

Bloomington Jews - Letter

HORSE SENSE PAYS OFF IN THE FIFTH RACE

No. 6

5¢

SPOTLIGHT

DANGER: DERO AT WORK

A farm family at Macomb, Ill., is plenty burned up at the loss of their home, two barns, and minor sheds about the homestead. Some 200 spontaneous fires ---origin unknown to authorities and experts at the scene--- have popped out of the wallpaper, plaster lath, haymow, and sundry other spots to destroy the buildings. A chicken shed and milk house were saved by vigilance. Early experts on the scene held the opinion spontaneous material was mixed into the wallpaper paste.

However subsequent experts threw cold water on this hot theory by shrewdly observing hen houses and barns lacked wallpaper, so it might be DDT stuff.

Eye-witnesses say first a "brown spot" appears on the wallpaper, spreads, and bursts into flame. In other buildings the spot is seen on plaster lath and walls.

The family moved into a tent and everybody moved in on them: state fire officials, agriculture experts, and the army air force. Theorized the air force technicians: sabotage! Materials ignited by radio waves! Speaking of radio-combustibles and the Macomb incident, Wright Field (Ohio) officials said "It is our business to investigate such matters. ... The situation at Macomb was just too unusual to ignore. ... If it is true, we think it must be very high frequencies or short waves. ..."

Figures are lacking on the number of Macomb-vicinity folks who've resumed going to church.

Likewise lacking is the circulation figure of Amazing Stories in that area. Zoomed, no doubt.

Like the famous "flying saucer" reports, our "brown spots" may be somebody playing around with secret weapons. The air force gents might have something on the ball with their radio-combustible theory.

September, 1948 * published by Bob Tucker, Box 260, Bloomington, Ill.

EDUCATION

CONTROVERSY CONQUERED

For as far back as I can remember reading science-fiction, the controversy over the color of space --deep space-- has been raging, with only the later years seeing a waning of the argument. (It seems something called a Bomb has replaced it.) Adherents of the black, blue, purple and 'nothing at all' camps fought bitterly for their color and many was the duelist who limped home in the early morning hours to his consoling bowl of oatmeal, mumbling to himself that altho he had been bested in argument, he'd never give in.

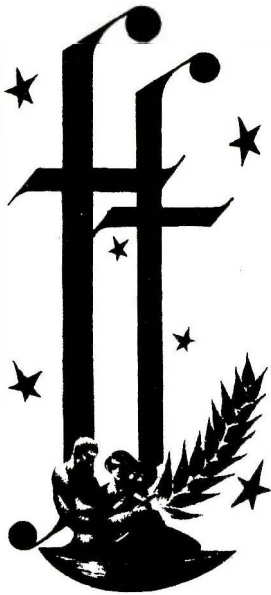
But finally science and research has triumphed, as science and research sometimes does, and the patient ones sitting on the sidelines have been rewarded. Hearken, then, to the words of Capt. C.E. Yeager (Muroc Air Base), the first man who smashed the sonic barrier and lived to talk. On this flight he also flew higher than man has ever flown before. Yeager: "A fiery sun that seemed about six feet away flooded the cockpit and filled my eyes. ... I leveled the plane and...turned on one of the rocket chambers. The plane came to life and lunged forward into space. ... At the start of the climb the sky had been a clean, unvarying blue. Now as the air became thinner with altitude, the sky deepened and darkened to a rich, fathomless purple. The stars came out. Millions of them. There was no moon but the sun glowed brilliantly."

Military censorship of course prohibited the captain from revealing the secrets of his flight, but the fastest speed it did permit him to mention was: "The (Mach) needle slid up to 1.0, and went over." The most interesting words are the last three.

Old Customers

VISITORS to Box 260 within recent weeks: Mike Fern, who had purchased a new Nash at the factory, drove to the Toronto ruckus and back, and was then enroute to the coast preparatory to sailing self and automobile home. Mike brought his Hawaii plates with him, put them on the car at the factory. Robert Bloch, who arrived in town with a bad cold, a stiff neck, ten vials of pills and a pint of Vat 69. Bloch is at work on a second novel to follow his "The Scarf". He departed with a bad cold, a stiff neck, and ten vials of pills. Walt Liebscher, on vacation from California, which is a novelty in itself. He allowed himself to be lured into a poker game with some local movie operators and lost a startling sum. FJ Ackerman, going home from the convention, who likewise dallied long and unwisely with the above-mentioned gentlemen. In addition there were two homeward-bound conventioners who stopped in while I was out and of course were never subsequently identified.

It was a trifle crowded in the Box.



The Fantasy Foundation (NON-PROFIT)

FOR THE PRESERVATION OF SCIENCE - FANTASY - WEIRD LITERATURE

HABEAS CORPUS

(an editorial)

Under this letterhead in July, 1946, there was pumped to life an organization which was to set the fantasy world afire---the promoters said. A lot of us strung along; some because we believed in it, some because the NFFF was then dying for the 45th time, some because they lacked strength to resist the salesmen, and some of us just for the hell of it. That was me.

That was two years ago at the Los Angeles convention. The dues paid in ranged from one to ten dollars, depending upon your purse and the status of membership desired. That was two years ago and two payments. What do we have in return? Well, the Ackerman garage is busily preserving fantasy fiction, and some of us have these letterheads. Providing you wangled a good supply of stationery, you have your dollar's worth. As for the wealthy patrons on the other end of the line, the five and ten dollar members, if any of them possessed the business acumen to deduct the dues from their income taxes they have neglected to mention the fact aloud.

The idea of the Foundation is a sound one: that of a depository for as much fantasy fiction as can be gathered together in one place to serve as a library and museum, the idea being that in the future (if any) such a depository would be invaluable for research.

Money from annual conventions is invariably diverted to the Foundation; once a year this reporter gets a notice from the charming wife of the treasurer that it is time to kick in again; and then follows a dignified silence until the following year.

I can do without the dignified silence. How about a report now and then? -BT

THE LATE FANZINES worth mentioning: The Gorgon, V2 #1 from Stan Mullen, 4936 Grove St., Denver. Head and shoulders above the fan press is this 62 paged (multi-lith?) job containing 10 photos plus 6 illustrations, featuring the best non-professional fiction going. Also Fantasy Advertiser V3 #2 from Gus Wilmoth, 1503 12th ave, Los Angeles; from John Gergen, the MFS Bulletin, 221 SE Melbourne St., Minneapolis; Art Rapp's long convention account in Space Warp from 2120 Bay St, Saginaw, Mich; and Fan Artisian from the cohorts inhabiting Box 105, Los Alamos, California.

This publication exchanges copies with all comers.

NEW BOOKS

THE LOVED ONE by Evelyn Waugh
(\$2½, Little-Brown, Boston, 1948)

Grade-A fare for lovers of macabre comedy is this sharp satire job on life, love and death in "Whispering Glades," a Hollywood cemetery where only neon lites are lacking.

Triangled love plot involves Aimee who is a corpse-cosmetician; Mr. Joyboy, chief embalmer, who loves her and sends messages by corpse--a beaming smile on the cadaver when he's happy, a woebegone droop when he's sad--; and Dennis, a pet cemetery caretaker who woos Aimee with stolen poetry and proposes marriage when she gets a raise.

THE STILWELL PAPERS edited by T.H. White. (\$4, Wm. Sloane, NYC, 1948)

The Japs run Gen. "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell out of Burma and 2 years later he began fighting his way back in -- only to be yanked from command and relieved of duty. The papers are his personal diary and

letters to his wife, portraying in sharp, critical detail the rotten corruption he found in China, the lack of cooperation and even friendliness from the British, and the throat-cutting actions of Washington officials ---his throat being the target.

Bucking Washington, British and Chinese high command, Stilwell organized an army and invaded Burma. And a few weeks later he was relieved and sent home with censorship lids clamped tight. This volume tells the tale.

WHO GOES THERE? -John Campbell
(\$3, Shasta Pub, Chicago, 1948)

Seven science-fiction yarns by an acknowledged master, the long title story tells of the 37 men of a south pole expedition and the 38th being who joined them, to their terror and decimation. Volume also contains the well-known "Twilight" and "Night", & other Astounding favorites.

This issue of News-Letter is a feeler, seeking readers. Unless you are numbered among the exchanges, editors, publishers and other professional deadbeats, you must send a postal requesting next issue.

-from-

P.O. Box 260

Bloomington, Illinois

return postage guaranteed

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DENVER in 1941

World Science Fiction Convention
Will I see YOU there??

Norm Stanley

43A Broad st

Rockland, Maine

