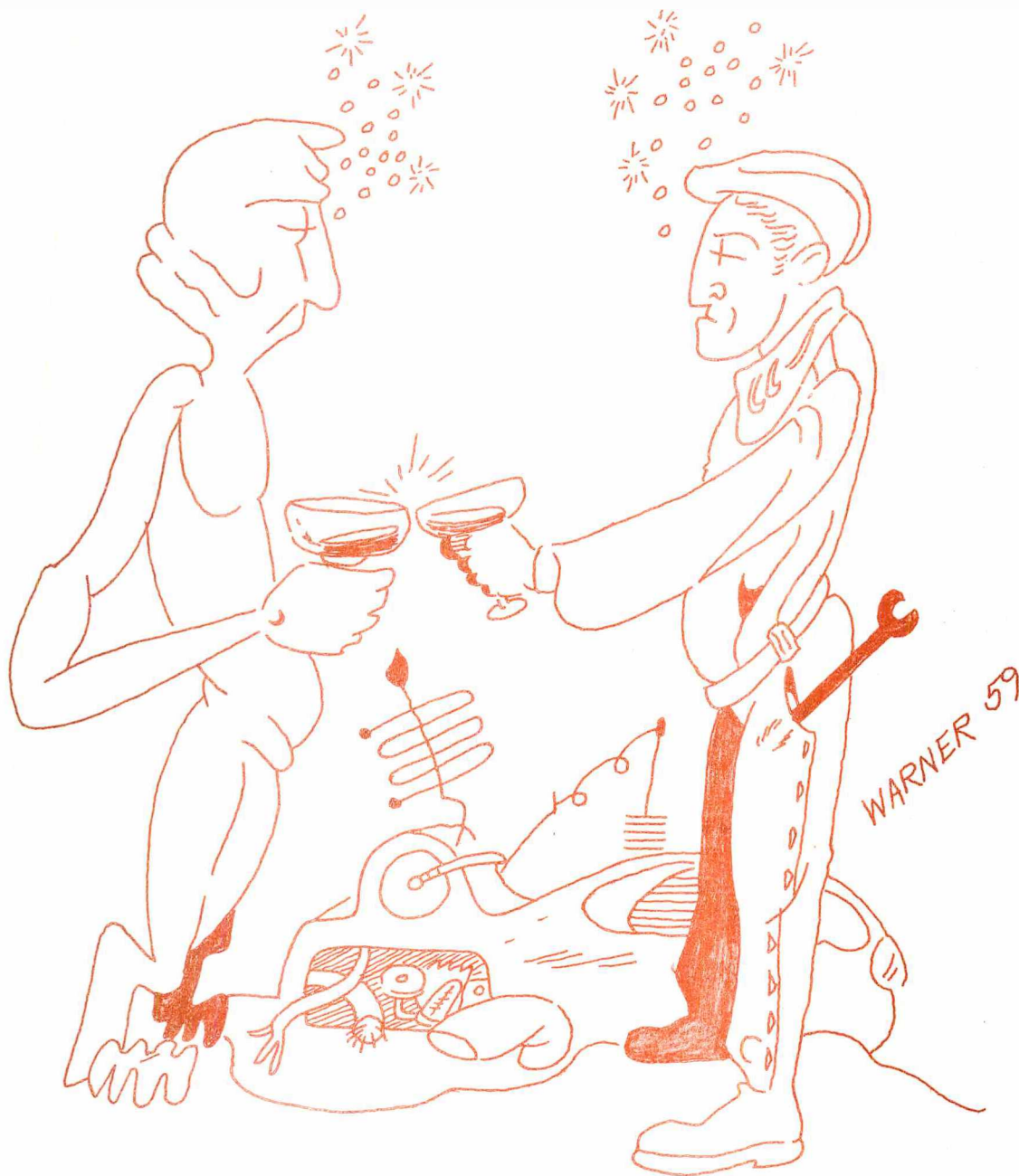


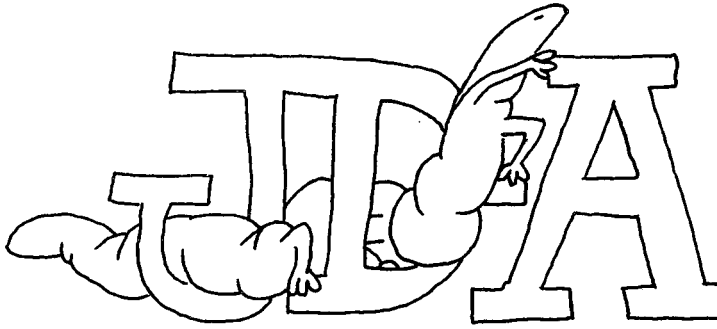
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H A P P Y H O L I D A Y S ! ! ! !

# ARGASSING . . . . .



Another poll for you to fill out this month. FANAC wants a wider coverage for their annual poll and have asked several fanzines to include the poll in their mailings. JD-A is happy to include this poll and ask all of you to fill it in and send it to FANAC, c/o Terry Carr, 70, Liberty St., #5, San Francisco 10, Calif. Do it today. The deadline is February 15, 1960 rather than 1959 as

printed on the poll. Fans sending the poll in will receive copies of FANNISH II with the poll results.

Visits the past few weeks with Dean Grennell in Fond du Lac, Wis., Emile Greenleaf in Waukegan, Illinois and Vic Ryan in Springfield, Illinois. While I was in Fond du Lac, Dean wrote an article on Wild Focal points he has known that will be included in JD-A's anniversary issue. Vic Ryan also has a new fanzine in the works. I'm planning to loan Vic my old multilith until such a time as I sell it, so he should be able to put out a nice looking zine. I'll be taking it up there on my next trip to Springfield, probably in January.

Jim Harmon has been spending a few days with us here in Mt. Vernon, and its been a ball, almost like a minature con, drinking bheer and talking into the wee hours of the morning. Jim brought Doug an electronic brain called Brainiac. Really something and Doug's in seventh heaven with it. Jim is going to do fanzine reviews for JD-A on a rotating basis, so review copies should be sent to Jim Harmon, 427 E. 8th St., Mt. Carmel, Illinois.

The response to the questionnaire sent out with #48 has been gratifying and the results will be published here sometime next year after Doc Barrett and Prof. Hirsch complete their study.

+++++

This will be the last issue of JD-ARGASSY that you will receive unless you :

Send \$1.00

Write

Trade



So JF  
THERE  
IS A CHECK  
MARK -  
DO WHAT  
IT SAYS!

I'm going to turn this over to Jim for awhile now and let him argASSy for awhile.

\* \* \*

So much for burp marks. In this troubled time when all forms of harmless fun like quiz games, advertising and syndicated crime are being harassed, I think it might be better for me to clear up a few harmless deceptions of Lynn's in the foregoing comments.

I'm not here for a few days but indefinitely. I'm hiding out from my draft board which never reads fanzines.

The beer Lynn and I are drinking is ginger, silver and root. The closest Lynn and I ever get to drinking malt is in tan milk.

Doug is not in "seventh heaven" over some crummy electronic brain. I brought the kid a carton of mescaline lollipops. Make a man out of him.

Having cleared that up, I might lurch ahead to point out that beginning with this issue, as you may have noticed, I've asked Lynn to list me as "Contributing Editor" or "Review Editor" or some such. And Lynn always does what I ask him to do. (And don't forget, buddy, I still have the negatives.)

This being an age of honesty, I may as well come out and admit the reason for this.

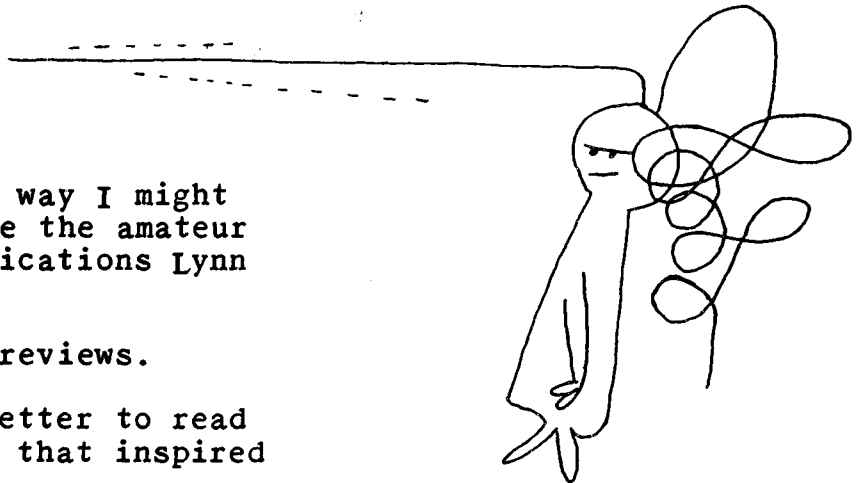
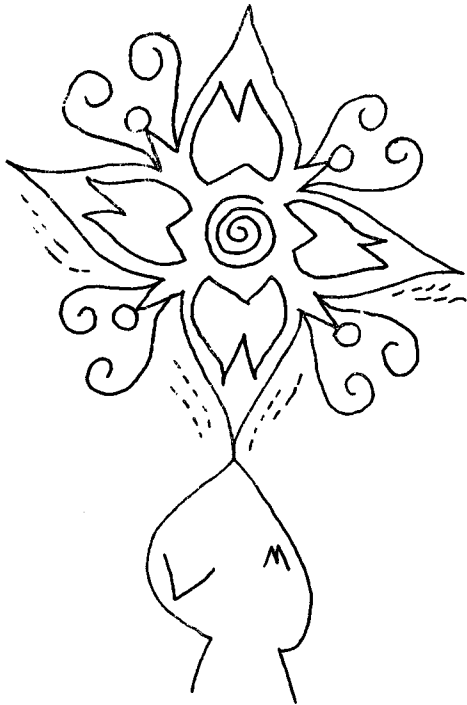
Greed.

I thought in this way I might get duplicates of some the amateur and professional publications Lynn regularly receives.

I am in favor of reviews.

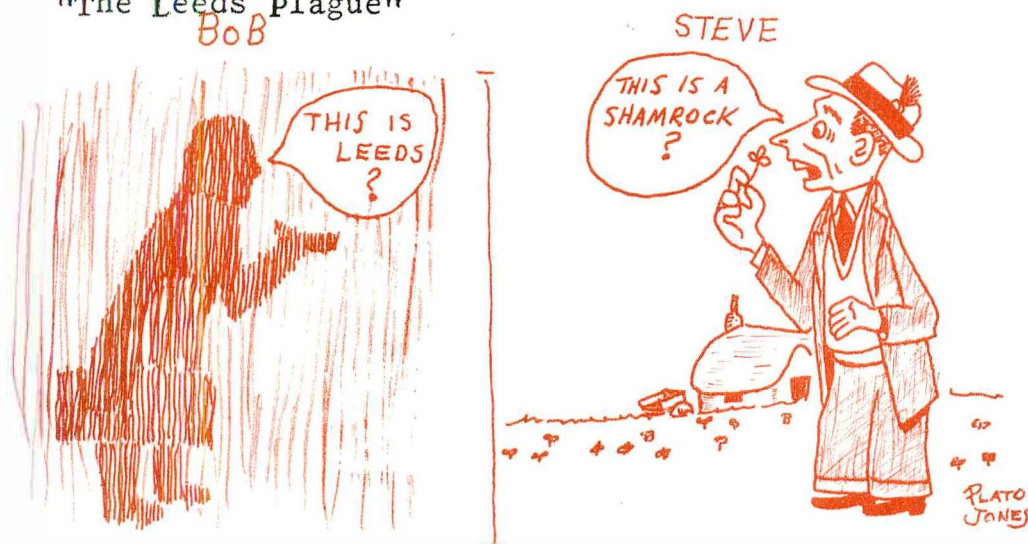
Sometimes it is better to read a review than the book that inspired it.

(Continued on page 21)



## Chapter 9

## "The Leeds Plague"



On Monday, September 16th, the American group arose too late for breakfast -- rather customary of this group, it would appear. Steve and I were rather busy getting ready for our forthcoming trips. On the other hand, Will and Shel, having decided to stay over for the LaSFAS meeting that evening, were in no particular hurry to check out.

Steve accompanied me to the station and then departed for the airport and for Belfast, Ireland -- specifically for the home of Walt Willis, commonly known as "Oblique House". Walt, as mentioned previously, had invited me to fly over, also. However, as much as I would have liked to visit Walt and his charming wife, Madelaine, it was a case of not being able to be at several places at the same time.

The train ride to Leeds was short and pleasant. It couldn't have taken more than two hours to cover the approximate 100 miles between Liverpool and Leeds. During the trip I merely relaxed and thought fine thoughts of the wonderful time I had been having since arriving in London almost two weeks before.

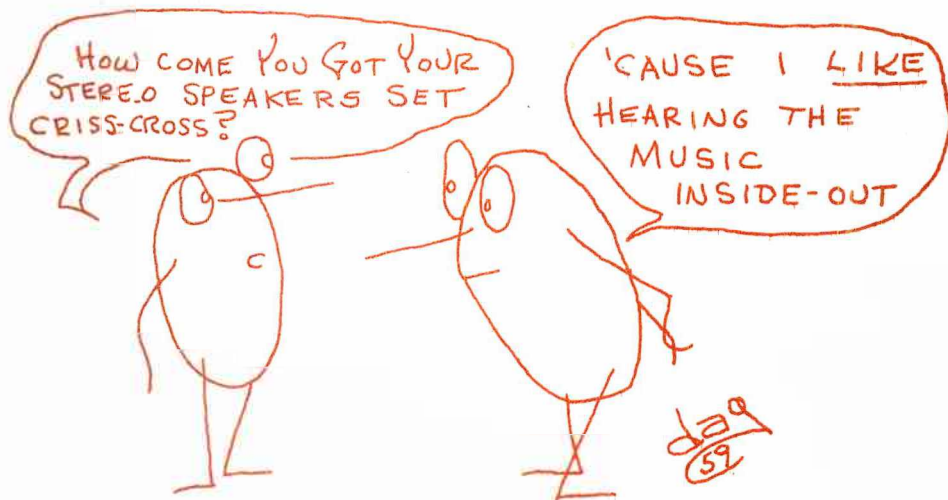
Mike Rosenblum had informed me that he would be on hand at the station to meet me. As I departed from the train I saw a pleasant looking, dark-haired, mustached chap, clutching a copy of Galaxy, walking toward me. This, I immediately surmised, must be Mike. I was clutching a handful of fanzines, a suitcase, and an overnight bag, and Mike picked me out of the crowd instantly.

Ron Bennett -- who has since become my fellow TAFF administrator -- made his appearance at this moment and it was just like old-home week. Mike hustled us to his auto and through Leeds to 7 Grosvenor Park. It was raining and the appearance of the city was quite sombre, as it

is wont to be on a dreary, cold, rainy mid-September afternoon. Leeds, like Liverpool, is a typical large industrial city. I didn't get to see much of the city because of the inclement weather that persisted for my entire stay at Leeds. Even so, there was, and still is, a warm spot in my heart for Leeds in that it was one of the cradles of science fiction fandom.

Leeds was one of the earliest chapters of Gernsback's Science Fiction League, being formed by Douglas W. F. Mayer soon after the creation of the SFL in 1934. I'm positive J. Michael Rosenblum was among its earliest members. Leeds was also the locale of what almost went down into history as the first science fiction convention. In January, 1937 this convention was held in Leeds with an attendance of twenty. Oddly enough, the attendance was held down by an outbreak of flu. The oddness of this situation will be clarified as this chapter progresses. Some of those present at this convention, at which the original British Science Fiction Association was formed, were Ted Carnell, Eric Frank Russell, Walter H. Gillings, Maurice K. Hanson, and Mike Rosenblum. I believe Arthur C. Clarke, then an active fan, was also present. This convention would have been the world's first if it hadn't been for the group that met in Philadelphia in October, 1936. Sixteen were present at this combined New York-Philadelphia gathering and it was Donald A. Wollheim who suggested the group go on record as being the First Science Fiction Convention. At this meeting impressive plans were also formulated for the First World Science Fiction Convention, to be held in conjunction with the 1939 World's Fair in New York City.

Mike, apparently, is one of the more well-to-do (financially, that is) of the British fans. He is a partner in the firm of Rosenblum and Newman, a real estate agency which, as Mike's letterhead reveals, has "Everything to do with Property." 7 Grosvenor Place is a delightful little home replete with all the necessities of American life -- many of which are luxuries in England. For instance, in America just about



everyone has an automobile, television, electric washing machine, electric refrigerator, and hot water plumbing. In England there aren't too many families that have all of these and, probably, many families that have none of them. But, as I said, Mike lives off the wealth of the land -- literally. (However, please don't get the idea that Mike is so well off that he lights cigars with five pound notes.)

Mike has a very charming (and attractive) wife named Betty, plus two wee sma' ones -- one male and one female. Betty, although not a science fiction fan, created quite a discussion when she wrote an article about the King's Court Hotel which appeared in Mike's fanzine, New Futurian, immediately preceding the Loncon. Betty described the King's Court as being good training grounds for panhandlers or people on the road. (Bob Tucker wrote a similar article about the Ingalls Hotel in Bellefontaine, Ohio, where the 1954 and 1955 Midwestcons were held.) While both were somewhat exaggerated, both also were somewhat authentic in their descriptions.

Mike, Ron and I no more than arrived than Betty summoned us to dinner -- and it certainly was a delicious one. After dinner, Betty asked me if I noticed anything unusual about the food. I honestly hadn't -- except for the fact that it was unusually good. She then indicated that it was meatless -- and that the Rosenblum family was a vegetarian group. Some of you gals who are collecting recipes might do well to ask Betty for some of hers.

That evening Mal and Sheila Ashworth were over and we had a nice little gathering which consisted of beer, more food, and discussion. Ron Bennett and Mal and Sheila ran a continuous little game of "you insult me and I'll insult you." I gathered, from this constant banter, that something had occurred in the recent past to cause this friendly-enmity, but I never did discover what it was. We topped off the evening by playing a space-ship game called Astron which is one of those things during which you spin an indicator and move spaces, and get sent back to the moon for space piracy, and like that.

Mike, being his own boss, was able to provide for time off by keeping half an eye on his business via the telephone. So Tuesday morning, which was another cold, rainy morning, we spent in Mike's library. In reality, he has his books spread throughout the house, but there is one particular room on the second floor which is all library. In fact, just about every square foot is library.

I cautiously fingered many rare items that morning. Mike showed me first editions of H.G. Wells' "War of the Worlds" and "The War in the Air". He then passed along Griffith's rare and legendary "A Honeymoon in Space" and the same author's "Angel of the Revolution." He showed me what may be the very first tale of the world destroyed by the splitting of the atom, "The Crack of Doom" by Robert Cromie, published in 1895. Mike then surprised me with a complete file of my own "ancient" fanzine, Fantascience Digest, published during the years 1937-1941. One of them even contained an article by J. Michael Rosenblum! Also displayed was Mike's photo album which includes photos of many of the earliest British



fans and photos taken at the Leeds convention. (Sam Moskowitz -- take notice in case you ever revise or rewrite "The Immortal Storm".)

Mike has thousands of s-f books and magazines. He has not attempted to keep up with everything published during the past few years but up to about 1950 he has a fabulous collection of books, magazines, and fanzines. Ron Bennett informed me that he has spent many enjoyable hours browsing through Mike's collection.

Through the years Mike has been active, to some extent, in fanzine publishing. He first issued The Futurian, a neatly-printed journal, prior to the war. During the war the name was changed to Futurian War Digest and Mike, along with Forrest J Ackerman, deserve credit for holding together the far-flung segments of British fandom from 1939 until 1946. I had always enjoyed reading those of Mike's magazines I received (although during the war I sort of lost track). Thus, when a copy of The New Futurian was dropped into my mailbox one morning several years ago, I was agreeably surprised. Those of you who haven't seen Mike's contemporary publication are missing a good, readable, mature magazine. It is slanted more toward the reader-collector type of fan, featuring, as it does, book reviews (old and new), discussions of trends in the genre, movie reviews, and Walt Gillings' own version of "The Immortal Storm", called "The Clamorous Dreamers." I haven't seen an issue of Mike's magazine lately but, as he explained to me, The New Futurian has to wait for time and inclination.

The two little Rosenblums were down with Asiatic Flu Tuesday morning, as was, apparently, half the population of Leeds. Mike and Betty had planned to take Ron and me out Tuesday to dinner but the sudden turn of events with the children added finis to this. So, Tuesday afternoon, Mike and I drove out to visit several spots of historical significance. We spent a while at the Kirkstall Abbey and at the Temple Newsam House. The Abbey remains just as it was some seven or eight hundred years ago and is replete with historical treasures of the Leeds area. The Temple Newsam House contains, primarily, the art treasure of the area. The afternoon was enjoyably spent with Mike acting as my guide.

When we returned to 7 Grosvenor Place we found Ron Bennett waiting for us. Ron teaches school in Leeds, although he lives in Harrogate, some twenty miles away. During my visit with Mike, Ron was also staying evenings and nights so we could have a constant and continuous fan gathering. By staying at Mike's, Ron was able to spend all of his time with us, except for the hours he was teaching school.

Ron mentioned how serious the Asiatic Flu epidemic had become. About three-quarters of his class hadn't attended class that day and, it would appear, things were getting worse, instead of better. We kidded somewhat about me taking Asiatic Flu back to the United States. Ah! Little did we realize -- but that is another story and another chapter.

That evening we indulged in another of Betty's wonderful meatless dinners. This was followed by tasting some of Mike's liquors and after-dinner drinks. In addition to science fiction, Mike collects

bottles of various types of liquers, such as Apricot Brandy, Forbidden Fruit, and that sort of drink.

That evening, with the rain still falling, and the winds blowing, and billions of Asiatic Flu germs drifting about Leeds, Mike, Ron and I sat about the living room, sipping our liquor and calmly discussing science fiction and its relationship to the world in general.

(Watch for "Last Days in London", Chapter 10 of "A Fake Fan in London.")

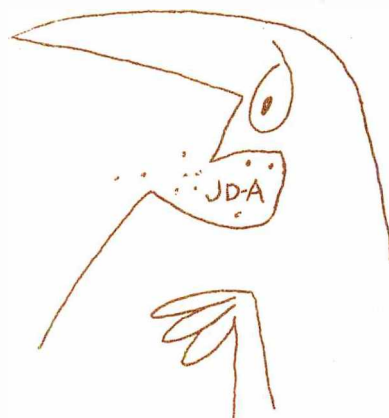




FANTOM CONFIDENTIAL:

FORREST J ACKERMAN

by Jim Harmon



Forrest J Ackerman is a good-looking man, appearing younger than his years of forty-odd -- but not queer, he always maintained to Francis Towner Lancy. He has a sport shirt and a small mustache. Below the mustache is a bland, contented smile full of love for his fellow fan. He sort of looks like Charlie Chaplin would look if he had just had a fix of heroin.

At conventions, Forrest J Ackerman can generally be seen passing out -- the reader will allow me to finish the sentence, being conditioned as he is by the example of the author -- passing out fanzines or prozines the way old John D. handed out dimes to the workers' kids. Forry (as he is known) undoubtedly has a soft spot in his heart for the rabble. "I have a soft spot in my heart for the rabble," he once said. This was copied down by a young fan who followed him around copying everything he said. (Like all of these articles, this has been carefully researched. I have the notebook in my possession. The final statement in the book is "Like blowo, kid".)

There is an illusion of generosity about Ackerman. He is alledged to have contributed freely to funds for importing fans, and exporting fans (it is said that he gave three thousand dollars to export Claude Degler alone.) There are stories that he always helps out fans who are sick or broke, and that his home in California is the place where all fans in the area party. If one believed these stories, one would believe that Forry Ackerman was a warm, wonderful, talented, dedicated human being. God knows, a man like this would make a pretty dull subject, so this article will put an end to these stories once and for all?

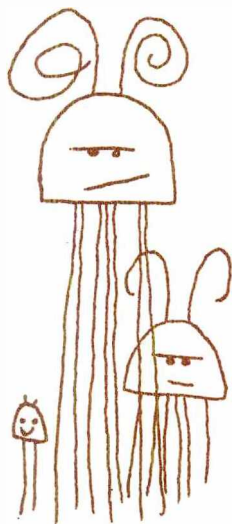
This article will ask these questions:

Did Ackerman sell the secret of the H-bomb to Franco Spain in 1937 or did he not?

How many times has Ackerman been convicted of the Mann Act? A simple yes or no, Mr. Ackerman, if you please?

And finally: does or does not Forrest J Ackerman habitually read science fiction, for crissake?

These questions are asked by this article, but we leave it to you to answer them. Your author will only stick his neck out so far. What do you expect in a fanzine? Authenticity? In the words of Harlan Ellison: Not at those rates, baby.



Our story begins on a stormy night in the second or third decade of this century. (Forrest J. Ackerman regards it with shame that he was born in this century, and not the next, but let us forgive him this one thing.) Momentous events are astir in the world. Adolf Hitler has just caught his foot in a bucket of wall-paper paste. Tom Mix is appearing in "Rough Riding Romance". And at a little bungalow in California, a baby is being born.

The doctor rises from the bed slowly, bandaging his hands.  
"The water needn't be that hot, Wilhelm."

"Achderberleiber, Doc Barrett, what have you given me tonight?"

Doc Barrett handed Wilhelm Ackerman the bill. "The usual, Wilhelm, just the usual."

"The baby, the baby," Wilhelm cries, seizing a bundle from the bed. Then handing kindly old Doc Barrett back his wallet, Wilhelm finally located the infant. "Achderberleiber, Mama, it is a boy."

"Nein, Wilhelm," Mama says with a mother's instinctive knowledge.  
"It is a fan."

"Achderberleiber!" said Wilhelm.

"Fritz," gurgles the baby Forrest. "fritzleiber."

# # #

In spite of everything, the baby Forrest lived to become a man, or rather a fan, who would be known around the world as Mr. Science Fiction, as Number One Fan, as 4sj. As Ackerman says with a smile: "Never give your right name."

Through the years Ackerman has been associated with many things. Esperanto, spelling reform, the LASFS, horror movies, Down with Degler, VOM, Down with Shaver, agenting science fiction, and reading science fiction, for crissake. Looking up from a collectors item like Out of This World Adventures or even a current Amazing Stories, Forry (as he is known) can proudly say: "I never grow tired of reading science fiction."

"Mr. Ackerman," your author asked him in an exclusive interview, "Have you actually read all of these books on your shelves?"

"Certainly," Ackerman replied. "Should I only buy books just because they sound like sci-fi? Here is an excellant time travel story" he indicates FROM HERE TO ETERNITY "and a great tale of immortality" pointing out FOREVER AMBER "and another about a robot servomechanism" LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER, the title reads.

"My," I said. "And what are those?"

Ackerman turned to a stack of books on a table. "Oh, those are just some non-sci-fi books sent to me by mistake. I'm throwing them out. One's a thesis on urban living, another's a historical novel, and the last is a book on teen-age problems."

The titles, we see, are: CITY, THE LOVERS, AND CHILDHOOD'S END.

With this kind of a background portrait of Ackerman, fully as reliable as any of these articles, we can now take a more personal look at Forry.

# # #

My first contact with Forry Ackerman came through the recommendation of Hal Shapiro. I had been trying to sell SF stories for years, and Hal suggested I try to get Ackerman to agent my material. So I, at about fifteen years of age, calmly wrote a letter to Ackerman asking him if he would care to represent my work.

I still remember Forry's reply.

"Dear Mr. Harmon,

Some years ago, Ray Bradbury wrote a letter to a New York agent asking if he would care to represent his work. The agent replied: 'Dear Mr. Bradbury: Drop dead.' But he didn't.

I don't want to make the same mistake in your case. Send me some of your stories.

Forry."

For years following this, Forry carried me without a sale. Finally, some of my stories were published in SPACEWAY and later I actually began getting paid for stories. I'm sure Forry wouldn't be weeping now if he had turned me down, but I probably would be if our paths hadn't crossed.

The first time I ever met Forry Ackerman was at the monster convention in Chicago.

I approached the great man and whispered: "My name is Jim Harmon, Mr. Ackerman."

"Well, well, Jim," he said pumping my hand furiously "glad to meet one of my star clients, have an advance issue of Galaxy, have an introduction to Stu Byrne, Doc Smith, have my wife," he continued with his typical generosity "say hello to you."

I saw Forrest later at a party, where someone pressed a clear liquid on me from an old Coca-Cola syrup jug. Mineral water, I presume. At any rate after a few glasses I began feeling pretty damned healthy.

Forry was sitting on the couch talking to, I believe, Charles Beaumont.

They were playing a game. (Once and for all, forget those stories about Los Angeles fandom -- it was a question and answer game.)

"What magazine," Forry asked "did Hugo Gernsback announce the publication of to the readers of Science and Invention in 1924?"

I lurched over and stuck my teen-age face between them. "Scientifiction!" I announced triumphantly.

They passed a few more questions back and forth which I answered for them, before either could get a chance to speak. I was feeling healthier by the minute.

"Say," Forry said friendly "this guy really --"

"Yeah," Beaumont (I think) drawled "he really is." And walked away, over to the bathroom door and tried it.

"Someone's using the bathroom for a bedroom, I think," Forry said dryly.

"Gosh, Forry," I asked "Why would anyone want to sleep in there?"

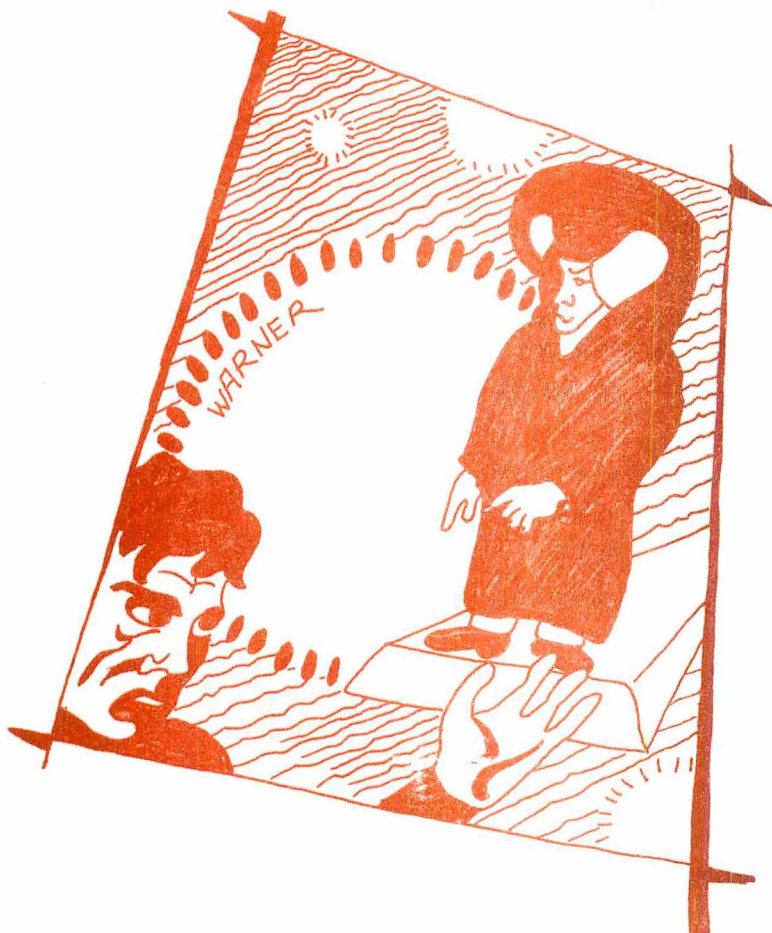
# # #

Some years passed before I saw Forry again at Cleveland.

As if there had been no years between us at all, Forry came over to me and said "Jim, when did you arrive?"

He recognized the young man Jim Harmon as easily as he had the boy Jim Harmon. In fact, he performed a similar if more difficult feat in recognizing the Middleweight Jim Harmon from the fat Jim Harmon, something that stumped Dave Kyle and others. I can only conclude that Forrest J. Ackerman never forgets a friend.

I got to know Forry pretty well at the Clevention.



## B O O K S . . . .

The Duplicated Man. By James Blish and Robert Lowndes. Avalon, 216 pp., \$2.95.

This is a puzzling book. Not only in the sense that it has a certain intangible quality that denies definition, but in its intricacies, which make vanVogt seem like an illiterate hack for Jack and Jill.

Sometime in Earth's history, the Security Council of the United Nations took things into its own hands; using atomic blasts directed at the Polar ice caps, they were somehow able to gain control of the world. No small feat for a basically weak and bureaucratic organization.

Of course, there are the ever-present discerners and discontents; these people flee to nearby Venus with its poisonous dust, rather than live under the rule of the Security Council. One thing that Blish and Lowndes must be complimented on is their iconoclasm; most sf authors picture Venus as a hot, humid, rain forest; these two pen a description of a desolate, barren world.

To protect these new colonists from possible atomic attacks from outraged Mother Earth, a brilliant scientist named Thomas invents the screen that bears his name. This "screen", while defying analysis, prevents any atomic warhead or atomic-propelled ship from passing through. Of course chemical weapons would be of a negligible effect on a planet whose surface is never seen.

However the surface of the Earth can be easily seen, and the colonists make the most of it. There is a continual bombardment of Earth.

The confusion in this book is brought about by the existence of four factions, evenly distributed on two planets. On Earth, we find, of course, the Security Council, and its reactionary, the Pro-Earth Party. The groups on Venus are: the original dissenters, and a smaller group of people who want to be reunited with Earth.

At one point in the story, it seems that one character might rise above all the rest; in fact, there is a good, honest attempt at characterization. But, unfortunately, he disappears, and is never heard from again. Back to the remaining score of sub-heros/heroiness.

The main weapon that Earth has in its control is the Duplicator, which can produce up to, and possibly beyond, five copies of any person. The idea is to cause havoc on Venus when duplicates of a famous military leader are seen. Alas, it just doesn't happen this way.

But what really happens is very entertaining, if not facinating. The ending is extremely clever, and fits; this more than makes up



for the repetitious "playhouse 90" dialog. I can't reveal the story in more detail, as most of its effectiveness lies in its suspense and in its surprises; however, if you can stumble back and forth between two planets and a dozen characters, and can stomach the somewhat neurotic and poetic dialog, you'll discover what is, without a doubt, one of the finest plotted books in some time. Try it....for something unique and refreshing.

review by Vic Ryan

Seed of Light. By Edmund Cooper. Ballantine. 155 pp., 35¢

This theme isn't new by any means. Heilein used it successfully in Universe. But no one - bar none - has ever made such brilliant use of its possibilities.

After tragic wars have destroyed most of the Earth, a domed city, living under the constant fear of a poisoned atmosphere, builds a starship....a last hope of preserving the human race. The departure of the ship with its carefully selected crew of ten (five men and five women....it works better that way) of course brings about the destruction of the dome, and the subsequent death of all the city's inhabitants. However, it is decided that the ends do justify the means.

For countless generations the Solarian drifts between stars, always with the vague hope of finding the "New Earth". But generation after generation experiences the same frustrations, the same disappointments, the same disillusionments.

The list of visited star systems grows....Alpha Centauri, Procyon, Altair, etc....but still there is no luck. The original inhabitants of the ship are long dead; Earth is a mere myth.

A brilliant member of a subsequent generation develops a device which will accomplish two things. First, it will eliminate the necessity for years of wandering between planets; secondly, it will place the ship in the immediate vicinity of an Earth type planet.

It does just that, and here the book ends.

But no simple resume of the plot can begin to describe what is written in these 155 pages; you'd have to find out for yourself.

Ballantine continues to fill the market with fine, representative works....last year it was A Case Of Conscience; earlier this year; The Fourth R, and now Seed Of Light. If you pass this by, you're missing the finest novel thus far in 1959.

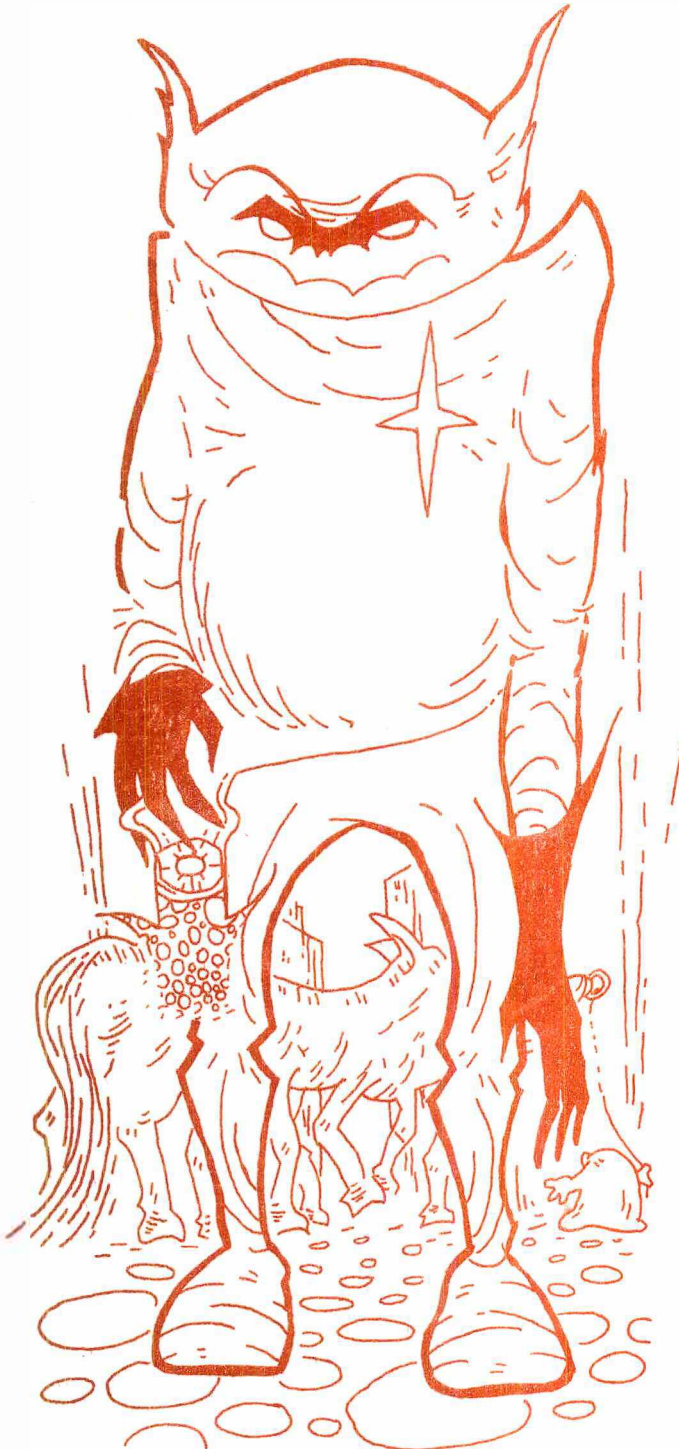
review by Vic Ryan

Beyond the Night by Cornell Woolrich; Avon, 154 pages, 35¢.

Yet another in the current series of poorly blurbed Avon books, this one is unique in that it sports a fine cover. Within, there are 6 stories, of which three are originals... the third, fourth, and fifth. The other three are from F&SF, Fantastic, and a Popular Pub, circa 1935, respectively.

Moon of Montezuma is a 26 page story which illustrates his talent for The descriptive prose, if accomplishing nothing else. Perhaps my enjoyment was somewhat lessened by the fact that I expected an anticlimax (the real climax was in the middle), which failed to materialize. Instead, there was an original ending (original for Woolrich, not for the field), illustrating the fact that Woolrich does know how to write, even if he doesn't know when to stop... This is the story of a bride who travels to Mexico to find her husband, the father of the child she carries with her. There, she discovers the woman her husband has been living with, and sets herself up (rather nicely) as the patsy for a pagan custom. It's just a little too pat, and a little too "the dead will rise"ish for my taste; however the writing is rather good, which partially makes up for the lack of originality. A fair story.

Somebody's Clothes-Somebody's Life is recent enough for me to remember reading it when it appeared in F&SF....you know, back in those days when there were things called "prozines" for people to read. Anyhow, I can't say as I enjoyed this any more this time, upon re-reading it. The title is just what it suggests, and the ending is just what you expected.



This is written in script-form, making character identification rather difficult. Also, the whole basic theme staggers my imagination, or Sense of Wonder, or whatever. The only Sense of Wonder I have makes me wonder why such crap was printed in the first place.

The Lamp of Memory, 22 pages, concerns a boy who develops a strange affinity for a portrait of a long-dead ancestor. It's another "I-am-compelled-by-forces-beyond-my-control" story, which is condemnation in itself. Woolrich, old man, this is so old it creaks.

My Lips Destroy is undoubtedly some of the worst trash I've ever read. It reads like neofaunish first attempts, only it isn't quite as well plotted. It's all about vampires, revenge, and the like; don't even bother to read this if you should pick up the collection.

Some uninformed idiot marries a vampiress, who is in the habit of leaving coy little clues to her identity (which he never picks up). No one, except the very clever doctor, realizes just what she is. Our hero finds out a little too late and, after a midnight snack, decides to end it all.

His ex-fiancee is rather mad about all this, so she drives a stake through the vampiress' heart, avenging her lover. Argh.

The story would be the ideal thing for a sadistic juvenile. It has all the blood required, and is certainly simple, in a fuggheaded fashion. Herein, you'll find the worst example of "moving-the-characters-to-suit-the-author's-needs" that has ever been written, most likely. Perhaps you might get a kick out of this story with all its blood; personally, the only enjoyment I got out of it was visualizing the naive hero, who is incredibly stupid. An exceptionally poor story.

The Number's Up is a mistaken-identity theme, set in the 1920's; it contains little or no stfnal theme. Actually, that's unfair criticism. The publishers made no actual pretense of having printed a science fiction book. But it is suggested.

For the first time in the book, Woolrich has a half-way decent plot to work with, but makes even less use of it. There is no suspense; the characters are typically (for C.W.) stereotyped, as far as actions go.

However, there is a nice twist ending, which compensates for the better part of the melodramatic and disjointed fialog. Good Alfred Hitchcock material, like psycho.

Music From the Dark is a mite longer...36 pages. It's a tale of voodoo in New Orleans, and of a bandleader who dares to taunt a secret cult (not the Cult), and the deity it worships. Naturally,

(continued on page 25)

FANDOM CONFIDENTIAL:

Forrest J. Ackerman

(continued from page 12)

I remember a coffee clatch at Cleveland. Forry, Dave Kyle and Bob Madle and I were sitting around talking about science fiction, Fandom, old times.

Forry remarked, "Yes, there aren't many old timers like the four of us left."

It was one of the proudest moments of my life. I tingled with joy. They were treating me as if I were as middle-aged as they were. I think I quietly sobbed.

Later, on the way back to the hotel Dave picked up a shirt he had washed at a local laundry.

Walking down the street, Dave examined the package critically.

"This," said Dave "is a remarkably fine example of packaging. Don't you agree, Forrest?"

He tossed it to Forry, who turned it over, nodded, and tossed it to Madle with an erected eyebrow.

Bob caught it and demonstrated his famous ability for tossing off with a throw to me.

I fumbled the play.

The packaged shirt fell into the dust of the gutter.

Then with a sudden inspiration I drop kicked it back to Kyle.

He started running for the goal of the Manger doorway (a patched up wreck that I had absolutely nothing to do with). Forry blocked. The pass to Madle. Interception by Harmon. The throw to Kyle. Kyle leap-frogs over cruising Volksvagon, sails package to Madle who grabs hold of bus and rides halfway down the block. Harmon lifts up cruising Volksvagon in his path, sits it aside, and lumbers after the bus. Madle drops off bus and throws a long, high one to Ackerman.

\*\*\*\*\*I bet Jim Harmon can't really lift a Volksvagon!\*\*\*\*\*



M E R R Y   C H R I S T M A S



Remember HIM with a birthday gift.



It's going back, back.

Forry tries for it, backpedalling.

And knocks a little old lady tottering while the package comes down on her head, and bounces off into the gutter again.

Forry's world is shattered. He has struck a little old lady. He is Jack the Ripper with the first kidney in his pocket.

Quickly, I grab the little old lady and stop her tottering.

"Thank you, sir," she says to me, and sitting the glasses straight on her nose, turns to Ackerman, Kyle and Madle, saying "Oh, those JUVENILE DELINQUENTS!"

# # #

I went to the banquet with Dave Kyle.

At the door, the head waiter was taking banquet tickets.

Kyle straightened the collar of his shirt, the one that he had just got back from the laundry, the one that had been in the package.

The head waiter glanced up at Dave, and then went back to some papers in his hand. "No soliciting inside," he remarked.

I stepped forward to vouch for old Dave.

The head waiter looked me up and down, and went back to the papers. "No exceptions," he announced.

But the banquet tickets got us inside. There was never much trouble with the good old Manger.

# # #

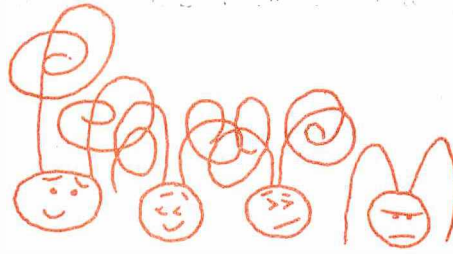
Forry Ackerman was making a speech as I got seated at the banquet.

"... And there's the well-known case of Jim Harmon, the famous vice-president. Or is it president of vice?"

"Ha-ha," I said.

"But there's one thing you can say about Jim Harmon. He's always got a song in his heart. Right now, he's got a song for all the subscribers to 'X Science Fiction'. You know, the one that goes 'Someday -- you will seek me and find me... Someday -- you will come and remind me of a dream that is calling for you and for me...'"

"Ha-ha," I said.



"Jim may not spend all his time in the gutter but I happened to have seen him there this afternoon," with a sly wink.

"Ha-ha-ha," I said.

Lee Hoffman looked over at me.

And got up and moved.

It was a thrill to hear my name on the banquet program, thanks to Forry.

# # #

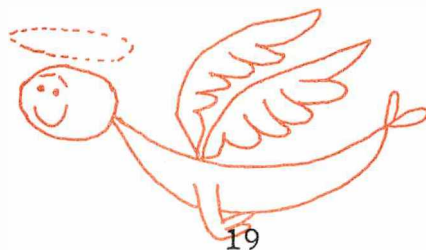
Forry recognized me at Detroit even though I had lost seventy pounds -- sixty nine of fat and one of hair (shorter, not thinner).

This time, he grabbed me and introduced me to a little Valkyrie named Ingrid who is prettier than Stu Byrne. Even.

I happened to mention that I had recieved a copy of Calvin Thomas Beck's THE MAGAZINE OF FRANKENSTEIN, which is an imitation of Forry's FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND and which mentioned Forry's FMOF, dutifully paying homage to Forry as the Hugo Gernsback of monster magazines.

Forry wanted a dozen copies immediately.

Not that many for himself but he wanted to send a copy each to different friends in Germany, the Netherlands, France, all them kinds of map places.



We went in and out of drugstores, Forry, Ingrid, and me, in and out of newstands, Forry, Ingrid, and me, in and out of washrooms -- there are limits to comradie.

"Look," I said to Forry "these regular newstands aren't going to carry something like FRANKENSTEIN. We're going to have to go to the backnumber book shops. There's a string of them on Clairmont Ave." (Or Crestview, or Woodcrest -- some such name.)

So we set out to find Claremont. Across streets, through alleys, through stores, we looked.

Finally, Forry asked a policeman.

The policeman looked at me in my solid black riding outfit, the black breeches, the black shirt, the black tie.

"This guy with you?" he asked Forry in a lowered voice.

Forry nodded.

"It's okay -- this once," the officer finally breathed. "Claremont -- you're on it."

I exhaled in relief and the officer went off.

"Vat vas the number of the store, Jim?" Ingrid asked.

"10372 Claremont," I said.

"10372 Claremont;" Forry said.

"Yes."

"10372?"

"Look up there," Forry said. "Look at the numbers on the stores."

The streetsign said CLAREMONT and the number of the corner stores was: 3. Next to it was: 4. Next to that...

I rocked back on my heels and forward on my toes, bursting with Wheaties and Charles Atlas exercises. "Come on. Let's go."

Forry sighed. "You don't undestand, Jim. I'm too old for that sort of thing." He leaned heavily on Ingrid. I thought of all the people I could lean against if I were old like Forry -- people like Ingrid or Evelyn Paige or Bjo Welles or Lee Tremper... or John MagnUs' bride, Joanne... But I wasn't that old.

"Yes, Jim, I'm an old man, past forty. Forty, Jim, forty..."

Forry has been forty ever since he was 39, "going on 40". It's his little joke on the world since he feels 15 and looks thirty. He enjoys the irony of mere chronological misrepresentation. But I suppose it is only right than time should be elastic to Mr. S-F. \*\*\*\*



### A R G A S S I N G (continued from page 3)

In a recent issue of FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION (Mercury, 40¢) Damon Knight reviewed Brian Aldiss' VANGUARD FROM ALPHA (Ace, 17½¢). Knight said the book wasn't a success, but it had some good points to it, and he listed them all, such as vivid word imagery like "flat as failure". Knight succeeded admirably. He listed all the good points there was to the book, mostly all the vivid word images. Aldiss is a very uneven writer and I would suggest in this case you pass up the story. But by all means read Knight's article and find out all the good things you would be missing, only you're not.

Personally I think if Damon wants vivid word images he should just go read his old rejection slips from Horace Gold. Or if he doesn't have any, I'll lend him mine. Such compression, such intensity, such imagery. I've considered trying to earn an agent's commission by gathering together a bunch of them and sending them to an avant garde book publisher as modernistic blank verse. Or even take his letters, such as the one that recently appeared in these pages. If you scan them quickly, you lose a lot. But savor this line Lynn Hickman had to point out to me. When Les Gerber misunderstood something Horace had reported to him, Aitchell remarked: "His taling is fine, but he's not a distinguished listener, for both reports were Gerberled." ... Lest I be accused of polishing the Golden Apple, let me say that this was equally appreciated by Harmon who sells HLG stories and by Hickman who hasn't yet. \*\*\*\*\*



Hickman Again:

The old jinx is here now. You will notice that when I say that I printed page 18 on the back of 19 and had to use a drawing and make it page 26. Confusing isn't it? The answer is -- that Emile Greenleaf is here for a week-end visit now (Dec.5th). Not only did he jinx me, but the crack Illinois Central Streamliner that brought him into town was 45 minutes late. Probably the only time this will ever happen with the possible exception of when Emile leaves town.

It might be well to note that a well-known BNF is under the watchful eye of the postal authorities. I won't mention the name, but his mailing list has been confiscated and I imagine that a number of the names on it will also be watched. It may be just a coincidence but the past few weeks, I have received an unghodly amount of letters sealed with scotch tape. I have no doubt that this will be settled soon, but in the meantime there may be a few embarrassing moments if the wrong things should go through the mails. For example, I would have hated to have received the latest Hocus with the mailing notice on the address page if I were under the postal eye. What do you say we watch this type of thing.

Emile and I were discussing this bit on holding the world's sf convention in New York City at the same time the world's fair is being held there, and both of us are against it. As Emile says, he would sure as heck not want an sf con in New Orleans at Mardi Gras time. What hotel would want to give decent rates for a bunch of fans when they would undoubtedly be filled at higher than regular prices anyhow? We go to a con for the convention fun, not other sight seeing things. I'll make a different trip for things like that.

LETTERS. . . .

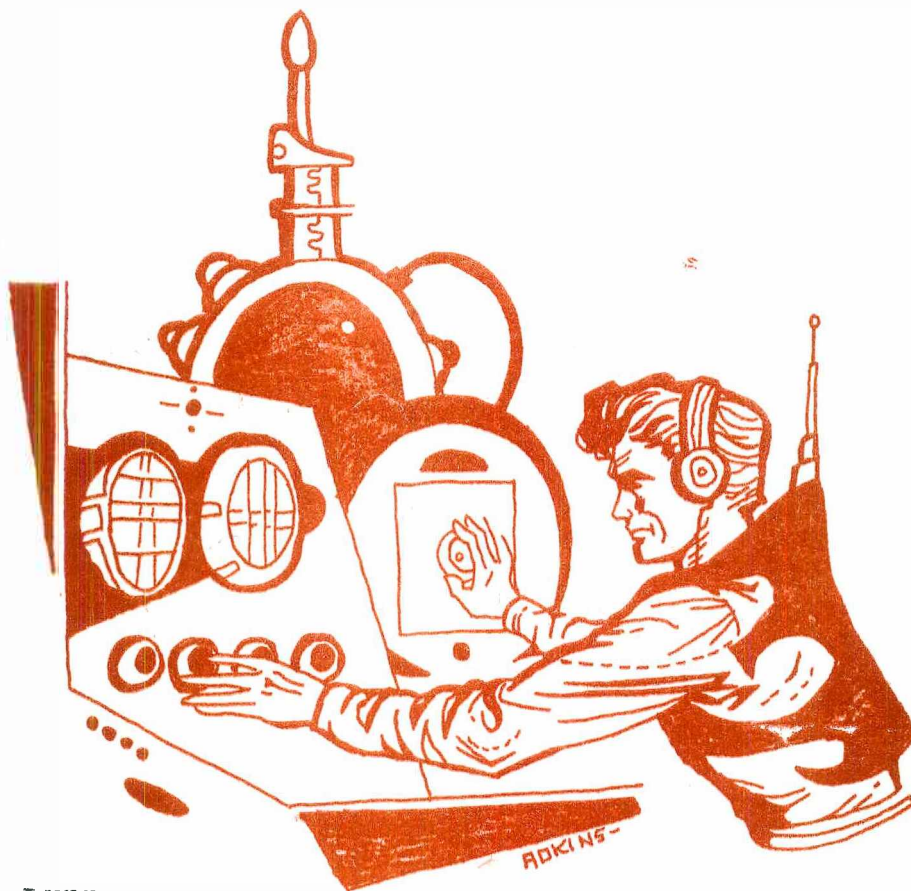
Dear Lynn,

Many thanks for JD-A #48. Fake Fan in London (actually Fake Fan in Liverpool) was good, as usual, and really brought back memories. I arrived in Liverpool just after Bob left, and got the Room With The Bath at the Birkenhead-Central. This I really appreciated, for after the con was over in London, the "hot" water at the con hotel got colder and colder. It was a real luxury to be able to take a bath (and a hot one) without going on a journey down corridors to a dingy room with a dingier tub. Bob quite underplayed the difficulties of Getting Open The Front Door at the hotel. Not only did they have that bar across the door, but also a chain, and a number of locks on it. It was quite weird to stand outside waiting to get in, and hearing the night porter drawing the various bolts, bars, chains, and turning keys in locks -- I guess The Englishman's Hotel Is His Castle too. All they lacked was a moat and drawbridge. Regarding gasoline prices in England, although the price per gallon is higher there, this is offset a little by the fact that the gallon is an Imperial gallon, which is about 20% more than a U.S. gallon.

It's good news that Harry Warner will probably be at the pittcon.

Boyd Raeburn  
Willowdale, Ont.





Dear Lynn,

Two features of #48 struck me very forcibly. The Barr cover and Madle's report. Ghod! The work that went into Barr's cover. Les Gerber's column is invaluable as a checklist. Keep it!

Dick Schultz  
Detroit, Michigan

{Dick also wrote that he noticed in Walt Cole's photo pages, (#49) that in picture 12, Walt had labled the people wrong. It was Dick holding the camera and Al Lewis on the floor. I had noticed that Dick, but forgot to mention it in Argassing. Hope this will clear it up for everyone. Dick also liked the color illoes by Bjo and Cameron, but was left rather cold by Warner. lh}

Some others commented on Gregg Calkin's suggestion that I turn JD-A into a letterzine. As I stated before, I prefer the more-or-less no policy zine where I can put out what I want as the mood strikes me. Next issue will be a letter-type-zine and I imagine that every 2nd or 3rd issue will be, if the letters continue to come in the way they have. I would like letters with more meat to them however.

Don't forget to send your \$2.00 for the PITTCON! Send checks or money orders to P. Schuyler Miller, c/o Dirce Archer, 1453 Barnsdale Street, pittsburgh 17, Penna. Send it now.

This issue has grown from the intended 16 pages to 26. Many good letters here that I'd like to publish, but just can't. The over-all opinion was good. George Barr's cover drew more comment than any I've run in years, and I'm glad to say that I just received somemore artwork from George and he will continue to do more in the future. There are already a number of letters in on issues #49 & 50 so I will probably do as I've done in the past and make #52 a letterzine.

Others that wrote in or returned the questionnaire are: Terry & Miri Carr, Jack Cascio, Dean Grennell, Stan Vinson, Michael Cook, Gregg Calkins, Shirley Chapman, Coral Smith, Paul Shingleton, Forrest J. Ackerman, Andy Main, George Spencer, Dave Prosser, Bob Coulson, P.F. Skeberdis, Marijane Johnson, Richard Elsberry, E. Mac Alarney, Rich Bergeron, Bill Plott, Howard Devore, Esther Richardson, Barbi Johnson, Marv Bryer, Geo. Raybin, Les Gerber, Bob Lambeck, Bob Farnham, Mike Deckinger, Dick Schultz, GM Carr, Bill Conner, Geo. Barr, Ted Pauls, Betty Kujawa, Phil Farmer, Ann Chamberlain, Buz Busby, Emile Greenleaf, Jim Harmon, Wilkie Conner, Al Swettman, Vic Ryan, Art Hayes, and Dan McPhail.

Don't forget, you must send in 50¢ if you wish to receive the 10th anniversary issue. Do it now.

\*\*\*\*\*

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Cover by Bob Warner. Interior artwork by Rotsler (pages 2, 3, 9, & 19), Warner (pages 8 & 12), Plato Jones (pages 4 & 26), Dean Grennell (page 5), Colin Cameron (page 15), Jim Harmon (page 17), Gregg Trend (page 21) and Dan Adkins (page 23).

Written material by Bob Madle, Jim Harmon, Vic Ryan and Lynn Hickman.

\*\*\*\*\*

Letters for inclusion in the next issue should reach Mt. Vernon before the holidays. We will leave for Napoleon, Ohio on December 23rd and I won't return to Mt. Vernon until sometime after the 1st of the year. I would like to type up most of the letters while on the road during that period so get them in.

The next issue should also contain book reviews, fanzine reviews, and some other items of interest that I have here. I will also continue the use of color for the illustrations unless comments show that it isn't worth the effort. Dave Prosser and Bill Rotsler are also going to do some artwork for me directly on master so there should be some improvement in that department. I have already written the next Harmon victim for Fandom Confidential and if he waves his bushy tail in the right direction, we'll have another expose in two months.

\*\*\*\*\*

he is cursed ( " double, double, toil and trouble... "), and slowly begins to rot, until he kills the man who is responsible for his degeneration. But his tough luck is only beginning....

This story, like some of the others, was extremely vivid as far as its descriptions go, but it still lacked something in characterization. Below par, though not by too much.

As you might have gathered, the overall impression that this book leaves on a reader is not at all good. Somehow, these stories seem incomplete.

review by Vic Ryan

\*\*\*\*\*

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Postmailed to the 22nd OMPA mailing

JD-Argassy #51

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