

DEGLER! 164 13 JANUARY 1967

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PICKERING BLOWS HIS COOL; THE GREAT SCIENTI-CLAUS ROBBERY --

In Los Angeles, on the afternoon of Xmas eve, a houseguest of Forrest J. Ackerman walked off with half his house. A fan who had arrived with two light suitcases left with three heavy ones, the third being stolen from his host. Sensing mysteriously missing collectors items within hours of the fan's departure (his plastic-encased Oct. '26 Amazing, issue that inspired his 40-year love affair with sci-fi; a British hard cover edition of Dark Carnival inscribed by Ray Bradbury to Martha "Best American Short Stories Anthologist" Foley; a pen & ink original of Bradbury from Ackerman's own "Masters Of Fantasy" series in Famous Fantastic Mysteries, etc.), FJA came to the conclusion he knew who the culprit was. "The complete story takes about a half hour to tell," reports FJA, "as fast as I can talk, but the fundamental facts are these":

The thief boldly returned to the scene of his crime.

Walter J. Daugherty, acting for Forry, by skillful interrogation in a little over an hour extracted an admission of guilt on three counts.

Ackerman and Daugherty then drove with the 19-year-old college student to his home in Bakersfield, Calif., a distance of about 100 miles, and there in the fan's den discovered 305 separate items belonging to Ackerman valued at approximately \$3,700!!! These filled a single suitcase; the contents of 2 additional suitcases were unaccounted for as of this report (10 Jan. 67). Recovered items included the 30,000 word manuscript of "Long After Midnight," original form of "Fahrenheit 451" which was 5,000 words longer than when published in Galaxy as "The Fireman;" stiffs from "Metropolis" and "King Kong" and of Boris Karloff, Lon Chaney, Sr. and others; pressbook of "Just Imagine" and "Dracula;" works by A.E. Van Vogt; movie scripts; Bradbury's fanzine Futura Fantasia; even canceled checks of Ackerman.

Ackerman is recuperating from hospitalization last October with a heart condition, believed to have been brought on by multiple emotional aggravations, of which ~~su~~ such an act as this would be typical.

Commented local (LA) fan Vern Bennett on the incredible theft (the largest known in s-f annals): "If nothing else, the fan will go down in history as the only person to do his Xmas shopping in the Ackermansion!"

The fan who dun it: the active fanzine writer and collector (!) who for about 3 years has been calling himself "Forrest J. Ackerman Fan #1" and "FJA Jr."

His name: Stephen E. Pickering.

Regretfully,

Forry Ackerman

Editorial Note: This issue of Degler! is being sent, at Forry's request, to more than 100 people around the world. Lest any unfamiliar with s-f fandom think this violation of law and decency is condoned by fandom, let me advise you otherwise. On numerous occasions Pickering has apologized for his writings on one hand, and blasted those he has apologized to (myself, Ted White, Terry Carr, & others) behind our backs. He has branded those who

Pickering, continued:

disagree with his writing as "new-leftists," "Birchites," "anti-intellectuals," "writers of comic-book prose," and other labels.

I myself am 21, and at present work as assistant editor of the Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, as well as doing free-lance editorial work for various paperback publishers in New York. Fannishly, I am secretary of the 25th World S.F. Convention and have been in fandom since 1961. I am an extensive reader and collector of s-f, and in the time since my early teens have managed to collect a library of some 2,100 books and magazines which share a room (8' X 16') with me, a mimeograph, a spirit duplicator, and two typewriters.

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To join the NYCon III, 25th World Science Fiction Convention, send \$3 (overseas supporting membership: \$1) to 25th World S-F Convention, P.O. Box 367, NY, NY, 10028.
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Paperback Releases for February: From Ace Books: A reissue of The Genetic General by Gordon Dickson (40¢); World Without Stars, an original novel by Poul Anderson (40¢); a collection of 4 novelletes ("The Doors of his Face, The Lamps of his Mouth"; "A Rose For Ecclesiastes"; "The Graveyard Heart"; "The Set") Four For Tomorrow by Roger Zelazny (45¢); plus the double, Envoy To The Dog Star by Frederick L. Shaw, Jr., bound with Shock Wave by Walt & Leigh Richmond (50¢).

Ballantine s-f releases for February include Out Of My Mind, an original paperback collection of previously published short stories by John Brunner, plus The Return Of Tarzan by Edgar Rice Burroughs, a reissue featuring a cover tie-in with the TV series. Ballantine notes that their recent reissue of Tarzan Of The Apes sold over 500,000 copies. Some one, somewhere, still reads the stuff, I guess...

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Religion In American Life Dept.: The Reverend William L. Donaho was featured in a 3 column story in the San Francisco Examiner. The story, complete with photo, recorded the first psychedelic wedding in San Francisco. The couple wedded in psychedelic bliss were Eloise and Sean Erlin, who explained to the press "People who are really where they're at, who are already there, are that much more there with LSD." The Reverend Donaho is actually a priest with the legally recognized Church Of The Brotherhood Of The Way (no relation to the First Church Of Donald Duck, Scientist), and can actually perform weddings, funeral services, confessions, and all that religious jass like that there.

More Of That Old-Time Religion: Bill Blackbeard and Barbara May were married on Saturday, December 24th, in a ceremony in The Church Of The Brotherhood Of The Way. The ceremony was conducted by Reverend Richard Ellington. Bill and Barbara plan to live in Berkeley. ((thanx, Bill Donaho!))

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John W. Campbell Dept.: Hughes Aircraft has built a mass sensor for NASA under a \$192,000 contract. The research model can detect the mass of a moving object in a room: eventual goal is a detector to measure the mass of planetoids and other bodies on interplanetary probes in the asteroid belt and beyond.

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Anthony Boucher Dept. Continued: Reg Smith reports from Santa Ana that Anthony Boucher also has, besides "Golden Voices" (an opera Program) another program entitled "Escape"; it is a bi-weekly show dealing in reviews and talks on mystery, S-F, and fantasy. Recent programs have dealt with death & humor in mystery writing, an interview with August Derleth, and other topics. The program is broadcast over KPFA, a Pacifica Foundation Station in the LA area.

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Steve Stiles For TAFF !!!
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