

Gerald W. Meader, courtesy, Leslie  
A. Croucher.

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# AD ASTRA.

For September, 1939  
Volume 1; Number 3

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AD ASTRA, 3156 Cambridge Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, is a bimonthly publication. Ten cents per copy and twenty-five cents for a three issue subscription. For advertising rates see back cover. Advertisements exchanged on an equal basis with other fan magazines. AD ASTRA is an amateur publication and is in no way connected professionally. Literary contributions welcomed.....

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# The "Good Old Days"

BY LESLIE A. CROUTCH

HOW LONG, dear readers of AD ASTRA, have you opened an S-F mag and in the readers' department saw letters with phrases like these: "Remember the good old days when so and so wrote whosis and whatsis on the whirligig?"; and "The stuff you print today ain't as good as what you gave us in the good old days of '28, '29, and '30"; and "Remember such and such and this and that? Why can't we have stories like those today?" So it goes, on and on like a lover's good-bye over the telephone!

Now, I'll admit I've been guilty of those things, and I bet you have too; quite likely even our worthwhile editor has written such inane dribblings by the light of the mid-nite oil. But did you ever stop to think just what it meant, actually? I didn't, until I got to exchanging letters with other "insane" S-Fers -- no insult meant; I'd sooner be insane than sane in this sense of the word! I'll admit such yarns as Smitty's "Skylark of Space" and its sequel "Skylark Three" were good, better than anything he's doing today! (That's my opinion, now, so don't get the gun out yet). Jack Williamson's "Green Girl", Hamilton's "Comet Doom"; all those were topnotchers and still hold a shining spot in my memory. You probably have certain favorites also.

But -- I was young then; S-F was young, and so were you, in S-F reading years, that is. S-F was comparatively new to the most

of us. It was something different that took our fancy straight off. We were easy to please, and the ones that were still green -- me too -- didn't know much science, and weren't much of a judge of writing values. Since then, we've read hundreds of stories, we have read plenty of science articles, we've been babied to the point where we are getting so we have to have a story just so before it will please us! Knowing more science and more about writing values, we criticize a story more harshly, and it takes a darned good story not to fall by the wayside then. Then, too, likes change. What we like today we won't tomorrow and the other way about. Perhaps we reread a good story so much we grew tired of it, and so an old one that lives in memory alone seems so much better. Then, first impressions are almost always the nicest, and S-F was young in those days -- impressions were first ones -- we had only one magazine a month for a long time to read, and so we couldn't get tired of it as we do now.

But -- and I think this is the real reason why stories today are judged as lacking: it's the editor's faults! Too many of them trim stories. How many times have you read a story to find that it appeared to cut right off before its natural end? You blame the author, but -- I found that Editor Tremaine of Astounding cut "Colossus" from a three part serial to a complete story



because he didn't have room to run it otherwise! Can you imagine what a lot was missing from that yarn? When an author sends his story in, it is usually already pared down to a minimum. Wandrei is a swell writer in my opinion. Think, then, what a lot must have been deleted to make a complete from that story! Is it any wonder that we yell: "Where's the stories of the good old days?"

Festus Pragnell sent his "Green Man of Graypec" to Hugo Gernsback for Wonder Stories. I read it; you read it. We acclaimed it a wonder. But what did Gernsback do? Paid Pragnell exactly nothing at all. IN OTHER WORDS, HE STOLE HIS STORY! Now, if you were an author and that happened, would you send another story to that man? No! How many times may that have happened that we don't know about? So, Pragnell now sells his stuff in England except for a rare tit-bit that seeps over to this side. "Where's the writer of the good old days gone to?" May not they have been scared away by such high-way robber tactics?

In a recent issue of England's fan magazine edited by a very good friend of mine, J. Michael Rosenblum and the "Futurian", Fearn had a short article in which he accuses S-F editors of keeping S-F in the doldrums! He accuses them of wanting to stick to the old, worn out, worked to death themes that have been common since Hector was a pup. He declares, whenever a writer sends in a story with a startling new plot, they are afraid to touch it! If this is true, and I have no reason to doubt Fearn's word, then no wonder yesterday's stories are better than today's!

Another thing that I think is ruining S-F, and that's the curse of the short story! The world

has gone short story crazy. Now we see a magazine with seven to nine complete stories in it, where in the past we saw a long novel that was really a novel and not a novel in shorts, and two or three shorts -- maybe a serial. Now, you tell me, how in the devil can an author develop a really worthwhile theme in 5000 words or so? He can't do it. In the past, how many of the short stories are remembered as good ones? Think back --- think of "The Green Girl" by Williamson; "Skylark Three" and "Skylark of Space" by Smith; "Ambassador to Mars" by Vincent, I think it was; and many other top-notchers. Were they short stories? No! Serials or long novels complete in one issue. Today, what stories are counted as the best? "Who Goes There" by Stuart, "Legion of Time" and the Legion stories by Williamson, "Survival" by Burks; all are serials or long novels, none are short stories. From this, then, wouldn't you think the editors would take a tip and run longer and longer stories in which the writer really had a chance to develop and work out his, or her, idea?

Illustrations, I think, have a reflection on a story. They have with me, anyway. A poor set of pictures will spoil an otherwise good yarn. In the past we had such artists as Wesso, Dold, Paul. Dold is fairly new, yet a damned sight better than a few other stuff Campbell is digging up somewhere or other! How many of us veteran readers applauded Wesso and Paul and stick by them? Sure, they had their faults, but who hasn't? Wesso knew people and machinery. Paul was all the same with people, that is, they looked alike as peas in a can, but he knew how to draw and paint those alien scenes, machinery, spaceships, etc. Campbell doesn't like Paul.



I know that. He told me in a letter that Paul's people were too standardized. He wanted more human looking people. Get that -- human. Yet, he went out on a rainy night to some deserted graveyard and dug up Frew and Wirt! The former is pretty bum but not nearly as bad as Wirt. So Campbell wants human looking people, eh? More like monkeys, if you ask me. And Frew? Well -----

So, it all sums up to what? Bum pictures. Stories too short. More critical readers. Editors accused of being too conservative. On the latter, I offer this challenge: Let Campbell, who prides himself on having the best S-F magazine -- and he has, too! -- write to Fearn, or E.E. Smith, or Jack Williamson, or some other good writer and say: "I'm going to offer you the job of turning out something that's never been done before. I don't care how wild it will be or sound. Just write whatever you want, and I'll promise I'll publish it, without cutting or trimming, or making it shorter, even if it takes ten parts" and then see what happens.

What I think? Yes, S-F today is not as good as it was yesterday, and if I ever read a story that is as good as those in '28, '29, '30, I'll be the first to admit it, and gladly.

The End

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#### COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES

"Fantasies That Became Fact" in three parts, by J. Harvey Haggard.

"Campbell Told Me..." by Leslie A. Croutch.

Interviews with Robert Moore Williams, Don Wilcox, M. Brundage, and other interesting S-F personalities.

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 \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* VIVA LA FAN MAGS! \* \*  
 \* \* by \* \*  
 \* \* Charles D. Hornig \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \*\*\*\*\* \*  
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As an ardent science fiction fan myself, I hold a deep affection for everything science-fictional -- and especially the fan mags, because I started off as a fan mag editor, and I'm familiar with the trials and tribulations of such an undertaking. I know of the sacrifices, the hopes and disappointments, the pride and satisfaction, the feeling of accomplishment that goes with editing a fan publication.

In 1932, a science fiction dealer from whom I had been making purchases for my collection, sent me the front page of the April-May 1932 issue of "The Time Traveller". Up to this time, I had never conceived of a science fiction fan mag, and I became very enthusiastic over the idea of subscribing. I went up to Julie Schwartz's home in the Bronx and bought all the back numbers of "The Time Traveller" available (which was only a couple) and immediately subscribed. When TTT merged with "Science Fiction Digest" late in 1932, I had become a very avid follower of science fiction's only fan mag, and even went so far as to make a few "literary" contributions. There have been times since when I have wished that they had all been rejected -- such as one evening last summer, out in Los Angeles, when Fred Shroyer forced me to sit in his room as he gloatingly read one of my SFD poems to me -- "The Window Of Truth"!

Early in 1933, I thought it



would be a swell idea to publish a small reprint magazine, but a short study of copyright entanglements forced me to resign this idea. Then I decided to issue a small-sized, neatly printed fan mag -- which, in the summer of 1933, materialized as "The Fantasy Fan".

I only had 250 copies of the first issue printed, but I expected to sell them all. Needless to say, I was disappointed. It wasn't long before I realized that it is great fun to publish a fan mag; but far from profitable. In fact, I began to learn that it was decidedly a losing proposition, financially.

The first issue of "The Fantasy Fan", dated September, 1933, was sent free to the publishers of professional science fiction magazines. Whereupon Opportunity came to my door and knocked --- in the form of Hugo Gernsback. Just at that time, he had dispensed with David Lasser, his former editor of "Wonder Stories", and needed a new man for the job. The arrival of "The Fantasy Fan" gave him the idea that perhaps a real fan could do a real job of editing a real science fiction magazine.

So I became a professional science fiction editor. I was only seventeen at the time, and had to complete my high school education in night school. This took me three years to finish a year and a half of day school.

But I want to stick to fan mags in this article, so no more digressions. Had it not been for my appointment as Managing Editor of "Wonder Stories", "The Fantasy Fan" would never have gone beyond the first issue for financial reasons. As it was, I continued to publish it monthly for eighteen consecutive months -- doing a swan dance in February, 1935. TFF never made a profit, but I know

that it filled a niche in the fantasy field. You may have noticed that many of the stories I used in its pages have since been reprinted in "Weird Tales". After the first issue, "The Fantasy Fan" used fiction of the weird type only, although I continued to use science fiction articles, departments, and poetry. Several issues had colored paper covers.

Anyway, in those days there were but two science fiction fan mags -- my own and "Science Fiction Digest", which later became the famous "Fantasy Magazine". Mort Weisinger, former fan mag editor of the "early epoch" is now the popular editor of the Thrilling Group fantasy mags, and Julius Schwartz, another of the old fan editor group, is now science fiction's leading and only exclusive science fiction agent for authors.

During the past two or three years, there has been a deluge of fan mags -- mostly mimeographed -- just as there is now such a deluge of professional science fiction books. It seems that every science fiction fan wants to issue his own publication, and the result is a horrible mess of hastily-prepared mimeographed pamphlets cluttering the market. But there are a number of really fine fan mags today -- "AD ASTRA" being among the top leaders.

I still get as big a kick out of reading fan mags as I did the first day I caught a glimpse of "The Time Traveler", way back in '32 -- so I say, more power to fan mag editors!

The End

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The 1940 SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION will be held in CHICAGO! AD ASTRA, and the MIDDLE-WEST fans enlist YOUR SUPPORT!



# An INTERVIEW

## WITH Dick Calkins

As I walked into the general offices of the National Newspaper Syndicate, I was greeted by the smile of a secretary. I referred her to my call earlier in the day for an appointment with Dick Calkins. After a few minutes wait, I was escorted to his door where I saw Mr. Calkins at work over his drawing board preparing "Buck Rogers". When the greeting formalities were over, I related to Calkins the fact of my having met him twice previously, once at the Buck Rogers concession during the Century of Progress in 1934, and again at a personal appearance in one of Chicago's large department stores. Then, I explained the reason for my visit.

"You see," I said, displaying a copy of the 2nd issue of AD ASTRA, "this is a copy of our publication, for the readers and fans of science fiction. Each issue we have a feature interview with some S-F celebrity, and you being such a mysterious character, I thought I might present you to our readers for the next issue."

"Well, I'm flattered," he said smiling. Then indicating two chairs in the corner, "Pull up a chair and make yourself comfortable." He turned toward a large filing case and unearthed a pile of newspaper clippings, and manuscript paper. "Here are a number of articles about myself and the evolution of Buck Rogers. You might look these over, and

\* BY RICHARD I. MEYER \*

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 what you can't find out there, ask me. There's plenty of material in this stack."

I sat down at another desk and looked over the material before me. In the meantime, Mark Reinsberg, who had accompanied me, kept up a running conversation on the various alternatives Calkins had, insofar as the story angle of Buck Rogers was concerned, when the current Earth-Mars war was over. Later, Mark suggested killing Killer Kane for good in a final fight with Buck. I listened.....

Calkins was speaking. "I think I will get rid of Kane --- yep, I'm goin' to kill that guy."

"That's the spirit," Mark interjected, "Of course it will be in a hand to hand fight. Probably Kane will trick Rogers and get the upper hand, taking it out on poor Buck. Then by misstep he'll fall out of the 200th story!"

"Sure," said Calkins, "Then, for humor, I can show Kane bouncing off the ledges on his way down."

Finding a wealth of information before me, I launched into the interesting details of Dick Calkin's life:

Dick Calkin's was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he



attended both elementary and high school. When but an eighth grade pupil, he was known to have a cartoon of his own which might be located in the pages of his notebook. Little Dick Calkins had some imagination, his fellow playmates said, for this cartoon concerned the adventures of an Ace Detective -- of the future, Karl Ketchemquick. The strip was entitled, "Thirtieth Century Mystery".

I interrupted the two and said to Calkins: "So you had a science fiction strip back in your childhood days?"

"Yes," he replied, "I really thought a lot of my hero, Karl Ketchemquick. Why, he could do almost anything. He might fly down from the roof of some building and surprise a criminal. One thing that he consistently had in his person was a cigar in his mouth. I'd no longer think of picturing him without that cigar than to have Kane give himself up to the authorities."

Calkins paused, and turning on his swivel chair opened an adjoining drawer. From a stack of papers he rescued a small and time-worn notebook containing the original "Thirtieth Century Mystery". Amid eighth grade math problems, pencilled sketches sketches of Karl and his flying belt flitted from tall buildings in hot pursuit of erstwhile thirtieth century criminals. And perhaps in that childhood epic there was a faint inkling of the creative mind later to sweep the country with his sensational strip "Buck Rogers".

I continued my questioning: "What did you do when you graduated from high school?" I queried.

He began: "I had always wanted to be a cartoonist, so I went to Detroit where I thought I might get a chance at learning the work.

Well, I couldn't find work in cartooning. I took what I could get, and before a year of my time spent in Detroit was over, I had held over thirteen jobs ranging from a plumber's helper to --- oh what have you."

"Well, nobody could say that you didn't have your share of life in the raw," I commented, "but how did you get into cartooning?"

"That would be a story in itself, and of considerable length, too. But I can make a brief of it...I went to Chicago. I had been able to gather some money of my own through my various episodes in Detroit. I joined the Art Institute and when I completed my course there, I went back to Detroit where I came in contact with Edgar Guest, who was connected with the Detroit Free Press. It was through him that I got a job with that newspaper. After two years I came back to Chicago under contract with Hearst. While I was still employed by Hearst, the war came and I entered into the Air Service until Armistice, when I joined with the National Newspaper Syndicate."

"How long was it until you began work on Buck Rogers?"

"Many years. You see, I had been doing plain cartoon work for some time. Then I tried to create a comic strip about the Stone Age. Dille, the Syndicate president said why not do one about the future? So Buck Rogers."

"In what year did you start with the idea?"

"This was in 1929. You might think it strange but Buck Rogers began as a flop. Dille displayed the work on the cartoon to many newspaper editors. They refused to put it in their newspapers. It was too bloodthirsty and impro-



bable, they said. We changed it, although it meant destroying over \$2,000 worth of work. Then it sold."

"In about how many papers is Buck Rogers being featured?" I asked.

"I lost the exact count years back, when we sold regularly to over 150 clients. Now, besides being in American papers, Buck is featured in many newspapers throughout Europe, Australia, and South America, in a startling variety of languages."

"Just how far in advance do you have the strips for Buck Rogers prepared?"

He answered: "Well, I try to keep about eight weeks in advance, and now that you mention it -- I'll never be able to boast that fact if I don't get back to my work."

"Guess you're right," I said, "but... wait a minute... what's this manuscript here on the desk?"

"That's a copy of the radio script from Eddie Guest's 'It Can Be Done' program. He had me as his guest June 7th. They told of an idea of mine, the Buck Rogers Solar Scouts, and dramatized the work I hope to accomplish with the youngsters involved, followed by a Buck Rogers radio sketch, and finally ending with my introduction to the radio audience."

"I'm sorry I didn't listen in; I generally make a habit of tuning in on that particular program. But now say, we'd better be going before we detain you any longer from your cartooning. I know that besides Buck Rogers you also write Skyroads, the aviation strip"... We shook hands, said goodbye, and thanked Dick Calkins for his time and interest.

The End

(Mr. Meyer has included a complete list of American publications of Buck Rogers, for the benefit of those fans who might be interested.)

	NAME	DATE
Big-Little Books --	Buck Rogers in the 25th Century	1933
Whitman Pub. Co.,	Buck Rogers in the City Below the Sea	1934
Racine, Wis., at	Buck Rogers on the Moon of Saturn	1934
10 ¢ apiece.....	Buck Rogers in the City of Floating Globes	1935
(On the retail	Buck Rogers and the Depth Men of Jupiter	1935
market.)	Buck Rogers and the Doom Comet	1935
	Buck Rogers and the Planetoid Plot	1936
	Buck Rogers -- War With the Planet Venus	1938

Buck Rogers on the Planet Eros 1934  
(Big-Big Book, by Whitman Publishing Co. 29¢ per copy.)

A Dangerous Mission 1934  
(Pop-up Buck Rogers, by Blue Ribbon Press; 10¢ per copy)  
Strange Adventures in the Spider Ship 1935  
(Also "pop-up", featuring Buddy and Alura. Pleasure Books, Inc., Chicago, Illinois. 25¢ per copy.)

(The above list is, to Mr. Meyer's best knowledge, complete, but he will be glad to supplement it in case any other retail publications are noted. He has maintained a complete collection of Buck Rogers items, and would be pleased to answer any questions regarding the strip or related subjects. Write in care of AD ASTRA. Editor.)



Special to AD ASTRA

Re-berth, as told on a train  
by Thos Calvert Mc  
Ackerman to Weaver  
Wright

Personly, I never picture personalities. Either I don't have the ability or it doesn't make any difference to me, I don't know. I only mean, to me my correspondents r pieces of paper & styls of handwriting (or a color of typewriter ribbon with varying degree of accuracy in use of the machine), certain salutations, characteristic comments, ktp (that's Esperanto for "etc.")

BUT THE CONVENTION HAS

CHANGED ALL THAT!

The Convention! Legion will b the letters exchanged about the WSFC, myriad the mss recalling the occasion. I'll contribute my share of both. This is the first of the latter ream, written on request & a couple hr deadline -- so may b more incoherent than my usual incomprehensible, reprehensible, non-sensible...bull.

B that as

it may.

What I wish to say is: The Convention for me kild a lot of old correspondents. Gone is Dick Wilson of the pre-Convention period; dead, "Doc" Lowndes, Dancy, Sullivan, Racio... But reborn, in their place, a brand new world of stfans. As I say, I never made any attempt to picture these people & so had no idea what to expect; & yet, as I met each for the first time, I was either surprised (in some instances startled!) or satisfyd with some aparently subconscious conception of their appearance. Robt W Lowndes was, I believe, the biggest surprise to me; tho maybe Walter Sullivan shares that distinction. Understand me explicitly, I mean nothing derogatory when I say any fan amazed me; I cannot tell U exactly what I do mean, but merely I must've expected someone fat when he turnd out lean, tall when he was small &c. O yes, Swisher! RDSwisher distinctly astonisht me. Perri & Krupa come into this category too. On the other hand, Ross Rocklynne fits his name fine, to my mind: suggestive of a rangy, red-headed rocketeer. Kyle OK; Madle, de Camp, Thompson, Sykora, Willey Ley. Gernsback & Merritt both gave me a start at being younger & less fleshy than, in this case, I had anticipated from fotos seen some yrs ago coupled with the fact that they seem to've been bfor us forever.

Pleasantest of surprises to me were these 3: Dale Hart, Jack Agnew & Otto Binder, whom I nominate for the best-looking fans at the Convention. & -- gosh, guys -- were'nt Malcolm Jameson's & Paul's dawters pretty?

Inconsequential inquiry: What were the impressions of the Great Ackerman. I wonder? Said one of the Chicagogetters to 4SJ after knowing him awhile: "Say, Forry, I had U all rong. Bfor I met U personly, I used to think about U as being a sort of society bug, or something."

&amp; now" supplyd the Mad Jenius,

"U think I'm just a bug?"

Fino

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READERS, IT'S UP TO YOU! AD ASTRA HAS RECEIVED SEVERAL REQUESTS FOR THE ABOVE FORMAT, RATHER THAN OUR PRESENT TWO-COLUMN PER PAGE ARRANGEMENT. DO YOU WANT THE PRINT ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE PAGE, OR NOT? Ed.



# IT'S THAT JINX!

We have, much to our misfortune, lost the services of our staff artist, Julian S. Krupa. Since the appearance of our second issue Mr. Krupa has come under contract for Ziff-Davis, publishers of Amazing Stories. We had expected his services to continue as he did also, but Mr. Bollin the Art Director of Ziff-Davis told me that Krupa was signed for full-time and could do no outside art work of any sort.

Being at a loss without any source of art work for the 3rd issue, we were obliged to change our plan of having a planographed reproduction process in our 4th issue and run this idea in the current issue. As it was, we took the money for this venture from our own pockets because of a low treasury count. In the future I hope we shall not have to do this. I am sure that AD ASTRA has proven its worth as a fan mag and should therefore receive the utmost support of its readers. Let this last sentence ring in your mind!

Both for fan interest and as a means of adding to our funds, we have gone to the added expense of obtaining extra copies of the reproduction of the cover on the 1st A.S. for our readers. The cost of the cover together with that of handling and mailing is set at 10¢, a fair price, don't you think? Send all requests to 3156 Cambridge Ave.-.

Let's have your reactions to this idea of the printed page. I am sure that every reader is in favor of its continuance, we are too..so to make this possible, send us your subscription to AA. Acquaint your fan friends with its contents--if you will do this and show us you are sincere in faith in our mag, you'll continue to see improvements each issue.

It was because of our trouble in the art division that AD ASTRA is late in publication,..Added to this misfortune was the sickness of the Editor, Mark Reinsberg. I was left with most of the memeo work unfinished and consequently had to complete it alone. Mark has still not fully recovered but I hope that he will be able to help me staple this issue. I hope to have the planographed sheet back from the printers within the next 36 hours at which time we will be ready to bind this issue.

Next in line in our dedication of the professional mags is Thrilling Wonder Stories. It was ten years ago last May that the June 1929 issue (the first) of Science Wonder Stories appeared. One month after this Air Wonder Stories appeared--less than 1 year later Gernsback had combined the two into Wonder Stories and had issued 2 Quarterlies. In 1932 Gernsback discontinued these quarterlies continuing only with the monthlies...He had changed the format of that mag more than any S-F mag and regardless of his interest in it, he was forced to discontinue publishing it in the spring of 1936...There was a span of a few months in which Wonder Stories did not appear and when the August 1936 issue came out it was retitled Thrilling Wonder Stories. Mr. Mort Weisinger has since been managing editor and I think we can all agree that his work has proved satisfactory to the majority of fans who make up its reading audience. Weisinger has successfully published 5 issues of the new Startling Stories which features each issue, a book length novel by some famous S-F artist.

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AD ASTRA has been named the official journal for the World's Science Fiction Convention to be held in Chicago in 1940!!



AMAZING STORIES \*  
 is pleased to be \*  
 selected by the ed- \*  
 itors of AD ASTRA \*  
 to lead off the de- \*  
 dication issues of \*  
 the magazine, and \*  
 its editors wish AD  
 ASTRA a long and profitable life  
 among the loyal fans who read sci-  
 ence fiction, and so ably support  
 it.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 GUEST EDITORIAL  
 No. 1  
 by  
 RAYMOND A. PALMER  
 Editor, AMAZING STORIES  
 \*\*\*\*\*

\* its cloak and blue-  
 \* som forth in its par-  
 \* ty gown, to make its  
 \* play for fame on pub-  
 \* licity's great stage.

\* The movies will  
 \* have their science  
 \* fiction evolution,  
 and they'll come to stay: pictures  
 like "The Invisible Man", "Metrop-  
 olis", "By Rocket to the Moon", and  
 others. Like westerns, detectives,  
 and mysteries, science fiction will  
 become the craze. And remain just  
 as have the other types of fiction.  
 It's when something new comes along  
 that I'll be most interested. What  
 will it be? Super-science fiction?  
 I don't think so, but when I do  
 find out, watch for the new maga-  
 zine.

Since Amazing is the oldest of  
 the science fiction magazines, it  
 seems fitting that it should lead  
 off, and we take our selection as  
 first to be honored by one of the  
 leading fan magazines, in that  
 spirit, since we confidentially  
 believe that all science fiction  
 magazines have room and to spare  
 in this great fiction field.

Readers may argue as to which  
 magazine leads, and editors know  
 (because it's simple deduction --  
 his own leads) but the fact is, we  
 all want to be read by the fans,  
 and we feel proud of the fact that  
 they do read all the magazines.

The recent convention in New  
 York, which was so admirably con-  
 ducted, earns our sincere approv-  
 al of fan activities, when conduc-  
 ted in this manner. It commands  
 our respect also, and we chime in  
 with Editor Margulies when he says,  
 "I didn't think you boys could be  
 so damn sincere!" with the excep-  
 tion that we knew you were sincere.  
 Which is why we did our best to  
 give the event the national cover-  
 age it justly deserved, and persua-  
 ded the magazine TIME, that here  
 was a real story. How they cover-  
 ed it is well-known to every fan.

It is this event that leads us  
 to make a few predictions, and in-  
 dulge in a few retrospections.  
 First, it seems evident that sci-  
 ence fiction is advancing contin-  
 ually, both in fandom, and in pub-  
 lic approval. The day isn't far  
 off, when science fiction will shed

In retrospection, I can hark  
 back to the days when Amazing first  
 began. My own career began with  
 its first issue, because I nearly  
 tore the drugstore door off its  
 hinges, racing out of the place to  
 the nearest quiet corner where I  
 could absorb this fascinating new  
 magazine. All through the years,  
 Amazing remained just as fascinat-  
 ing as always. I believe in the  
 magazine, and I believe the pres-  
 ent day readers do too.

But harking back, I know what  
 made the magazine so fascinating  
 then. And I've tried to instill  
 the same appeal into the new Amaz-  
 ing, and at the same time, refrain  
 from taking a backward step.

It has been an odd evolution,  
 but eminently successful, and who  
 can say that the stories are not  
 improving? They have (some of  
 them -- not all) the old appeal,  
 coupled with stronger plot, signi-  
 ficance, and characterization.  
 Writers have been slow to catch on  
 to our new policy, but they are  
 beginning to turn out better mat-  
 erial daily. Witness especially  
 the last few issues, with such sto-  
 ries as "Beast of the Island", Nel-  
 son S. Bond's stories, and several



more coming up very shortly. Authors like Temple, Bond, Farley, Bloch, Kummer, Ayre, Cross, Fearn are getting the slant, and you can expect them to take off the reins, and give you stories that can be remembered in years to come as "classics". I predict at least two soon to come up will have that honor. The authors are Bond and Wellman! Watch for them.

With his Adam Link series, Binder has started something that seems to gather mass as it progresses. The third of the series is under construction -- should be finished as you read this. We understand Adam Link falls in love with this one. A machine can't love, you say? But you said a machine couldn't be human -- once. However, Adam Link has wormed his way into your hearts, and if he can do that -- well, draw your own conclusions.

In closing, we want to express our thanks to all fans and readers, to those who offer us criticism, of either type, because it has helped us immensely to give you the magazine you want, and we predict great things in the future from Amazing Stories, because whether it is noticeable or not, as more than a slow progress, there is an evolution underway which will someday soon crash into your minds as something significant. It is an evolution of the writers. Science fiction writers are graduating. They are becoming "authors" in the true sense of the word.

Raymond A. Palmer  
AMAZING STORIES.

Next issue, in conjunction with the second in the series of dedications, AD ASTRA presents a guest editorial by Mort Weisinger, Editor of THRILLING WONDER STORIES. TWS is second in the current series, followed by ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION.....

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* CONDENSED STATISTICAL \*  
\* RESUME OF AMAZING, by \*  
\* Jack Darrow \*  
\* \* \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

TO DATE (Sept., 1939) there have been 175 issues of Amazing, including Monthlies, Quarterlies, and the Annual. These are divided into the following groups:-

Small-large size	24
(Vol.1-1 to Vol.2-12 incl.)	
"Larger" large size	63
(Vol.3-1 to Vol.8-5, dated Aug-Sept)	
Small size (Monthly)	23
(Vol.8-6 to 10-5)	
Small size (Bimonthly)	19
(Vol.10-6 to 12-5)	
Small monthly (Ziff-Davis)	18
(Vol.12-6 to 13-10 -- to date)	
TOTAL MONTHLIES	152
Quarterlies (1-1 to 7-2)	22
Annual (1927)	1
GRAND TOTAL	175

#### EDITORS

Hugo Gernsback - Apr.'26 to Apr.'28  
A. H. Lynch - May '29 to Oct.'29  
T.O.Sloane - Nov.'30 to April '38  
R.A.Palmer - Jun8 '38; to date....

#### PUBLISHERS:-

Gernsback (Experimenter Pub. Co.) up to April '29...Mackinnon-Fly took over under Exper. Pub.Co. name till Oct.'30...when name was changed to Radio-Science Publications...In Feb '31 Shafer-Harrington\*Wise & Smith became owners, under same Publishing Company name...Sept '31 to Feb '38 it was owned by Teck Pub..... April '38 Ziff-Davis took over....

COVER ARTISTS: Paul, Mc Kay, Wesso, Morey, Sigmund, Fuqua; and coming in the next few issues are Krupa, and Mc Cauley.

THE PRICE had been 25¢ up to the change to 20¢ June, 1938.

THE LATER ISSUES OF THE QUARTERLY were issued irregularly, and the last two were Reprint Editions....

"Accurate to my knowledge"- Author



\*\*\*\*\*  
 \*/////////////////////////  
 \*//// CONVENTION SIDELIGHTS ////  
 \*/////////////////////////  
 \*//// By Robert A. Madle ////  
 \*/////////////////////////  
 \*/////////////////////////  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Before going any further I will state that this article will not, by any stretch of the imagination, attempt to cover the entire WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION. In fact, it will deal only with the items which other writeups most probably will not even mention. For those who wish to read excellent, full-coverage articles concerning the convention, I recommend NEW FANDOM or a forthcoming issue of AMAZING STORIES which will feature an excellent convention review by Mark Reinsberg and Erle Korshak.

One of the most interesting of the sidelights was the science fiction softball game, in which twenty science fiction fans participated. It was played in a spacious playground in Flushing, and the team comprised of a majority of the Queens SFL boys triumphed, 23-11. From the score you can gather that it wasn't exactly a pitcher's battle. It might be mentioned that the outfield of the losers caught exactly two balls, both of which were gathered in by fly-shagger Mark Reinsberg. This game was so successful that there probably will be another such affair in Philadelphia early in October when Philly fans will play host to numerous out-of-towners at the annual Philadelphia Science Fiction Conference.

After the completion of the softball game, the convention split up into several factions, Charles D. Hornig, Ross Rocklynne, Mark Reinsberg, Jack Agnew, and several others, myself included, paid a visit to Coney Island. Hornig, Rocklynne, and several other boys

just couldn't get enough of those midjet cars which you drive all by your lonesome. A humorous incident occurred when Agnew threw a firecracker on the boardwalk and was caught red-handed by a local attendant. This gathering broke up early in the morning of July 5th.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Morojo, and other out-of-towners were indeed pleased when Leo Margulies (who appears to have been impressed considerably by the convention) invited some of the out-of-towners to a dinner July 7th. Everything was on Thrilling Wonder Stories, and Mort Weisinger was host. To say that the dinner was replenishing would be putting it mildly. A list of those who accepted Mr. Margulies invitation follows: Mort Weisinger, Ross Rocklynne, Julius Schwartz, Dale Hart, Ray Bradbury, Mario Racio, Wm. S. Sykora, Sam Moskowitz, James V. Taurasi, Forrest J. Ackerman, Morojo, Charles D. Hornig, Mark Reinsberg, Erle Korshak, and myself. We all thank the Editorial Director of Standard Publications for a really swell time.

At the convention itself I was impressed by the handsome Forrie Ackerman and his companion, charming Morojo, both of whom were dressed as people of the future. I believe the costumes were made entirely by Morojo, and she deserves quite a bit of credit for her work. When Ackerman was called upon to speak he received a tremendous ovation, much louder and longer than that awarded to any of the authors and artists, with the possible exception of Frank R. Paul. When one becomes acquainted with Ackerman one is impressed by his extremely sincere interest in all phases of science fiction. It is the opinion of several fans (the writer included) that Ackerman is easily the top-notch fan of all time, and should be recognized as such by all fandom.



I got a good laugh over the "wrestling" match between Charles D. Hornig and Manly Wade Wellman. It seems that the printer of Hornig's magazine, SCIENCE FICTION, made a mistake and listed "Nancy" Wade Wellman as one of the future contributors. Apparently Mr. Wellman, whose first name fits him to a T, didn't exactly like to be known as "Nancy".

Did you ever sample a delicious "Ghoul's Broth"? Ray Bradbury, who is adept at mixing up such concoctions, will be pleased to supply you with the recipe. He practically had everyone rolling off their seats when he mixed one up in a New York hamburger joint. The proprietor cast many a dirty glance at Mr. Bradbury, but that didn't deter him in the slightest.

I was quite surprised by the female attendance at the convention. Besides Morajo (Myrtle R. Douglas), there were Gertrude Kuslan, Leslie Perri, Rose Alberti, and the rest of the Queens SFL girls, the wives of many of the authors, editors, etc. It seems that the gals are finally evincing a definite interest in science fiction fandom.

#### ONWARD TO THE 1940 SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION IN CHICAGO!

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#### ADVERTISEMENT

SCIENTIFICTION for sale! "Sky-lark" stories and other classics of Smith, Merritt, Taine, etc. Take your pick of my large-sized magazines -- 30¢ each. Small-size -- 20¢. Discount for issues without covers. Also s-f books and Argosyarns at low prices. Postage paid on all orders. Write for my list...

Paul H. Spencer, 88 Ardmore Rd., West Hartford, Conn.....

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Don't forget to mention AD ASTRA when answering advertisements. In that way, only, the advertiser may gauge his results from the ad.

## SIDELIGHTS in Fantasy By LARRY B. FARSAKI

Well, here I am boys. Yes, it's me! with all the usual load of wells, and incidentally, and what have you. Foremost reason for this comeback is to broadcast a few news items which have been roaming lonely in space ... You know, this used to be the "Lone Wanderer" column.

A very agreeable surprise to me is the appearance of the story "Celephais" in a recent W.T. I once had the issue of Marvel Tales with this story by Lovecraft, but to my later regret, did not read it at the time. Clark Ashton Smith's "The Double Shadow" and David H. Keller's "The Dead Woman" are also reprints, of course, the former from CAS's booklet of the same name, published about 1933, the latter from a 1934 issue of Fantasy Magazine. But I don't believe it is generally known that both were originally accepted by Strange Tales before it ceased publication. Strangely enough, "The Dead Woman" now appears in Strange Stories, after being rejected by WT as too horrible.

Other facts which have apparently escaped the eyes of the fantasy-columnists are that A. Merritt and E.E. Smith have not as yet written a story for T.W.S! "Rythm of the Spheres" by Merritt is in reality chapter 11 of the famous "Cosmos" in FM, under the title "The Last Poet and the Robots", while "Robot Nemesis" by Smith in the 10th Anniversary T.W.S. is chapter 13 of the same, under the name "What A Course!" A. Merritt's "The Drone Man" is the



same as his story "The Drone" in the anniversary Sept. '34 FM. This means that the recent 10th Anniversary issue of T.W.S contained two reprints...from the "good old days". It is well not to look back too much, however, says Seufert, and I agree.

Tucker's "Yearbook of 1938" should have included "Peabody's War" by Richard Sale, in the Nov. 19, 1938 Argosy. This is but one of many stories which are overlooked because of a too mundane subtitle:- "Here's one for the history book: one man bites John Bull's dog of war." It deals with the successful resistance of one man against the British fleet through a...hoax disintegrator! The hoax affair is an almost exact copy of that in Mort Weisinger's end-of-war tale in Amazing, "The Price of Peace".

Talking about hoaxes it seems that I have been a poor victim of one until the recent (recent when this was written) visit of Wolheim, Michel, and Wilson, who dropped in for a visit on their way to Chicago. Do you remember the letter in the May, 1931 Astounding (the issue with Charles Diffin's "Dark Moon") in which were listed a lot of unfamiliar stories for sale? There was "Marooned in Space" and "Beyond the Earth Atom" by Jules Black, "The Dimension Wizard" and "The Challenge from Beyond" by John Louis Hill, "Lost in Time" and its sequel "An Amazing Empire in Time" by Davidson Mortimer, "The Moons of Lanisar" by Booth Langell, many of them very intriguing titles. I had always wondered about these, the more so when I found thru my correspondence with Henry Hasse, that he himself didn't know anything about them. Imagine my surprise when Wolheim, after looking thru the "Date Unknown" listing in "The Fantasy Collector", where I had included them, told me that I had bitten for a lot of hoax titles, authored by a prominent N.Y. fan! I found tho, that I was not

the only one who had written to the given address and received no answer. Wolheim, himself, had been one of the victims, a fact which was rather relieving to ye serious-minded fantast collector, as you can see.

Believe It Or Not Dept: (as Tucker would say) The first story I ever wrote "Into the Inscrutable" saw print in the April, 1939 Editech, together with a reduced and inverted reproduction of the photo-offset illus. of mine you saw in the recent FAPA mailing. You will probably read this story in a future number of Spaceways. I am now half-way through an s-f novelette. Incidentally, "To Vega", the little verse in the second SCENES OF FANTASY, is a reprint from "31 News" (our two issue school paper) for August 3, 1932.

\* Among the fanmag names now appearing in the pros. are "The Ether Vibrates", "The Fantasy Fan", "Science Fiction"....Can you think of any others? The last title, "SF" brings to mind the original editors of a mag by this name, Jerome Siegal and Joe Shuster, whom I found out recently are still making good in the field of comics, with "Superman"...and my! Have you noticed the increasing number of titles being repeated in the pro field lately. Nowadays you have to give both title and author to have people know what story it is you're referring to. Another deplorable fact (at least what I consider so) is the increasing use of house names. It was bad enough with pseudonyms. Don't you think so? Well, anyway, we can always cheer over the fact that now, at last, we know who Anthony Gilmore is!!

### Finis

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Should AD ASTRA feature columns of off-trail news like the above, and if so, would you want AA to continue "Sidelights in Fantasy"? .....  
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.....  
 .. WHY NOT PAUL? ..  
 .. ..  
 .. by ..  
 .. Harry Warner, Jr. ..  
 .. ..

When I wrote my first fan article, about a year ago, I made a vow then and there that I would never mention one subject which has become almost tabu in s-f --- Frank R. Paul. I seems almost no use to go into it, upon first glance: the situation resolves itself into the fact that some like his work and others don't. However, that's no reason why I shouldn't make a monkey out of myself (as if that were possible anymore) by going into the question; so here goes:

Paul has a rather unique reputation in many ways. He has done probably more covers than any other s-f artist -- on fantasy mags, that is --- and no Gernsback s-f mag has come out without his signature on the cover. If any other artist today had a similiar reputation -- even Finlay, I believe -- I would immediately say that I did not like him; he grew too monotonous. But somehow, Paul never does to me at least.

Arguments against him: mouths open. Well, I know that that's a fault of his, but the fact remains that no artist is perfect. Most of his covers are scenes of some huge mass of machinery, or a forbidding landscape on another world or something of that sort, and if there are any men or women there, they are usually extremely secondary, both in importance and size. This last is most important. In order to keep up the mood, these humans must be doing something to express astonishment. You could hardly expect them to have a sweet look of contentment upon their faces. And I challenge any artist

to accurately portray astonishment in a figure perhaps an inch, maybe less, in height. It can't be done; the only thing to do is to try and indicate it. And almost the only way to do this is to make his mouth come open! Why don't the other artists have the same failing? Well, name one whose covers month after month have the same general outline as I've mentioned. If you'll check over the past year or so, I think you'll find 90% of the covers either are purely mechanical scenes with no men at all, or else they portray the humans at close range. It'd be the easy way out; inside it doesn't matter so much. The cover is what sells the mag, and if on the inner illustrations the little mannikin in the corner isn't gaping in wide-eyed terror, it won't persuade someone not to buy the magazine.

Baggy breeches: attention Mr. Tucker. How in the heck do you know what the style in the twenty-ninth century or on Venus will be? Red and yellow backgrounds? They sell the mag. Ten to one Paul isn't responsible. Of course, he's not perfect. His last three covers for SCIENCE FICTION haven't been up to his old-time self by any means. His interior illustrations leave much to be desired. Too often he tries to portray scenes that no artist can paint --- the cover for "The City of Singing Flame" spoiled the story for me, after I'd finished the yarn. Simply because Smith's word-picture is just undrawable.

And yet I reiterate: I like the work of Paul. Some don't, and he's not doing work for any of the really big fantasy mags today. And here's a curious situation: If a poll were taken, I think Paul would come out near the top on about two-thirds of the ballots, and last on the rest. Only Virgil Finlay comes near him in s-f, in my estimation, and I've not seen much of the latter's work in this line -- not enough to really judge. Probably



after I get a squint of his cover for the August ASTOUNDING, as I will by the time you read this, he'll go above Paul. But I'll still think Paul is next-to-the-best, and I don't think anyone will challenge his position there in my mind for a long time. And why in the world doesn't Campbell or Weisinger, or one of the big shot editors give him a chance?

So there you have it. What do we have in the way of s-f illustrators, anyway? There's Dold, who is a master at machinery and the "atmosphere" but even more pitiful than Paul at figures. Wesso's pretty consistently good, but no standout --- never was and never will be. Marchioni lacks something; all his men look alike, and his drawings are invariably too contrasting. Jack Binder is so-so -- good sometimes, but usually terrible. AMAZING (and AD ASTRA's) artist Krupa is probably one of the most up-and-coming, but lacks experience and, too, that "atmosphere" again. Fuqua has done a good job on the covers of AMAZING most of the time. But he's no Paul either. He came fairly close to it in that famous robot cover a few months back, but in the last analysis it was merely one gadget piled on top of another. As for the rest -- mainly hacks! Except the weird magazine illustrators, of course, whom I'm leaving out of this. Brown sometimes touches greatness, but usually doesn't. If Paul had drawn that cover on ASTOUNDING three years ago for "The Blue Infinity" he'd been run out of s-f. Brown got away with it.

All in all, it's a most spilling situation.

End

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WANTED! A horde of A-1 material for future issues of AD ASTRA.... Get busy on that projected fan article, and send it in. AA is in the mood for an avalanche via the postalways, but no fiction or poetry please.  
-----  
Ye. Ed.

\*\*\*\*\*  
- FROM BAD --- TO VERSE!  
\*\*\*\*\*

### "The Inventor Technocrat"

by Da Noma

4 hrs. a day he pulled a lever--  
His only endeavor.  
The other 20 he was free  
(Nice way to be!)  
His idle hrs. were all spent  
(& fast they went)  
On scientific research.

Perpetual Motion was his goal  
(Poor soul)  
& thru the yrs. he tried  
In vain  
To obtain  
The Secret of It All.

& then one day he wed  
"According unto law";  
& found PM contained  
("Oh Henry!")  
In his wife's wagging jaw!

---Which isn't so good,  
but considering you may be getting  
\$20,000 a yr. before long, WHAT DO  
YOU CARE?

### "IN OCEANIC DEPTHS"

by

Harry Warner, Jr.

Sunken now, five thousand feet below,  
Its towers crumbling, its minarets  
once proud  
Are fallen. Once praises loud  
Resounded to the fame of heroes'  
deeds.

But though no mortal man could ever  
live

In those vast, deadly, fear-filled deeps,  
If it could be, amid the grass that creeps,  
Would there be still faint sounds  
of cheers --- vague forms?  
Never may their ghosts in peace  
abide.

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- - -





SAYS RAYMOND A. PALMER: You've got a good fan mag in AD ASTRA, just keep it for the fans and don't get personal as so many others have. Keep up the good work!

FRANCIS J. LITZ, writes: I received issue No. 2 of your mag. I think it's swell. The best in the issue was "Beyond the Gates". Future Trends scored the next hit. Harry Warner's article was good. I must say that your Science Supplement is truly 'Different'. Keep this dept for sure. Readers' Department is always good. Here's hoping No. 3 will be as good as the current issue.

(( Reader approval was about 50-50 on the Science Supplement, but since there are so many "Science" articles in pro and fan magazines today, coupled with the fact that the average fan does know his science fiction, we will probably discontinue this feature. However, we leave it up to the readers..... Ed.))

DAVE KEENE writes from Los Angeles: Your letter of May 30, together with your publication AD ASTRA at hand, and hasten to comply with your request for an expression of my opinion.

You state that you realize I am not familiar with this type of literature. Correct. I have never heard of it before. However, I have read the issue of AD ASTRA from cover to cover and am happy to find that something of the meaning, purposes and interpretation of SF is sinking in.

This is my first experience with a mimeographed magazine. I can see that you have overcome great difficulties in getting it out. ((Amen! Ed.)) To me it appears well organized with regard to material. I liked the editorial, the fiction, the science supplement,

the letters from fans, and the illustrations....which gave me the impression of a well planned magazine designed to keep the reader interested from cover to cover.

Being no student of Latin, I at first wondered what the name AD ASTRA meant, finally concluding that the subject matter would deal with Astrology. However, as a stranger at the shrine of SF, I would prefer a title in English. Next, I felt somewhat bewildered in trying to really understand the meaning of science fiction, and my mind groped for ideas on what it was. As I read on, it cleared itself somewhat, leaving me however, still unsatisfied. So I concluded your magazine was more for the purpose of maintaining the interest of those who had previously explored the realm of SF than making converts.

The story, "Beyond the Gates" was more than a mere story to me. It was a text, a guide, an illustration of SF. It was interesting, fantastic, and well written, leading up to a definite climax. The interview with Krupa was very good, -- clear, concise, well written and very interesting. I imagine that a vast treasure of interesting copy can be secured by further interviews with Krupa. I particularly liked the element of humor in your interview. In fact, it seemed professionally handled to me.

I hope the above observations will gratify your request, tho I frankly confess that I can see no value in them, unless it be in the reactions of one who had never heard of SF, to a new type of magazine. Wishing you great success in your undertaking.....

((This letter is particularly interesting, coming from -- as the writer said -- "one who had never heard of SF..". Thank you, and don't forget to send in your welcomed comments on this issue.....Ye Ed.))



JOSEPH GILBERT comments, in the course of a nine page letter:-

Three things really outstanding this time. 1st: AD ASTRA your own poem, which was darn good, although unconsciously you used two lines of Wells in "Things to Come". H.G. had Cabel say in his soliloquy in the observatory in the last scene of that fine picture, as nearly as I can remember on the spur of the moment: "Redd for the individual. Too soon and too quick and we call it death. But for man there is no rest; he must go on ---"etc., etc. Nevertheless "AD ASTRA" is the first good poem I have seen in a fan mag.

Second: The science supplement which was really original. Who is Henry Bott? The gentleman treated his subject accurately and interestingly. Not only that but it was well written, and believe me, that paragraph about the third innermost planet struck home....

Third: Krupa's splendid artwork. The cover was quite good and rather amusing to my simple mind. The inside drawing was superb. I don't care for Krupa's work in "Amazing" but in AD ASTRA he is really excellent. "Beyond the Gates" was based on a theme that is older than fantasy. Well written, though.

"An Interview with Krupa" was written in a rather juvenile manner, I thought, at least the first part. Harry Warner's piece was fair filler, as was W. Lawrence Hamling's. I believe that the latter's article was a little sticky in the last paragraph, and Wells, who incidentally is my favorite author, wrote s-f you know, not so much for the purpose of advancing an art, as he said, as for the purpose of satire.....

THOMAS HINMON flashes: I liked your mag, AD ASTRA quite a bit and especially the article by Jack Williamson. Henry Bott's article "Life on Other Planets?" made me ask why doesn't he read L. Sprague De Camps article in the May & June issues of Astounding. It will do him good and give him a lot of food

for thought....

HENRY D. GOLDMAN writes:- I received my copy of AD ASTRA several weeks ago but this is the first opportunity I've had to write you. Your magazine is swell in every way. The articles are all very good and no wonder; all the big writers that do them. "Beyond the Gates" was very entertaining and surely could have crashed a pro magazine. ((Am flattered no end, but Mr. Campbell of UNKNOWN didn't seem to think so. ...Yed))

The last 2 pages were sort of shot coming through the mail but the front cover was intact. The cover and inside picture by Krupa were very good. All in all, the magazine is very entertaining and informative. The only improvement I can suggest is, that you publish AD ASTRA every month instead of every 2 months.... ((At present it is all but impossible to get AA out every month --- but perhaps??? Ed))

DON WILCOX remarks:- Your magazine has a striking name. It caught my eye, partly because the motto of my home state is "Ad Astra Per Aspera". Do all your Kansas subscribers mention this fact?

Excerpts from three letters of LESLIE A. CROUTCH:- Krupa's cover is well done, and looks very nice on green. His inside illustration on yellow also merits commendation for a job well done....Of the articles I found Williamson's the better of two superb ones -- his and Simak's, the latter's of which follows close behind....Didja notice the staples in the last issue of AA didn't come through far enough to hold the lusty babe together along its spinal column? ((Observe the staples used in this issue. Improved? Ed))

Many interesting letters were squeezed out due to lack of space, but keep those letters coming and next issue we'll enlarge "AD LIB" to fit all your comments, brick-bats, etc.



# The EDITOR says!

The old typewriter, somewhat battered and worn, finally has reached the editorial page, and ye old staff member has reached the point of collapse. And this AD ASTRA is a tremendous improvement over last issue, just as No. 2 eclipsed the first number. I know you'll agree to that.

AA feels it owes a debt of honor to the professional science fiction magazines. Without the pros there would not be a fan field -- nor would fan magazines like AA be possible. So, to repay that "debt of honor" AA is dedicating an issue to each professional SF magazine, starting in chronological order with the date of the first issue. This issue is respectfully dedicated to AMAZING STORIES, the first magazine devoted solely to science fiction. In conjunction with this event, Raymond A. Palmer, editor of AMAZING, has prepared a guest editorial, as will the other editors as their magazine is honored. And, best of all, Artist has reproduced the front cover on the first issue of AMAZING exactly as Paul drew it! In future issues we plan to continue this custom until every first issue has been represented. Elsewhere will also be found, a condensed statistical resume of AMAZING, containing fact and data valuable to the fan. The next in the series of dedications will be THRILLING WONDER STORIES, descendant of the original AIR and SCIENCE WONDER STORIES. Watch for it!

Recently, your editor took a trip to New York and the World Science Fiction Convention, accompanied by Erle Korshak, prominent Chicago fan. There, I had the extreme pleasure of meeting just about everyone in S-F, coupled with the co-privilege of representing

AMAZING and FANTASTIC in editor Palmer's place. I want to thank New Fandom and all the boys connected with the Convention for a wonderful time, and cordially invite the fan world to Chicago's 1940 Convention by way of reciprocation. And thank you, Robert A. Madle, for making an extended stay in N.Y.-possible (You know what I mean) Bob is the worthy editor of FANTASCIENCE DIGEST. Continuing the "thank you's", I might include Forrest J. Ackerman, who is your editor's nomination -- like Madle -- for No. 1 fan of all time, Donald Wolheim, Jack Agnew, Charlie Hornig, Ross Rocklynne, Jimmy Taurasi, Sam Moskowitz, Morojo, and so darn many others I just can't begin naming them. Thank you all, for the best time of my life.

One fan who has been a great help in AD ASTRA is Leslie A. Croutch. Although he is hundreds of miles away, he has been more valuable than a lot of fans living in Chicago. By his fine contributions in the line of art-work (many of the title cuts in this issue); in welcome suggestions and ideas, and in material, he has easily earned the title of editorial advisor to AD ASTRA.

Also thanks to Julian S. Krupa, for his continued services. Tho he has been pressed with work that required much of his time, he has still come through for AD ASTRA with the finest mimeo-work in fandom.

I could write several pages on editorial gossip alone, but that must be cut short. In the future we'll make every effort to improve AA with each succeeding issue -- and better yet, get AA out on time. Sorry for the delay, it was unavoidable. Next AA -- about Sept. 20.



\*ADVERTISEMENTS:- 25¢ per quarter page; 50¢ per half page, and \$1.00 for whole page.....

How many of you have read a copy of FANTASY MAGAZINE? I suppose quite a few of you. Well, then you will be intensely interested in reading FANTASCIENCE DIGEST, the magazine that has been acclaimed as being the best since FANTASY!

FD is issued bimonthly, containing thirty large, perfectly mimeographed pages, featuring the best fan material procurable. FD is especially noted for its news coverage, as it features three long news columns (not petty gossip); "AMAZING News" by Mark Reinsberg, "The Science Fiction Spotlight" by Robert A. Madle, and the "Eternal Wanderer" by Oswald Train. Pertinent articles related to all aspects of fantasy comprise the remainder of the magazine.

Following are a few excerpts received from letters commenting on FANTASCIENCE DIGEST:

"It is the best fan-article publication that I have seen since Julius Schwartz ran FANTASY MAGAZINE."--- Charles D. Hornig.

"Congratulations on the superb mimeographing! In my opinion, you'll have to go a long way to find any that's better, and very, very few are even this good."-- Harry Warner, Jr.

"At last I've found a real fan magazine, the first, in my estimation, since FANTASY. I enjoyed every darn department." -- C.J. Wilhelm.

"Seriously, you pack plenty of pleasure into your pages, and your position as one of the top 5 fan mags should go unquestioned." --- Sam Moskowitz.

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