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The PULP ERA



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PROSSER GS

T H E P U L P E R A n u m b e r 62

Nov.-Dec. 1965

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C O N T E N T S

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E. Gilbert (25).

Back Cover: Harry.

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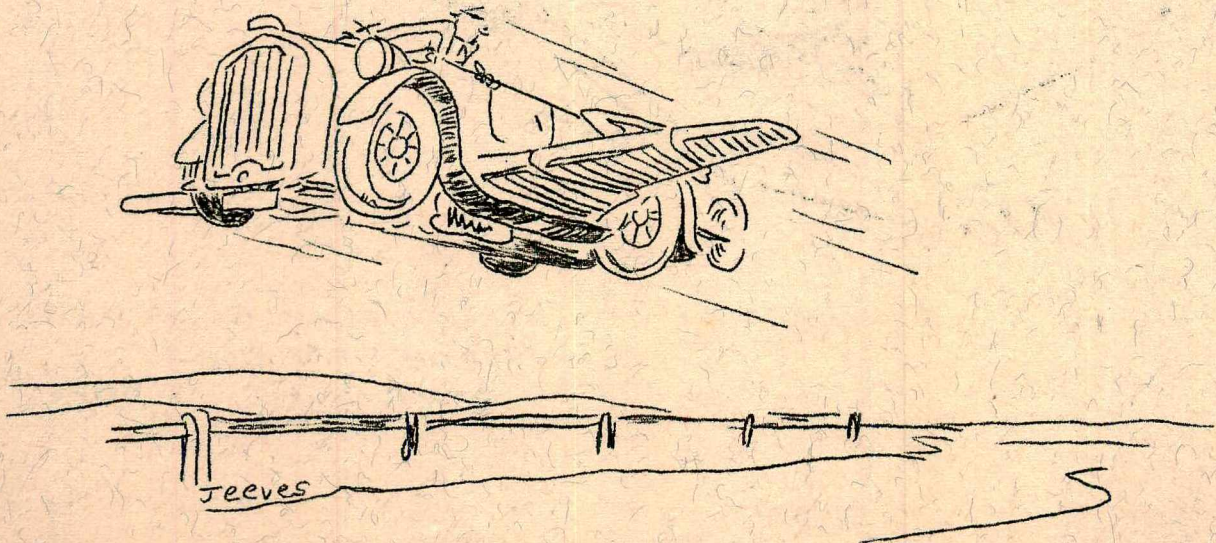
Topless Science Fiction by John T. Phillifent is featured in
the current issue of Trivia. 25¢ per copy from Lynn Hickman
413 Ottokee Street, Wauseon, Ohio 43567

SCOOPS

The first regular s-f in my young life, was the weekly periodical 'Scoops'. Having around 30 quarto sized pages, it cost the magnificent sum of 2d, and was thus well within the financial range of most of the market for which it was aimed. Not that Scoops was a juvenile, far from it. The stories and writing style were little if any inferior to the current trend in Wonder, Amazing and Astounding. Purists may howl at this, but just dig back into the 1932 to 1936 files of any of these magazines and make an honest appraisal.

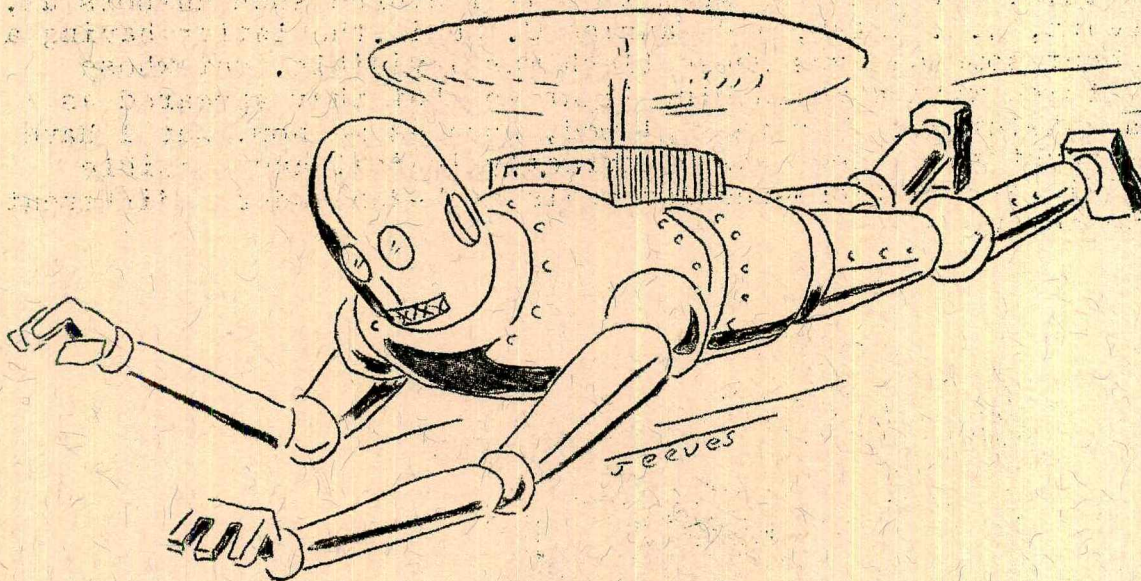
Lack of adequate advance publicity caused me to miss the first two issues, but my younger cousin was more fortunate. He got them both..and steadfastly refused to part with them, even under the increasing offers of trade, cash, and sheer physical violence which I offered to him. I was more favoured with our long-suffering newsagent however. I did manage to convince him that this weird and gaudy publication should be supplied every week, and I settled down to enjoy my regular dose of s-f. I never did realize in those days, that every time I went to collect my prize, that it was always withdrawn from under the counter and handed to me face downwards.

Memories of Scoops over a period of almost 30 years are pretty thin, but I do remember that it featured such authors as, J.R. Fearn, J.M. Walsh, and Maurice G. Hugi..the latter having a yarn about some natives whose flesh was invisible, but whose bones glowed with a weird blue light so that they appeared as walking skeletons. Why they glowed, escapes me now, but I have little doubt that there was a perfectly logical and feasible scientific explanation--regular meals of U-235 under a different name no doubt.



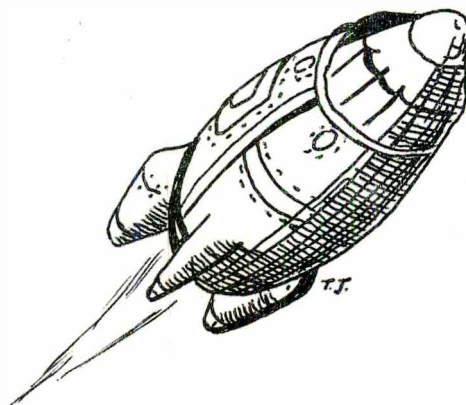
Then there was a story called, 'Submarine-Road-Plane #1.' which concerned a young man who inherited a ramshackle car from a dead inventor. He took a friend out for a ride and in yanking on the steering wheel, discovered several modifications had been made to the car....it sprouted telescopic wings, and a rear propeller and took to the air. After stooging around the sky for a while, the car goes into a nose dive over the coast. On entering the sea, a plastic canopy unrolls over the passengers, and the car becomes a miniature submarine. Wondering what will happen next, the hero makes a belated search of the car and discovers the full plans and operating instructions, so all ends well, and we leave him to his dreams of financial greatness when he markets the invention.

Also flying about for some reason which escapes me at the moment, was a flying robot. This was a rather massive, rivet-studded monster, sustained in the air by a diminutive airscrew as shown in the sketch. What it did, why, and to whom are all questions which are lost to posterity..or at least that is what has happened to the answers, as my collection of Scoops was used for firelighting by my mother when I was serving overseas with the RAF, and couldn't protect the poor things.



THE FLYING ROBOT
FROM AN EARLY
STORY IN 'SCOOPS'

One thing about the gadgetry of this period, apparent right through 'Road-Plane No. 1.' Flying Robots, and right up to spaceships, sticks in mind. Everything, with only one exception, was apparently built from 1" steel plates and hundreds of rivets. Presumably, the theory was that robots and spaceships, and in fact anything mechanical, must be made by mechanics, and as everyone knows, mechanics work in shipyards with steel plates and rivets, so futuristic gadgets will be even more futuristic if they have an extra quota of steel and rivets... preferably with angle iron braces, and all joints showing. Yes, I mentioned an exception, and there was one....aircraft. The aircraft of those halcyon days, were generally underpowered and relied greatly on wood, canvas, string and sealing-wax to keep them in one piece and light enough to stagger in the air. As a result, both authors and artists, (particularly the latter) could not conceive of any futuristic aircraft which did not follow this practice. Naturally then, boiler plate rockets and robots rubbed rivets with flying box kites and people in plus-fours.



We also had the Martian Menace - with a twist. This started in a mild way, when throughout the world more and more radio sets began to develop a faint, though high-pitched hum. Gradually, this grew in volume and spread from radio sets to include every possible electrical gadget. Lamps, irons, telephone wires, car ignition systems, pocket torches, and the like all added to the ever increasing cacophony. Cracking beneath the mental strain, accidents, death, mayhem and rioting became the everyday lot of the people. At the very last moment, all the noise stopped. The peaceful Martians had landed (on Salisbury Plain, naturally) and switched off their space drive which had inadvertently driven the world to the very brink of madness. After touring around the place and admiring our policemen, they greatly deplored the havoc which their spacedrive had caused. Perhaps it wouldn't be so bad on their journey home ??? Embarking into their humming-top shaped spaceships, they prepared to depart. Naturally, the terror-stricken public didn't fancy a second helping of the hum, and began to panic. All was well however. The grand old British Government had not been caught napping by jove. Salisbury Plain had been secretly ringed with A.A. guns, and no sooner had the Martian contingent got airborne, than it was smashed to bits by the devilishly accurate gunfire of the British Army.

Naughty as this action was, it did leave Britain free to foster further science fiction at a later date, although sad to say, Scoops was not destined to participate in the movement. It folded with its twentieth issue..not through lack of quality, but from lack of support.a more adult type format might have saved the day.



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Editors note: For those of you that are especially interested in the Shadow and Doc Savage, I recommend the fanzine Bronze Shadows published by Fred Cook. For further information write to Fred Cook at the following address: 503 Terrill Street, Grand Haven, Michigan 49417.

I never knew The Shadow had brown eyes, until recently when I was idly skrenning the newsstand and was suddenly rocked back to find a pair of burning orbs glaring at a point immediately above my left shoulder. Midway between and below the eyes was a proboscis of heroic conception and I thought to myself, 'Hmm, reminds me of The Shadow,' and then noted the title: RETURN OF THE SHADOW.

Who, I wondered had the daring and also the audacity to perpetrate a renaissance of that time-honored and long-defunct character. The cover was bylined Walter B. Gibson who was as you know,

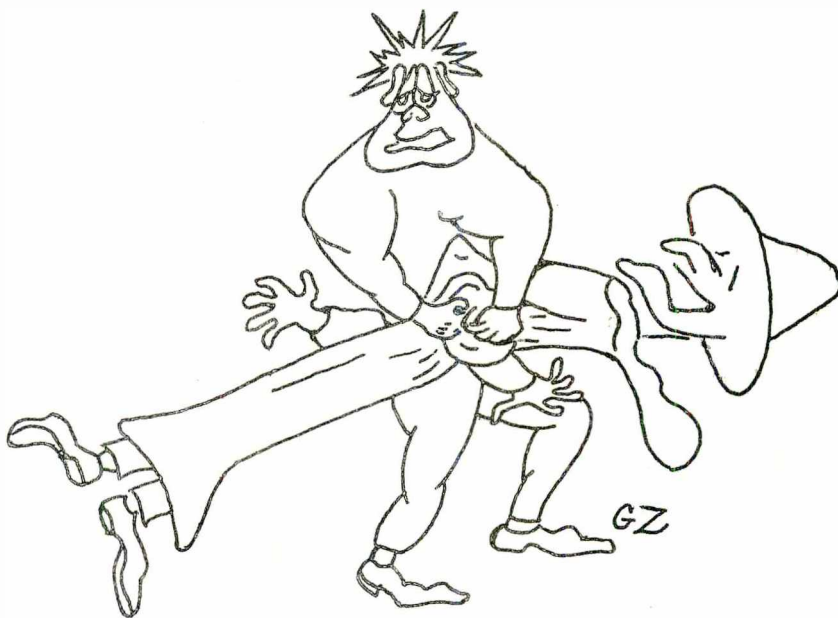
the first of the Maxwell Grants (house name for the creator of the Street & Smith version Shadow--the other, who took over about 1940 through the closing was Bruce Elliott, late of The Dude and Rouge magazine.)

So I picked it off the stand for a closer onceover. Published by Belmont; copyrighted 1963 by Conde Nast Publications, Inc. That's the outfit that bought out Street & Smith, current publishers of Astoundalog or whatever they call it. I had wondered if they acquired survivor's rights on the departed titles as well and it would appear that they did.

The cover blurb said: "America's all-time suspense best-seller --the famous "Avenger" in a brand new mystery." On the first page (facing the IPC), there was a pseudoquote which gave the impression that it came from the book. I never encountered it therein. The pseudoquote is interesting and sounded quite promising; I would like to read the story of which it was a part of the context but it is probably copyrighted to the hilt. The back cover even mentioned the bit about 'clouding men's minds.' It also identified The Shadow as Lamont Cranston, Kent Allard, Henry Arnaud and Phineas Twambley, "the old man with the cane." I can't seem to verify within my memory whether I ever heard of Twambey before (it has a sound almost as distinctive as Moocher Gleetz.) And among the list of henchmen (with one henchwoman) at the bottom of the back page, several were familiar but "Stanley" for one, rang no bell at all, not sure about "Tapper" and Jericho Druke either.

However, the upshot was that I decided that it was worth investing 40 cents, if for no better motive than old times'sake. So I did.

I should have known better. The pre-1940 (Gibson) novels had been the ones that were exceptionally dry (Very dry Gibsons, as it were) and the vintage of 1964 showed no improvement--deterioration, if anything. For one thing, there was not even the saving grace of occasional Edd Cartier illustrations; nor were there any ads in the back portion for a book called "Feminine Beauty Around the World", or somesuch name.



"QUICK MARGO! HAND ME MY 45.
HE DONT HAVE A MIND TO CLOUD."

The plot itself was 20 ways more anhydrous than a mummy's dandruff. It is possible that I have encountered more pedestrian prose than Gibson's, but offhand I'm unable to recollect it. Harsh words are those, needing a shoring up framework of cited evidence if to be made up into some sort of tangentially defensible indictment which same sort of operation the prosecutor at hand shall marshall his resources into some vague sort of semblance of attack formation in order to valiantly press forward with all possible vigor; in fact, be it now by the astute reader observed that he has subtly, albeit with infinite, if elephantine deliberation and no small--that is to say, modest--meed of malice aforethought, to say nothing of premeditation, even now, before your very eyes, shifted into what can with vestigial accuracy only be described as a simulacrum of gibsonian writing style in the manner of which has here been spoken about, with hardly more than the most modest of all possible modicums of hyperbole, added for purposes of illustration and/or delineation. (Translation: This sounds nasty but I'll show you what I mean.)

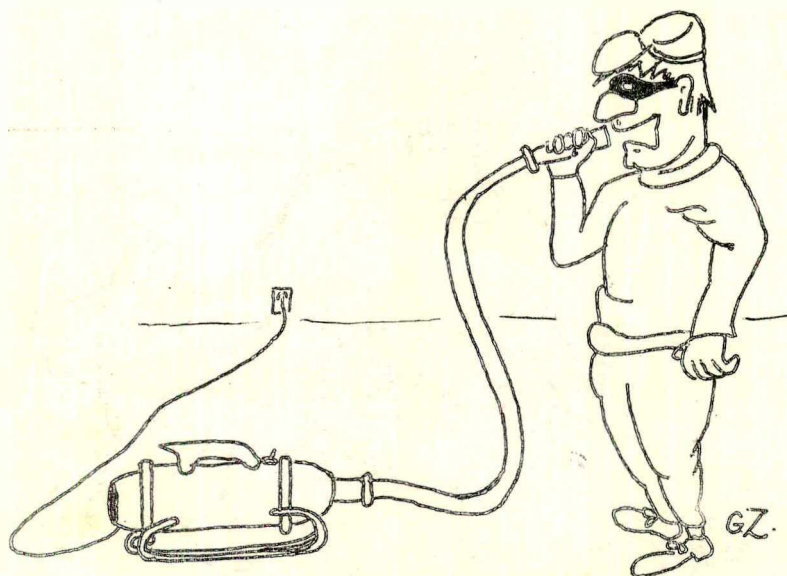
Opening the book at random and quoting the first sentence lighted upon by a casual eye, we see:

"Relax they did, studying the new scenes that the Hudson offered." The paragraph goes on to catalog the more memorable sights that might be noted in driving down some particular stretch of highway in New York state. Interesting, perhaps, but the National Geographic does it better, and with color photos.

Another grab-bag line, and we get, "From back near the neck of land, The Shadow's .45s were tonguing their last stabs."

I have put at least 15 or 20 thousand rounds through .45 Colt automatics one time or another. I still have yet to see one perform a maneuver that I could, by the imagination's maddest test of elasticity, describe as 'tonguing a stab.' Sheeg.

There is an episode in the book's concluding pages where a bunch of prisoners escape from some sort of bad-hat who was holding them in what we laymen are prone to call 'durance vile.' They go stampeding into a nearby room with a collection of edged weapons displayed on one of its walls. They grab these lethal curios and proceed



"JUST REMEMBER, SHADOW! WE AIN'T LETTIN' YOU OUT TILL YOU PROMISE TO QUIT CLOUDIN' OUR MINDS!"

to right merrily incapacitate, decapacitate and otherwise wreak grievous bodily harm upon the janissaries of the aforesaid bad-hat. You would think that here, at least, a feeble spark of animation might seep into the narrative: Not so. Even as pawnish extra's are being sundered from truck to keelson before your very eyes, the prose is as pedantic and bloody-dull as a treatise on blights among Tasmanian lentils (1894 through 1911, inclusive). It is incredible, but true.. Buy a copy for yourself, if you don't believe me.

No matter what the title, no matter the author, the book you read after that will march like a brand-new James Bond opus, through sheer comparison.

One cannot but be impressed by extremity. I was impressed by this book.

+++++

For Sale -- Pulp Magazines: I have hundreds of the great old pulps you read, or will read about, in this magazine. Perhaps you'd like a copy just to satisfy your own curiosity about how good these really were! Or you may wish to read again a favorite story you fondly recall from the great pulp era of 1920's and 1930's or earlier. Obviously I don't have all issues of any, but I can supply a few of most. Titles include All Story, Argosy, Bluebook, Avenger, Detective Fiction Weekly, Clues, Doc Savage, FFM, FN, Ghost Stories, Golden Fleece, Jungle Stories, Planet Stories, The Spider, The Skipper, Thrilling Adventures, The Shadow, Secret Agent X, Operator #5, etc., etc. Many other kinds in stock not listed here. Please send wants; stamp appreciated.

My speciality is the great pulp, Weird Tales. Have more of these than any magazine. Also I will buy collections of this magazine at all times. I especially want the earlier issues and will pay well.

Richard H. Minter
901 S. Fieldcrest Road
Draper, North Carolina 27241

Send want list.



LETTERS

William F. Temple I for one am glad that you'll concentrate more
Wembley, England on memories of the days when the yellow pages
 of our collections were white -- we-ell, maybe
kind of off-white. And we were beardless youths before sophisti-
cation gnawed at the edges of our sense of wonder.

As Derleth said,
we change, and if some books lose their magic, the loss is really
ours. Lately I've had to wave a sad farewell to Haggard's She,
my onetime favorite wonder-story. Incidentally, it's just about to
be filmed again here.

But, hearteningly, some childhood fantasies
still stand the test of time. In 1919 the pulp ALL-STORY magazine
published The Curse of Capistrano by Johnston McCulley. I didn't
read it but I saw the film Doug Fairbanks made of it the following
year under the title The Mark of Zorro. It seemed the apex of
romantic adventure to me. I longed to see it again but had to
wait 43 years for the chance. I've bought an 8mm. print of the
film and can see it in my own home whenever I choose. And to me
it's still a highly stimulating experience.

I had only one story
in WEIRD TALES ere it folded (as against Derleth's 150!) but I'm
always happy to use it as a handle to boast I was a WT author.
For, as Derleth also said, there's been nothing comparable
since.

I agree with Eric Bentcliffe that Arthur Clarke's Against
the Fall of Night is poetically and artistically superior to its
long-winded rewrite, The City and the Stars. The only new touch
in the latter of the earlier magic was the conception of the de-
vice for observing the City from its exterior.

Actually, Clarke
wrote a still earlier version of this story before the war. It
was called Raymond then, and I had to share the author's agonies
of composition (and no one since Michelangelo can agonize like
Arthur Clarke) for the simple reason that I was sharing the same
flat and couldn't escape.

The Eddie Jones folio is first-rate.
Wish I could draw like that. I once tried to draw a Barsoomian
Thoat as I imagined it. A flop. But Eddie's done a real job on
one. I've some private doubts about the maneuverability of that
jet/ray/rocket-propelled craft through the forest in the next
drawing, but maybe the pilot knows what he's doing.

Russell Watkins I like the present title and theme of your
Lakeland, Florida mag. I am very interested in the pulp era
 for I was brought up in its midst and my
youth fairly well corresponds with it.

I was especially interested
in the SHADOW magazine. I was reared on The Shadow and read and
collected all his novels during the early forties. I was also
fortunate enough to find a magazine store in Louisville where I
bought all the back copies for 5¢ each! Can you imagine? I had
them back through 1936. I wish I had them now, for I see they
are bringing \$2.00 each, if you can find. But when I graduated
to science fiction I disposed of them to a friend for nothing.

Alas, alack! Being a Shadow fan, I was looking forward to reading Dean Gronnell's article which you announced in the previous issue. I was disappointed when I started it to find it being so critical but later as I followed it, it was obvious that Dean was doing a tongue in cheek item. The more I read, the more I liked it, until I was laughing out loud with glee. What a wonderful, humorous essay, on the character, Dean has done. Having read a couple hundred of the novels, I was intimately acquainted with the friends of The Shadow, as well as his enemies. Dean, with all his funnies appreciated, certainly brought back memories. I used to buy the mag every 2nd Saturday and read it at one sitting which took till midnight. I once wrote an article for the stf fanzines in 1954 or 55, entitled "The Shadow in Fantasy and Stf" which discussed the novels that bordered on fantasy or stf. Somehow it never saw print and since I didn't keep a copy, that was lost to me and now I fear I could not write one from memory. I recall two of the novels it dealt with were THE BLUR and THE THUNDER KINGS. Both based on a scientific achievement by which the villians could do their will. I went out and bought THE RETURN OF THE SHADOW and read it last week. Sad to say I thought it was the worst Shadow novel I had read. Perhaps it is the best ever written. When I enjoyed the Shadow, I was twelve or thirteen years old. In my late thirties, now, I am sure I have lost my "sense of wonder".

John Boston
Mayfield, Kentucky

Although my interest in pulps is nil, I found this issue quite interesting, especially the article on Startling. This is the type of reminiscence I have always found quite entertaining, even when I'm not familiar with the material under discussion.

Personally, I'd like to see material on the sf pulps more than westerns and spicy romances and the like. Do you think you could rustle up an article or two on such things as the very earliest days of ASF, the short and happy life of Unknown, FFM and FN, and so forth? Ignorant as I am of pre-war sf history, they would prove very interesting and informative; you probably have a large number of other newcomers on your mailing list, too.

((editors note: As time goes on, we hope to deal with almost all of the pulp mags, characters, etc. Being basically a science fiction/fantasy fan, each issue will have something dealing with this field in it. LH))

Harry Warner, Jr.
Hagerstown, Maryland

The Weird Tales item was one of the best things in a fanzine that I've seen by Derleth. My only objection to Derleth is not involved in his conclusions or opinions but in the carelessly lavish use of cliches. I don't think there's a fan in captivity who would squeeze so many into such a short space as Derleth does in passages like: "But Howard had a large and devoted following, and protests about his stories fell upon deaf ears, though it was significant that attempts at humor in the magazine after publication of the Giesy store were few and far between. For all that the team of Henneberger and Baird conceived the magazine and breathed life into it...." I hope that this article will correct some of the wrong ideas nestling in the younger fannish heads, like the heresy that Farnsworth Wright was infallible in his choice of stories or the notion that Weird Tales published only weird tales. (But isn't it possible that Derleth has omitted

the most likely possible reason for Wright's accepting previous rejections? Perhaps this happened because when money was short or he was overstocked, he would return manuscripts unread.)

Nostalgia about Startling Stories is almost as good as nostalgia about TWS. My favorite years of Startling are somewhat before the period that Eric loves, and I don't think I bought many issues from those years. One thing that Eric fails to speculate about is the possibility that Startling in some years rates higher than Astounding with respect to proportion of fictional contents later printed in book form. This would hold good only if the count were made by total wordage, not by number of titles of course. Its strange that Startling had so few imitations in the prozine field for its policy of a complete long novel in most issues. That policy must have been profitable for quite a few years, but I can't recall any other prozine that attempted to do likewise, except for the special case of the Munsey reprint magazines.

The artfolio doesn't nudge my sense of nostalgia too much, but I can't think of anything else to say about it that is less than highly flattering. I associate many of the elements in Eddie's style with a somewhat later publishing age than that evoked by the rest of the magazine. An exception is the second picture, with the spaceship whizzing through the giant forest. It somehow evokes Dold in my thoughts, although I don't recall that he ever did much work involving outdoor nature.

I hope that many other persons will soon be taking the same attitude to the pulps as that expressed by Ed Wood in his guest editorial. There's no real reason why the pulps shouldn't soon become the subject of the same type of specialized fandom as dime novels have enjoyed for many years. Their larger size and still-current copyright restrictions might force us to wait quite awhile before we start to get the facsimile reproductions that dime novel fans have been issuing for several decades. But certainly it's high time that people started to put into the permanence of print the facts about the authors and editors, before death and forgetfulness cause many items of information to be lost forever. There might even be usefulness in a salvage project, taking the form of an effort to rescue as many issues of old pulps as possible from attics and second hand stores, so that they aren't destroyed before they come to the attention of collectors. If the Pulp Era could reach enough of the right people, it wouldn't be hard to do the job systematically, through visits to all known dealers in specified geographic areas, followed up by insertion of inexpensive classified ads in key newspapers. I think that the American public understands well enough the value of dime novels and first edition books to make it unlikely that many are burned up after a housecleaning in the event of someone's death. But I'll bet that every day, hundreds of priceless pulps get sold as bulk paper or thrown into the trash pile because national magazines don't publish feature stories about how valuable they are.

((Comment?? LH))

Wilkie Conner
Gastonia, N. C.

was much better.

#60 and #61 of your editions to hand, and I thank you. The Pulp Era shows much promise, though I must say the last issue of JD-Argassy

a big thick mag, "Headline Stories" - newspaper yarns - with a Dold cover! Gangland Stories, Far East Adventures, Outlaws of the west and Racketeer Stories were other HHershey mags. Remember Sky Raiders, Western Rangers and Western Trails? It seems to me there was a "Submarine Stories" put out also.)

Just a few words about your last two fine issues: That was a fine editorial by Ed Wood. As he so aptly stated "there was an aura of romantic adventure, chilling terror and heroic action that lives in the fading memory of the pulp fictioneer. It was a time of glory." Amen. True, indeed! Those were two fine articles by August Derleth and Eric Bentcliffe. The artwork is all fine, but perhaps best is Barr's illo for the Weird Tales article....a fine study in line and shadow. The Eddie Jones artfolio is great - especially the first two.

What a beautiful Barr cover on The Pulp Era #61! John Phillifent did a most interesting article on the British Pulp. On the article by Terry Jeeves, the illustrations adapted from those old magazines made it all the more facinating. Dean Grennell is always interesting, even if I had read his article before. All in all, a fine issue, and a great start for the new title.

Maurice Gardner The recent issue of The Pulp Era brought
Portland, Maine back memories concerning the Shadow. At
one time I had all those magazine stories
and enjoyed them very much. I still have the hard-cover Street
and Smith copy of "The Living Shadow". As the article states
the early stories were superb, but later they began to become
almost hopeless. That is the way of a series, the earlier
stories always attract and hold one's attention. Although this
is not true in all instances. I've just read "Tarzan and the
Madman" and found it very interesting; in fact, I thought this
story in many ways more interesting than many of the other
Tarzan books, except the earlier ones.

Larry Farsace By a curious coincidence, receipt of your
Rochester, N.Y. magazine with its article about The Shadow
was the very day I ran across twenty or so
Shadow magazines in a rummage sale on my way home from work -
all in good condition. I may even have ignored them if it had
not been for that article which caused me to pay more attention
to them, especially the numbers that seemed to have a tinge of
stf.

' Also esp. enjoyed the article about the story of the "pulp" in England.

You don't by any chance have any back 3s or a file for sale? (Ed. note: No back issues are available of JD-A or The Pulp Era. 1h).

Lee Riddle Thanks a great deal for sending me a copy
Newark, Delaware of JD-A #60. I have always remembered the
"good" old days of pulp reading, and have
been telling my two older boys who are now dyed in the wool sf
readers, about them. Sometimes they look at me like I'M slightly

nuts, but I am awfully glad that someone else like me likes to talk about the pulps of yesteryear.

The titles you mention so casually, Dusty Ayres, Bill Barnes, etc. bring back an awfully lot of memories. I am real pleased that you intend to carry on with a fanzine devoted to them, and you can count on me as a constant reader. In fact I am so delited with your venture, that I am going to do something That I have done in about two other instances--subscribe.

James R. Goodrich #60. Eddie's splendid cover symbolizes my
Middletown, N.Y. devotion to fantasy as opposed to scientific
sf better than I could verbalize my feelings.
His folio & all the other artists work is superb. Fan eds around the globe should be envious as hell that you are presenting such consistantly high-quality art in the folios and in general. When I recommend your zine to potential subbers, I can do so without reservations as to excellence. Derleth's history is up to his usual rank, but his long involved sentences surprised me. Being a lover of erotica, I found Wilkie Conner's description of the modern Prince Charming of Spicy Western very tantalizing. What about an issue devoted to the Spicy mags?

Now to #61: Beautiful covers. John's article is something different and I'm always fascinated by accounts of Merrie England, but will have to peruse it again for better comprehension. Though Terry writes about zines I've never heard of, he does it so well that I'm eager for the next installment. As for Dean, wonder what he can do with a subject he likes when his work on a distasteful one is so enter-taining!

George Barr The EDDIE folio was beautiful. For too
Salt Lake City, Utah long his work has been seen merely as
simple cartoonish mimeo stuff which gave little or no indication of the marvelous talent behind it. The versitility and imagination demonstrated in those six drawings should be ample proof that you could not publish too much of his work. Unlike some other artists, both fan and pro (myself in-cluded), I doubt that his work would become tiresome and repet-itious. I found his folio doubly interesting BECAUSE he did not use a non-reproducing pencil for his sketching. Being able to see his guide lines, and to detect where he'd made changes in his original ideas was fascinating.

I'm eagerly looking forward to CAWTHORN's folio. Since I first saw his mimeo work in CAMBER, he's been one of my favorites. AMRA has been uncountably richer for his presence.

Stephen Barr #61: The cover is the best I've seen in a long
Nocona, Texas time. Barr does a very good job on such things
and I really enjoy his work.

The article by Phillifent was very interesting. In my correspondence with British fans, I can to some extent notice the differences he

spoke about.

The Jeeves article was very nice and it is good to know there are fans that can remember. Soon these things will be forgotten because of fans like me that missed the pulp era and know nothing about it. Articles like this will go down as a form of history and will make zines like yours valuable reference sources later on.

Surely you could have reprinted an article better than the one on The Shadow. Although it was well done I will never take this kind of article for anything else than junk reading because the writer had not read enough about this character to even make a reliable guess as to events and happenings.

Creath Thorne JD-A is, in my opinion, obviously in the top
Savannah, Mo. group of fanzines. Top material plus impeccable lithography make it so. You obtain some of the best art to exist in fandom. I usually ignore most zines that feature fan art, but yours is certainly an exception. The art is all of pro quality, much of it better than art that appears in the prozines.

There is throughout the zine, a spirit of nostalgia. Some of your contributors have admitted that perhaps the reason the pulps seem so great is because that was the time that they discovered them. I think though, (and here speaking from the attitude of the younger fan) that the pulps did have something no pro magazine of today has. I have been able to get just a few of these old magazines, and reading the stories and the letter columns, one receives a "sense of wonder" that I rarely find in todays prozines. For me though, the greatest experience was reading a collection of ASF comprised mostly of the fabulous fifties issues. Many have said that the fifties were barren of good material, but for me JWC created a magazine that will never be forgotten.

The Pulp Era #61: Again a beautiful and interesting zine. The Jeeves article was enjoyable, but the piece was The Shadow. It was quite different from what I was expecting. I thought that it would be ab article reminising about the good old days of the pulps when all fiction was great and enjoyable. Instead it gave what the true picture must be, although I predict that more than a few of your readers will write in to complain.

David B. Williams I like the idea of devoting JD-A to the
Normal, Illinois pulps. My interest in science fiction and fantasy has always been more or less academic; I will always be more of a reader than a faaaan. It is so hard to find information on stf itself that I will always look forward to The Pulp Era.

My only contact with pulps has been a box of 50 assorted, from a dealer who was clearing his shelves. The lot contained one or two of just about all the big ones -FFM, Startling Stories, Planet, TWS, etc. -and I think I went through every one of them, skimming the stories, reading the editorials and lettercols, in about one afternoon. I remember that I had a bad cold at the time, and the musty smell really set my sinuses and throat on a protest march, but I couldn't put them down til

When I was fifteen I started to write my first novel in long hand--that was the beginning. I followed with four more. When I was twenty, I rented a typewriter and copied the five novels. Even though I realized they did not contain literary merit, I've retained them to this very day. Occasionally I look them over with the realization how I served my apprenticeship and compare how I improved with each effort.

After a few more years and a few more novels, one summer day while swimming in a river near where I lived at the time, as from out of nowhere the thought came to me to write my first Bantan novel. It would concern a young man who loved to swim as I did. Perhaps that is where my imagination had its initial testing--having been fostered by having read the Tarzan books, and the other novels Mr. Burroughs had written. Previously, my stories for the most part had been of material things I was more or less familiar with, but somehow they seemed to lack reality. So now, at long last so it seemed to me, I decided to let my imagination take the reins.



The novel concerned a boy of three, born of American parents, marooned upon an island in the South Pacific, adopted and reared to young manhood by natives. When it was completed I titled it just "Bantan". Later, I appended, "God-like Islander" to the singular title to infer my fiction character had god-like attributes. at a later time I regretted this appendage and retitled the novel, "Bantan of the Islands", when the third edition was published.

After the novel was written I had no immediate intention of making a series based on my island character, but, since the book sold fairly well, I began to wonder if I might write another of sufficient interest--remembering as I did, how successful Mr. Burroughs had been with his Tarzan series. As well, some of my reviewers had mentioned Bantan as somewhat of a "South Seas Tarzan".

And so I wrote "Bantan and the Island Goddess"--which I consider a better novel than its predecessor.

World War II furthered my interest in my island character, since I had a nephew in active service in the South Pacific aboard a destroyer. I dedicated this third novel to him, naming it "Bantan Defiant". In this book Bantan first meets the Japs and engages them with his primitive weapons--and does a fine job of it.

WHY I WROTE THE

BANTAN NOVELS

by Maurice B. Gardner

I have been asked by the editor of the Pulp Era how and why I have written ten Bantan novels to date--eight of which have appeared between hard covers. Also, if any, what affect reading the works of Edgar Rice Burroughs had on my writing. First of all, since the age of 13, when I first read the serial installments of "Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar" in the old All Story Weekly--and I enjoyed this story very much--I then proceeded to obtain the other similar weeklies, also the old All Story Monthlies that contained the author's works. Meanwhile, I was following his current serialized works as well. What I appreciated mostly about his stories was his vivid imagination, and his manner of telling the stories made them plausible.



Before my father died--this happened when I was midway ten and eleven--he used to tell me stories of a highly imaginative nature--

not the type Mr. Burroughs wrote, however--and in my developing mind I hoped one day I might be able to write stories that would be interesting to readers.



Because of a widowed mother to support, my education was curtailed in high school, but excessive reading taught me how different authors went about telling a story. I used to read these stories not only for entertainment value, but also to further my education in grammar. When I came across a word I didn't know the meaning of, there was always a dictionary handy.

Now on the other hand, John Phillifent offered a pretty good article and Terry Jeeves an adequate one on British pulps -- but of course these are of little personal interest to me.

Belmont Shadow pb, you've no doubt seen the Beacon Nick Carter books, which aren't bad imitation James Bond in an undistinguished writing style but it's too bad they had to tie up the Carter name with them. The most promising event is of course the Doc Savage reprints (3 so far) by Bantam. I'd like to see a combination of reprints and new stories, even though Lester Dent isn't around to write them.

In Fantastic Monsters #5, we ran Steelmask Meets the Zombie Master by Judson Grey (me), a pulp character story, and got tremendous response from the kids. Incredibly enough, in a movie monster magazine, this piece which had nothing to do with movies or monsters per se became the most popular thing we ever ran. I have hopes for doing something more with Steelmask. (He also appeared in a subplot in a sex novel by Judson Grey (Ron Haydock and me) called Twilight Girls.)

The new Radiohero will be out in a week or so.

[illegible]

I'm sorry that I could only run a portion of the letters received on the past two issues but space and time will not permit. In answer to many requests for back issues of my zines, I'm sorry but I do not have any available.

To all fans that wrote in response to my advertisement in regards to the old pulp magazines that I have for sale, I'm sorry to say that at the present time all of my collection is in storage in Hannibal, Missouri. When I get it moved to Ohio and shelved again I'll run another ad on the issues I have available.

Lynn Hickman

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I had looked through every one. It was a small window into a world I'll never really be able to know. I hope The Pulp Era will be able to open the shutters a little more.

Jim Harmon
Los Angeles, Calif.

Thanks for The Pulp Era, indeed a better title. Beautiful artwork by Barr.

I recall Grennell's article from its first appearance, but I think I recall it mainly for those few paragraphs superbly satirizing a Shadow gunfight. Overall, there seems to be a lot wrong with the piece as an article.

It seems to have been written in that mood of spiritual deflation that generally follows the act of love. In reviewing nostalgia (pulp, comics, movie serials, radio programs) one can assume an attitude of bitter, biting cynicism, or of joyous, youth-rekindled discovery -- Dick Lupoff managed to assume both poses in one article on LEADING COMICS in XERO. But a state of bilious depression such as Dean seems to be enjoying here does not produce the liveliest and best of articles. In fact, only Dean's mastery of language makes the thing worthwhile at all. Shot with error and erroneous assumptions, it is also in need of form.

If learning literature has spoiled Silverberg from reading primitive SF and ruined pulp characters for Grennell, editing or associate-editing even so undistinguished a non-fiction magazine as a horror journal has spoiled the typical fanzine article for me. And I'm afraid the superior fanzine writer Dean Grennell has produced one with the faults of many average fan articles.

Since Dean admits he has always hated The Shadow, an objective article is a difficult goal for him to achieve, if he was trying. I've always been pretty ambivalent about it. The character is fascinating, but a lot of grief has been done to it. Many of the Shadow magazine novels are downright dull. But in style and composition they are at least competent. Much more so than many pulp stories. There are good Shadow novels. ("Good" in the sense of good pulp). The Living Shadow is good, as is the one about a black ray machine (whose name escapes me). The Shadow Meets The Mask, even in the digest era was well done. The final few in the revived pulp size show a certain verve. And I thought the recent pocketbook, Return of the Shadow was excellent. Strangely enough, perhaps the BEST of the Shadow novels.

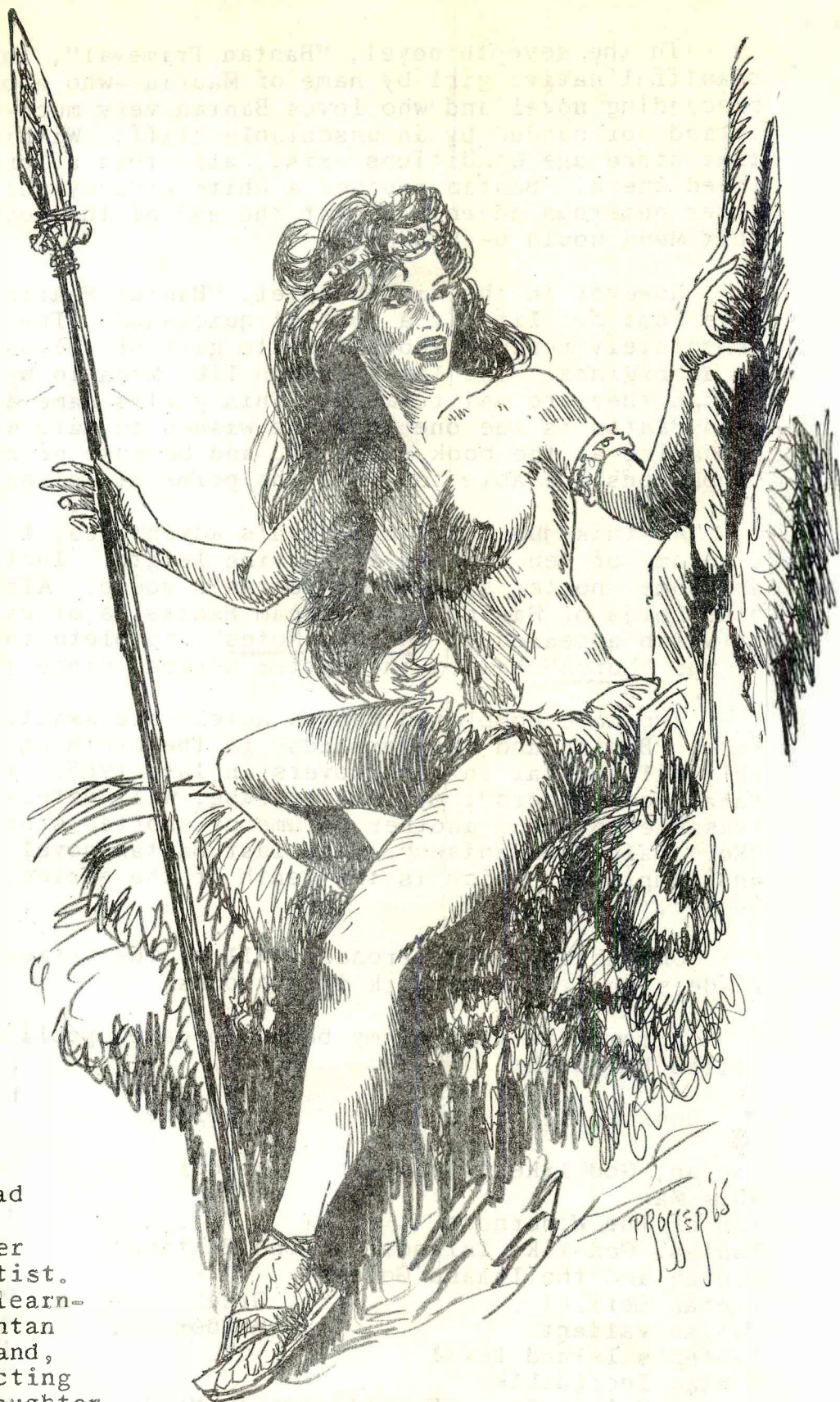
As for the radio program, as I have observed elsewhere, an invisible man is the ideal hero for radio. Here, too, little was done with the character. There was more experimentation in the late '30's and early '40's in the series starring Bill Johnstone (and I suppose earlier in the Orson Welles shows, which I never heard). The Johnstone programs are in the current radio re-runs, and some of these like "Carnival of Death" and "Traffic in Death" stand up as good thrillers.

The comics were pretty bad in story and art, although not as bad as the current comic book series. At least, the Archie company stopped making The Shadow a blond. That blond hair would stand out like a neon light in the shadows.

I realized one book on that subject was insufficient to take care of matters as they should be, and so "Bantan Valiant" followed. By this time I was taking a serious interest in the bronzed giant. I remembered once reading that Mr. Burroughs admitted the only mistake he made in the famed Tarzan series was to have Tarzan married at the end of the second book. Thus far I had written four Bantan books, and through various reasons had managed to keep him unmated. I wondered how long I could continue this procedure without my readers complaining.

Then I wrote the fifth novel, "Bantan's Island Peril", and once more a possible romance was shattered as death in the form of an enemy spear removed the heroine.

The sixth novel, "Bantan Incredible", followed, and this time Bantan's love is for a young white woman who had been injected with the serum of longevity by her father, who was a scientist. In a fit of rage, when learning his daughter and Bantan planned to flee the island, he injected a counter-acting serum that caused his daughter to age a year for each hour she lived thereafter. When Bantan overcomes obstacles to rescue her, she is then over two hundred years of age in appearance and near death.



In the seventh novel, "Bantan Primeval", in the company of a beautiful native girl by name of Mauria--who appeared briefly in the preceeding novel and who loves Bantan very much--they come to an island surrounded by an unscalable cliff. Within, they discover that stone age conditions exist, also that a long-lost white race lived there. Bantan rescues a white girl by the name of Mena. After numerous adventures, at the end of the book it would appear that Mena would be his mate.

However in the eighth novel, "Bantan Fearless", Mena appeared to have lost her life in a pool of quicksand. The bronzed giant almost immediately rescues another white girl of the same race, but reared by aborigines. She looks enough like Mena to be her twin sister, though they are not related. This girl's name is Nulu, and in her mind Bantan is the one whom she wishes to mate with. She proves to be daring as the book recounts, and because of her Bantan and two companions are able to leave the primeval island.

At this juncture in Bantan's adventures, I decided to release a volume of ten stories of varying length. Included in the volume are some shorter stories of Bantan's youth. Also two groups of stories "the Loves of Bantan" and "Dream Fantasies of Bantan's Creator", both of which appeared in "Norb's Notes", complete the volume. The readers of the "Notes" hailed the latter series, since it leaned toward fantasy.

Two more completed Bantan novels are awaiting their turn in book form. "Bantan and the Mermaids" is the ninth of the series, and probably will appear in hard covers in late 1965. The success of "Island Paradise & Others", my 1964 release, will determine whether it is feasible to issue another volume of shorter stories under the title "More Island Paradises". The last Bantan novel to be written to date and completed, which is the tenth of the series, is titled, "Bantan's Quest".

Undoubtably Dave Prosser will be the artist, since many of the readers enjoy his artwork in my books.

A complete list of my books to date, publisher, artist, etc. is listed herewith:

Book Title	Publisher	Year	Artist
Bantan, God-like Islander	Meador	9-1-36 op	Not known
This Man	"	8-7-37 Op	" "
Son of the Widerness	"	1-1-39 op	" "
Bantan, God-like Islander (2nd Edition)	"	2-1-39 Op	" "
Bantan and the Island Godess	"	9-1-42 op	" "
Bantan Defiant	Greenwich	9-19-55op	Vern Coriell
Bantan Valiant	Meador	9-19-57	not known
Bantan's Island Peril	"	4-24-59	Jim Cawthorn
Bantan Incredible	"	9-26-60	Dave Prosser
Bantan Primeval (Forum) same as Meador	"	1-1-61	Dave Prosser
Horrors of Smiling Manor	"	6-5-62	Bob Horvath
Bantan Fearless	"	9-13-63	Dave Prosser
Island Paradise and Others	"	11 64	Dave Prosser

The op at the end of the publication date indicates these volumes are out of print. Brad Day, however, has copies of Bantan Defiant still on hand. The price on all books in print is \$3.00

FOR SALE

The following books are for sale direct from the author.

Bantan Valiant -- Bantan's Island Peril -- Bantan Incredible
Bantan Primeval -- Horrors of Smiling Manor -- Bantan Fearless
Island Paradise and Others --

Enclose \$3.00 for each volume wished and mail to:

Maurice B. Gardner
90 Cobb Avenue
Portland, Maine
Zip Code 04102

Mr. Gardner will
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your desire.

Coming in the Jan.
Feb. 1966 issue of
The Pulp Era will
be the long awaited
fantasy artfolio
by George Barr.

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your zip code.



The Pulp Era is now on a bi-monthly schedule!! I hope that is good news for those of you that have been so patient over the past year. Rather than take up a lot of space explaining my reasons for my inactivity this past year, let me say that I am now in a position to enjoy my hobby and to devote more of my sparetime hours to publishing activities.

Pages 3, 4, 10, 11, 16, 17, and 18, were by the Coulsons. to them. The rest was multilithed Era Press on all and ends of had on hand. issues will be on Hamilton offset vellum, white. This more expensive but should the appearance zine.

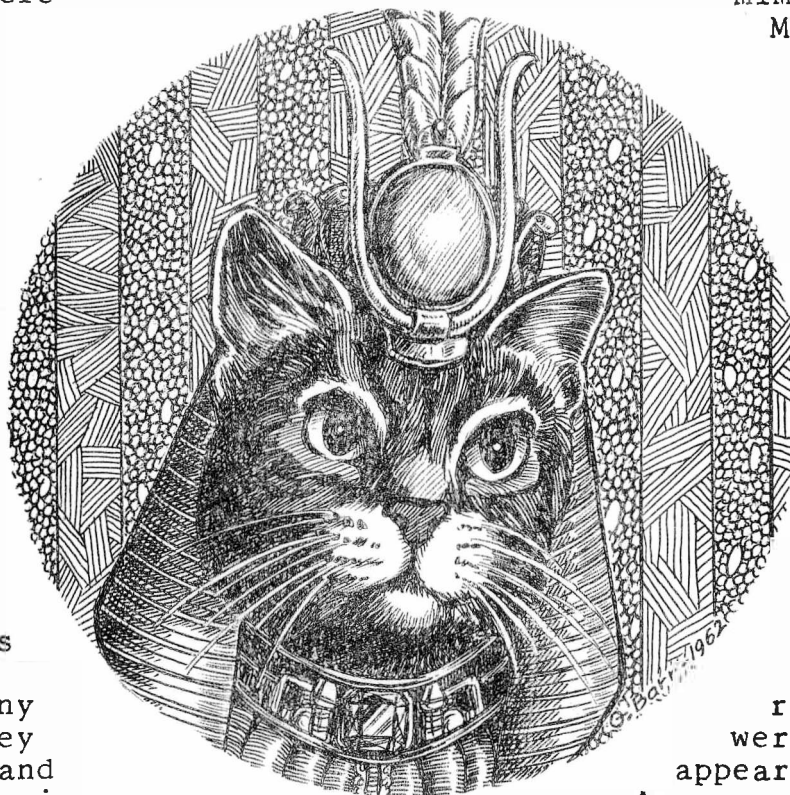
My collect now moved and I ed shelving it. and looking thru covered many items make interesting Pulp Era. How many Dikar series? They Arthur Leo Zagat and novels and serials in

1939. These were adventure-fantasy based on the USA after it was over-run by the yellow horde. Gary Zachrich and I are planning a series of articles on Dikar and the Bunch for future issues. I also found some issues of Short Stories, The Gray Goose, and Black Cat from the late 1800's and early 1900's that should be of interest.

The Pulp Era is now on a bi-monthly schedule. Another item of interest is the Buck Rogers series of little booklets issued by Big Thrill Chewing Gum in 1934. There were 30 of these booklets issued, but I can find only one left in my collection. It is #4, entitled "Buck Rogers - The Fight Beneath the Sea". These were 8 page booklets, complete with color cover, 2 color illoes, and 2 black and white issues and came in packages of gum. Do any of you have a complete set of these?

In future issues we plan to run a column of publishers news of current books you can purchase that feature reprints from the pulp magazines. We will also review as many books from this list as space allows.

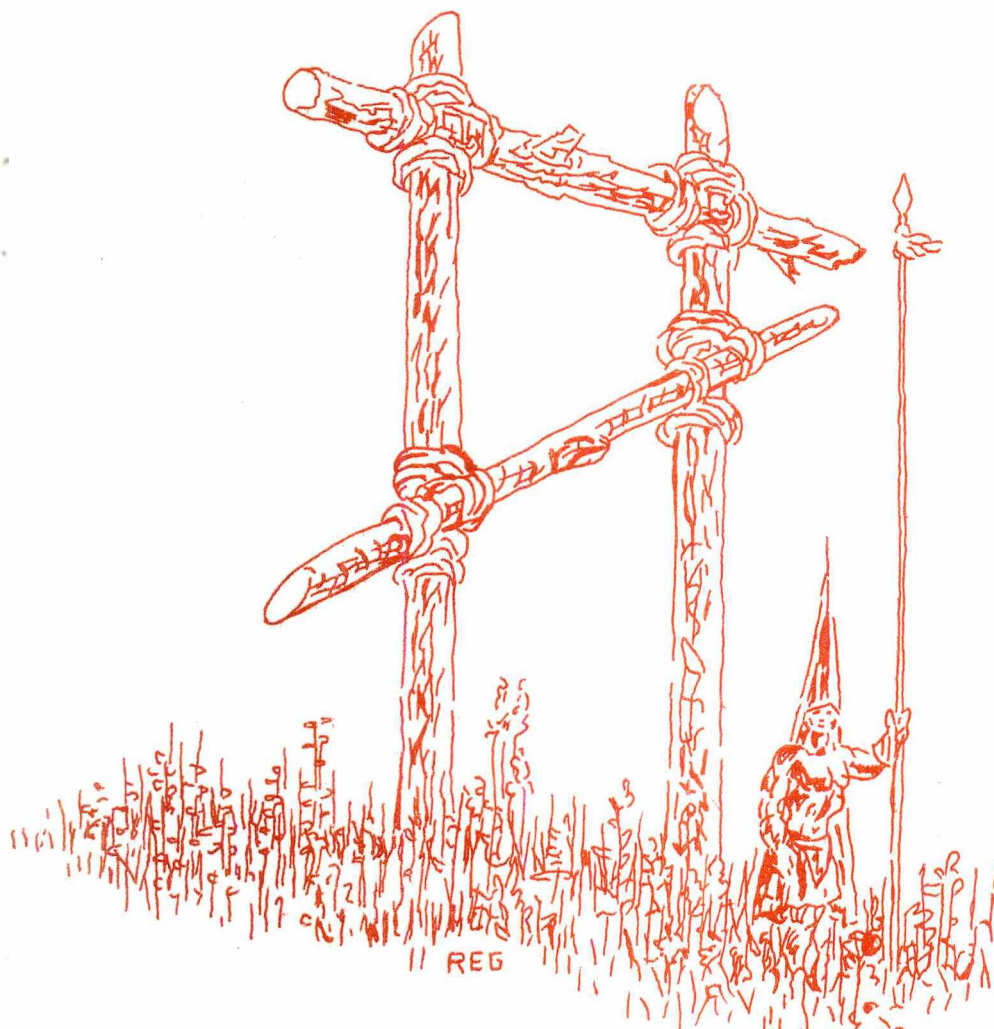
Also note that we will have a classified ad page starting in the next issue where you can list your wants or what you have for sale.



12, 13, 14, 15, mimeod for me Many thanks of the zine by The Pulp the odds paper I Future printed 50 lb. natural is a paper improve of the

ion is have start- in unpacking it, I redis- that should topics for the remember the were written by appeared as short

Argosy starting in after it was over-run by the yellow horde. Gary Zachrich and I are planning a series of articles on Dikar and the Bunch for future issues. I also found some issues of Short Stories, The Gray Goose, and Black Cat from the late 1800's and early 1900's that should be of interest.



Rates are reasonable, at $2\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ per word, 50¢ minimum. Special prices for full page listings. We will also accept display advertising which will be photo-offset. Rates for display advertising on request.

I am extremely pleased with the policy of the new publishers of Amazing Stories & Fantastic of reprinting from the old magazines, artwork as well as fiction. I heartily recommend both of these magazines.

Another magazine recommended most highly is the Magazine of Horror edited by Robert A. W. Lowndes. Doc Lowndes is doing an extremely fine job of bringing us some of the better short fiction of science fiction, fantasy, and

the weird from the pages of the old pulps. This magazine has very poor distribution in this area and I understand, in many areas, so I hope you will support it by sending in your subscription. \$2.50 for six issues to: Magazine of Horror 119 5th Ave. New York, NY 10003. It is a real bargain.

Coming in the next Pulp Era:

The long awaited George Barr artfolio (and it was worth waiting for), Darrell Richardson on Pirate Stories and High Sea Tales, Down Memory Bank Lane by Terry Jeeves, Doc Aborigine by Gary Zachrich, news and reviews of what is being currently published, and the start of John Nitka's Argosy index. Artwork will be by Dave Prosser, Robert E. Gilbert, Terry Jeeves, George Barr, Gary Zachrich, Plato Jones, and others. It will be a big issue.

Subscription rates: 5 issues for \$1.50. 10 issues for \$2.75.
35¢ per single copy.

B O O K S

I'm pleased to see the numerous reprints now coming out in paper back format. By reprints, I'm refering to re-printing from the pulps, not hardback. Ace books is doing a fine job in bringing us many of the classic science-fiction and fantasy novels from the Munsey publications. Pyramid Books have done a real service in publishing the E. E. Smith series from Astounding, Bantam Books have brought Doc Savage back to life, while Regency is reprinting the Phantom Detective. Belmont of course, has brought out a new series Shadow which is covered elsewhere in this issue.

Now that the Pulp Era is on a bi-monthly schedule, this column will attempt to bring you news from all publishers on any books re-printed from the pulp magazines as well as science-fiction and fantasy releases.

Wilkie Conner writes in regard to the first two Doc Savage releases: I know Man of Bronze was written by Lester Dent....he originated Doc Savage. The Meteor Menace has the typical Dent machine gun style, too.

Dent was quite a guy. I had some correspondence with him in the thirties when he was in Paris, but I never did know much about him. In order to reach him, you had to write him in care of the Adventurers and Explorers Club in NYC....so evidently he knew something about the far-flung places that he wrote about. I think Street & Smith paid him a flat salary for writing the Doc Savage novels and thereby acquired the rights to them. They could assign anyone to write the stories under the Kenneth Robeson name. No telling how many people actually wrote about Doc and his gang.

The Savage stories are pure examples of pulp fiction at its finest. Very little wasted on description. No atmosphere. Just action piled on action. Dent's fiction formula was: give the hero a motivation of wanting to get, or prevent someone else's getting, or to prevent something undesirable happening, or to cause something desirable to happen and to have this motivation something new. Something different. Let the hero have it in the first few paragraphs, then let him win a little and when he thinks he has the villian licked, let him have the grief again. And then shovel on more grief and still more until the cause seems hopeless. Then let him win. Virtue will triumph, etc. Pull a surprise on the reader whenever possible. I will never forget one of his classic lines in a Click Rush story printed in -- hell, I forget the name of the magazine, but I believe it was Click Detective -- under Dent's own name:

"If you were strolling in a cemetary and someone shot at you from behind a tombstone, you would be surprised."

"Click Rush was no exception."

"He was surprised".

In the Savage books, Dent's style is one of planned repetetion,



designed to impress the reader with what a remarkable man Doc is. He will repeat three or four times an enumeration of Doc's remarkable abilities, his strength, etc. so that when Doc has to do something extra ordinary, the reader will believe that Doc could do it!! Like for instance, in the Man of Bronze, Doc is climbing down a rope from the top of a sky scraper. Someone is trying to cut the rope. If the rope remains taut, he can cut it easily, but if it slackens, he can't cut it. So what does Doc do? He merely turns loose the rope and lets it slacken, then utilizing his great strength, which Dent has already showed you a couple of times, he regrasps the rope, as though nothing has happened. So clever is the Dent spell, you believe that Doc could do it!

I don't remember the first Doc Savage yarn I ever read, but they numbered many before S&S ruined them by trying to make them sexy without being sexy in the early forties....One thing about the Meteor Menace and The Man of Bronze, no body will ban them because of profanity or sex. In these books, even the villians don't say damn... and sex is non-existant.

Wilkie Conner

Ed Wood writes of "A Requiem for Astounding" by Alva Rogers, published by Advent:Publishers, Chicago. \$6.00

There would be few fans to deny that the most important science fiction magazine in the history of magazine science fiction was Astounding Science-fiction now retitled into Analog Science Fact Science Fiction. Some more scholarly fans would insist, as indeed does this reviewer, that magazine science fiction has never before or since attained the perfection that it achieved during those few years of the great "Golden Age" 1939 to mid-1943. Therefore any history of ASF would be bound to be an important book.

Alva Rogers has expanded his articles for the fan magazine Viper into a full book amply and beautifully illustrated by covers and interiors from ASF. Along with Rogers' own preface are three editorials by the three editors of Astounding, Harry Bates, F. Orlin Tremaine, and John W. Campbell. Bates is informative in adding new material on the origin of Astounding Stories of Super-Science January 1930. The material by Tremaine was selected from articles he had submitted to Fantasy Times and what he might have wanted to say for a book of this nature. Science Fiction lost a great and good friend when Tremaine died in 1956. Campbell's material is hard to understand in the light of the many accolades bestowed upon by Rogers in the book itself. Campbell claims that Rogers is trying to recapture his youth and that the book, "may be doing modern science fiction a distinct disservice." Surely anyone has the right to recall those memorable and wonderful times which he treasures. When time has completed its terrible work, what can remain but memory?

Rogers has written this book the way any book like this should be written -- with love and respect. There is none of the snide pseudo-intellectual panderings to Freud and others. There is straightforward "I liked this..and this and I disliked this...this....this" Refreshing.

A simple and direct chronology is followed by Rogers. He starts out with preliminary remarks about Hugo Gernsback, Amazing Stories, and Bob Davis of Argosy and All-Story. The first chapter covers the Clayton Astounding 1930-3 with its Wesso covers and pulp adventure material like the later Planet Stories. The second chapter covers the emergence of the Street and Smith Astounding under the editorship of F. Orlin Tremaine who was to form the first "golden age" of Astounding 1934-5 when he was able to get all the leading authors of the time to contribute such sterling material to his magazine as to leave his two competitors, Gernsback of Wonder and Sloane of Amazing far behind. Too many people forget that when Campbell became editor of Astounding Stories he was in command of the leading magazine which he was to wonderfully

transform during his early years as editor. Chapter by chapter the reader is led along with what is Campbell's epic editorship as he takes over from Tremaine and begins to alter the magazine by changing the title to Astounding Science Fiction, bringing new writers and illustrators to the field, starting Unknown (a book in itself) and the change to large size with the January 1942 issue. The chapter headings tell the story: Chapter V The Dawn of the Golden Age: 1939-1940; Chapter VI The Golden Age Begins: 1940; Chapter VII The Golden Age: 1941; Chapter VIII The "Bedsheet" Astounding: 1942-1943 etc. Even when one knows the story, it is a pleasure to watch the way Rogers handles the coming of Asimov, Sturgeon, van Vigt, the great double Robert Heinlein-Anson MacDonald and others who are still active today. Never was Campbell more creative and equally important, never again was he to have the monopoly on talent that he had in those years. Building on the shoulders of the earlier giants of science fiction, this perfect fusion of talent and editorial skill was to produce an almost perfect magazine. The one point at which the failure of Campbell was complete was in interior illustrations. Because of hindsight one can say any illustrators Campbell could have used from elsewhere in the field would have been better than the ones he used.

Now in the years toward the end of the war as the size of Astounding diminished, so the level of material leveled off on a high plateau, to slowly decline through the decade of the fifties. Even Rogers is reluctant to dwell on the decay of a giant. Rogers uses 12 text pages to cover the single great year of 1941 and but 21 for the entire decade of the 50s. One can hardly blame Rogers for this because the number of memorable stories and of exciting issues were far less than during the stirring 30s and roaring 40s.

I believe the reader of this review should know that I am one of the partners in Advent:Publishers and therefore am concerned in the reception of this book by the reading public, yet I am glad that Advent:Publishers was able to add this contribution to the slim list of bibliographical books about science fiction and fantasy. It is my sincere hope that others will write books and articles about the other worthwhile magazines that have added lustre and glory to this field.

Ed Wood

Gary Zachrich after reading "After The Rain" by John Bowen, Ballantine 50¢ comments:

A crackpot rain maker invents a catalyst that unites the hydrogen and oxygen in the air to make plain old water. Sly old devil that he is, he takes a contract from a Texas town that needs water very badly. Naturally, the catalyst runs amok in the atmosphere when he wrecks his completely unairworthy and unimaginable airship. (with a helicopter type airscrew on the top, yet). Regretfully, the perpetrator of this economy sized flood is killed before he could collect for his contracted three inches of rain. (smashed to bits on the bonnet of an auto when his whirlygig failed.) To go on. The good old Earth is inundated by inches while the fittest survive. Captain Hunter, who sails a convenient balsa wood raft (sponsored by the Glub cereal company. Man can live by Glub alone) for a living, Arthur, an

Accountant who sets himself up as a god, and various other normal, everyday people, including the hero.

Now, as I see it, the most outstanding things about this book are: A. The atmosphere was turned to water, but no one suffocated.

B. The fittest who survived found out that they could get along without an insane accountant.

C. The cover on the book in dull shades of blue and green that closely resembled my face when I laid it to rest and headed for the john.

Gary continues with comments on "Bill, The Galactic Hero" by Harry Harrison. Berkley Medallion 50¢.

A delicious piece of satire on the armed services of the future. A red blooded, husky farm boy is induced to enlist in the Empire Space Corps by somewhat devious means. He is shipped off to basic training, which he finds not to his liking. There, he meets "Deathwish" Drang, the king of all drill instructors, who has genuine vat grown, surgically implanted tusks. These are quite expensive, by the way.

Bill never does get to finish basic training, because of a stepped up attack by the enemy, the Chingers. Not only is their training foreshortened, but they also send the training personnel into the combat zone.

He is assigned to the battleship CHRISTINE KEELER, the grand old lady of the fleet, as a fuse tender sixth class. (The C.K. had been in service two weeks. It seems there was quite a turn-over in equipment.) Though it usually takes a full year to train a fuse tender, Bill and his friends learn the trade in ten minutes. At this point, I became quite convulsed with laughter and spilled beer on the table and floor. Not a drop touched the book, but my wife still viewed the proceedings in a dim light. After two combats, Bill becomes a hero of the first water. Single handedly, he destroys an attacking enemy battleship, and is ordered to a planet to receive a decoration. There he is victimized by a computer, and in order to stay alive, joins an underground organization. The garbage collectors. He finally wins his way back into the Space Corps, and becomes a recruiting agent with genuine vat grown tusks.

This is the best piece of laugh larking I have read for a good long time. It is entertaining from cover to cover, with the exception of one small part about three fourths of the way through, where it gets a little sick. Everyone falls into a bad humor once in a while, you know!

Gary Zachrich, once again, with comments on "We The Venusians" by John Rackham, Ace double 45¢.

A small colony is established on Venus. They find two things. A population of green skinned humans with no measurable intelligence, and a bean like plant that reduces fat people effortlessly, and immunizes the user against all virus infections. A small money and power mad group, headed by Borden Harper, controls the supply of beans.

The "Greenies" as the green skinned Venusians are called, are regarded as animals, good only for harvesting bean pods.

An accomplished pianist, Anthony Taylor, who loves and plays the nearly forgotten classics of music with skill unsurpassed in this modern age, lives only for his music.

However, Borden Harper hears him play in an obscure club in London and forces him to go to Venus to play for the colony. Though being paid well, Taylor must be forced to go because he has a terrible fear of Venus. For Taylor is a Venusian Greenie and knows it!

Once on Venus, he and another Venusian (who did not know she was a greenie till they ran out of the chemical that kept them fair skinned.) are forced to brave the wilds of Venus on foot, where they find that the Venusians are an intelligent people after all. Taylor uses his musical talent as a power and leads the Greenies in an attempt to gain an equality with man.

Very Good!! An oft used plot is mixed with a love of classical music. (Though not so much that you must be a music lover to read it,) developed into a real power. The development of the main character is quite stirring. I find it amazing that this work should be reduced to publication as half of a double. Along with Fred Saberhagen's "Water of Thought" on the opposite side, this is one of the best book buys of the year! Hurrah for the Ace Doubles.

Gary Zachrich

A R G A S S I N G.....(continued from page 25)

After announcing on page 24 that The Pulp Era was on a bi-monthly shedule, something came up that held this issue up a few months. First, the holidays, and then something that I announce with a bit of pride. A new Hickman, Mark Alan, born Feb. 9th. A fine boy, 9 lb. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. This slowed my publishing down, but we will publish bi-monthly from now on. The number 63 issue will be dated May-June 1966 to make us current and will be released within a month after this mailing. So, letters of comment, if you want them published, should be sent at once. Deadline for advertising for the next issue will be May 25th.

Hold!! This seems to be catching. Gary Zachrich, who will be featured next issue with Doc Aborigine in The Gold Mine of Gold, just announced the birth of an 8 lb. 1 oz. son. Please sterilize these sheets and wear a mask while reading. Who knows? YOU may be next!

If you are a Doc Savage fan, you'll laugh as hard as I did when you read the Gold Mine of Gold. Its wonderful!!

Lynn Hickman



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