickly spread, causing a great deal of dissention and speculation. Finally the terrified museum attendants demanded the mummy's swift removal.

The management hid the priestess and substituted a clever imitation. But the deception was discovered by a wily American Egyptologist. He offered to take the mummy to America, and his invitation was promptly accepted.



THE MUMMY'S CURSE: continued from preceding page

Shortly thereafter, with the gruesome cadaver, this American boarded the United States-bound Titanic. You know the fate of that vessel: it never reached shore.

Did the mummy actually possess some inexplicable supernatural power? So many tragedies can hardly be accounted for by coincidence alone. Yet that is the explanation we will have to accept.

Author's note: The Priestess of Ammon- Ra was not the only mummy who apparently exerted some evil influence. There is the more familiar case of King Tut - Ankh - Amen, the defiers of whose curse also met strange deaths.

The End.

#####

#### THE FACE OF GWARTH

I saw the stone-carved face upon the hill,  
Immobile, austere, grave-featured, and bold,  
And wondered what hands carved it there of old,  
And thought perhaps the winds and rains which spill  
Their natural corrosives down that slope  
May have had their hand in on that work,  
As through the years their forces never shirk  
To have effect on all within their scope.

But noting then the gleam of those cold eyes,  
And their malignant stare on all below,  
I knew nature alone could not bestow  
Such harsh effrontery without disguise;  
And there upon an altar 'neath the face  
I found the bones of man in close embrace.

--- R. Flavie Carson

#####

(( We like poetry, particularly the type above, and we'd like to publish lots of it in SPEARHEAD. So if you have any such material on hand, why not ship it our way?  
--- the Ed.))



## GENIUS IN THE PAST

by ARTHUR H. RAPP

Sooner or later in every time-travel discussion, someone pops up with enthusiastic speculation about what a scientific revolution a stfan could cause by stepping thru some mad scientist's time-lock into Ancient Rome or Ditto Egypt, or Medieval Europe: "Oboy! What Napoleon could do with a couple battalions of heavy machineguns!" etc.....

Far be it from me to discourage the happy daydreams of fellow fantasites, and perish the thought that fen are impractical visionaries -- but I have a vast and terrible doubt that you, or you, or even you, could usher in the Atomic Age among the neanderthalic peasants. You just don't know enuf.....

Put down that beaker of hemlock, fan, this is not treason! Let me explain before I am liquidated....

What, for example, would you do if you turned up among the ancients with nothing but your nimble brain and a pocket full of safety matches? You might gain a wizard's reputation by producing fire a la magic, but do you have enough knowledge of parlor legerdemain to continue the show after the fire dance loses its novelty? Maybe you can pull out your ball-point pen and show 'em how to write under water, hey? (Incidentally, someone should poll the werewolves and ghouls of stfandom to ascertain whether it also works under blood....)

O. K., so they decide not to kill you, because you claim that you can show them miracles of science. So you find yourself in the finest alchemist's lab of the kingdom, under orders to produce some wonders right pronto, or gives it a haircut from ear to ear.

And not a Gilbert Chemistry Set in the jernt! Whatcha gonna make, huh?

A gun?

Do you know the formula for mercury-fulminate to fill your percussion caps? Can you design a practical trigger mechanism? What are the proportions of charcoal, saltpeter, and sulphur in gunpowder so that it will explode instead of doing a slow burn. And where the hell do you get sulphur and saltpeter if your alchemist assistant never heard of them?

A steam engine?

How do you get enuf steam into the cylinder to move it, without blowing up your boiler? Do you know how to condense the exhaust steam so the engine will keep running after it once starts? Can you find a non-petroleum lubricant that will work at high temperatures? How do you finish the inner



GENIUS IN THE PAST: continued from preceding page....

walls of the chamber so the piston will slide without allowing too much pressure leak?

Plastics?

Where do you get raw material for plastics? Do you know how to design a mold so you can get the casting out of it undamaged? What is the formula for celluloid? Can you prove that molecules exist?

Can you show the temple astronomer that the earth is not the center of the universe? Can you compute lens curvatures and build a practical telescope? Can you predict an eclipse? Do you know how the escapement of a clock works? How do you tan leather? Build a loom? A spinning wheel?

Better talk fast, brother -- here comes the Lord High Executioner with the sacrificial knife!

Gaaaaaaaah!

The End.

#####

This is an ideal spot to insert a plug for the NFFF Mss Bureau, since the above article and Four-Eyed Fish Story were both obtained from that source. The Bureau is a worthwhile project that deserves all our support. So: ---

The NFFF maintains a Manuscript Bureau as a service to fandom. Send your stories, poems, artwork, articles, or what-have-you to the Bureau, and they'll be forwarded to fanzines that need copy. (At the moment, that includes just about all fanzines!) You too can become famous as a fanhack. You, too, can get egoboo! Send your stuff to

NFFF Manuscript Bureau  
% r-t Rapp  
2120 Bay Street  
Saginaw, Michigan

#####

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SPECIAL OFFER at this time: I will handle copies of the Arkham House volume, "Selected Letters of Howard Phillips Lovecraft", costing \$6.50 at the regular standard price. Anyone ordering his copy from me will receive FREE the unusual book "Albertus Magnus". Order now! This offer not good after publication. Write: Herman King, Wolf Creek, W. Va.



## THE GOLDFISH BOWL:

being a regular feature, we hope  
in which you tell us what you think  
of fandom....

A fantasy and stf fan spends all his waking hours developing his mind in pursuit of the kind of fun and excitement that he finds only in fandom. A few have other hobbies but all that I know admit that it is secondary to fandom. Of course, there are a few gripes and groans, but they come generally from fans who would always beef about something.

We are all friendly with each other. --- With the exception of those who turn extremist when confronted by a Shaverite. Shaverites exist in two very interesting varieties: those who believe in Shaverism; and those who like to read his stuff. The latter type is relatively harmless, except when repeatedly pressed for explanations as to precisely why they read Shaver stories. Unfortunately, the other type is harmless only when bound or talking to another of their brand. There is only a slight tension when a "normal" Shaverite converses with a loyalist stf fan. But when an extremist Shaverite meets an extremist fan, there is likely to be wailing, molar-gnashing, and bloodshed. So it's better to avoid 'em both when they get together!

There is only one possible source self-expression and recreation for such people. Fandom is the only answer. One way for a fan to further his hobby is to enlist in the nearest fan club. At one time I did not know the difference between a fan club and a Neanderthal mace. In truth, I actually thought a baseball bat and a fan club were the same. For reasons possibly obvious!

There is both pleasure and profit to be found under the roof of a fan club. I like fandom no end but unfortunately so far for me it has been naught but monetary loss. However, the friends I have acquired are worth something; the little money I've spent, nothing. I love fandom because of the fine people that are in it.

Fandom is very likely to cost considerable more in the future; but I consider it money well spent. One can lose dough at race tracks or poker games. You can toss money away in joints guzzling beer; it can be spent in innumerable stores. But I can imagine no manner in which it can be more cheerfully lost than by indulging in fandom.

But the gain in fandom, the profit is not to be measured in terms of money, except by perhaps thinking how much you've saved. Some people make a sport of being well-dressed to the extent that their wardrobes are more expensive than fandom could ever be. Eating also sometimes enters into that category.



## THE GOLDFISH BOWL:

Fandom saves many of us from other vices besides the ones that have an immediate effect on our purses. This is especially true of the younger fans. Most heartily I recommend fandom as a deterrent of delinquents. Citizens who graduate from fan clubs, or those who come up through fandom, are more likely to be fitted for a future where an open mind and ability to understand, along with an ingrained thirst for knowledge, will be a distinct advantage. Reading and enjoying several types of science-fiction will certainly do wonders for keeping one broad-minded; a closed mind gains little knowledge of any kind.

In conclusion, I say that I think that fandom IS the best thing since the wheel! Not only for what it is now, but for what it can be in the future, and for what it will be in the future. It is growing by leaps and bounds. There is no limit to how far fandom can go! And I love it, every part of it!

--- JOHN E. BLYER

#####

### THERE ARE NONE

Time is a curse, a binding cord,  
A distasteful thing, or else adored;  
To lock out the past, 'tis a blessing,  
Conveying tomorrows, 'tis sometimes distressing.

Or the past is all, and needed to those  
Who have lost their faith in the seeds time sows.  
Or the future is life, and always adventure:  
So to half she's all, the rest ignore her.

For one half is alone, with their memories drawn,  
A half is impatient, awaiting the dawn.  
The second part reverses the scenes,  
Thus nothing is gained when time intervenes.

--- Con Pederson

#####

We've got a few lines here that might as well be used for what ordinarily (usually we can spell it right) would come under EDITORIAL COMMENTS. Question: how long can this small publisher bonzanna last? We're all for it, but as Joe Kennedy pointed out, it would cost at least two hundred dollars to purchase all the books published by these firms. The buying audience for this type book is limited; it will probably decrease more, due to flooding of the market, --- but it's swell while it lasts, isn't it? --- Tom...



## TOP O' THE CROP

by LESLIE HUDSON

Once upon a time (consider November, 1942 as a specific example of that time) Amazing Stories was generally considered one of the leaders in its field. It had, at that time, a line-up of authors who were all nearly well-known and well-liked. One such author was Eando Binder. Quite often, this magazine and this author presented a story which might be termed a classic. As an example, let's look at "After An Age".

Stuart Knight awakes in the 50th century after 3000 years of suspended animation. Instead of the advanced civilization he expected to find, the world has reverted to another Stone Age, brought about by terrible wars and a second Dark Age. Only in Narticia (Antarctica) is there any remnant of civilization, and this is decadent.

In 25 years, Knight introduces science to this world, and reinvents many of the machines used in the 20th century. He forms a government along democratic lines and himself becomes first Lord of Earth. During this time he also marries and becomes the father of two sons.

When Knight's sons, Perry and Stuart, are in their early twenties, two other sleepers awaken in Europe. These are Lar Tane and his daughter, Elda, from the war-torn 30th century. Knight puts Tane in charge of rebuilding Europe, but the latter has aspirations to ruling the world. He gives the people metal weapons, military training, and generally ignores Knight's previous methods. He refuses to drop these activities when Knight orders him to do so, and the latter is forced to declare war upon him. His oldest son, Stuart, because of Elda, joins Tane. The shock of events is too much for Knight's heart. He dies, leaving his position to Perry.

Reinventing guns, machine guns, tanks, and other instruments of war, Tane soon defeats Perry in Europe and controls that continent. He then begins his assault upon the United States.

Perry has had several encounters with Elda and has realized and admitted his love for her. He is thus fighting two battles at once. Elda goads him and mocks him to fight for her, while not realizing her true feeling for him.

Both sides try to obtain the aid of Narticia, who professes to be neutral. When she learns, however, that Lar Tane plans to force the country to join him, her government agrees to help Perry. The weapons with the Narticians have been manufacturing in secret and a renovated submarine from one of their museums turns the tide of the war in Perry's favor and Lar Tane is soon defeated.



This is, of course, only a rough sketch of the novel. You have to read it in its entirety to get Binder's fine writing, well-drawn characterization, and splendid description, particularly of the battles.

Some fans will probably disagree with me concerning this story. At the time it appeared, opinion appeared to be sharply divided on it. Some readers compared it to "Darkness and Dawn", called it Binder's best, and praised it to the skies; others named it his worst story, said it was childish, and used similiar epithets. In my humble opinion, the first named group was the closest to the truth, that the tale was deserving of the praise they gave it. In spite of poor writing in a couple of spots, I'd unhesitatingly give the story the name, "classic".

The End.

#####

#### ANACREON

In Anacreon's greenest valleys  
Once this tall, this regal palace  
Reared aloft its proud and stately head.

O'er its ramparts, gleaming, pallid,  
Platinum banners here held sway  
Famed in song, yea, famed in ballad,  
This, the home of the Tuatha De.

Never, never did any angel  
Pinion spread o'er scene so fair;  
Estatic music of their making  
Wafted through sweet-scented air.

Galatic Empire's capitol world  
Pleasure-sphere of imperial decree  
Platinum banners in peace unfurled  
Here from sea to azure sea.

But hell-spawned things in robes of sorrow  
Assailed this Empire's high estate  
Caring naught for any morrow  
Seeking but to desolate.

And in Anacreon's desert valleys  
Lie crumbled ruins of stately palace;  
Eloquently mute, they say ---  
"This is the world of the dead."

--- A. Y. Gordon



## THE GRAB BAG:

consisting of letters and such....

((Many heartfelt thanks for your letters; we're sorry we haven't room to print 'em all. As we told Wrai Ballard, it's the notes we get from you that make this fanzine worthwhile, both for us and the contributors; otherwise it would be time wasted. So let's hear from you! --- Tom))

Our lead-off man this time is R. FLAVIE CARSON, who writes from Route 1, Rich Hill, Missouri: I have read the first issue of SPEARHEAD with great interest and believe that you have the beginnings of a fine fan mag. Especially noteworthy from the standpoint of content is Herman King's article on "parapsychology". I'd like to see a series on that subject, authored by King and run in your mag. Maybe King can do it for you?

The "prose expression of a poetic mood", viz.: "Fantasia: 'Dream City'" by John Troy Sternwood goes O K with me. I think one such "expression" per issue of SPEARHEAD would not be amiss, but only if the said "expressions" maintain as high a quality of excellence as Sternwood's "Dream City".

Next comes some comment from AUGUST DERLETH, famous novelist and "presiding genius" at Arkham House: Thank you for ... SPEARHEAD. I got it this afternoon and sat down to read the "Dream City" piece at once. I am sorry, but it did not particularly impress me; unity of mood is not there; the writer lacks experience sufficient to enable him to select his words with adequate care to assure that unity of mood.

Now we have W. C. Butts, emanating from 2058 E. Atlantic St., Phila. 34. Pa.; Bill was represented in our last issue with a rightfully indignant piece against a certain editor: Received your first issue and it's a swell start for a new zine. Keep up the good work, but don't you think you're letting yourself in for a lot of hard work by putting out the zine every three weeks? I think it will be kind of tough to get enough material. This is only a suggestion, why not once a month? But I hope you can do it as I will enjoy getting SPEARHEAD as often as that. ((Well, Bill, we've finally decided to come out irregularly frequent. Or maybe frequently irregular!))

I hope RAP comes through on that question on the Canada deal. If you have the Amazing issue of May 1948 you can look up the article I wrote about. It's in the Observatory by RAP.

Follows now PAUL D. COX, editor of OTHER WORLDS, who resides at 3401 6th Ave., Columbus, Georgia: SPEARHEAD seems like a competently done job and the hectoing is really good. I've experimented with a hecto and I kneel to anyone who can make one work.

You've done a rather good job for a first issue. Everything in SpH is worth reading altho hardly any is really exceptional. Don Wilson's guest editorial is probably the best thing in the mag. Don said it when he said that everyone should make at least some effort to help fan editors with material. Don is probably a fine fellow even tho we disagree on at least one subject. (Planet's Vizi)

W. C. Butts has a point when he complains about this editor not responding to correspondence. We cannot, however, expect him to take up much



time with this plan to send Camfans mags. After the prelimineries are settled the fans should take on all the job.

We now turn you over to LESLIE HUDSON, from Roseland, Virginia, who offers the following interesting comments: SPEARHEAD received. Am delighted with it. You did an excellent job for a first issue.

For some reason I liked the cover. That center picture with the other objects around it was, I thought, very effective.

Herman King reports on a highly interesting subject. Many science-fiction stories have been slanted along this line and it is gratifying to know that it is being investigated and that positive results are being obtained. Perhaps you can persuade Herman to tell us more on this subject.

Bill Butts is to be commended on his stand concerning "that editor." I read the column he mentions myself.

I enjoyed your "Miscellania" feature. You cover the mag situation pretty thoroughly and correctly. I am almost ready to agree with you as far as ASF is concerned. As for fantastic music --- though I'm a music lover, I've never thought much about any music being particularly fantastic. Maybe my mind just doesn't run that way. Which brings me to the conclusion that the fantasticity of a piece of music depends on the person who is listening to it. I'd like to see a list of music written as fantasy music.

Bill Track's book review was intriguing enough to cause me want to want to read the book. Long is one of my favorites anyway. Nice job on this review.

What would a fanzine be without Don Wilson? And here he is right on hand! I'm not complaining, quite the contrary. Anything Don writes is always all right. And he's right on the ball this time too. Some of us guys should be shot. I have promised several people stuff for fanzines and never come thru. Don's article gives the editor's view of this.

Next on the agenda is a brief commentary by HERMAN KING from Wolf Creek, West Virginia: First, I'd like to say your policy is fine. It is much better to appear frequently in small format than to come out only occasionally with a larger content. Keep this policy up!

I agree with Bill Track anent F. B. Long. I am one of those who admire Long. He has a style different from any other writer ... and good! "The World of Wulkins" was a delightful blend of fantasy and stf. Glad to see Leslie has viewpoints on this story similiar to my own.

The poetic prose piece was beautifully done. More, please.

From Blanchard, North Dakota comes WRAI BALLARD, who tears into us with vim and vigor: My copy was clean, very nicely done, one of the best and easiest to read fanzines I've seen. Clean is the best way I can describe it, nice.

I want to hear the other side of the Bill Butts-editor fued; hope you hear from the ed. ((We didn't. Ray Palmer is given to inscrutable silences, and appears to be square in the middle of one now.))

Miscellania I liked, probably because I agreed with you on every issue, maybe I go farther, I'll put ASTOUNDING fairly far down on my list of pro-zines.

More book reviews, I can never get too many.

No comment on Leslie Hudson's bit, I'm prejudiced in his favor, I agreed with him. I agree with you on his being a nice guy. Looks like I'm agreeing with everyone, or everyone is agreeing with me.

The "Dream City" left me with a feeling of frustration, as nearly all of this type writing does. I read it religiously in order to give it a fair review, and it meant absolutely nothing to me, sorry.



Don Wilson's editorial hit me in a sore spot, I'll send you something in the near future, being careful to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your tactful refusal. ((An excellent idea, Wrai, I wish you and everyone else that reads this would submit something. And don't worry about "tactful refusal"! We're always glad to get material.))

For the following we're lifting a paragraph from a personal letter from JACK STERNWOOD: Incidentally, I was glad to see those reviews of Frank Long's work; he has long been one of my favorite authors, why, Tom, I even liked Johnny Carstairs, and, brother, that's something to admit! Especially did I enjoy Hudson's lucid analysis of "The World of Wulkins".

From 703 - 2I st. Street, Altoona, Penna, JOHNNY BLYLER strides boldly forward and proclaims in ringing tones: The whole mag is on nice paper. A neat uncluttered contents page, this I appreciate, and so will other fans I think.

We agree that Herman King will some day not be with us amateurs. He is one of several fans I'm proud to say is a friend of mine. He's an up and coming writer; let's have a lot of him.

If what W. C. Butts says about no response from that editor concerning the Canadian magazine deal is true, he's got a perfect right to be sore. Bill is a good scout and he worked hard to get the thing going. I know Bill was doing it for the unfortunate fans of that country, who cannot buy American mags, but if the editor had any sense he'd see the increased circulations possible, if the mag ban is lifted.

Bill Track sells the author and my old friend Leslie Hudson sells the story. Both of these articles were very interesting. Leslie told me he couldn't write, but he certainly did a fine job here. So did Mr. Track.

Sternwood need not have been ashamed to put his name (his real one) to "Dream City". Nosir, it was swell. I don't like to see pro authors in fanzines, since such material is generally hack. But this was far from it.

Don Wilson had a fine guest editorial, nicely written and informative. If it is possible a guest ed every time would be fine. ((If possible, we'll have one, each time.))

ART RAPP, residing at 2I20 Bay Street, Saginaw, Michigan, takes time off from publishing his excellent and informal SPACEWARP to tee off on our efforts: Wot's this? Another new fanzine? Gad! Hey, for a first issue you all haint done half bad, nohow. Undoubtedly you want comments. Therefore, I'll thumb my way through the zine, letting the quips fall where they may.

Editorial... like your attitude toward fanzine-pubbing. However, isn't three weeks pretty often? As soon as I finish one ish of SPACEWARP I've gotta start on the next; or do you gentlemen get more work done at one time without being sidetracked than I do? Putting it out free will run into a lotta dough in a short time....

Miscellania .... Magazine Digest for July 1947 carried an article on sfandom -- also, Campbell has a piece in the Atlantic for -- I think -- March '48. He says, in part, that stf is working out the details of space travel, such as provision of oxygenated air, concentrated food, etc., leaving the scientists free to concentrate on the more technical problems. It would seem Street & Smith are the only stfpublishers who go after publicity in other media, since all these articles in other mags give one the impression that ASF is the only stfzine worthy of the name. Campbell, incidentally, looks on organized fandom with a bleary eye. Ask Redd Boggs.



Book review --- well-written critique.

Top O' The Crop -- also well-written, but it seems to me that all the fen will already be familiar with the story. How about concentrating on some older classic, Les?

Don Wilson -- A-men! It's getting so bad, now, that half the space in fanzines is taken up with material like this editorial -- pleas for copy. And if a guy feels his zine with the same writers ish after ish, he's accused of favoritism, and not wanting to give new fans a break. I think the trouble is that a new fan reads something by Wilson or Ackerman or one of the really good fan writers like them, and then thinks that his own efforts would be so lousy in comparison, that he hesitates to send them to a fan editor. Sure, there are good writers in fandom -- but they weren't always that good -- they got that way by writing crud for the fanzines, and reading the reader reaction in succeeding issues of the fanzines.

As for your Virginia stfclub, it seems to me that you gave up too easily. We have almost two dozen members now in the Michigan Science Fantasy Society -- from nine differnt cities all over the state. We not only get together for statewide meetings -- we do it every two weeks! This is the atomic age --- if you haven't got a P-38 to travel across the state in, borrow your old man's car, or see your nearest Greyhound Bus Line ticket agent. You can visit a stfcon a hundred miles away for about what it would cost to take your girl out to dinner and a movie and a dance, which is probably what you'd be doing if you stayed home, anyway.

All in all, SPEARHEAD is a very readable zine, and promises to be even more so in the future. I'll be looking forward to it.....

oOo

((And that, folks, finishes up the letter column. We're sorry, again, that not all the letters could be included. Next time we'll try to even it up. Apologies are due the several of you whom I owe letters; I'll answer you all as soon as I get time. In closing, let me urge as many of you as possible to write! Otherwise how can we make SPEARHEAD what you want? ))

#####

#### EDITORIAL COMMENTARY ---

As is obvious, this also starts a new department. The regular editorial will devote itself to serious discussion of the many facets of science-fantasy; but back here we can be ourselves and talk to our friends.

Naturally, we've tried to follow your wishes as much as possible. Most of the authors you liked last time are back. As the Grab Bag showed, opinion was divided on John Troy Sternwood's piece, so, although we shall carry that type from time to time, we shall not do it too often.

Unfortunately, there are a number of things to apologise for this trip around. Firstly, the mimeography is none too good, for which we're sorry; it was an unfamiliar technique, and next issue we have high hopes of it being better.



EDITORIAL COMMENTARY: continued from preceding page....

One of our most popular features is also not with us. However, GUEST EDITORIAL will be back. Outside of that, there doesn't seem to be anything for us to say about the contents, except that we liked 'em.

Here's bad news, though. It's become necessary to charge for SPEARHEAD. We hate to do it, but to continue we must. So we're going to ask a dime an issue, and, to give you your money's worth, we'll expand the format some. We're asking, if you like to keep getting the mag, that you send 25¢ for three issues, 50¢ for six. No more than that, please.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes to you people that sent material. If it's not in this issue, and some of it isn't, it'll be in one of those that follow. As you've noticed, there is some poetry in this number, all of it pretty good in our uncultured opinion.

So now we'll repeat our plea for material. We gotta have it, that's all; we can come out pretty darn often if we just have something to print. As we said before, anything goes, so long as it pertains to our "hobby" and is interesting. Frankly, we'd like to get a contribution from every one of you, and towards that end we promise to handle with tender care anything you send our way. If we can't use it, you'll get it back, and we'll tell you why. I'd like to get some poetry, fairly serious poetry, that is, and articles of all types. So the next time you finish something, we'd appreciate your letting us have a chance at it!

It appears that we're repeating ourselves considerably, but there's one more thing that should be reiterated. One of our big purposes in publishing SPEARHEAD is to swap with the other fanzines. If you fanzine editors feel that you cannot trade, please drop us a line and we'll send you a sub.

Oh yeah: contributors naturally get a free copy.

Well, I guess that this is enough; looks as though we've mentioned everything important that occurs to us right now. I hope sincerely that you enjoy this issue of SPEARHEAD, and will take the time to write and tell us about it. From our end it's a lot of fun, and we only wish that you can get as much out of it.

Until next time then, a long-winded "so long"!

--- Tom....



Addenda to Editorial Commentary:

Having read over what I've just written, I see where I might be misunderstood; when I said contributors would get a free copy, I of course meant contributors of material. Furthermore, I've decided that one copy is not enough. For a contribution you get either a three, six, or twelve issue subscription, depending on the length of your piece. Does that sound fair? Then submit something, will you!

--- Tom ...

#####  
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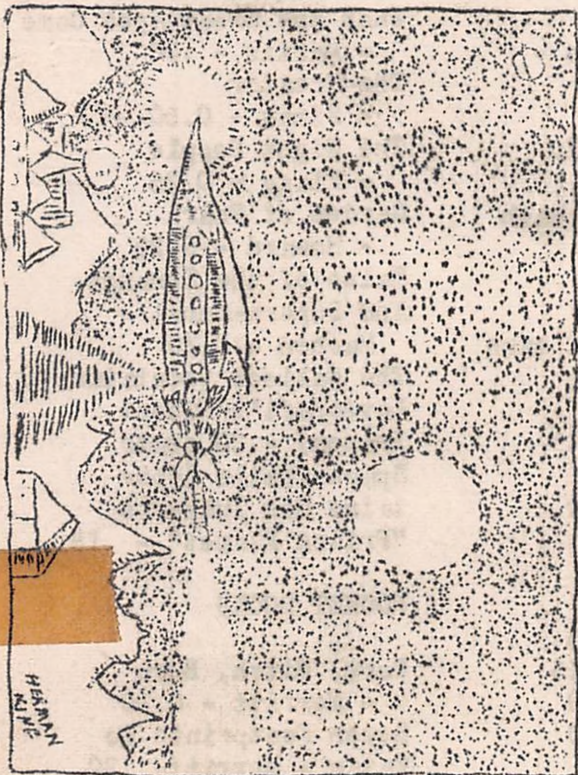
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