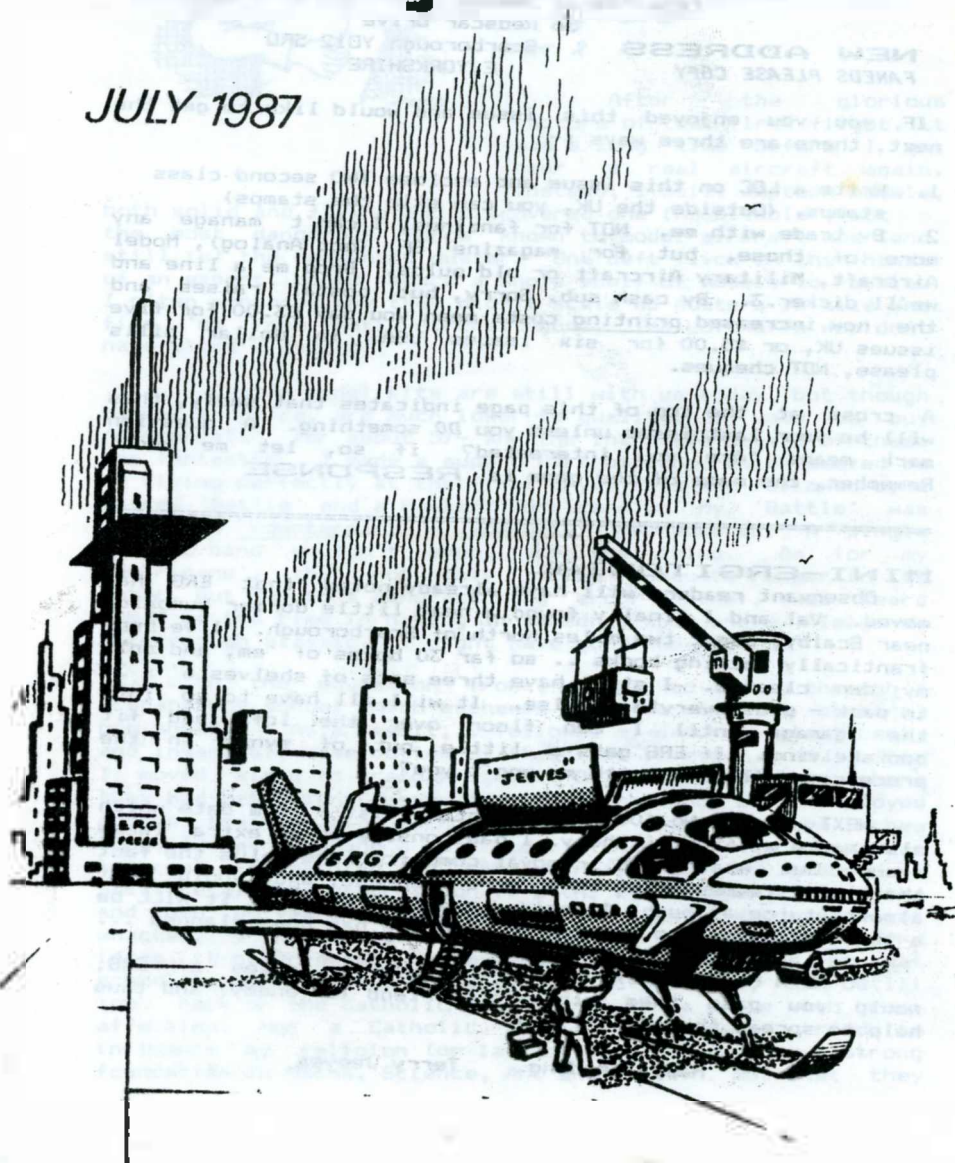


ERG 99

Quarterly

60p

JULY 1987



99

NOW IN ERG'S 29TH. YEAR

From Terry Jeeves

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E.YORKSHIRE

IF you you enjoyed this issue and would like to get the next, there are three ways :-

1. Write a LOC on this issue and enclose TWO second class stamps. (Outside the UK, you can skio the stamps)
2. By trade with me. NOT for fanzines, I can't manage any more of those, but for magazine SF (not Analog), Model Aircraft, Military Aircraft or old pulps. Drop me a line and we'll dicker.
3. By cash sub. Sorry, but postal raises and the now increased printing costs mean you pay £3.00 for five issues UK, or \$5.00 for six issues USA, in dollar bills please, NOT cheques.

A cross at the top of this page indicates that sadly, this will be your last issue unless you DO something. A question mark means "Are you interested?" if so, let me know. Remember, the name of the game is **RESPONSE**

MINI-ERGITORIAL

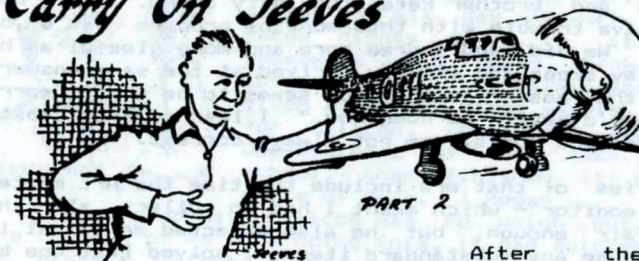
Observant readers will have already noted that ERG has moved. Val and I finally found a neat little dormer bungalow near Scalby, about two miles North of Scarborough. I've been frantically packing books .. so far 30 boxes of 'em, and only my den cleared. I still have three sets of shelves 6' x 3' to pack - plus everything else. It will all have to go into the garage until I can floor over the loft and fit bookshelving. If ERG gets a little out of synch in the process, you'll bear with me won't you?

NEXT issue No.100 due on October 1st - is a date which also marks my 65th birthday. I had considered an extra large issue, but what with removal complications, plus the fact that large issues bring in no more response, and would cost almost twice as much, I decided against it -- but it WILL be a landmark issue, so one little surprise has been planned ...

DO ME A FAVOUR? If you don't save your copies of ERG, would you pass them along to a friend (or enemy) and thus help to spread the gospel? Ta.

Happy reading, Terry Jeeves

Carry On Jeeves



PART 2

After the glorious rapture of that first flight, it was a long time before I got near a real aircraft again. Instead, I built umpteen models,

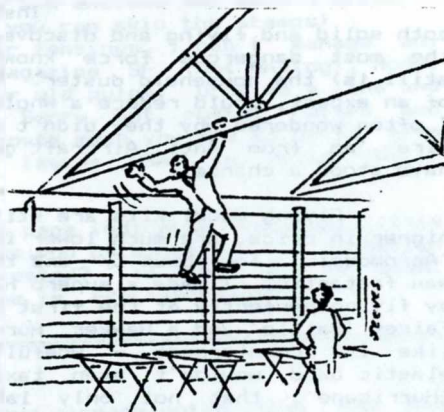
both solid and flying and discovered one indubitable fact - the most dangerous force known to model aircraft was (and still is) the household duster. One deft flick in the hands of an expert, could reduce a whole shelf of models to rubble. I often wondered why they didn't scale up dusters in size and fire 'em from Anti Aircraft guns. The Luftwaffe wouldn't have stood a chance.

Flying model kits are still with us today, but though higher in price, are much lower in quality. I used to buy 'Aeromodels' for about 5/- and the intricate detail of these was fantastic. I made a superb Hart biplane, which amazed me by flying perfectly at the first try. This was followed by a Fairey 'Battle' and a Hawker 'Hurricane'. My 'Battle' was like its counterpart - woefully underpowered. A single elastic band wouldn't even taxi the thing. As for my 'Hurricane', that not only lacked adequate rubber in its motor, but due to a manufacturing error (mine), was years ahead of its time in having an anhedral wing angle. Imagine, with enough elastic, it might have gone supersonic!

On the education front, I shirked my way through a preparatory school which eschewed such horrors as corporal punishment. As a result, I followed my naturally lazy bent, and invariably came bottom of the class in every exam. Then I moved along to grammar school, De La Salle College, where they had Detention Classes for offenders, and also employed modern teaching aids such as a leather strap some ten inches long, and an inch and a half wide. I suddenly acquired an interest in learning and this was reflected in my grades. I still recall the progression .. 29th, 24th, 23rd, 15th, 4th, and then two years of being top of the class. Whenever I got whacked, I had earned it, and no wimpering. Despite modern ideas, it never seemed to have done me any harm. As for that school in general, I enjoyed every minute of it, and still look back on the Catholic Brothers at De La Salle with great affection. Not a Catholic myself, they never tried to influence my religion (or lack of it), but gave me a strong foundation in Maths, Science, Art and English. Not that they

were infallible, I still recall the time I got DY for getting a Maths problem wrong. Brother Peter opened the extra session and set me to re-working the thing. I got the same answer .. and again on second and third tries. By this time, it was 4-35 and Brother Peter took pity on me. "It's not like you to have trouble with this sort of problem let's do it together." We did, and I grew more and more gleeful as he emulated all my steps and finally arrived at the same answer. "Oh dear, the answer in the book seems to be wrong, sorry about that, you'd better go home now." I learned from that, that authority (and books) are not always correct.

Memories of that era include the time the Art master appointed me monitor - which meant I had to collect all the homework. Fair enough, but he also expected me to vet it first, and refuse any substandard item. I solved that one by helping out the less able to lay out their work. I was also in charge of setting out the folding desks in the gym whilst everyone else was in assembly. Lovely fun, I appointed myself two helpers and we would unfold those desks like lightning, then send them skidding along the polished floor like runaway toboggans. This efficient system left us with some spare time, so after setting a lookout, we developed our muscles by climbing up the wall bars, swinging across the roof girders and sliding down the support columns at the other side of the gym. Great fun, and we never got caught out.



When war started in '39, I was still happily modelling and in addition to SF, reading all the Air magazines I could find. Being in my final year at De La Salle, I was too young for the RAF, so enrolled as a cycle messenger in the A.R.P. This was a period memorable for such events as the time I was turning out during an alert and skooting full tilt and lightless through the blackout. I hit a housebrick left thoughtfully in the middle of the road. That led to my first wartime flight. On another similar occasion, I came down a steep hill, shot round a corner and caused the Chief Warden to jump for his life .. probably his first wartime flight.

Shortly after this, I Matriculated - eight Credits and one Distinction (Maths). My heart bleeds for today's youth as it struggles to get a single O level. Anyway, having not a clue as to what I might do for a living, I wound up as an embryo steel analyst. I also transferred from the A.R.P. to the Home Guard and began training with them.

Analysis also saw me attending Night School courses for the degree of A.Met. This involved sessions in Technical

Drawing, Theory of Analysis, and Practical Analysis. At this



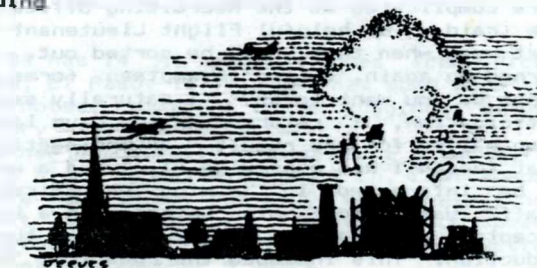
GUESSTIMATION

point, Fate re-shuffled the cards and things happened rapidly. I was finding the Analysis utterly boring .. what with doing it all day at work, then having three nights given to it .. plus 'homework', I could think of better things to do. This culminated when I was given my weekly steel sample to analyse for Silicon, Phosphorus and Manganese. One did part of this task at evening school, then finished it off at one's place of work. I began ...

First step with Silicon was to weigh out a sample. Since umpteen of us were doing this, it was quicker to use the last bloke's weights already on the balance. This I did but it wasn't until I had finished the analysis that I found he had put the wrong weights on the pan. Oh hell! Instead of doing the thing again, I calculated the requisite 'fudge factor' and applied it to my result. Next day, at work I did my Phosphorus estimation in the time honoured way .. holding it up to the light and guesstimating. My Manganese went OK until I had burned it off in the muffle furnace .. but whilst removing it, I sneezed and blew the ashes all over the bench. Oh well, scrape 'em up and press on.

Came the following week, and I handed in my results. Normally, I got the Silicon right, Phosphorus in the ball park, and Manganese nowhere in sight. **THIS TIME**, I got all three spot on! I began to realise steel analysis wasn't for me - but what to do?

The Luftwaffe solved that one. A few days later, the sirens went as usual around 7pm, so I turned in at the Home Guard post expecting the customary single aircraft, one bomb and then the 'All Clear'. Instead, wave after wave of the blighters began to come over and paste hell out of the city. I was given an empty rifle and put outside on guard. This gave me a spectacular view of everything - including the sparks flying as shrapnel crashed, hissed and bounced around the place. - At one point, a bomb scored a direct hit on the local gasometer sending it up in a mounting mushroom of smoke and flame, just like an atom bomb. Then another bomb brought down the overhead tramline cables. They leaped and thrashed in all directions, sparking like crazy before finally subsiding. I presumed the cut-outs must have blown. This theory was strengthened when a lorry came belting along and ran slap into the tangled mess. The driver backed out, circled the cables and drove off. Whereupon another bomb



dropped and jarred the wires -- and dammit, they leaped and sparked all over again. That driver never knew how close he had been to electrocution. It must have been about midnight, when a hullabaloo behind me turned out to be a couple of sergeants forcibly restraining a bloke from lugging a crate of .303 ammo up the stairs so that he could have a bash at the bombers. Seemed a good idea to me. Anyway, my spell of guard duty finished, I went back inside into the darkened hall - and it suddenly lit up, the black out curtains flew high in the air, and the windows cascaded in. A bomb had just taken out the church behind our hall.

The bombers kept up the bombardment until around 6 am next morning, whilst the only injury I sustained was a cut finger where I had dropped my rifle on it when diving flat as yet another bomb came down.

Daylight and All Clear saw me picking my way home over rubble which made roads impassable. The big question was, would I have a home to get to? It turned out that I did, in fact our house avoided damage through all the raids which followed .. only to succumb to re-development many years later.

After a quick breakfast. I rolled down to the lab. only to find that when the gasometer went up, it took our gas supply with it, so the lab was closed down. This was obviously an omen. Not only was I fed up with analysis, but I was now barred from it until gas supplies were restored. I set off down town. Rubble and burning buildings everywhere. Sheets of ice where water from the hoses had frozen. Gaunt-faced A.R.P. workers with stubby chins clambered among the debris. The city was unrecognisable .. familiar stores gutted, streets vanished, a pub with a shelter full of people beneath it had received a direct hit. Utter chaos as the rescue services struggled to bring back order. -- I did the thing I had wanted to do for ages. I went and volunteered for the R.A.F.

Put like that, it sounds easy. Actually, it was a bit more complicated as the Recruiting Office had been damaged in the raid. A helpful Flight Lieutenant told me to come back next week when they would be sorted out. A week later, I duly turned up again, filled in umpteen forms and in answer to "What do you want to be?", I naturally said, "Pilot". Full of anticipation, I returned a few days later for the medical - then waited for the result - an apologetic letter explaining that though I was otherwise A1, I had a weak right eye. Would I be interested in joining as a Wireless Operator, Ground Staff? Half a loaf being better than a kick in the teeth, I accepted and January 1941 saw me turn up at Padgate for Induction. This included the question, "How soon do you want to be called in?" I answered "Right away" whilst the bloke next to me poured out a sob story of all the things he had to do first. As you might have guessed, he was taken into the ranks there and then, whilst I was sent home on 'Deferred Service'. This lasted until April the 14th, 1941, when AC.2 JEEVES B.T. 1085729 got a travel warrant and orders to report for 'ab initio' training .. not to Padgate, but to Blackpool!

* * *



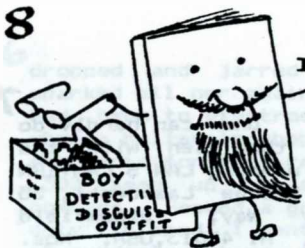
One can hardly do better than open with the Award winning LAN'S LANTERN from George Laskowski, 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013, USA. Nos. 20 and 21 are to hand, both are mammoth, 100+ page affairs of superb production, layout, artwork and variety. You'll find reviews (fmz, book, film etc), articles serious and light-hearted, doodles of LOCs and just about

everything else in the fannish line. Highly recommended and is available for the usual, or \$2.00 cash. There's no wonder it came top of the Fan Poll, I only hope the work involved won't cause George to semi-gafiate to recover. STOP PRESS - It hasn't -- No.22 just arrived, same huge size, and if anything, better than ever. All the usual items, plus items on criticism, personal time warps, history warping, cookery, Ellison, 'Dangerous Visions' and much, much more. Excellent, no fan should be without it.

Another Giant is HOAXERAMA from Elst Weinstein (and Mike Glycer), 859 N. Mountain Ave., #18-G, Upland, CA 91786, USA. 95pp for \$3.00 or the usual. All articles, verse etc are some form of hoax (i.e. spoof, satire or downright untrue), so the name of the game is fun. Production is impeccable, and there's even a year by year listing of 'Hogu' Awards for such items as 'Best Feud', 'Most Obscure Fanzine' and so on. Not for the serious and constructive fan, but great stuff for the rest of us. The giant syndrome slackens off to 24 A4 pages with ENTROPION 6 from Nick Shears, 27 Chiltern Rd., Wendover, Aylsbury, Bucks. Production quality stays high however, and you get film and book notes, travel, computers, pop 'music' letters and a poem. No rate given, but a begging letter will probably do the trick.

LIGHT IN THE BUSHEL #4 has 14 A4 pages, comes from Richard Brandt, 4740 N. Mesa, El Paso, TX 79912 and has some good art, personal notes, book notes, reactions to a mugging, a drug overdose and a burglary - then a lettercol. MIMOSA.2 38pp is another beautifully mimeod issue after a five year gap, from Dave & Nicki Lynch, 4207 Davis Ln, Chattanooga, Tenn 37416. Available for asking, but \$1.00 would help funds. Excellent cover art and interiors, Tucker's GOM speech, articles, a play, cartoons and LOCs. Very nice production, let's hope #3 isn't held up another 5 years.

PULP, 26pp, 0to, Vinc Clarke, 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent has a spoof game item by W. Willis, (a well known fan of the fifties), Maureen Potter reviews 5 fmz in depth, nattering by Chuch Harris and a lettercol. Nice friendly zine, get it for the usual.



IN PURSUIT OF THE ORIGINAL PAPERBACK EDITION AND OTHER STRANGE TALES

by John Bradford

I remember one day, way back in '74 walking into a local bookshop to find two editions of Zelazny's DAMNATION ALLEY, side-by-side on a shelf. Nothing unusual in that, you may say .. except that one had a good Eddie Jones rendering of a futuristic Hell's Angel splashed across its cover, the other an equally good Jones' painting of the super tank 'Our Hero' ploughing across the radioactive American wasteland. Both were published by Sphere, they had been simultaneously released .. and I suffered all the agonies of the damned trying to decide which to buy!

Publishers at that time were fast catching on to the growing interest in SF cover art, exploiting its commercial possibilities for all it was worth. SF MONTHLY was probably already more than a twinkle in some enterprising NEL editor's eye, and 'speculative fiction' rapidly becoming a term open to more than one interpretation.

...Which is all by way of leading into the latest promotion gimmick designed to prise the extra few quid from your pocket; namely, the so-called 'Original Paperback Edition'. Some issues back, Terry queried the practice of labelling books this way, convinced he'd read the stories in one such collection long before.

Almost certainly, he had. And at this point it is necessary to make it perfectly clear that a book does not have to contain any original material whatsoever in order to be classed as 'original' or a '1st Edition'.

Ballard's THE VENUS HUNTERS (Granada 1980) is a 'Granada Paperback Original' and is also listed in Joseph Connolly's book MODERN FIRST EDITIONS. The book contains 10 stories. The printing history clearly states that the first 7 have been lifted from an earlier Panther collection - THE OVERLOADED MAN, while the remaining 3 have all been previously published in other collections or magazines. The most recent story pre-dates the collection by two years, the eldest by thirteen. Despite this, it remains an 'original paperback' and a '1st. Edition' It's the first time that this particular arrangement of stories has appeared in print, you see...

This still begs the question, was there ever a 'Granada Hardback Original' of this book, possibly published at the same time? Quite often, short of making enquiries at a good bookshop, there's no way of knowing; and in the case of an



HARDBACK ORIGINAL

out of print book, it's almost impossible to tell (Connolly doesn't). Granada Books is now Grafton - who publish both hard and paperbacks, and the simultaneous publication of both, is a fairly well established practice. For the casual reader, this isn't terribly important; but for the collector who may wish to determine the value of his collection, it's a problem.

Arthur C. Clarke's TALES FROM THE WHITE HART (Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972) makes no claim to be either an original publication, or a 1st Edition; and in the light of Clarke's prefatory remarks that "...this was my third collection of short stories, published by Ballantine in paperback in 1957..." A publisher would look a bit silly trying to make any such claim. Wouldn't he?

Apparently not. Both Ballantine and S&J editions are listed as 'firsts' in Connolly's book. Again, we're not informed whether the price set is for a S&J paper or hardback. And - the mystery deepens - the preface to the 1972 book is dated May 1969...

So where did that come from? In the absence of any immediate solution, I think I'll just write this off as Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious First Edition .. and move quickly on.

Moorcock's THE MAD GOD'S AMULET was first published in 1969 by Mayflower. Moorcock's copyright date though, is a year earlier, so could a hardback edition have preceded it? Another explanation might be that THE SORCERER'S AMULET was published in 1968 by Lancer .. which is of course, the same book. Arrow similarly claim that their 1971 edition of THE RITUALS OF INFINITY is its 'first publication in book form'. This is definitely wrong. Could it be they didn't know it appeared a whole four years before as half an ACE double, under its original NEW WORLDS serial title, THE WRECKS OF TIME?

Perhaps Moorcock forgot to tell them.

Perhaps he forgot to tell Lin Carter something too, since that gentleman's introduction to his second FLASHING SWORDS collection opens: "You have never read any of the stories in this collection before, because they are all brand new, written especially for this volume.." and he goes on to cite a "new Elris yarn", THE JADE MAN'S EYES.

Carter's collection was published in America in 1974; it first appeared in Britain in 1975 (Remember those dates).

In front of me is a slim paperback of about 75 pages. One of those upmarket jobs, artily printed in green ink, overpriced, and with pages which fall out as soon as it's opened. Its title is THE JADE MAN'S EYES. It was published simultaneously in Britain and America by the Unicorn Fantasy Press - in 1973 - one year before the supposedly original Carter collection ever saw print.

I wouldn't care to go into the legal niceties of this (I couldn't afford the lawyer's fees); but if these printing histories are accurate, it looks as though someone was misled - possibly Carter. Definitely the reader who bought the FLASHING SWORDS collection in the belief he was paying for entirely original, never before published material.

The ambiguity of phrasing in some printing histories is often misleading, making it rough on the researcher and possibly resulting in expensive mistakes for the collector of genuine first editions. The Corgi paperback of Sturgeon's THE DREAMING JEWELS states that the novel was, 'Originally

published in the UK by Victor Gollancz Ltd. Gollancz Edition Published 1968' It's unlikely that many longtime SF readers would be misled by this statement. But a relative newcomer to the field might reasonably take this to mean that the book's first publication was in this country in 1968. So far as I can determine, the book's first publication was in 1950, and almost certainly in America. Even the 1950 date is open to question, since it might refer to to that novel's other title THE SYNTHETIC MAN.

It appeared in 1955 in the UK as a paperback, Nova SF Novel.2 from Nova Publications .. and this credits.. 'First published in the USA.1950 by Greenberg.' T.J. <@

Which brings us to the sometimes questionable business of re-issuing books with new titles - frequently with no indication that they have been published before. Such re-titling is a writer's privilege which he may exercise for a number of reasons. A title may be unimaginative, thus uncommercial. It may have badly 'dated' as Moorcock's early Martian trilogy - whose original titles may easily have been confused with a host of others. Brian Aldiss did it with AN AGE (Faber 1967). Possibly anticipating risible comments on the time it takes to read this unusually slow-paced novel, Doubleday published it in 1968 as CRYPTOZOIC. Interestingly, Connolly lists both these titles as 'firsts', notes they are the same book, and gives the same market value to each. So a novel issued under a new title, it would appear, is a '1st Edition' (The Aldiss book isn't an isolated case). With the interest in first editions reaching endemic proportions this puts the whole matter in a different light. How far can an author go before this privilege crosses the line into 'collector exploitation' or 'reader abuse'? Apparently, as far as he likes.

Back in 1976, an obscure fan writer (Rog Pile) did an article on cataloguing an SF library. He was interested to note that the opening lines of Vogt's short story THE GREAT MACHINE were the same as those of the novel MOONBEAST. He then found that MOONBEAST had been previously published as THE BEAST - which had originally appeared in A VAN VOGT OMNIBUS. Looking at his copy of THE BEAST, he found it had originally appeared as two stories, THE GREAT ENGINE and THE WONDERFUL MAN, the latter having been first published as THE CHANGELING. The Macfadden paperback of THE CHANGELING says, 'The complete text of the original edition'. By this time one suspects he was tempted to enquire, "Just what was the original edition?"

Following up that writer's line of enquiry, I note that THE BOOK OF PIATH was re-issued by Paperback Library as TWO HUNDRED MILLION A.D., and QUEST FOR THE FUTURE (Ace.1970) though bearing no previous history, is either a development of FILM LIBRARY, or another 'cannibalisation' of several earlier pieces. The same goes for THE MIND CAGE, which had its origins as THE GREAT JUDGE.

All of this seems harmless enough on the surface, and just part of the fun of collecting - there's undeniably a morbid fascination in sifting through books to find how many times, under how many titles, and varying forms, they've been issued before. But for the collector, who almost by definition, is a completist, it can pose expensive problems.

Buying may be up to him, but for a postal buyer who has no chance to examine the book, or for the casual reader, perhaps quickly picking up a book to read on the train, it can be disappointing to say the least.

Vogt's is admittedly, an extreme case, but serves to illustrate the point; just about every writer changes a title or three at some stage in his career. I wouldn't even like to guess at how many 'doubles' I've unwittingly picked up over the years.

Legend tells how Bertram Chandler wrote his rip-roaring novels of space piracy and parallel worlds whilst between ports aboard his tramp steamer (One of those legends I'd like to believe, even if it's not true.) His novel CATCH THE STAR WINDS (Lancer.1969) boasts what appears to be a rather fetching painting of Carol Emshwiller for its cover, (it's not credited or signed); and if this weren't inducement enough, bears the legend, 'Never before published'. Strong stuff for an author whose novels usually appeared first in serial form. Turning to the print history, we find Chandler and Lancer's mutual copyright of 1960. So far, so good .. but look lower down the page, and you'll see that the last 27 pages have been padded out with the short story ZOOLOGICAL SPECIMEN, dated 1956. 'Never before published'? Turn to the back cover and there's a slight amendment - a 'get out clause' if you like - 'Never before published in book form'. There's still a minor mystery about this one. On page 82 of THE VISUAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF is a small reproduction of the cover of ORIGINAL SF for May.1957. In rather large print, it states that its contents include Chandler's ZOOLOGICAL SPECIMEN. That's one year later than the Lancer date - if you're still counting. So just how original were the stories in ORIGINAL SF? Aldiss remarks elsewhere that its origins were entangled with those of SCIENCE FICTION STORIES and FUTURE .. the sort of cryptic comment that makes any dedicated researcher want to walk quietly away and bathe his fevered brow in a dark corner.

Are there any genuinely original paperbacks then? Yes, but you have to dig hard to find them; and if you're collecting for 'investment' purposes you'd be well advised to double check their authenticity before buying. Sphere publish only paperbacks so far as I can determine, and seem to be the only entirely independent British publishing company (not an imprint of a larger company, nor with imprints of its own). Aldiss' THE PRIMAL URGE (Sphere.1967) was the first British publication of this novel (though it appeared first in the USA). Graham Masterton seems to have his first UK editions published as Sphere paperbacks. Next to Sphere, Star (an imprint of W.H.Allen & Co.) is a fairly safe bet. Then there are the U.S. Lancer, Ace, Belmont, Ballantine, Tower and Paperback Library publications which are frequently genuine originals.

In closing, here are one or two more ways publishers cut corners, and a hole in your wallet.. I began by mentioning two Sphere editions of DAMNATION ALLEY with different covers. Old tricks die hard. Last year, one of Jean Auel's stone-age sagas appeared with a choice of covers. If I remember correctly, one had a shiny green cover, the other shiny red. The Macfadden edition of Poul Anderson's TIME AND STARS collection stated that it was the 'complete text of the

original edition'. Panther made no such claim when they re-issued it; they couldn't. The last story in the collection, 'Eve Times Four', had for some unknown reason been omitted - despite this, the Panther edition appears the larger book, the paper thicker, the print blown up.

One of the most blatant examples of 'unusual alterations' must have been the 1973 Penguin paperback of *WATERSHIP DOWN*. This book first appeared in paperback under the juvenile Puffin imprint, and as such was markedly cheaper than similar sized 'adult' novels. I bought the Puffin for 40p, sales rocketed, the publishers caught on that they had a runaway best seller.. and the next week, I walked into the same shop to find that the imprint had changed from Puffin to Penguin .. and the price more than doubled to 95p. (which throws into question, just how 'realistic' book prices really are.)



A PENGUIN IN THE HAND

Finally on the subject of corner cutting covers, there's the Mysterious Case of The Ubiquitous Beetle. This particularly repellent insect, (a kind of stag beetle with a shock of hair and one human eye) made its debut, so far as I can tell, on the cover of a Consul reprint of a Richard Marsh's horror novel, *THE BEETLE* in 1965. The following year, Harl Vincent's *DOOMSDAY PLANET* was published by Tower .. and the same picture, this time tinted a predominant red, was used. *DOOMSDAY PLANET* was reprinted a few months later - no Beetle this time - but Tower must have been mighty short of illustrators, since the cover featured a photograph of Fireball XLS (with all identifying insignia carefully airbrushed out - presumably in the hope Gerry Anderson wouldn't notice?). Was this the last of the Beetle then? No such luck. It featured yet a third time on the cover of a Tower/Belmont paperback, a reprint of *THE FUTURE MAKERS* collection in June 1974.

Someone it appears, is short of a cover artist. Suitable applicants contact Tower/Belmont books. One qualification necessary, must be able to paint Beetles!

Even as I write the last lines to this article, I'm watching the news and see part of this is redundant. A 'Battle Of The Books' has begun and Sphere, our one independent publisher has been swallowed up by the Penguin Group. Life's going to get tough for the author - and for the reader too. A novel entitled *SARUM* is to be released with a choice of no less than six different covers - with the expressed intention of selling that many more copies.

This isn't publishing, it's insanity; and in the end, the author, reader, and publisher will all lose out. Just sit back and keep your eyes on those remainder shelves .. and wait. They'll soon be full.

John Bradford === April 1987.

ERGitorial

interjections are in italics
between these pretty little
computer created symbols -
and we open with .. <@

ROG PILE

34 HARRISON RD
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CORNWALL TR15 3JR

'JOURNEY INTO SPACE' Brought back fond memories of other contrivances authors used to get their characters off the ground. Leinster's *WAILING*



ASTEROID had a scientist getting signals from space telling him how to build some kind of device from Plaster-of-Paris and 'electric stuff'. It gave the impression of being a super duper, battery-driven Roman catapult. I always had a fondness for the bit in Heinlein's *THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS* where the Moon colony started chucking rocks at Earth ... using catapults. <@ Surely, it was not a catapult, but a linear motor accelerator? <@ The illustration on page 5 is excellent, but no serious magazine editor in his right mind would have consigned it to the bottom inch and a half of the page; much more likely that it would have been blown to four times its size and spread across the lower halves of two pages. <@ I fancy if you check a few *Analog*s, etc. Rog, you'll find quite a few similar end-of-page fillers. <@ One reason you might not get the response you're looking for, is that ERG is simply presenting too much of the same thing. It's dead easy writing a panning letter on a bad or controversial issue, but keep bringing out more of the same .. amusing anecdotes, personal reminiscences, reasonable reviews, stories which aren't bad enough to pan, but not good enough to fetch money from a publisher .. and I don't think you'll get much response. <@ Comment anyone ?? Actually, quite a few ERG itees have gone on to sell to publishers <@

ALAN BURNS (19 THE CRESCENT, KING'S RD, 8TH, WALLSEND NE28 7RE)

I dare bet a pint of your favourite tippie that prior to the war, you ne'er saw a spaceship parked on its tails, they always lay flat in pre-war illos, so accordingly, Cartiff's ship should lie flat. <@ Can't agree Alan - see cover for *TALES OF WONDER 2* (In S.F. ART Brian Aldiss) or the pre-war *BIS* rocket - or the rocket in Fritz Lang's '*GIRL IN THE MOON*' - or Goddard's first rocket - or *Wonder* c1934 cover for 'The Come' .. etc. <@ There is just no way a rocket can land standing up, *Journey Into Space* notwithstanding. The one on the moon wasn't a rocket, it was a flying bedstead kind of thing. <@ Do you mean the LEMs? But how else do you land on an airless world?? ..and what if anti-gravity comes along ?? <@ 'Carry On Jeeves' yes, I cut my model aircraft teeth on both the *FROGS*, the fighter and the *D.H.* type.

FRANCES CHAPMAN 22 REVINGLEY RD., REDRUTH, CORNWALL TR15 3DB

Liked the front cover, but hasn't it shrunk in more ways than one? I had to get out the magnifying glass. @> Actually, I calculate a 28pp Qto ERG has 1400 lines of print, whereas the new (reduced from A4) ERG has 1488 lines. <@

Much enjoyed 'Journey Into Space' - how come you seem to ignore the telepathic bit (McCaffrey, 'Doc' Smith etc?). @> They seemed cop outs - otherwise I'd have included John Carter. What I DID miss, was the high speed Ferris Wheel throwing off a space car as used in one of Neil R Jones' 'Prof Jameson' yarns. <@



TED HUGHES 10 KENMORE RD., WHITEFIELD, MANCHESTER M24 4BA

Tempted to reply to Thomas Ferguson of Belfast who thinks I show a marked sensitivity in my views on the atom bomb. I'm inclined to think he sees it through CND type spectacles whereas I'm looking through a pair stamped WW2. No harm, I accept that. We are what experience makes us. The difference is, I don't think he shows a marked lack of sensitivity. I can understand his revulsion to explosions nuclear. I just hold a different, possibly more practical view inculcated by five years of exposure to Hitler's submarines and bombers while our German friends were industriously working on their own atom bomb! If they'd managed to produce it, probably neither Thomas Ferguson nor Ted Hughes would be here now. Our country would be a subject state and Hitler's Thousand Year Reich would still have over 900-odd years to run. Thomas shouldn't kid himself that the world is full of civilised countries who don't like hurting people. The world is full of tigers and it's the bomb keeps 'em reasonably quiet. @> I couldn't agree more. It's a matter of perspectives. Those who survived the war, and the air raids, generally have a different attitude -- and think more highly of their own country. <@

ALAN SULLIVAN 83 ECCLESTON SQ., LONDON SW1V 1PB

'CARRY ON JEEVES' - I shall be watching this one closely - The bikes are now BMXs, the electrical kits have microprocessors. The fabric is not balsa and tissue, but metal and plastic - the cost, astronomical. It's the same sort of thing, but they've upped the stakes now. My brother and his friends talk only in terms of Radio Control. Hobbies like this are getting



far too expensive, you've got to have a job to pay for it all, or else be on the dole. One of life's little mysteries is that you always seem to have more money on the dole than when you're working. @> Egad, the great unemployed will scrag you for suggesting they have spare cash. <@

PAM EGAL 2 WESTFIELD WAY, CHARLTON HEIGHTS, WANTSAGE, OXON

No, I do not like your new style and format. My real dislike is the reduced print which makes it so difficult to get at the contents. Small print is bad enough, but when it fades away in places or gives the impression of the original being printed on a dot matrix printer that omits a third of the dots, it really is difficult. @> I'm afraid the fading off occurred in the photographic stage at the printers .. check foldouts such as page 2-23 or 6-19. As for missing dots, sadly, my Epson has started omitting risers and descender. I've contacted Epson -- who referred me to a Leeds dealer -- who suggested 'cleaning the head holes with a pin' !! But as for size .. seems clear enough to me. Anyone else out there having trouble? <@

VINCE CLARKE 14 WENDOVER WAY, WELLING, KENT DA14 2BN

So this is the new look, hi-tech ERG? Impressive as a feat of manipulating the computer, but possibly losing a bit of soul? I think there'll be an effect of distancing you from the reader which I don't like, but I'll have to see a couple more issues before deciding. I've always had a feeling that a fanzine is more of a letter which just happens to have a wide circulation, rather than a bland interface between you, as the Publisher on one side, and the Reader on the other. @> Surely a letter IS an interface? <@ In that respect, I'm even a bit dubious about right hand justification. @> Anyone else rather I omitted justification ?? <@ I wonder if it's something to do with the age of the observer? I feel somewhat uncomfortable with computer-generated text. Yeah, I know it's silly and that typewriters equally distance one from the reader, but I can't help thinking that the old style typer and corflu make things more human and approachable. Maybe I'm just a neo-Luddite at heart. @> Not so, Vince. I admit to feeling like you .. a duped zine IS a fanzine, whereas printing seems more remote. Hard to change a fifty year habit, but on the other hand, the very first fanzine I ever read (Gilling's SCIENTIFCTION) was A5 and printed. <@

PETER SMITH 11 TRENTA WALK, WOKING, SURREY GU21 4XP

Is SF analogy, mythology, predictions of the future? (probably a melange of all three) I tend to view SF as being not totally realistic, so I don't demand total credibility with ways of travelling to other planets. The universes and technologies authors create are more like the rules of a game, and the novels, games of solitaire played to those rules. @> Which is precisely why fans refer to story nit-picking as 'playing the game'. A story should (a) stick to known science as far as possible.. and (b) when departing from same, do it as plausibly as possible. Thus, it would be wrong to read of a manned spaceship taking off at 100G -- UNLESS the author 'invented' an inertia nullifier akin to a Bergenholme. @> The problems authors face when drawing up what a spaceship may and may not do is not to satisfy scientific speciousness but to make space travel not too difficult and not too easy. Now mankind has explored all the continents, sunk to the bottom of the sea and shot up to the Moon and Mars, tales of wonder must be set on alien worlds. @> Not necessarily .. it depends entirely on the story line -- alien invasion, society changes, mutation menaces, new inventions are just a few areas where adventures can still occur on Earth, Mars or the Moon. <@

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

IS ANYONE THERE...?

by ALAN BURNS



When I look back over the various weirdos that various writers - some who should have known better - have presented as coming from 'out there' in stories when SF was more than just a vehicle for protesting against the system, or for experiments in pornography, I occasionally wonder why, almost without exception, aliens were either represented as against us or had some underhanded and not exactly pleasant ideas to make something of us - such as tomorrow's dinner in Damon Knight's 'To Serve Man'. In another story, their object was to whip out our brains and use them to control various bits of machinery - but in any case, nothing especially nice was to happen to us. Now and then, there was something nice in store, 'Childhood's End' by Arthur C. Clarke being one such, but such stories are thin on the ground. The net result of 90% of E.T. stories was to create a galloping xenophobia in one and all, and just as in prognosticating scientific advances, it will all be wrong.

The strange people that rule our planetary governments have it even worse than us. Like the Pentagon spokesman who solemnly said about E.T., that if we meet an alien, we should smartly inform the authorities of the presence of him/her/it, because it may carry diseases we wot not of, such as a desire to tell those idiots in authority to go and get lost, as in E.F. Russell's world of Gand in, '...And Then There Were None'. I feel that when - no! damn the world 'aliens' - 'others from out there' come - having perfected interstellar travel, they will have perfected a mite more sense than to decimate us with diseases, as our missionaries did when they went to cannibal islands with no experience of civilised blessings such as T.B., measles and V.D., not to mention the, to them uncommon cold.

But are there intelligences out there? Or are we alone? I doubt it. Observations from orbiting telescopes have indicated the possibility of planets about several stars, and people have speculated that where there are planets there could be life - and where there is life, there is hope. However, it may well be that there is no good reason for advanced intelligences to visit us, or as in 2001 they have visited without our ever knowing it, and given a nudge here or a push there, causing outbreaks of common sense every so often, so that we progress. One day, some equivalent of Nils Bergenholm will invent the Interstellar Drive and it will be, "Welcome friends, glad you made it." For there will be a welcome, even if a cautious one as in Van Vogt's 'Far Centaurus' where, if I recall correctly, they

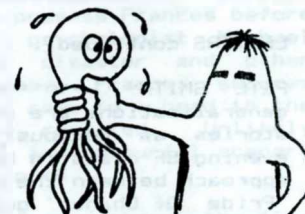
found us smelly and a bit repulsive and couldn't move fast enough to give us a ship with 'adeliclander' power to get us (a) back to Earth in a trice .. and (b) back in time, so it wouldn't be obvious.

What will the people out there have for us? Well you can bet your life they'll have done away with a lot of things that bedevil us socially, because social advance is the one thing that has lagged behind other every other science, yet it is the most important science of all. It's little use having cars and calculators if you also have yobs going around slugging the weak and helpless for the sheer hell of it.

So having decided what the advanced science of people out there will have done, we can consider their physical attributes. Odds are they'll be fitter, healthier, freer from disease and a darned sight longer lived. I think we can safely forget the presence of glorious pokies just waiting for a lusty Earthman to make love to them. Would any of our current womenfolk enjoy the embraces of a Neanderthal Man, or would our menfolk enjoy going to bed with a Cro-Magnon wife? No, I think we will be regarded much as the Aussies regard the Aborigines, except that we will be a lot better treated.

Now a race having interstellar travel will however, have enough good will to do what we do for a lot of primitive tribes. Go and cure diseases and perhaps a hundred years after contact, two hands from different civilisations will grasp each other in something more than friendship.

Yes, there will be hands. There is nothing more fitted for manipulating things. Tentacles are all right for grasping things roughly, but for delicate manipulation, there is nothing better than a hand. How many?, well there have been stories of four-armed people and at times, a third hand might be useful, but there is always some holding device if you care to get it. As for stronger hands? well maybe, but then again, you can get some tool or other to make up for a lack of strength - the old lever to move the Earth idea. But the mind; there people with the science for interstellar travel will have the advantage of us.



A thoughtful comment was made on that silly but beautiful film, 'Forbidden Planet' that had we the talent for star travel, we would hardly have marvelled at Robbie the robot, or the Krell machinery. We could have duplicated them without trouble. Of course, in the film, the crew of the spaceship reacted like the crew of a present day battleship, except the cook who could find nothing better for the robot to do than make bottles of booze. Advanced civilisations (we may assume they will find us before we find them) will have much improved the minds of their members. But we may ask, in what way? Mathematical genius? - we have computers.

Advanced social conscience? -Maybe, but I think a truly advanced mind (forget Arisia) will have conceptual ability much enhanced, by which I mean the talent to see the entirety of a situation instead of just one facet. Instead of blasting away at the Morbius monster, they would have realised it was either Morbius (and sent him to the psychiatrist) or the Krell machinery, in which case the engineering crew would have sorted it out.

That is why I think there will be civilisations out there waiting for us to get to them. It would be little use coming to us and saying, 'here is the secret of FTL travel', any more than one could offer Isaac Newton the design for a nuclear reactor. His scientific knowledge wouldn't be up to making it. But right through our development from slime in the sea to modern man, there have been skittles to knock down and score if we can. Extra terrestrial civilisations are just another such set. But when will we get the science to go out and meet them? Well Harry Stine wrote in Analog that the progress of the speed of travel formed an asymptotic curve and in about AD2000+, travel would be instantaneous. I'm not sure that I entirely agree, but then in my own lifetime I've seen progress jump in huge bounds. I don't imagine that I'll live to see it, but I dare bet, when we get out there, we'll find 'em much like us .. only more so.

-----Alan Burns-----

LETTERS continued..

FETE SMITH ~~continued~~ This is a generalisation, and all generalisations are only 10% true, but I don't take SF stories as seriously as some do. I occasionally go to an evening SF class in London's West End, but I find a different approach between the rest of the students and me. Cherryh's 'Pride Of Chanur' got praised for its scientific credibility and consistent universe, but to me, these are not important aspects of SF. I also found the ending of the story confused and amateurish. ~~Personally, I find Cherryh's yarns too tediously slow and involved, but as for accuracy and credibility I'd rate these highly in any yarn.~~ ~~© ©~~

GEORGE R. GRIEFF 1030 HAZEN WOODS DR. NE., ATLANTA, GA 30329
It was good to receive your letter and to learn that like me, you were involved with the B24 during the war. I should have guessed that you were. The editorial views in ERG have to belong to someone like a veteran of the Big Assed Bird. I flew 35 missions in B-24s and 10 more in B-17s. In one issue of ERG, you and a correspondent defended our use of the atom bomb in Japan. I couldn't agree more. I came back to the States in March 1945, and was about to be shipped to the Pacific when I was instead discharged from the service in July. I expect that was because with the bomb in hand (something which of course I didn't know at the time), the government anticipated an early Japanese surrender.

©- That's all this time folks, but you will write in time for the next issue won't you? ©©

Recent Reading



HEART OF THE COMET

Gregory Benford
& David Brin
Corgi £2.95

A mixed crew (some are gene manipulated 'Percells') set off in deep-freeze on a 70 year trip to Halley's comet with the aim of diverting its orbit and ultimately mining its minerals. In addition to political schisms, they must contend with conflict between normal 'orthos' and Percells - and then a strange virus and an alien life form from the comet pose further threats. When this news reaches Earth, harsh measures are invoked. A terrific yarn as the mission crew fight prejudice, their hostile environment and the Earth Government.

THE LIGHT OF EDEN

W.A. Harbinson
Corgi £2.95

A dark mist exchanges Glastonbury Tor for a primeval swamp, whilst out in Mesopotamia, medical workers Frances and Laurence meet Shul, who has been transported there from the Tor. Shifted into a timeless place, Shul is able to possess Frances before time returns to normal. Back in England, psychologist Michael is treating a survivor of the Tor disaster and other manifestations appear. Returning to England, Frances seduces Laurence, then Michael before events come to a head in the Garden of Eden when the manipulators are revealed. Unlikely characters, but plenty of explicit sex and colourful scenery keep this one moving at a high rate of knots.

TRAVELLER IN BLACK

John Brunner
Methuen £2.50

Now gathered into one volume, the five magazine tales of this enigmatic traveller with his staff of light and unusual powers such as the too-literal granting of careless wishes. In striving to reduce chaos to order, he deals with a city crying for a God, another seeking its former greatness, a vicious ruler, rival cities, and an overlord dealing with evil gods. Brunner has as deft a hand with fantasy as with SF and this is well brought out in this excellent assembly.

THE FADED SUN

C.J. Cherryh
Methuen £3.95

The complete trilogy comprising 'Keshith', 'Shan'jir' and 'Kutath'. For 30 years, mri mercenaries have headed the regul war against humans. Then the regul, virtually sexless, cowardly and machine dependent sue for peace, and offer the mri planet, Keshith, in the deal. Niun who has trained for battle must now join with mri queen Melein, and Terran Sten Duncan in a search for the mythical mri home world of Kutath. A highly involved yarn; names, places ranks and social customs getting in the way of the story. But if you can handle them all, it's a block-busting 756 page tour-de-force.

TIME OF THE TWINS Bk.1 This new trilogy sees the world of Krynn (see 'Dragon Lance Chronicles') threatened again, this time by the magician, Raistlin. Some of the earlier characters are here - half-elf Tanis, Tasselhoff the kender, Raistlin's twin brother Caramon. With the aid of Priestess Crysania, they seek to foil the Mage's plans.

Two more Penguin SF Classics

LAST AND FIRST MEN This is basically, a panorama of 'future history' as seen by the 'Last men'. After Olaf Stapledon war has ravaged our planet, the Second Men emerge to deal with Martian invaders. They decline and Third Man sows his own destruction by creating the giant-brained Fourth Men. In turn, they create Fifth Men (giant and perfect) and these take humanity to the stars. Well worth its place in the series, not an easy read, but one to savour for its ideas.

THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE As we follow the lives of the P.K. Dick characters, it emerges that we are on an alternate Earth where the Allies lost WW2, the Japanese administer America's West, and the Nazis rule the East (they have also landed on Mars, eliminated most of Africa's blacks and exterminate Jews). Culture patterns have changed radically, most consult the 'I Ching' to guide their doings, and a favourite (frowned on) book tells of a world where the Allies won. A superbly created tale of what 'might have been' which you'll find hard to put down once you start reading.

CONTACT When the radio telescope at Erecibo picks up a Carl Sagan message from near Vega, it displays Hitler at the 1936 Olympics. Then a further layer of the coding details how to build an enigmatic machine. Russia, America (and secretly, Japan) start construction whilst anti-science cults and saboteurs raise objections. Then a Machine is completed - and tried out with totally unexpected results. The basic idea stems from Hoyle's 'A for Andromeda', but Sagan's version is much more sophisticated and will hold you wondering right to the end.



SPEAKER FOR THE DEAD. 1000 years ago, Ender killed the only Orson Scott Card known intelligent E.T. race; so when the 'Porkies' are discovered on Lusitania, only a minimum settlement is allowed. The porkies vivisect members of their tribe in the belief of reincarnation as trees. Then they extend the vivisection to two xenologists! Thanks to extended FTL travel, Ender is still alive, and comes, as 'Speaker For the Dead'. In addition to being incontact with a galaxy wide intelligent computer net, he also carries another secret as he seeks to solve the riddle of the piggies. No precis can do this justice -- it's top level SF and highly recommended.

THE BLACK SHIP The world of Fenrille is the source of a longevity drug produced by the Chitin insects. C. Rowley it is protected (for its forests), by the super race of Arizel. Then a giant star ship full of rebels, flees the Solar System and arrives to plunder. Only the relatively immature 'Chosen' Fundan can save them. Exciting and multi-layered as an onion. Names and places take some sorting out, but it's a good read.

STARCLIPPER AND THE GALACTIC FINAL Brian Earnshaw Methuen Children's Books £5.95 Another juvenile in the series about the partly telepathic pop group 'Star Jam'. Recording tycoon Count Astragrande wishes to keep the group from the Inter-Galactic pop final (will there still be LPs and 'singles' then?) as well as marry their folk singing mother. To foil him they take refuge on the Green Planet - which turns out to be full of menaces. I'm not sure of the intended age range, (the group's goes from six to eighteen), plenty of action, but as SF, it's feeble .. with FTL ships measuring speed in machs (sic).

THE SUBATOMIC MONSTER ...is a magnetic monopole, one of the 17 Isaac Asimov essays from F&SF collected here. In Grafton £2.95 entertaining, everyday language, they cover Physics, Astronomy, Chemistry, Biology and Technology. Unified Field Theory, satellites, Betelgeuse, the heart, thinking, photosynthesis, space travel, flight, time scales are some of the topics. If, like me, you're a dedicated lover (and collector) of Asimov's science titles, rush out and get your copy now!



THE GALACTIC PDT-HEALER In a world where most things are made of plastic, impoverished ceramics repairer, P.K. Dick Joe Fernwright is approached by the alien Glimmung and offered a fabulous sum for help in raising a sunken cathedral on a Sirian planet. Off Joe goes, along with the sexy Mali Yojez, but a careless inspection of the site by Joe, releases the 'Black Glimmung' with unexpected results. Pan issued this in '73, and it's still as good a read as ever.

THE BLUE WORLD The water covered planet was settled by Earth refugees who now enjoy a placid, ritualistic life on a fifty mile strip of floating pads. Their only troubles stem from the giant sea monster, King Kragen who must be appeased by bribery. Communication is by semaphore, towers, and signaller Skar. Hast sets out to kill King Kragen with results which bring great changes to everyone's lives. Highly readable and full of Vance's credible characters plus richly detailed background.

THE LURE OF THE BASILISK Desiring to win undying fame, Lawrence Watt-Evans the giant warrior, Garth of Ordunin Grafton £2.50 bonds himself to 'The Forgotten King' who sets him the task of entering the city of Mormoreth and bringing back a basilisk. Since its gaze turns all to stone, the job is not easy and is complicated by invisible bandits and the magician Shang who inhabits the city - even the local Baron covets the creature. A lightweight but entertaining start to a new trilogy in which Garth will doubtless have other (Herculean?) tasks to perform.

GALAPAGOS The disembodied spirit of Kilgore Trout's son Kurt Vonnegut describes how an ill-assorted handful of Grafton £2.95 people board a pleasure yacht to flee an escalating war. Their inept captain unwittingly fathers a new race of small-brained, aquatic, fur-covered humans to replace those who have wiped each other out. We discover this in a fragmentary (albeit amusing) way as Vonnegut bounces all round his target theme with dozens of ranging shots. A method which can be confusing, and rather tends to minimise events.

GUARDIANS OF THE WEST Book 1 of the 'Mallorleon' After the David Eddings earlier adventures, all seems peaceful. Bantam £9.95 Durnik and Polgara set up home and adopt the waif, 'Errand' (who has unusual powers). Then troubles arise - the vicious Kal Zakath starts carving out an Empire, the Bear Cult reappears, petty squabbles disrupt Belgarion's kingdoms and the Orb Of Power warns of 'Zandramus', should he get the Sardon stone, all will be lost. Deaths, battles and assassination harass Garion, culminating in the kidnapping of his infant son. Edding has the knack of creating interesting characters, then keeping them - and the story line, in constant interplay. Normally, I dislike sword and sorcery, but I enjoyed this one from start to finish.

BLACK STAR RISING After war with Russia, a devastated USA is Frederik Pohl now ruled by Communist China. Castor, a Futura/Obit £2.95 self-educated commune worker who happens to be selected as a 'dummy' President when an alien spacecraft arrives and demands contact with that non-existent official. A spacecraft takes Castor to rendezvous with totally unexpected results - involving aliens, a lost starship, and interstellar war. The yarn starts very well, but the 'alien' society is too contrived and comic-opera to sustain the pace. Otherwise, Pohl juggles his characters well, and I particularly liked the scientist with 11 minds.

TALES OF WONDER Has no connection with the defunct UK Jane Yolen magazine, but holds over a score of extra Futura/Orbit £2.95 short 'fairy stories' which almost follow on where the Grimm brothers left off - though perhaps these are at time, a bit more worldly. After a rather twee introduction you're into tales of a pot child, new hands, a dryad's love, mourners and others, but at the risk of howls of 'male chauvinist', I'd suggest these tales are more likely to appeal to teenage girls and young women. If you love the unsecured ending, it's here in (well written) abundance.

AFTERLIFE Crammed with reports and incidents which Colin Wilson are examined for their bearing on life after Grafton £3.95 death - voices in the head, clairvoyancy,

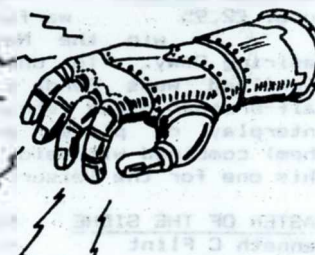
Spirit People, Psychical Research, Mental Powers and Reincarnation are some of the themes. In a style reminiscent of Charles Fort, the author presents scores of unusual events which he uses to support his case. A Bibliography is included for further study. My own view is that afterlife is a refusal to accept the inevitable termination of one's ego, but for those with different views, this is a fascinating compendium of thought provoking phenomena.

THE PLACE OF DEAD ROADS Anti-hero Kim Carsons has a noxious William Burroughs upbringing, acquires guns and equipment, Paladin £3.95 then heads out West. Dreaming or experiencing gunfights, he also encounters plenty of explicit homosexuality and other esoterica. A story line eluded me, but there's a wealth of incident and description. Burroughs is an acquired taste which I never developed, so I leave it to you.

DEMOGORGON Satan's minion, Demogorgon, slays tomb openers Brian Lumley and becomes a weird amalgam of man and Grafton £2.95 donkey. One man opposes him and later one of Demogorgon's bastard offspring is drawn into the fight against the growing evil as the creatures nears his final re-birth. The sheer horror is convincingly detailed, but just when all has been worked out comes the sting in the tail. If you like horror, you'll like this one.

DR. ADDER Limmit quits the chicken ranch (where giant hens K.W.Jeter also double in the brothel) to venture into the Panther £2.95 perverted, drug-ridden L.A. underworld.

Bearing a prosthetic killing glove, he offers it to the sinister Dr. Adder who specialises in surgically altering women to suit perverted tastes. But Adder's enemies move in, violence flares and Limmit must seek out 'The Visitor'. Full of explicit and perverted sex, drugs, language and sadism, you'll need a long bath after reading this one.



ISLANDS OUT OF TIME The Priests of Atlantis are conducting a William Irwin Thompson great biological experiment which Grafton £2.95 musician Viracocha warns will destroy the city. Warning ignored, he joins astral forces with the Abbess Brigitta to foil the Archon's ghastly activities. Auras, astral planes and out of body experiences (and sex) are well blended in the fate of Atlantis, and speculations on man's future.

ARROWS OF DESIRE AD 3000 sees a post-holocaust Britain ruled Geoffrey Household benevolently by the Euro African Penguin £1.95 Federation, with most of the population being returned descendants of those who ran away. Life is peaceful until the inevitable malcontents botch an assassination attempt and anti Federation feeling is stirred among the 'British'. It falls to a 'native' leader and the Commissioner's daughter to rectify matters. A lovely socio-political satire, I particularly liked the banned song, 'Linda Fope' and the 'cricket dance' believed to depict a land decontamination ritual.

THE AMTRAK WARS Book.3 'IronMaster' In the 30th. Century, Patrick Tilley America's Eastern coast is now the Japanese Sphere £3.50 ruled 'Ne-Nissan'. Agent Brickman seeks to rescue Cadillac and Clearwater, held by the Shogunate to make aircraft. All become enmeshed in power struggles between Federation, Mutes and aspirants to the Shogunate - with the latter hoping to re-discover the banned electronics and atomics. However, Clearwater has powers of her own which complicate matters. The mindless inhumanity of the Shogunate is well depicted as are the strongly created central characters. A powerful and excitingly different epic.

THE ISLE OF GLASS In 12th Century England, the changeling Judith Tarr 'immortal' monk Alfred can also heal. This Corgi £2.50 leads to his involvement in preventing the border war which Lord Rhydderch seeks to start. He sets out, accompanied by Johan - and the amorous, Thea, (a shape-changer) Seized and tried for witchcraft, Alf is saved by.. but I mustn't spoil this superbly written and different saga for you. A refreshing change from all those heroic sword toilers.. don't miss it now it's in paperback.

GHOST IN THE SUNLIGHT Not so much SF as historical fantasy. Kathleen Herbert Britain in the Dark Ages sees tribal Corgi £2.95 warfare as Penda, King of Mercia seeks to win the North of England - held by the peace desiring Oswy. To unite the two factions, his daughter Alchflaed weds Penda's son .. only to find he is her half-brother - and strange events follow. The complicated interplay of places and names (the opening lists 3 pages of them) combined with slow action and involved plotting make this one for the leisurely reader - or the history student.

MASTER OF THE SIDHE BOOK 4 of the 'Sidhe Legends'. In Eire Kenneth C Flint High King Nuanda and his Champions Corgi £2.50 (closely akin to comic book superheroes) face a final confrontation with the Fomor Army of King Bres. First (and stupidly) the Champions meet Bres to offer peace - and inevitably meet treachery. Bres calls on the robot-like Balor and the tank-dwelling being Malghen in the Tower of Glass for aid, and the land ironclads begin to roll against Nuanda. Unusual characters and fast action make for an entertaining yarn.