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C O N V E N T I O N

What? The Contracon, a convention of s-f fans

Where? In Chicago at the Fort Dearborn Hotel.

When? The weekend of 12-13 Octobe .

Who? Anyone at all; so far this includes Bob
Block, Henry Elmer, Frank Robinson Paul
Kingsbief, Ollie Saarl, and famous fan
#23 Phil Schumann, to mention but a few.

What do I do? Send a reservation letter or
telegram to Fort Dearborn Hotel at least
two weeks ahead of time for your room.

2) Be ready to kick in 50¢ to pay
for meeting hall.



CONTRACETIVE - Port Lost in the Fourth Generation, by William A. L.
Rathbone (Part 3, continued from last week.)

During Wednesday, the influx reached its maximum. I seem to have spent most of the day at Slanshack, playing the piano for Myrtle, and watching the passing parade. In the evening we had dinner at Clifton's Cafeteria, after which we repaired to the bus station to give Art Widner a rousing welcome. Upon returning, a few of us walked over to van Vogt's for a short visit. Van Vogt turned out to be a very nice person, about fortyish, pleasant and soft-spoken. Following that there was a visit to a couple of bars in the interest of stirring up excitement, with a group that included another brand-new fan: Donald Day, of Portland, Oregon. There's a guy who has a complete collection of pro-mags, completely cross-indexed, but who had never met another fan, and who had only seen one fanzine before coming to the convention. A most pleasant chap, also. Another newcomer from Portland was Ralph Reyburn Phillips, a weird artist, a few of whose items were sold at the auction later. Returning from the drinking tour to Slanshack, I found that Jack Speer had arrived, with more hair than I remember him having possessed previously.

So comes convention day finally and we all flock to the hall, gathering autographs on all sides. My autograph pages look like a list of all the prominent fans. Almost everybody was there that you could think of, except a few hermits like Dunk and Warner. Even Thaddeus Bruce Yerke was there, "out of morbid curiosity". In the morning nothing happened but fangab and book buying from the book-sellers who displayed their wares on various tables. There was a copy of "The Outsider and Others" on one table, but it was chained down.

The afternoon session started with the customary welcome by Hodgkins, who introduced Daugherty, who welcomed us some more, and who introduced the celebrities who rose to say a few words into the microphone which Ackerman held, dashing madly to all sides of the room. The procedure seemed to be that Daugherty would mention the name of a prominent fan or author, who would rise to his feet amidst wild applause, and would say his little piece. These little speeches were of uniform brilliance, the average running as follows: "I can't think of a thing to say fellows but I'm glad to be here." But since they never waited until the applause was completed, nobody heard them anyway.

Then van Vogt gave his talk as the guest of honor. Many things will be said about this speech, and in fact, certain lines from it are already immortal. A.E. had a great many things to say, but unfortunately, and for some obscure reason, he omitted certain connecting sentences, which made the result like a puzzle -- the object being for you to guess what he was driving at. The general topic was: Here we are; what are we going to do about it? Are we going to go along in the old way as before the war, or are we going to try to improve ourselves? He then started speaking of methods of self-improvement, but because he did not sufficiently emphasize what he was driving at in general, it sounded like he was endorsing a bunch of cults. I thought all along he was going to end up by speaking of semantic training, but he never did get to that, although it would have been the logical development of his subject. At any rate, it was one of the two parts of the convention which gave the brain something to chew on. The rest was either entertainment or fan business.

Following van Vogt's talk, Ackerman and Laney presented the Foundation to fandom. This went off in a rather dull, routine manner, but for a good reason. Far from the big surprise that was being planned, everybody seemed to know about it, everybody dutifully paid their money and pledged their contributions, and that was that. The reason for this was Ackerman. It seems that the boy had been knocking himself out working night and day, and when the time came for him to make his speech, he was out on his feet. He made the presentation in a monotone, failing to emphasize the important points, altho later Laney did a better job in explaining the publishing program of the Foundation. A goodly amount of money was collected, and many promises of contributions of books and collector's items were entered into a big record book.

~~Life in October~~

ODDS AND ENDS: Papers bring out news of B.bot poison developed by biological warfare, with Science Illustrated to carry story in next ish....Brain to have direct control over wooden leg by electro-mechanical devices operating from nerve ends....The Theater Guild has scheduled "Lute Song", a fantasy based on a Chinese play, with music by Raymond Scott; watch for this in your city if it's on the circuit....Sir James Jeans dies not too long after H.G. Wells. Ackerman and Joquel have gotten out a nicely mimeed Memorial to H.G. Wells at 15¢. It has a portrait cover....Chanticleer #7 and Canadian Fandom #11 new arrivals in past week....Next issue of EMBER goes to a minimum of 2 pages for 5¢. Special articles, biographical sketches, more illustrations are promised. Coming up will be articles by Farnsworth of the Rocket Society, Klingbiel, Rothman, Joquel, and others; also first on the biographical parade will be that famous author Robert Bloch. Bloch is a gentleman. I remember....D.B. Thompson is in Hays, Kansas working as a draftsman on the Cedar Bluffs irrigation project....Gerry de la Ree reports 7 Sept Colliers with article by Pendray "Next Stop the Moon", and 9 Sept TIME mentions Farnsworth in discussion of proposed moon projectile....Elsner wants to know: "Can anyone tell me why, in Heinrich Hauser's AGHARTI, all the surrounding temperature froze suddenly to 60 below zero when Stufa fired the V-77? And why did the same thing happen to the place where the V-7 hit? And what did Heinrich do to the fuse before he fired the rocket? Or was the whole thing so much hog wash?"....George Tullis address: 2424 S. 26th Street, Apt. 2, Arlington, Virginia....Richard Frank, editor & publisher of the old Bizarre Series, one of Fandom's few printed pubs, is now editing a department called GED, STRANGE, AND CURIOUS for a newspaper with 600,000 circulation.