

# FANTASY SCIENCE

## DIGEST

MAY-JUNE

15¢





HERE IT IS! One of the finest mimeographed magazines ever presented to the science fiction world. AD ASTRA --- "to the stars", it means, and ten cents is your guarantee of receiving the gala third issue, eclipsing even the two previous numbers you've heard so much about.

Artist Julian S. Krupa has drawn TWO magnificent full-page illustrations for this issue! They're both on special thick, colored paper --- but that isn't all. One is an exact reproduction of the cover of the first issue of Amazing Stories, just as Paul drew it! The reason?

Well, we've decided to dedicate this issue to Amazing, with a guest editorial by Raymond A. Palmer, the first in a series of dedications engulfing the entire professional science fiction field. Also contained is a complete, statistical resume of facts and figures in Amazing's history. BUT THAT ISN'T ALL!

In the same issue you'll find "An Interview with Dick Calkins" by Richard I. Meyer, "The Good Old Days" by Leslie A. Croutch -- his first printed fan article, "Viva La Fan Mag" by Charles D. Hornig -- editor of Science Fiction, "Sidelights in Fantasy" by Farsaci, "Convention Sidelights" by Robert A. Madle -- editor of Fantascience Digest, plus great material by Warner, Reinsberg, Wollheim, and -- among others, that No. 1 fan of all time -- Forrest J Ackerman. What more can you ask in 24 carefully mimeographed pages? 25 cents for a three issue subscription is your best bet. Send it to: AD ASTRA, 3156 Cambridge Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Adv.

### THE EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Probably the first thing I should get off my mind is the inexcusable lateness of this issue. I announced that this number would appear early in June and now it seems that September has arrived! All I can say is that I'm really sorry that the delay occurred, but during the past few months I've really had little time to publish FD. If all goes well, the next issue will be out in about a month or so, and the following number will appear a month after that. Perhaps in this way, I'll be able to catch up on the dating of the issues.

This issue several departments have been excluded. First of all, Ossie Train did not show up with his "Eternal Wanderer" and Ghu knows where Ossie is! I don't! Perhaps he'll be back next issue. Then Milton A. Rothman moved to Washington, D.C., and is no longer able to write his "Ten Years Ago in Science Fiction". However, Rothman has contributed an swell article which appears in this issue. Also effective with this issue is the combination of "Amazing News" with "The Science Fiction Spotlight". Many of you have suggested this, and now you'll be able to tell me whether you like it or not. Please comment on the latter.

Thanks is sincerely expressed to Forrest J Ackerman who contributed \$10 for a life-time subscription to FD. That certainly helped things a lot.

I have plenty of excellent articles and short stories on hand for future publication, but don't forget that I can always use more. How about letting FD have first look at your fan efforts?

All fan mags should express their thanks to the various professional magazines for reviewing the fan efforts. This has resulted in many new subscribers and certainly helps the poor fan mag editor considerably. Also, these new subscribers (some of them at least) develop into fan writers, and that helps also. So thanks a lot, Mr. Editor, for your help in keeping the fan magazine from folding up.

-----RAM



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# Fantascience Digest

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NEXT ISSUE will appear late in September.

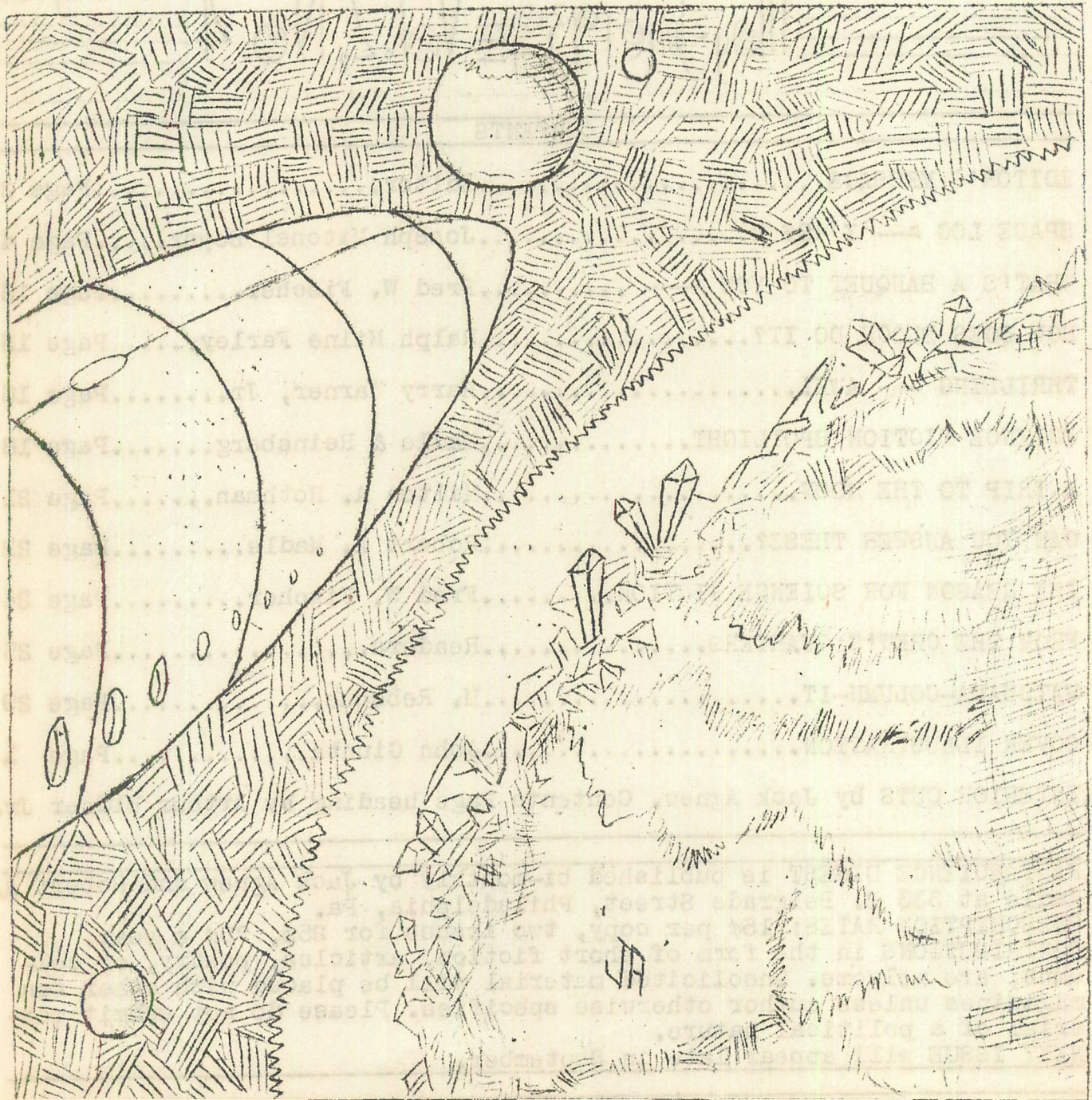


# SPACELOG

BY

JOSEPH MITCHEL BOYER

## Y-486-G





THE TERROR--the soul-cringing terror that still lurks in the dead, unseeing eyes of my crew and passengers; the stark horror stamped on those bloated faces. That alone gives me the strength to force slowly stiffening fingers to set down this last entry in my log. Perhaps some day---thru some now unforeseen act of fate---this great space cruiser will find its way back into the time current of my---our---other life---perhaps....

JUNE 12, 2149. Standing out to space on regular flight to the outpost planet Venus, 9:06 G.C.T. Everything coming off perfectly. The oxy-hydrogen feed lines to the ventral batteries which had given trouble in the early warming up period, are now functioning perfectly. Passenger list without a single vacancy---carrying a full consignment of Dropcphite catalyst for the colonies---and to top it off, Alice is wearing my student lieutenant's button on her uniform.

The automatic control arms take over at 2:00, and a few moments later the ship, having reached a point 100,000 miles out from earth, gradually changed her course until we were following a track parallel to the mother globe's orbit.

I pushed a release button, opening the wall ports in the main passenger cabins so that they might share the breath-taking sight of the cloud wreathed black-brown head of South America plunging into the blue of the twin oceans.

We ran into a swarm of meteors three hours later and threw the Empinon field generators into action. Not too soon, either. A few smaller particles reached the ship, the impacts being clearly audible even thru the layers of

Corametal and Rikker insulation. No damage, however.

Strange thing happened just as I was turning the controls over to my relief pilot. One moment intense sunlight was flooding the room in contrast to the panel lights---the next instant---blackness, absolute blackness.

Blindness. The terrible thot rushed thru my mind, suddenly sickening me. Plainly I could hear the relays clicking away in the communications nook---the buzz of rectifiers---the far offroar of rocket motors, but see them---see anything? No.

Then my relief pilot's voice, from very close at hand, began bellowing for "somebody to turn on the lights". I felt better at that. Something other than blind-ness must be at work if all of us were groping our way thru this ink.

It was over as quickly as it began. The flare of light forced me to cover my eyes in momentary pain. When finally I could see, I found myself and my sub-commander sitting on the floor, both of us slowly shaking our heads. A mechanic was painfully untangling himself from the wreckage of a chart table, and the red call light of the rocket room was blinking on the panel.

Answering the communiphone, I found that the black-out period had been general over the whole cruiser, yet all lighting generators had been running all thru it. A quick check of every gas light tube in the system revealed that not one of them was defective. It is beyond me. I rechecked our course and went to bed.

June 15. More un-answerable occurrences for the log. I receiv-



ed a call early this evening from Doctor Gronburg, asking me to carefully inspect our destination planet thru the telescope in the control room.

I half rose from the eye-piece couch in amazement as the three-quarter crescent swam into the lens field. Instead of the familiar impenetrable blanket of clouds hiding the surface markings from view, there now appeared a sharp image of the planet itself, and surrounding it like a crown was a halo of constantly changing colors. I couldn't stand looking at it for more than a few seconds at a time. The play of those colored lights was maddening.

Gronburg's voice came over the phone, asking me what I thought of the sight. The only answer which came to my mind was that, due to some freak trick of refraction, the planet had taken on this strange appearance. The doctor didn't seem impressed, told me to keep his phone frequency open during my period of duty in case he wanted to contact me with further information.

Then there was the radio. Ever since passing thru that moment of blackness, the receivers had been dead. By that I don't mean that they were not operating, but simply that all television and phone transmissions from Venusian and Earth stations had ceased. From one end of the broadcasting spectrum to the other, there was only silence---the cathode screens glowed with a faint green phosphorescence, innocent of any image. The operators tested and retested the apparatus, but could find nothing wrong. However, their calls, to all appearances, remained unanswered.

When the screens in the main salon had gone blank in the middle of a news transmission, Alice had come hurrying to find what the

trouble was. As she stood there in the hatch, its oval framing her slim loveliness---as the lights in the control room touched her auburn hair with living flame---well, it was hard to lie, but I couldn't have 200 passengers going crazy with unfounded fear. She accepted my explanation of a "dead spot" without question. I'm getting worried. But it'll all be history when we reach Venus. Something to tell my grand-kids about.

June 18. I must be mad. Gronburg must be mad. Otherwise, how can we believe our eyes. A scant 12,000 miles ahead hangs the huge bulk of Venus. For millions upon millions of far-seeing earthmen, the planet of new hope---a life giving globe of promise---a battle field for the conquest of new frontiers. But now.....

It hangs before us....DEAD. Its atmosphere a solid, glittering shield of frozen gas. I hope Gronburg can give us some glimpse of reason in this nightmare of fantasy.

True. Gronburg's report lies before me, not clearing, but fogging our dilemma further. For according to his findings, altho the atmosphere is a solid, and altho there remains no hope of the existence of any life as we know it, the thing we see before us will not occur before the passage of at least two million years. Later the astro-physicist scrapped his own report.

"I can't give you an accurate scientific plan of data with that "all wrong" example before me," he explained to me.

"Two million years," he growled, "is a mad man's figure. Any student of natural science knows that an extension of twice that amount would still be far



from the truth."

At four noon, we discharged a series of Cedral bombs in the direction of the corpse world. The resulting explosions---the flying diamonds of frozen gas tumbling lazily into space flicking all the colors of the rainbow from innumerable facets, convinced us that this was no illusion. I decided to pause in the neighborhood long enough to secure photographs of the catastrophe, then back to earth. At my command, the Y. 486 G was maneauvered into the shadow of Venus. Work proceeded from there.

A cold feeling of dread hangs over me as I write the occurrences of the last few hours. The corridors and state rooms of this great space transport are quiet now with the silence of fear-----a few hours ago.....

I had left the control room at the end of my watch and went up onto the officers observation dome. The place was deserted. Far down in the bowels of the ship, generators wined softly, and from the main solon came the sound of music, laughter. I remembered that a tungsten wire audio-graph had been installed in the fourth level for amusement of the passengers.

Above me, the cold eyes of the stars stared silently from a background of utter black, and filling the rest of the sky---I use the word sky for lack of better definition---was the half-lit atmosphere of the dead planet: a great curving line of light running the entire length of the glassite port.

Suddenly I stiffened. Something---something shapeless, black to the power of blotting out the non-color of spacial depths---blearing out the clean

edge of the atmosphere line, was moving in the direction of the Y 486 G.

At first I felt its coming, rather than saw, but when the stars gradually faded from view; when the port was but a mass of interwinding gray and black lashes of light---then I knew.

Minutes went by on leaden feet. My eyes were held to the port watching the faint undulating motion which passed down the black in regular intervals. Suddenly there was, simultaneously, a convulsive ripple in the thing pressed against the dome, and a man's hoarse scream from the main salon.

I was down the companion-way and running for the fourth level before the echos had ceased. As my fingers closed over the salon's door bar an intense feeling of cold seemed to grip my brain; some unseen force halted me in my tracks as if I were a doll. For an un-measurable length of time I stood motionless, senseless; then what ever it was had gone, and I pushed into the salon.

Edwards saw me as I entered, and pointed to a state room off the main level. The ship's physician stepped away from a bed, in which lay the blanket-covered body of a woman, as I came in. She wasn't a pretty sight. Space pressure cases never are. Suicide I thought, looking down on the horribly bloated body bulging from beneath the bed covering; the traces of pink froth still remaining about her mouth despite the doctor's hurried work. Probably managed to find her way to one of the tail air-locks and crawled inside a Grame chamber. But I was wrong---this wasn't self-inflicted death, nor was it a pressure case.

Edwards, without saying a



word, led me to the center of the salon's polished floor and lifted one corner of a table cover which covered the spot. The un-palatable sight marked the place of her death ---she'd been dancing when..... when the tragedy occurred, surrounded on all sides by 200 people.

I questioned the fellow who had been her partner---in my mind a constant image of the thing of blackness I had seen pressed against the observation port.

For the log I record his answer---little as it was.

"We were dancing," he gasped, "when suddenly the lights seemed to grow dim---then, Oh God!" Here he buried his face in his hands, sobbed between twisted fingers:

"---she just fell apart in my arms. And it was so cold, so cold."

That was all I could get out of him. As I left the room he was moaning about the cold---and the many "eyes" or something like that.

June 20. It got two more. This time during the rest period. We found Shorty Martin, a mechanic, huddled in a rocket nacelle; the other, a young colonist named Richman, died in his room before the eyes of his wife and four year old daughter. It's dangerous for me, the commander of this ship, to believe in, or even think of the thing I saw coming out of the solid depths of the Venusian atmosphere. Better to believe, as does our medical department, that these terrible deaths are due to some unknown disease.

June 21. Earth bound. Gronburg tells me that all of the constellations have changed greatly in shape. I noticed the red, sullien appearance of the sun, but after all that's happened, wouldn't

trust my own judgment. Everything is wrong. The only thing that keeps me sane in the fact that the safety of my crew and passengers lies in my hands. My only thought is: reach earth, and as speedily as possible.

June 23. No fatalities during the chronometer paced night. Only one day remains before we land. I talked to Gronburg during the early evening hours (system of lighting in all space cruisers provides for an artificial twilight and dark hour pacing) telling him how glad I'd be when the ship was safe in the sub-hangers of International field. I wonder why he avoided my eyes?

June 24. We've reached earth, but only Gronburg was prepared for the sight that met our eyes. We came to rest in a desert of dust--res dust that exploded into great clouds of scarlet as we struck. Above us, instead of the soft, familiar vault of blue, stretches a sky of desolate violet in which the stars shine, unabated. Of trees, or grass, or animal life, or habitations, or least of all, man, there is no sign.

I sent out two men, protected by space suits, to see if they could find any signs of life; more to keep the spirits of the crew and passengers up than anything else. One of them came back three hours later, exhausted from fighting his way thru the dust. The other is still missing as the copper sun sinks behind the faint haze surrounding the western hills.

Gronburg came to my state-room tonight. His eyes fell on this last entry in the log, as he laid a mass of papers on my desk.

"June 24," he smiled. "Perhaps, but not 2149 A.D."

(over)



I asked him what he meant.

"Surely," he said, "you've been puzzling over the phenomenon we've experienced from the 12th day of June, 2149 A.D. to---" here he paused, casting a glance at the papers he'd placed on my desk, "to NOW."

I stared at him.

"You knew; I knew what the report of those two men you sent out would be, even before they left the ship."

I nodded, asked him how all this could be.

"You remember that black-out period we struck the first day out?" he asked. "Well this is only hypothetical, of course, but I believe we struck what is known to students of advanced astrophysics as a Time current. As we know now, time, in itself, is not continuous—or rather I should say, uniform."

"Proof of this exists in the corrections, by modern astronomers, of hundreds of stars' distances from our solar system. For instance, Canopus in the southern sky was thought, only as far back as 1973, to be 650 light years from the earth, when, by its light passing through a deverse time current, it was doubled back on itself, giving a result of only 1/60th its actual distance.

"Hence in light's case, so too in ours. For there are in places, isolated currents of ether moving at a velocity vastly different from that of the commonly thought of cosmos. What is to prevent an object striking this current to pass into the stream's particular time level, all other factors remaining unchanged?"

As the scientist's voice had

been painting a picture of our condition, I had been desperately trying to remember everything I'd ever read or heard of the Lorentz transformations. The formula:

$$\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}} \times l$$
 measured from systems at rest; system shrinkage in relation to conception,

kept just out of my mental reach. Gronburg must have seen my trouble. He put his hand on my shoulder.

"In other words, Forest," he called me by name; a thing he'd never done before, "this ship and everyone on it has been transported into the here-to-for far-removed future. A future in which conditions have become unsuited for the support of life, as we know it, at least." I wondered if Gronburg knew of the thing I had seen pressed against the port that first terrible night and used this remark to qualify its existence in his own mind.

Before he could go on there was a dull crash in the corridor outside my room. Gronburg reached the door first, opened it. My sub-commander, Edwards, lay in the patch of light from my room, a look of terror on his mutilated face. The shadows had claimed another victim.

(No date). Night by night, day by day, that foul death stalks us. Out of the original two hundred and twenty of us, there now remains but thirty.

The fates treated us to a bitter jest. At midnight the alarm bells began ringing over the entire ship, arousing passengers and crew, bringing them on the run to the control room. The officer on watch told us he'd seen a rocket trail against the western sky. For a moment I saw hope light thirty haggard faces, then die as Gronburg's cold voice came



over the speaker system informing them that it was only the trail of a large meteor. As I wearily resought my bed I could hear a woman's hysterical voice cursing the scientist.

(Day Following). Strabnor, a rocket man, went mad and murdered Richman's little girl before we could reach him. Her poor little body was slashed to pieces, the madman doing his best to imitate the work of the unknown death which has ravished our ranks. As I write this, I can hear his fists pounding on the locked door of his room. Every few minutes he stops pounding and begins screaming for the "big eyes" to go away.

Food and drink enough for about three more months, but in order to keep the oxygen content of the air in the ship up, and to maintain a liveable temperature, we must run the rocket motors twice each day. How long the fuel will last under those conditions, I won't attempt to guess.

(A gap of approximately one month). I, with the four remaining male members of our little group aboard the Y 486 G, ventured into the territory surrounding the ship today. We followed a southerly course, keeping a sharp lookout for any signs of animal or vegetable life. It's almost hopeless, I suppose, but we'll go mad doing nothing.

Walking is a nightmare in this dust. At every step it blooms up into clouds which hang suspended for hours in the breathless air. I see now how Davison, the missing patrolman I sent out when we first reached this nightmare world, had become lost. I had to keep stopping to clear a spot in the vision plate of my helmet.

Back to the ship at four. Gronburg was right. We are in a period

of the earth's future so advanced that not even a trace of former civilization remains. There is only the dust, the violet sky, the leering stars.

I've ordered everyone to their staterooms. Strabnor is loose and out to kill. It happened about twenty minutes ago. I was in the control room when to my amazement, in walked the killer. Laughing when I asked him how he'd escaped, he looked about the room, making sure we were alone, then leaned near my ear.

"I saw IT, commander."

I asked him what he meant by "IT".

"The Eater, commander. Him that comes to us, one by one; him that drinks the souls from our shrivelled hulks; him, the Black One, who sits and talks with my in my room."

"Talks with you?" I asked, my hand ready on the butt of my gun.

"Thru my brain, commander. Thru my brain. He tells me who's gonna die---before they die." He backed clumsily away as I rose to my feet.

"He let me see him, commander." The former rocket expert turned like a cat as my co-pilot came into the room, and seeing the maniac, drew his gun.

Meekly he stood in the center of the room as Wendy walked up to take him back to his room. But as my friend reached his side, Strabnor suddenly lashed out with his foot, knocking the gun from Wendy's hand and at the same time tossing the pilot's body in front of him as a shield.

Gun drawn, I crouched waiting



a favorable position to blast him without harming Wendy. I made my mistake by dropping to one knee to scoop up Wendy's gun. Before I could snap a shot the Killer had leaped thru the hatch-way, taking Wendy with him. The companionway was dark because I had ordered all unnecessary lights turned off to conserve power.

A mechanic and passenger joined me in the search. We stumbled thru the gloom, the killer's heavy footfalls echoing on the metal floors. We had just reached the first tail lock when we heard the high pitched hiss of escaping air, then a man's voice torn with pain. The trap to the lock was open, a tiny red light flicking on and off to signal that the outer vent was open.

Sick with hate because I knew what awaited us, I paused long enough to slam shut the fifth Cobb gear comb, then cautiously entered the lock. There wasn't much left of Wendy. Strabnor had held him against the test vent, a hole about six inches in diameter used for securing atmosphere samples, and opened the vent's grid. His back against the hole leading to the low pressure of the outside, the pilot's body had been forced thru that tiny hole---crushed thru---like the liquid of a blown egg. Before the total destruction of Wendy's body, the madman left the airlock, knowing we were close on his heels. However, without a fully armed party it would be foolhardy to search the darkened interconnection tubes.

So at this moment all passengers are in their state rooms behind locked doors. Here in the control room I set down this data for the log while Gronburg goes over a plan to get Strabnor with my fiance. During all of this nightmare voyage I've only been

able to speak with her but once, and that but a brief moment. How it is that two persons, so much in love, can forget all personal feelings in a crisis like this, I don't know.

I once questioned th-----

Good God! The pressure meters! That madman, Strabnor, has opened all the locks in the ship. How that devil knew where to find the emergency control-----all three of us hurled our weight against the hatch lock closing off all passengers leading to the nose of the ship-----but the others-----those in the state rooms-----no hope for them.

With the terrible prospect of slow death staring us in the face, Gronburg's pitiful attempts at humor cause a lump to form in my throat. I asked Alice to drain every drop of alcohol from the tanks. It'd come in handy when the cold started creeping in. While she was working at this task, I edged over to Gronburg.

"How long will our air last," I asked him.

"Maybe till morning," he said slowly, "but only if we do not flame the alcohol."

I knew there wasn't an ounce of food in the control room. Slowly an idea of the terrible thing I must do began to form in my mind.

At about two in the morning I was sitting at Alice's side while she slept. Over the pilot's chair I could see the gaunt figure of Gronburg. It was just after I had whispered to him to see if he was sleeping that I happened to glance up at the roof ports.

A hand of ice seemed to grip my heart. Just as before, so slow-



ly that it was almost unnoticeable, the light of the stars began to fade. A few moments later they were pressed close against the glassite port: tiny whips of light rippling with evil life. Suddenly I had Alice in my arms---every muscle in my body tense---caught myself pleading with the thing to spare her---heard the girl catch her breath as she saw the thing. Then there was a sickening crash--poor Gronburg crumpled to the floor moaning. When I looked up, the stars were again shining brightly.

It is almost daylight now; I must do ----- and soon ----- what I planned. I couldn't bear to think of Alice dying like the others. What had Strabnor called IT-- the Eater. the Drinker of Souls? I steeled myself, helped the girl I loved more than life to her feet.

"Will you light the first alcohol torch?" I asked her in an unsteady voice. Why did she have to smile that way as she turned to do my bidding?

I sit here, alone, this last moment and try to recall that last split second. I remember how cold the handle of my service gun felt as my fingers closed over it. In a haze I can see her half way across the room as I pull the trigger.

No sound---the deadly pencil of light stabbed the dark, killing instantly, silently, painlessly. She slid to the floor, her face away from me.

"No pain. She felt no pain," pounds thru my brain as I write the last of this: the log of space transport Y 486 G, quickly sign my name, close the cover. As I pick my way over to the body of poor Gronburg I am struck with the thought that someday the eyes of a world once dear to us--- these silent dead and I---will

know this log of mine; will be aware of the doom which has overtaken us.

I can almost smile as I climb into a space suit and adjust the oxygen supply so that I can cut it off when. . . . .

There are the silent stars, the coldly glaring stars above as I step from the lock into the deep red dust. Over there in the east they're beginning to pale with the coming of day. It will be a shabby sunrise with only my eyes to witness it. Just the corpse of a sun, the red dust, violet skies, and the day glowing stars.

—THE END—

(Notice: Only one time publishing right of "Space Log Y 486 G" is given to FANTASCIENCE DIGEST. All other rights retained by author.)

COMING NEXT ISSUE:

"Dawn of Death"

By Fred W. Fischer

Other excellent short stories will appear from time to time, but they will be the best amateur efforts obtainable. Watch future issues of FANTASCIENCE DIGEST.

## NOTICE

The H. P. Lovecraft Memorial Volume is now ready to go to press. It will be titled, "The Outsider and Others," the price of which will be \$3.50 to those who order before publication, and \$5 if ordered after. This volume will contain, with a few minor exceptions, all of HPL's stories. Send your orders to August W. Derleth, Sauk City, Wisconsin.



WHAT'S A BANQUET TO YOU MIGHT BE GARBAGE TO THE UNDERSIGNED

- or -

Vice Versa

By Fred W. Fischer

It has always been my assertion that one man's appetizer is another man's allergy, a deduction that I made after watching a group of son's of the soil as they listened delightedly to a very nasal rendition of "Red River Valley" coming in over the radio. At the conclusion of the atrocity they twitched and squirmed and did everything to show appreciation of the world's finer music, even giving voice to a few exultant cries. For my part I twitched and squirmed because my eardrums had been assaulted, and if I cried out at all it was in anguish.

What, I wondered, could sound worse than two asthmatic fiddles and a decrepit "GIT-tar" sobbing and groaning such a maudlin ballad? I soon found out. The announcer in a bit of linguistic acrobatics compounded of five parts city talk and five parts backwoods vernacular, informed those listening that the next number which the "Mounting Minstruls" would favor us with would be called "The Death of Jesse James." There was lifting joy in his tones, as if a great day was dawning, and I took heart.

Well, I listened to the story of how Bob Ford the coward shot Mr. Howard and laid pore Jesse in his grave, o-le-o-le-a-hoo -- and then I left that mountain store, convinced that men are created freely and equally as different as day and night -- in their tastes.

All of which leads up to the point. I am about to present free-gratis-and for nothing those ten scientifiction stories which I consider to be the best so far written, in the order of my preference. It is not anticipated that more than six people will be in even close accord with my opinion. Five of those people are dead and the sixth lives so far back in the woods that you can't get an alienist to prove he's insane. I have already been alienated,

So without further attempting to delay the inevitable:

1. INTO THE INFINITE, by Austin Hall.
2. THE BLIND SPOT, by Austin Hall and Homer Eon Flint.
3. THE PHANTOM IN THE RAINBOW, by Slater LaMaster.
4. WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE and sequel, by Balmer and McHarg.
5. DARKNESS AND DAWN, by George Allen England.
6. THE MOON POOL, by A. Merritt.
7. THE GIRL IN THE GOLDEN ATOM, by Ray Cummings.
8. TRIPLANETARY, by E. E. Smith.
9. THE RETURN OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, by George F. Worts.
10. THE SECOND DELUGE, by G. P. Serviss.

This list has been in the making for fully eighteen years, so don't just figure offhand that instead of having been alienated I



should have been eliminated. I've got reasons to support my choices.

I'm omniverous, if the term might be applied to reading. I lap up anything and everything in print, if you will excuse me mixing a metaphor. If you'll have patience I'll mix you one, too, and we'll all get cock-eyed. Out of my twenty favorite stories, ten were those listed above. A couple or three of the others on my "20" list were THE SAPPHIRE DEATH, by Loring Brent (who is, of course, George F. Worts), THE SHIP OF ISHTAR, and GREY-FACE, a story by Sax Rhomer.

INTO THE INFINITE is my favorite of favorites because of the weird atmosphere which gives the reader such a sense of unreality (as in The BLIND SPOT), and because of the careful character delineation employed in making of the hero a dual personality -- a man you both admire and despise at the same time. The plot is involved yet concise, and leads up to one of the smashing denouements ever written.

THE BLIND SPOT is astraddle the border line between weird and science fiction, being unrivaled in either field. The uncertainty of the reader is increased by the knowledge he possesses of not knowing what it's all about. The whole book tantalizes one into finishing it, and then a person still can't summarize it. The sequel THE SPOT OF LIFE didn't explain much either, but with the death of Homer Eon Flint the rambling style disappeared. (Flint died, by the way, in a mysterious fashion. He was found in a wrecked automobile at the bottom of a declivity. His last words to Hall had been "So long. I'll see you in the Blind Spot." At least, such is the story).

I class THE PHANTOM IN THE RAINBOW as scientifiction because abnormal psychology is as scientific as atom-splitting, and the villain of LaMaster's tale is nothing if not abnormal. His telepathic powers, his hypnotic influence over the hero, his insane indulgences and sadistic plottings, keep the reader in an agony of suspense up until the last page. Even then, you expect to turn the blank leaf and have Sigmund Von Mortimer jump out and smack you in the puss with a loud "Boo!"

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE and its sequel I consider to be just about the best written of any scientifiction novels. The style is grammatical and literate, and while the plot may be regarded as hackneyed and drawn-out by all the fans who've read stories just like it a thousand times before and since, it yet approaches more of a literary standard of excellence. Character delineation and natural human emotions are given due consideration -- as much so as the description of the space-ship and its mechanical aspects. This pair of books deserves recognition primarily because normal, natural reactions are present. WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE describes accurately what the public reaction would be to an imminent catastrophe -- the hopes, the fears, the dread of disaster are all presented with almost photographic exactitude. AFTER WORLDS COLLIDE, while more necessarily imaginative, is almost as vital and real as the book to which it is the sequel.

I've never understood how the world can be menaced with annihilation, how a scientist can dish up a space-ship and flee with the flower of the human race, and how sanctuary and civilization can be established on another planet -- all in ten or fifteen short pages. It takes eight hundred or more to make it seem like actual history.



People are interested in people. How would you feel if you knew positively that ten days from now a comet would utterly destroy the earth? Would you think an historian of the event supplied very good coverage if he left out your emotional disturbances from his account and contented himself with merely a paragraph or so stating that the population was in an uproar but some few escaped in a space-ship?

DARKNESS AND DAWN, THE MOON POOL, THE GIRL IN THE GOLDEN ATOM, and TRIPLANETARY are generally too familiar to scientifiction fans to summarize or explain. I liked them all, just because. THE RETURN OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, by George F. Worts, may not be so well known to fans. It was published in book form under the title of NO MORE A CORPSE, by Loring Brent. The story deals with a plot from which GIANTS FROM ETERNITY? BY Manly Wade Wellman, must have derived its inspiration.

The world finds that an inventor can bring back from the dead a single famous personage, and a poll is conducted to determine whom the immortal will be. John L. Sullivan, Abe Lincoln, and numerous others are considered, but the Father of Our Country leads the list. He is revived and tours the United States, seeing the modern marvels and dipping his fingers into various political pies -- and falls in love with a modern girl. The story entertains, amuses, and lingers in the memory of the reader.

That it all turns out to be a gigantic hoax is no deterrent to my claim that it is excellent scientificfiction. It is more scientific, for instance, than all those putrid stories which end when the hero wakes up at home in bed. I've read about a hundred since 1920 which were labeled scientificfiction and in the last lines proved to be just bad dreams induced from too much gastronomic activity.

THE SECOND DELUGE is a famous and familiar story, also. I think my arguments in regard to WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE apply here. It is real, vivid, and NATURAL!

Every time a fellow fan reads this article my ears will burn. But thank heavens this is the United States and I can have my opinions -- you -- you RED RIVER VALLEY admirers, you!

[illegible]

## HOW DOES BLOCH DO IT?

By Ralph Milne Farley

In search of an answer to this question I interviewed the mighty mite, who wrote and 85,000 word complete novel, including revisions and retypings in 8 hours in New Orleans earlier this winter.

Robert A. Bloch, public author No. 1, occupies a whole bloch on Knapp street, Milwaukee. In fact, he is a syndicate, most of his work being done by robots, built for him in the lavatories of Prof. Schmidt of Marquette where I also am a Lecturer in Physics. That's very singular, isn't it?

The leader of these robots is named, after its creator, Robot A. Bloch. The next is Robot B. Bloch, etc. They do all the real work for

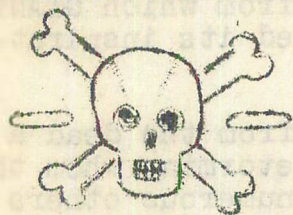


him. In fact, "Henry Kuttner" is merely the pen-name of robots H to K.

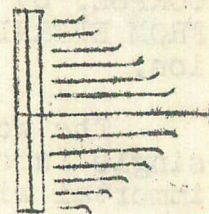
The secret of Bloch's success lies in his innate laziness -- he makes others do the work. Thus, for example, in the Bloch-Kuttner collaboration, "The Body and the Brain," Kuttner did the body of the work and Bloch merely furnished the brains.

The foregoing is strictly secret and confidential -- that's why I'm offering it for publication.

If I knew half what I've told, I'd be sued for libel.



# THRILLING --- AWK!!



By Harry Warner, Jr.

That was the wail which went up on that horrific day a few short years ago when THRILLING WONDER STORIES was born, and WONDER STORIES became a fond memory. Fans far and wide became horrified at the mere mention of the name---defiling a great stf. magazine with such a title! Yet, that was what had happened, and there was nothing that could be done about it.

WONDER always had been something of a problem child, though. True, it had printed great stories; a capable editor had been present, and its policies, on the whole, had been approved of by the fans. But our good friend, Hugo Gernsback, was continually experimenting. I've lost track of the number of times the magazine changed format in the half-dozen odd years he had it under his wing, even after it had become WONDER from the original SCIENCE WONDER and AIR WONDER.

Charles D. Hornig was, in fact, just about the first fan to become connected with an stf. magazine. That alone was something, and there's no denying that he was a fine "managing editor". My own humble notion is that the WONDER of 1934 and 1935 vintage was about the greatest set of issues (over an extended period) of any stf. magazine before or since.

But then that fatal little phrase crept into the proceedings. Not so bad appearing on the surface; there have been worse ones (such as "Fantastic Adventures") but this one was certainly the beginning of the end. That phrase? "NOW 15 CENTS!"

The magazine began to degenerate a little. Not so badly, but at the same time it lacked something that it had a year or so previous. Finally came the day when the noticed appeared in a 1936 issue that there would be no more newsstand distribution of WONDER STORIES. Instead, fans would be able to obtain it via subscription only---but bighearted Gernsback would even trust you for the money for it. When you received each issue, you sent him the dough. (No dough---no more magazines. Simple, eh?)

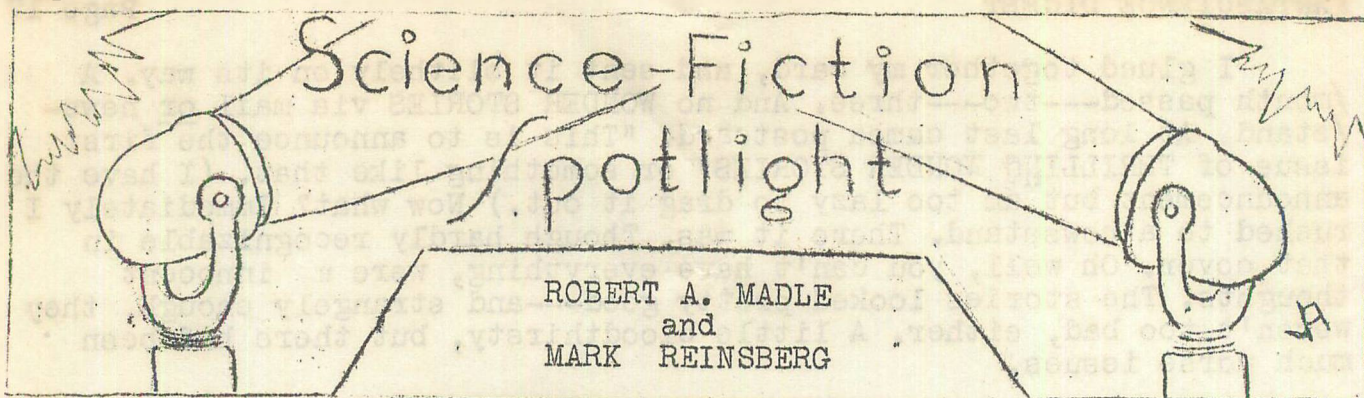


And then things began to happen. The magazine got worse and worse. In that first year, despite the fact that the yarns in the first issue weren't so bad, only one story deserved the ranking of good. That story was "The Circle of Zero" by Weinbaum. Others were merely fair, poor, or awful. If I may venture yet another opinion, those six issues were about the lowest standard s-f has hit over any period, before or since. Even the present plethora of mags usually contain one good story each, which makes up for the sins of the rest of the issue.

One more thing: something that seems to have been overlooked by the fans. Do you realize that THRILLING WONDER STORIES has been responsible for every, or nearly every, new feature the fantasy magazines have adopted in the past few years? It's a fact. Viz.: "The Story Behind the Story" (which is merely biographies of the authors in many cases, and certainly their forerunner), the science quizzes (to not to be confused, of course, with the older science questions which were based on stories in the magazines); "Scientifacts" started the new string of science fillers; and in numerous other ways THRILLING WONDER STORIES has led the field.

Now don't get me wrong, I don't say that TWS is the finest fantasy magazine today, or anything else equally as ridiculous. However, I believe that if you'll think it over a little you'll find the mag to be better than it appears on the surface. (If you think that the new bunch of mags is a good sign, you can even thank TWS for starting it.) Its editors appear to be more sincere than many today. They've helped struggling young authors, and assembled the greatest collection of names of the fantasy world into one issue of TWS---the tenth anniversary issue. They've brought the finest artist in fantasy to stf.--- Virgil Finlay---and are mainly responsible for arousing interest in the Weinbaum trilogy. At least, son't condemn the magazine too much. Of course, it has its faults---and plenty of them---but it may surprise us all in a few more years. Just wait and see.





Well, Weinbaum's greatest epic, NEW ADAM, will definitely appear in September. And it will be published in book form! This was announced by B. G. Davis, editorial half of Ziff-Davis Publications. The first edition will consist of 5,000 copies and the illustrations will be reproductions of the original ones by Weinbaum himself. The book-jacket has been drawn by Julian S. Krupa. The cost of the book will be \$2. Several sets of galley-proofs will be sent out to various critics for commentaries and opinions. A renowned scientist will receive one set, a very famous writer of science fiction will receive another, two or three top-notch book-reviewers and critics by profession will also get advance readings. The idea in back of it all is obvious; if the scientist likes the story -- the science must be air-tight; if the s-f writer thinks it's a good story, it must be. Ditto with the critics. Mr. Davis, who must be conservative in his position as editorial head of all Ziff-Davis publications, enthusiastically declared it was one of the finest stories he has ever read. For a sure bet, don't miss NEW ADAM.

Mr. A. J. Gibney, Associate Publisher of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, informs us that the contents of future issues will depend entirely on readers' requests. Because of the popularity of the first issue, a second issue is already being published, and will be released on or about October 4th. It is very probable that monthly publication will be adopted in the near future. We hear that one of the stories under consideration for future publication is THE BLIND SPOT.

Despite the fact that John W. Campbell publicly announced that he would do no more writing under the pseudonym of Don A. Stuart, the feature story of the October UNKNOWN will be "THE ELDER GODS" by none other than Mr. Stuart. . . . A new author, John Mac Cormac will appear with a short 30,000 word novel in this same issue, titled "THE ENCHANTED WEEKEND". . . . Several well-known WEIRD TALES writers will make their appearances also in the October UNKNOWN. Dorothy Quick pens a tale of a witch-woman's quilt under the title of "BLUE AND SILVER BROCADE" and H. Warner Munn, author of the classic "WEREWOLF OF PONKERT", has a short story, "DREAMS MAY COME". . . . "THE DAWN OF REASON" is the title of a poem by James H. Beard, and this is the first poem to appear in UNKNOWN. The cover of this issue has been painted by a newcomer, Modest Stein. Let's hope he's a little better than some of the other artists Mr. Campbell has introduced during the past year.

At the present time there is quite a circulation war going on. Every editor believes his magazine to be tops in this respect, but it appears that most of the magazines have about the same circulation ---



60,000 copies. WRITERS DIGEST claims that when a magazine reaches those figures, there is something to get excited about. Question. Which magazine reached 60,000 first? . . . . Speaking of circulation, Raymond A. Palmer estimated that only about two hundred science fiction fans will buy the NEW ADAM, despite the large number of pledges he has received. And if this occurs, one Mr. Palmer will be in the "dog-house" and will not be inclined to do anything for the fans again. We sincerely hope Mr. Palmer's pessimistic outlook will not materialize.

Although FUTURE FICTION, announced in the current issue of Hornig's SCIENCE FICTION, was supposed to hit the stands August 20th, it has yet to appear. And August 20th is about a week in the past as this is being written. FUTURE FICTION will be primarily an action magazine, and stories accepted that stress adventure will appear there. On the other hand, SCIENCE FICTION will lean more to science and fantasy. Both magazines will continue to be bi-monthlies indefinitely. One of Editor Hornig's policies will be to endeavor to present a long novel in each issue of both magazines. The January, 1940 issue of FUTURE FICTION (which is probably the date of the initial issue) will contain a novel by Frederic Arnold Kummer, Jr., the amazing lad who appears to sell everything he writes. FUTURE FICTION will probably have a cartoon feature by Frank R. Paul.

Here's a scoop! Killer Kane, Buck Rogers' timid little pal, is dead! Dick Calkins finished him off for good in a little spat between the two arch-rivals. This move was suggested by your co-correspondant, Mark Reinsberg, during an interview for AD ASTRA. Dick Calkins was in a jovial mood and accepted the suggestion. By the way, what ever happened to Phil Nowlan, the original author? It is rumored that Nowlan has had some stuff accepted by AMAZING, but this is only hearsay.

On or about September 16th, Raymond A. Palmer will say "I do". Ray will wed Margaret Ruth Coyle of Milwaukee, whom he has known for several years. . . . It appears that Will Sykora will also be getting married in the near future. We wonder who'll be next? . . . . Poor old Neil R. Jones! During the Editorial reign of Sloane, Jones was one of the most popular writers -- and one of the most consistent sellers. Since Palmer took over, Jones has received rejection after rejection. Palmer recently rejected three of his yarns at once. It looks like we'll never see Professor Jameson in the pages of AMAZING. Perhaps some other magazine will deem it advisable to continue the series, tho. . . . . On the other hand, Polton Cross (who writes a damned sight like John Russell Fearn) has sold "One Came Back" to Palmer. . . . . John Taine's "G.O.G. 666" is still awaiting a decision. It is a very long novel and if Palmer accepts it, it will necessarily have to appear in serial form.

David H. Keller fans will be interested in reading the following, from Farnsworth Wright: "David H. Keller returns to the pages of WEIRD TALES with a yarn entitled "LORD OF THE ICE". This deals with our world gone mad with war fever and too much gold. It deals with vast cataclysms, and the Antarctic continent spewing up salt water through a thousand volcanoes, to rock the earth and engulf the land. The tale tells of a supercivilization under the Antarctic ice, where the descendants of Moors from Spain have built their own civilization. Admirers of Dr. Keller will be glad to read this story, which appears in the



December issue of WEIRD TALES." Several well-known science fiction fans will soon make their appearances in WT. Harry Warner, Jr., one of FD's best article writers, Willis Conover, Jr., and C. S. Youd, a British fan, have all sold poetry to WT. Arthur L. Widner, Jr. has marketed a short story to Editor Wright, slated for future publication. . . . George R. Hahn (Cyril Mand) recently hitch-hiked from Buffalo to New York City and from NYC to Philadelphia. Ye Olde Editor was indeed surprised when Georgie dropped out of the skies with absolutely no warning. Watch for more pf Mand's work in future issues of FD.

Perhaps some of you know this already, but MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES is going to drop the "Science Stories" from their title and will be known hereafter only as MARVEL. The policy of the past few issues will be discontinued and the sex angle will be stressed hereafter. It is also rumored that horror stories will be included amongst the pages of MARVEL. Tch, tch. 'Tis really too bad for MARVEL really gave us some excellent stories; "SURVIVAL," "AFTER WORLD'S END," "TOMORROW," being about the best. However, perhaps it will not be as bad as it all appears -- we hope. From all indications, DYNAMIC SCIENCE STORIES has gone the way of all pulp. Editor Erisman just won't comment.

Robert Bloch's "THE MAN WHO COULD WALK THROUGH MIRRORS" was accepted over the protest of B.G. Davis. . . . Concerning the "great surprise" in the October AMAZING all we can say is "Fooie!" And whatever happened to the "monthly" contests? Anyway, the winner of AMAZING's first contest on the topic: "If I were Editor" --- and you'd be surprised if you knew who it was --- advised: "Disregard the fans' wishes and desires altogether. Cater to the average reader who composes 99% of the circulation. . . ." Who is the culprit who wrote the foregoing? Read future issues of AMAZING STORIES and find out. (FD should get a free subscription for that plug, Ray. Take a hint.)

Palmer reports there are five copies of "DAWN OF FLAME" Memorial Volume not for sale at any price. Palmer originally wrote the introduction which was five pages long and a lot more personal. This Mrs. Weinbaum objected to and Keating wrote the present one --- shorter and less personal. But the closer friends of Stanley G. Weinbaum wanted it the original way and, as a result, five copies were made up with the "Forward" by Palmer. The remaining 495 went out with Lawrence Keating's introduction, and this is the one most of us possess. The five lucky people who own the rare copies are Palmer, Conrad H. Ruppert, Forrest J Ackerman, Julius Schwartz, and Keating.

How many of you know that the first all science fiction magazine was almost published in 1923? At this time Hugo Gernsback sent 25,000 circulars around announcing SCIENTIFICTION, but the response was so poor that the plan fell through. . . . There is something afoot at the offices of Hugo right this moment. It is a dank, dark secret, but we suspect that it is a photographic magazine of intense interest to fantasy readers. Of course, we may be wrong, but Hugo admitted that he is brining out something of interest to fantasy fans this fall. Krause, formerly connected with WONDER, will be the editor. . . . Who was the fan who applied for an editorial position with FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES? . . . John Giunta, our cover artist, has sold a cartoon to AMAZING MYSTERY FUNNIES. . . . "WONDER (THRILLING WONDER) will soon have a slick companion stf. mag if rumors are true. --Chicago in 1940!



# TRIP TO THE MOON



By Milton A. Rethman

The girders of the space ship arch up and around, interlaced in complicated pattern with pipes, conduits, and machinery. The pilot enters the door and strides over to the control panel. He signals the stations around the ship, and one by one the crew responds, their lights on the control board changing color as they check in. The controls are set, the master switch thrown, and the lights of the ship flicker as a roar sounds from without. The whining wind from without responds hollowly, and through a porthole the earth is seen receding with fantastic rapidity. Its continents, outlined in green and brown, embroidered with white clouds, contract, and the ship is off in space, en route to the moon.

The ship lands on the moon, in the center of a large crater. It is before dawn, and the sky is flecked densely with stars, with the earth hanging motionless above, to one side. The sun rises slowly and the tips of the mountains on the west side of the crater become tinged with light as the sun's rays reach across and illumine them. Presently the entire crater is flooded with light, and the towering mountains are seen encircling the ship in all directions.

The motionless earth is directly in the path of the crossing sun. The brilliant orb, haloed by a pearly corona continues its motion until it passes directly behind the planet. The atmosphere of the earth tinges the sun's light a dull crimson, and the crater's rim takes on a ruddy hue. The sun is entirely eclipsed, and no light but the bloody rays that have passed through the earth's atmosphere remains to brighten the moon. Finally the sun passes from behind the earth, and all is light again, until at the end of the lunar day the sun sets again, and the light fades, lingering briefly like a sparkling gem at the tip of the highest mountain on the eastern horizon.

The space ship again prepares for flight; the rockets roar, and the vessel shoots towards earth, floating silently through the void until the roar of the atmosphere is heard around the ship.

## I saw that.

I sat in a space ship, saw all the fantastic machinery, heard the rockets roar, saw the earth through the porthole, saw the crater of the moon, and the earth eclipsing the sun, and saw the sun rise and set on the moon.

So did quite a few thousand other people in Philadelphia during the months of April and May, 1939.

For the topic of the lecture at the Fels Planetarium in the Franklin Institute was: "A Trip to the Moon." And it happened exactly as I described. Even more so.



The cleverness of the demonstration was incredible. The designers of the planetarium could never have dreamed of putting it to such a use when they made the dome of metal perforated with tiny holes for the sake of acoustics. When lighted from the inside of the dome the metal is perfectly opaque, but put a few lights on the outside, and leave the inside dark, and what do you see? The dome disappears! And without is seen the supporting girders of the building and the dome. The huge metal ducts of the air conditioning system, the wires, and heating pipes, ladders and catwalks, and a fake space ship control.

It ~~it~~ looked marvelous.

The noise affects were simple. The mountains of the crater were projected very cleverly around the base of the dome. The earth and the eclipse were nothing for the planetarium to do.

And thus we went to the moon.

-FINIS-



## CAN YOU ANSWER THESE?

Conducted By Robert A. Madle

Judging by the reactions of the readers, last month's set of questions, compiled by Robert W. Lowndes, proved to be very, very difficult indeed. In fact, no one answered all of them correctly. However, the following two readers received the highest ratings:

John Newton, 2667 N. Orianna Street.----97½%  
Paul Freehafer, 404 S. Lake Avenue.----70%

Phila., Pa.  
Pasadena, Cal.

Consequently, Mr. Lowndes does not have to award any prizes, although Mr. Newton almost won. Incidentally, I would like to receive similar sets of questions from readers of FANTASCIENCE DIGEST. How about it, boys? Forrie Ackerman should be able to compile a nice, easy set; and the same applies to Sam Moskowitz, Bob Swisher, and many other science fiction wizards.

Oh yes. I would like to make mention of the fact that Forrest J. Ackerman's name should have been included among the winners in the last issue. His entry arrived too late, so I'm making mention of it now.

Get out the last issue of FD and look over the questions, for here are the answers:

1. Dr. Keller: Summer 1928 Amazing Stories Quarterly. "The Menace", "The Gold Ship", "The Tainted Flood", and "The Insane Avalanche".



20 False. It was not an interplanetary yarn nor did it appear in Argosy.

3. "Faster than Light" (a) Wonder Stories, Oct. 1930, J. Harvy Haggard (b) Amazing Stories Quarterly, Fall-Winter, 1932, Harl Vincent (c) Science Fiction Digest--Cosmos Chapter 1--Ralph Milne Farley (d) Marvel Science Stories, Feb. 1939, D.D. Sharp. -- "The Atom Smasher" (a) Astounding Stories, May 1930, Victor Rousseau (b) Amazing Stories, Jan. 1934, P. Schuyler Miller (c) April 1934, Astounding Stories, Donald Wandrei (d) Amazing Stories, Oct. 1938, Gordon A. Giles.

4. "The Diamond Lens" by Fitz.--James O'Brien.

5. False. Picture was adapted from S. Fowler Wright's "Deluge".

6. They were the same person, the villain. Marakinoff was substituted in the Liveright edition because Prussian villains were no longer acceptable.

7. Muller's drawing for "Anaxhronism", December 1930.

8. The "Ardathia" series by Francis Flagg.

9. Yes, with David Lasser; "The Time Projector"--July-August '31 Wonder Stories.

10. "The People of the Pit" by Merritt.

11. The Conquerors' ship blundered into a great mass of frozen mud on Venus and all were killed.

12. "The Time Oscillator" by Henry Kirkham, SWS December 1929.

13. "The Hidden World" Science Wonder Quarterly, Fall 1929 and "The Other Side of the Moon" Amazing Stories Quarterly, Fall 1929.

14. No. Saranoff always managed to escape.

15. He was made into a pure intelligence.

16. "A Rescue from Jupiter" by Gawain Edwards.

17. "Beyond the Pole" (Verrill) "Skylark of Space" (Smith) and "World at Bay" (Wallis Bros.)

18. Booth Cody.

19. Laurence Manning. (Practically every Wonder Stories writer, for that matter.)

20. Murray Leinster.

Due to lack of space no questions will be asked this issue. However, we'll have a nice set ready for the July-August number. Don't forget, you science fiction bugs, send in your questions. However, please make them of interest to the general reader of s-f.



/o

# THE REASON FOR SCIENCE FICTION

By FRED W. FISCHER

[illegible]

In general, science fiction is actually even more prophetic than most people believe. "What the mind can conceive, man can do." This type of literature should be inspirational in providing invention with further field of endeavor.

Not now, perhaps, but within the next ten thousand years men will be rocketing from star to star by utilizing the tapped energy of the atom or of the ether itself -- I KNOW this will be so, because even continual wars cannot confine science to the limiting creation of instruments of destruction alone. Humanity cannot be held in check always at the start of actual progress toward finer and more useful discoveries.

Science fiction also furnishes diversion to persons with slightly warped minds -- that is, those of us who have perhaps too vivid imaginations and are regarded by our contemporaries as having been born too soon. Personally, I like to get away from the humdrum world by excursions into impossibility (or rather, improbability). If I HAVE been born in advance of my time, I can at least vicariously exist and live in the future through scientifiction.

We enjoy dreaming of the wonders to come; the wonders that were. Science fiction, besides providing prophetic vision also gives us greater knowledge and understanding of the past. You and I know more of the history of this planet as regards its physical creation and continuance, than nine out of ten college professors. We know of the birth of the world, the chemical processes which coalesced and exploded to bring forth a world. Most people NEVER know why Earth is, or why it winds eternally around the parent sun. They don't even know the sun IS the parent.

Science fiction, then, is educational. It is inspirational. It is escape!

/o

COMING SOON

## THE PLANET OF ILLUSION

b v

Millard Verne Gordon

-also-

# VIBRATION

by

Robert W. Lowndes

THESE and other excellent short stories will soon make their appearances in FANTASCIENCE DIGEST. Watch future issues of FD!



# READERS' COMMENTS



CHARLES D. HORNIG: I just finished reading the March-April issue of Fantascience Digest this minute, and I couldn't wait to tell you how much I enjoyed it.

I lauded the previous issue, but this one is so much superior that I consider it the best collection of fan articles under one cover that has appeared in many years.

I won't comment upon any particular item, because I thought they were all very excellent. Your fan magazine is undoubtedly tops in the field now, and I hope your circulation jumps so much that you can have it printed. As it is now, you fellows do a perfect job of mimeographing.

My only suggestion for your future policy is to keep amateur fiction out of your pages. I have yet to read a fiction story in a fan magazine (since Fantasy Magazine) that is worth reading.

As long as you continue to put out such a fine book as Fantascience Digest, you can depend upon my support in THE FANTASY FAN department of SCIENCE FICTION. (All I can say, Mr. Hornig, is I thank you! In regards to the fan fiction, I believe you will change your mind after reading some of the stories slated to appear in FD. For instance, try "Space Log--Y 486 G" in the current issue--RAM)

HELEN CLOUKEY: The current FD is swell. Methinks Giunta improves. Moskowitz' tale was well told with an almost psychological approach. Bristol's research convincing. That's the kind of stuff I eat up.

I think I'll try an article like that sometime. I think, perhaps, you're in for trouble. If you're going to allow a civil war within the covers of the mag (about AMAZING), it will be interesting. But think of the space it will waste. Can you afford it? I hope so. By the way, is that rock in the man's head on the cover coming out or going in? I suspect the former, but I'm not sure. (I wouldn't know, but I think it's going in--RAM)

I can truly say without reservations that your magazine has reached heights that never could have been anticipated from the first two issues. I think I found more undiluted enjoyment and less flys in the ointment in the last issue than ever before. I think that more improvement is impossible, but you can do it!

JOE RIPA: The big thing on my mind right now is that outrageous attack that Harry Warner made on AMAZING STORIES.

In his first paragraph he puts a question mark after AMAZING STORIES and leaves TWS and ASTOUNDING free from such punctuation marks. Perhaps AMAZING STORIES has a few stories that are written scientifically, and not like the fantastic, impossible tales published so often in the other mags.

Page ten, 2nd paragraph: "Follow the fine tradition set for him...." Warner had just finished berating T. O'Connor Sloane for incapable editing of the "Aristocrat".

Just below that: "He has ac-



cepted stories not fit to see print." I wish he would name three and tell me what's wrong with them, and then think of such stories as: "The Secret of the Ring" by Thornton Ayre; "Revolution of 1950" by Stanley G. Weinbaum; "I Robot" by Eando Binder; "Ghost of Mars" by Festus Pragnell; "Mr. Craddock's Amazing Experience" by Wm. F. Temple; and Bob Bloch's unique story, "The Strange Flight of Richard Clayton". In the June issue, Abner J. Gelula rings the bell with "The Whistling Death".

Page ten, 2nd paragraph:

"...said some ridiculous things in editorials," Again, I'd like to see a few examples.

He also talks about Palmer being stubborn; I call myself a real fan and I always wanted the following things:

An Author's Column: (RAP gave it to us.)

A real informal editorial: (We've certainly got that.)

Answers to questions in discussions: (Aren't all answered now?)

A science quiz: (All us "Einsteinians" like that.)

A back cover: (I thought this impossible until Palmer did it.)

A correspondence corner: (Now I know who to write to.)

Again he remarks that Palmer has had two stories published in his own mag. So what? Campbell often includes his own stories in ASTOUNDING, yet no one says anything about it.

Well, that ends my squawk about Warner's article (not to mention a few others.) (What others? \*\*RAM) If you permit such destructive criticism in your mag in the future, you'll have one less reader:--that's me!

(Well, well. Apparently someone likes AMAZING STORIES. Perhaps Mr. Warner will answer this letter of Mr. Ripa in the near future? Frankly, I do not think Warner meant to be destructive, as you interpreted the article. Anyway,

wasn't most of Reinsberg's "Amazing News" taken up with praising AMAZING STORIES last issue? That should atone, somewhat, for Warner's article. By the way, how do you like Warner's THRILLING WONDER article in the current issue? ---RAM)

DONN BRAZIER: Digest came today, and I am delighted with it. Kuttner is amusing; have more of those crazy yarns. News is good --- how do you guys know it all? Too many letters from readers.

(First kick we've received about the letter department---RAM)

TOM WATSON: I think you have one, if not the best all-around fan mags today, Please continue "Ten Years Ago in Science Fiction" by Mr. Rothman. 'Tis swell.

SYLVESTER BROWN, JR.: Concerning your Digest: Please omit "Ten Years Ago in Science Fiction".

JOHN A. BRISTOL: The cover of the latest FANTASCIENCE DIGEST is a good piece of work. The scene is frequent in science fiction, but hasn't, in my experience, been overworked as badly for fan magazine illustrations as the space-ship eternally zooming up an out.

Moskowitz and Milton A. Rothman were both fair this time. Harry Warner reviewed the history of Amazing Stories, but he didn't go far to prove the statement made in the title of his article, "An Aristocrat Abdicates."

Your questions are still interesting, but there are some I know I couldn't answer, and since a 100% correct set of answers is required, I'll stay out.

Fred W. Fisdor's article was faintly amusing. Reinsberg as usual. I like the department, "Ten Years Ago in Science Fiction."

Keep up the good work.



JOHN GIUNTA: The best thing in the current issue was Sam Moskowitz's "Grand Old Fan" and, of course, I know who he was referring to as the Grand Old Fan. Which makes it all the more enjoyable. I have read it twice already and I would like to congratulate Sam on a beauty of a story-article. Your editorial; good as usual. Same for the readers' department; keep it as large as it is, or you can enlarge it a little more. I did not care for Rothman's "Jack Williamson's Valhalla"; not interested in such stuff, I suppose.

Harry Warner's article was interesting, but nothing new. Your "Science Fiction Spotlight" was very good, but some of the items are stale. However, keep it up; it's swell. Fischer's "Those Were the Days" I enjoyed plenty. Reinsberg's "Amazing News" this issue is so-so. "The Strange Case of Mr. Geech"---PUTRID! Why do you insist on publishing such stuff? (Now, now, Johnny. Kuttner's humor-yarns are extremely popular with the readers of FD; you being about the only kicker. Consequently, I'm afraid I'll print many more Kuttner humor-yarns in the future, providing Hank writes them, of course--RAM) Rothman's article again was not so hot. The second best thing in the issue was "Davud V. Reed's Hoax" by John Bristol. "My Favorite science fiction Story" is a good department. Hope I will be able to tell mine soon. "The Eternal Wanderer" not so hot this time. Tell Train to brush up a little. He has been doing an admirable job, but now.....Well, I guess it's not his fault. Fred W. Fischer made me change a smile into a laugh with his "Genius Bursts in Bloom". You have a good catch there; hold on to him. His poem and article are among the wittiest things I have ever read. If he writes any more like them, grab them up. (Fischer will appear quite consistently in FD. How do you like his article in this issue?--RAM)

JOHN F. BURKE: Quite honestly, I think FD is far better than the old FANTASY MAGAZINE - your set-ups, material, and the terrific personality about the whole magazine amaze me. I have been loaning my copies all over the place in the hope of getting you new subscribers; this because without sufficient backing any fan-mag will fold up, and I couldn't bear to think of the Digest flitting off to the Never-Never Land.

Generally speaking - I marvel at the perfection of your duplicating. As Harry Warner says, you have just the right amount of ink on every page - it's wunnerful!

Cover - quite good, but a little Flash Gordonish, don't you think? I prefer symbolical covers myself, or at least some general scene. This one looks as though it might be from a story inside, and I spent quite a time looking through the issue for the feature it was supposed to illustrate.

"Grand Old Fan" - very hackneyed. Make the fan a theatrical producer, and this story appears about three times a month in our "20-Story Magazine". The style is quite good, though.

Williamson's Valhalla - I am definitely a Wagner fan, but never thought of this parallel, which is very interesting. I think I'd better try plagiarising Lohengrin - or has someone else started on it by now?

Harry Warner writes facts that we all know, but he puts them together well, and I always enjoy this sort of article - probably because I know what it's all about, and don't have to think too hard.

Oh no - I can't answer those questions, and I'm not going to make a fool of myself trying.

The Spotlight is excellent - where do you get all your news? I receive regular letters from Margulies giving advance line-ups of TWS, STARTLING, STRANGE, etc., but I've usually read the stuff in



your columns long before his stuff arrives.

"Those Were the Days" - not so good. Interesting, but not very inspiring.

"Amazing News" always interesting - another good column.

Kuttner still bewilders me. I thought he was trying to be serious at first, and then when I realized it was meant to be funny I didn't think it at all humorous. It's a matter of taste, I suppose - Sam Youd nearly died over it, he says.

"Ten Years Ago" - he starts off by talking about 5 years ago, but that doesn't worry anyone, I suppose. Interesting, readable.

Bristol's reports are not particularly exciting, but I don't begrudge them their place in the magazine - you certainly cater for everything in your pages, and little items like this make for absolute completeness.

"Eternal Wanderer" - I like idle chatter of this sort.

Readers Letters - can't say anything save that the department is what one would expect - only most of the letters weren't enthusiastic enough.

ALEX SAUNDERS: The March-April issue was (and no one can deny this) a marvelous improvement over the January-February number.

The cover was excellent and the contents page swell.

I enjoyed immensely "An Aristocrat Abdicates" by Harry Warner, Jr. After reading the article I know now the history of AMAZING STORIES, and mighty interesting it is, too. Now I would like to read the history of THRILLING WONDER STORIES and also ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION. Can you arrange this? (Does Warner's article in the current issue concerning TWS please you?--RAM)

"Grand Old Fan" by Sam Moskowitz was very good.

"The Science Fiction Spotlight" written by yourself is an excell-

ent feature, and I thought "Those Were the Days" as being very good indeed.

Mark Reinsberg's "Amazing News" is, in my opinion, one of the best features in FD.

Henry Kuttner's "The Strange Case of Mr. Geech" was very enjoyable.

One of the highlights in the March-April issue was "Ten Years Ago in Science Fiction" by Milton A. Rothman. By all means, keep this department in your magazine. (Mr. Rothman has moved to Washington, D.C., and no longer has access to his collection. Consequently, the department has been discontinued. Perhaps some reader would desire to take over for Mr. Rothman?--RAM)

That article by John A. Bristol was good, and "The Eternal Wanderer" by Oswald Train is an excellent feature.

HARRY WARNER, JR.: The cover of the March-April issue is exceedingly fine. The use of shading, and particularly neat lettering helps muchly. Mimeing just about as good as you'll find anywhere, if not better. Not one single faint spot in my whole copy. Typography seems to be better too.

Inner material the best yet, probably, the top stuff being turned out by SAM and MAR. They're your two consistently best writers; hang on to them. Fischer shows great promise; fine style and fair subject, Bristol is rapidly coming; his style is probably tops among fans. Reinsberg seemed to slip a little this time. Very little real news. Lowndes' questions just right; the "Spotlight" continues as excellent. And I still like those "Favorite Stf. Story" paragraphs. Hurrah for the last sentence on the contents page.

Watch for a very important article by Mark Reinsberg next issue.



The SFA rated the magazine so highly that they took it over as their official monthly magazine - but we're still not biased in any way, and continue to present articles, humor, and news that will interest you all.

The most significant thing of all - in the whole of our career we have amassed a great deal of correspondence and criticism - and NO LETTER has been condemnatory. This is surely an achievement?

Swiftest of all rain-mages.

By M. Rebeque

[illegible]

Fred W. Fischer  
Mark Reinsberg  
Harry Warner, Jr.



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