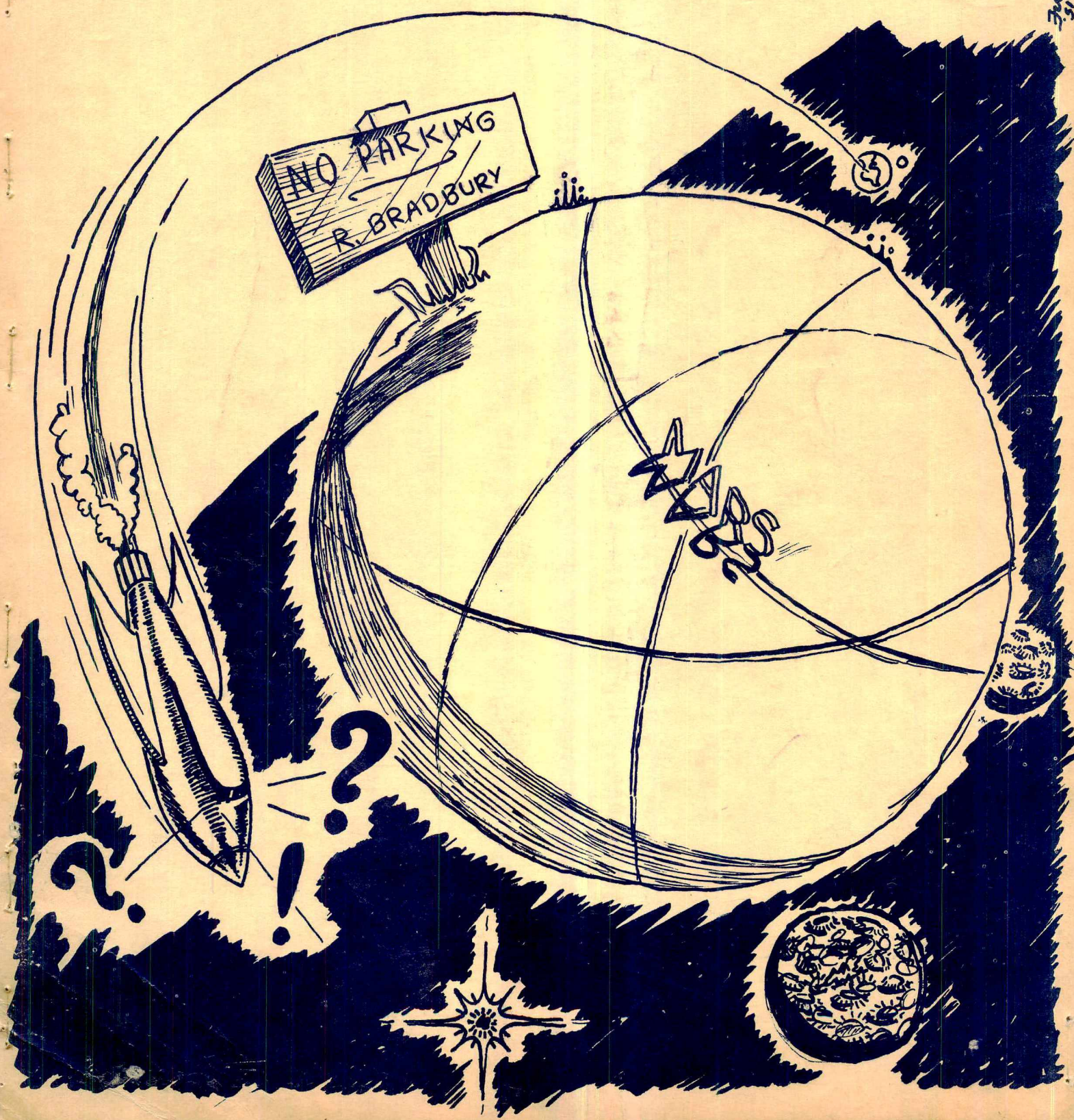


OOPSLANNISH!

Feb 73
19



JANUARY 1ST, 1953!

OOPS LANNI3H!

Contents

Cover	Bob Fultz	1
Eruptions	The Editor	4
The Jaundiced Eye	Ken Beale	7
Too Bright	William M. Rose	10
Dear Alice	Shelby Vick	13
The Great Unknown	Vernon L. McCain	15
Fan Artfolio	Dave Stone	
	Ray Capella	
An Opened Letter...	Richard Bergeron	21
The Iron Curtain Drops	Richard Bergeron	31
The Fan From Tomorrow	Bob Tucker	32
Memoirs of a Screwlooseologist	Walter A. Willis	37
Letter from Minneapolis	Richard Geis	41
The Tape of Things to Come	Richard Elsberry	44
Dribblings	Robert Bloch	48
Bacover	Final Editorial	52
	At last, the end	60

* * * * *

GREGG CALKINS...
1429 Talisman Drive,
Salt Lake City 16, Utah.
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

* * * * *

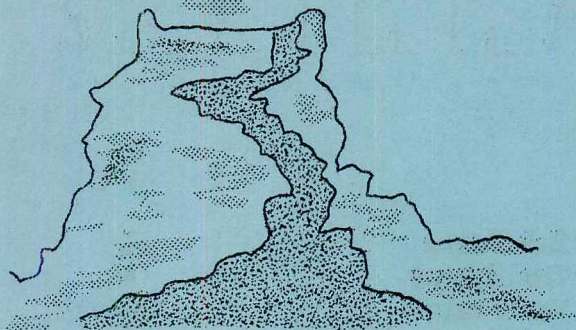
This is the ninth issue of OOPSLA, the annual, celebrating a year of publishing in the fan field, as well as the passing of 1952 and the entrance of 1953. Happy New Year to all, and may 1953 be as prosperous a year as you could wish.

OOPSLA! is published monthly from here on out, sells for 15¢ per single copy, seven issues for \$1.00. Advertising rates on request.

Next issue will be mailed on February 1st. Deadline for columns and all other material for the February issue is January 15th. Mailing dates on future issues are always the 1st of the month, and deadlines the 15th of the previous month. Columnists please note.

This issue is dedicated, with my deepest thanks for your help and support in the past year, to: Diane Law, Dean Hill, Jimmy Webbert and Al Mulaik.

ERUPTIONS!



A year. A whole, entire, complete year. Gone. Past. Finished.

But not forgotten.

This is the OOPSLANNISH! It is the ninth issue of OOPSLA! that I have edited and what I laughingly call published. It is the symbol of a year's effort.

Sadly enough, it is not what I wanted it to be. It is not as large as the QUANNISH by quite a ways. It isn't even as large as regular issues of some magazines. It isn't as nicely mimeo'd as some magazines. Or as nicely bound.

Only one thing saves me from crying over my plans that gang aft a gley, and that is what I hope you'll consider quality. This issue marks my first experience with a lithographed cover--something rare, in my case, because they're expensive. In this issue, also, are the regular columns you have come to depend upon, by Beale, Elsberry, Vick, and now a short one by Bergeron is also added. Along with these are articles and stories by McCain, Tucker, Bloch, Willis and a number of others that are well-known and appreciated in the fan field. In a separate section, you will find something still different--a fan art portfolio. Not quite as complete as I had wished it to be, but still around ten pages long. Add to tie all of it together, you have my two editorials, for what they're worth.

This is the annual. It represents a good deal of blood, sweat, and tears. It represents a year of effort in publishing a fanzine. It represents something entirely distinct and meaningful to the editor--and the contributors.

I hope it represents some of these things to you.

A year can be so long in one sense, and so short in another. It's hard to realize that 365 days have gone by since I mailed my first issue--and yet, in another way it's hard to believe it has only been that long. So many things have happened.

I remember my first issue quite well. I had been planning it for quite some time, dummyping each separate page and illustration carefully until the day arrived when I could cut it. Lee Hoffman had promised me her fanfile, and also a cover, and Rog Phillips said I could use one of his old CLUB HOUSE editorials from Amazing. I was excited beyond words. As a Christmas present I got my mimeograph, and with my own money I bought stencils, shade plates, styli, and lo! these many things that go into the production of a fanzine. In trembling excitement I stencilled, mimeo'd and mailed my first issue to a carefully selected list of subscribers--or, at least, potential subscribers.

The issue wasn't much to brag about. The very first thing I did wrong was to put my cover stencil on the mimeograph wrong side out. Naturally you put them on backwards, or the printed copy comes out in reverse. But I didn't know that until I had learned the hard way. The issue was poorly printed, and barely legible. It was clumsily stencilled, and my first attempts at stencilling illustrations met with but mediocre success. But I bundled up each copy fondly, and mailed them all.

Eruptions, II

To a number of people, I am indebted. To many people and editors for information, advice, help, and sympathy--most notably, Lee Hoffman, Bob Silverberg, and Vernon L. McCain. Without them, I would have had a much harder time surviving. One other person who gave a big boost was Gerry de la Ree, who sent me a full-page ad for my first issue--that meant a lot to me. To a number of other fan editors who gave advance plugs for OOPS, to contributors, to artists, to well-wishers, I send my heart-felt thanks.

Another group of people are especially important to me. These are the people who had faith enough in me to subscribe to OOPS for an entire year, even before my first issue had been mailed, or even completed. These were: Redd Boggs, Bill Berger, Ray Capella, Tom Covington, Sheldon Deretchin, Bob Fultz, RF Higgins, Gerald Hibbs, BO Igunboo, Richard Lupoff, Doug Mitchell, Mrs H Reed, Dave Stone, Stephen Schultheis and Roy Wheaton. I hope this ninth issue of yours fills the expectations you had when you subscribed to OOPS out of faith alone.

My second issue marked a couple of important changes. First among them was the discovery of Allen Mulaik as a slip-sheeter, and OOPS approached the ranks of legibility because of his efforts. Shelby Vick and Wilkie Conner began regular columns in this issue. I also moved from my old address (where I had been publishing in a cold dank basement) to 761 Oakley Street, when I managed to obtain half of the nice warm attic for my own.

Issue #3 saw a new typewriter in evidence, better mimeography, and the addition of one of fandom's best columns, "The Jaundiced Eye" by Ken Beale. Issues #4 and #5 followed more-or-less peacefully, right on schedule, marred only by a spring flood or two, a Walter A Willis Special Issue, and a FAPAazine marking my entry into FAPA. Issue #6 saw a consolidation of idea in OOPS, that issue taking almost the same slant and contents that are featured today, with the addition of Elsberry as a columnist in the place of Wilkie Conner. These issues also found the discovery of a number of fans in Salt Lake City, most notable and helpful among them Dean Hill and Jimmy Webbert, who devoted a good deal of time and effort towards OOPS--they deserve, and get, my special thanks.

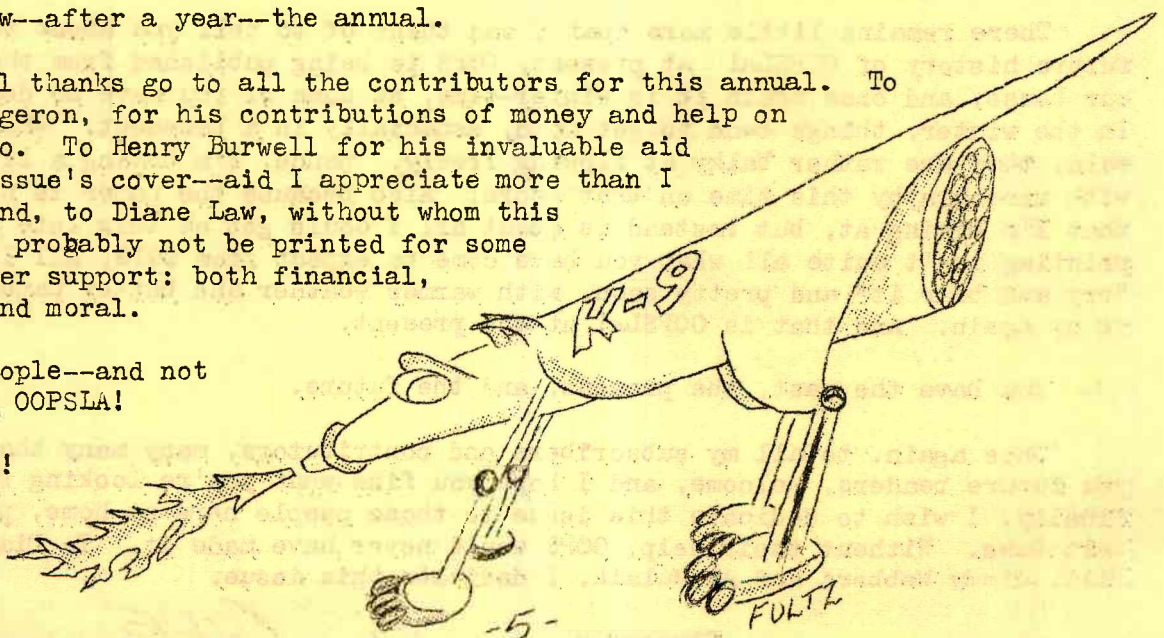
Issue #7 was the first issue of OOPS ever to be late. The reason? Chicago, 1952. The mad, glorious whirl of the convention and all that followed. And then issue #8, also late, struggling valiantly along through the chaos that followed the convention.

And now--after a year--the annual.

Special thanks go to all the contributors for this annual. To Richard Bergeron, for his contributions of money and help on the artfolio. To Henry Burwell for his invaluable aid with this issue's cover--aid I appreciate more than I can say. And, to Diane Law, without whom this issue would probably not be printed for some time--for her support: both financial, physical, and moral.

You people--and not myself--are OOPSLA!

Thanks!

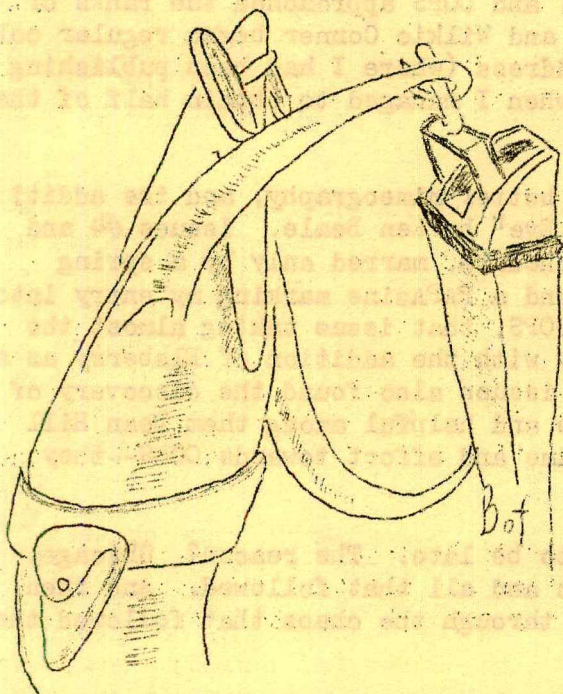


Eruptions, III

Such was the year behind me. Another year lies ahead. 1953. Who can say what it will bring? There are some definite changes in store for OOPS, of course--some of them I can see, but some of them will be hidden until I come to them.

Most obvious will be the change in frequency. Regardless of gloomy predictions to the contrary, OOPSLA! is hereby monthly, and the next issue will be mailed on the 1st of February. It will be the February issue. Issues after that will be in regular order, all mailed on the 1st of the month, when possible. Deadline for all material will be the 15th of the month before. Columnists Elsberry, Beale, Vick and Bergeron, please note! Your columns for the February issue are due January 15th so you'd better hurry. If you four cooperate with me on deadlines, OOPS shouldn't have any trouble being a very regular monthly.

And, of course, there's the price change--OOPS is now 15¢ per, seven for \$1.00. Why? Well, in case you haven't heard, prices are indicating a rise in the near future, and I want to be prepared. Why, they tell me that stencils might even go up to as much as...well, the unbelievably high price of 20¢ per quire!



Seriously, OOPS is costing a bit too much. Maybe the increase in price will help. I don't know. I can only hope....and then wait and see.

From now on, OOPS will probably be run on colored paper, tho not necessarily the same colors as you find here in the annish, and perhaps not even the same type of paper, depending on whether or not I can find anything different. Occasionally OOPS will run a lithographed cover, all depending on the state of the exchequer at the time, and the availability of a good cover drawing.

And that, as far as I can see, is the year to come for OOPS. Monthly, 15¢, color, with occasional litho'ed covers. Hope you like it.

There remains little more that I can think of to tell you about the past or the future history of OOPSLA! At present, OOPS is being published from the basement of our house, and once again it is winter-time, as some of you have no doubt noticed. In the winter, things tend to get cold, especially in a basement. When inks get cold, they are rather balky at flowing freely. Hence, I'm having a little trouble with mimeography this time on that score. Also because the paper is not at all what I'm aiming at, but instead is about all I could get at this late date. If the printing isn't quite all what you have come to expect from OOPS, all I can say is "try and bear it" and pretty soon, with warmer weather and better paper, I'll fix it up again. And that is OOPSLA! at the present.

You have the past, the present, and the future.

Once again, to all my subscribers and contributors, many many thanks. To all you future readers, welcome, and I hope you find what you're looking for. And, finally, I wish to dedicate this issue to those people here at home, people here in Salt Lake. Without their help, OOPS would never have made it. To Diane Law, Dean Hill, Jimmy Webbert and Al Mulaik, I dedicate this issue.

Sincerely,

Gregg Collins, editor.

the
JAUNDICED
EYES — KEN BEALE

PHILLYCON: As a sort of preview of the next World Con, the annual Philadelphia conference was held, this year, in the next convention hotel--the Bellvue-Stratford --on the same floor--the 18th--which would later be taken over entirely for part of the Con. On the basis of this brief advance peek, I can report, tentatively, that the place is spacious and well furnished. The acoustics in the room we used were good, so that no amplifier was needed. (However, this room is too small to be used for the main events of the Con.)

The program itself featured L. Sprague de Camp, Bob Tucker, and Howard Browne. I missed de Camp, but am told that his talk, which dealt with the ancient Phoenicians, was up to his usual level of interest. When I got there, Tom Clareson, a member of the Philly group who is an English professor by occupation, was talking on the evolution of sf. Though not saying anything really new, his talk was an accurate, literate, and interesting synopsis of the field's history, discussing general trends and types of fiction. It was considerably above the level of the usual convention talk, and was well received by the more-than-fifty people present. (Clareson is both vice-chairman and publicity chairman of the convention.)

Bob Tucker, a more or less unexpected addition to the program, came on next, and discussed the beautiful foul-up in publicity that occurred at the Chicon. Readers of this mag will have gotten the gist of it in Bob's article in the last issue, but he brought up a few points not covered there. One of them was the reason that no pictures of the ballet appeared in LOOK. Seems the editor(s) thought the costumes looked too crude and home-made. Well, I saw them, and I know they weren't professionally manufactured and designed, but they looked just as good, to me, as those worn by the regular ballet troupes. The only possible exception would be the space-man's outfit worn by the male lead. But even that was quite neat. Personally, I think the editor or editors in question must've gotten up on the wrong side of bed that morning--with a hangover to boot.

Bob's talk was probably better received than any other I heard.

Bud Waldo, who is a PSFS member and works for HOLIDAY magazine, talked of an sf article coming up in a future issue--by Arthur C. Clarke. James Williams, the Con chairman, got up and plugged the Con, displaying the newly-printed membership cards. Incidentally, copies of the first Progress Report on the Con were available at the meeting.

After an intermission, Sam Moskowitz talked well and interestingly on his collection, which is little short of monumental. Among other things, he mentioned his difficulty in keeping it pruned down to a "working library" of 1,000 books. In spite of what you may think from the subject, the talk was good, not at all dull. This was because Sam is a fine speaker.

The Jaundiced Eye, II

Lester del Rey, listed on the program for the next spot, failed to materialize, so emcee Irving Heyne filled in by asking members of the audience to get up and say whatever they thought pertinent. A N.Y. fan named Martin Margulies, just out of the army, asked why a group of fan from that city could not get together and start working, now, for a Con there in '54. Heyne enlightened him, briefly, on the interne-cine difficulties of that city, and promised to explain in detail, later, in private. Bob Lowndes of FUTURE also talked, briefly, and said he's be interested in publishing the text of Clareson's speech. The speech was off-the-cuff, but Clareson landed a series of articles with Lowndes anyhow. Lowndes also said he'll publish a series of progress reports on the Con in his mag, in issues coming out between now and September. This amounts to free advertising. It is understood other editors, like del Rey and Palmer, will follow suit.

Howard Browne was next, with a speech he called "Predictions of Things to Go". He said he expected a lot of changes in the sf mag field, and gave his ideas of what some of them would be. To be exact, he told what features of other mags would soon disappear. Oddly enough, these seemed to be mostly the things that distinguished those magazines from his own. Editors who try to appeal to the high-minded, intellectual type of reader, with man's journey to the stars, etc, he said, will only have a small following. (Scratch Campbell and possibly Mines.) Editors who try to make all the stories in their mags similar in theme and approach (Campbell, again, and Gold) are also on the way out. What about space-opera, adventure, etc? Also slated for the trashcan, Browne declared. Readers are getting "more selective." The pulp size is soon to be as extinct as the dime novel. Either the now-popular digest size, or the larger slick-magazine size (such as is used by FANTASTIC SCIENCE FICTION) will become standard. Furthermore, more and more readers will be attracted by the names on the covers of writers well-known in other fields. (Browne is the only editor who consistently follows this policy.) The field will finally be whittled down to eight mags, he said, but these eight will have more readers than the present ones.

As for his present policy in FANTASTIC, Browne revealed that he was personally opposed to all reprints in his mag, except the Chandler yarn in the first issue. "I never liked Poe, even as a child," he admitted candidly. I suppose he thought this confession of lack of taste would make him more popular with the audience.

It is obvious that, for one, Browne did not like E. M. Forster's "The Celestial Omnibus," since he chose to cut the ending. If you will check with the version of this classic but oft-reprinted story in "The Collected Stories of E. M. Forster," (Knopf, 1948) you will note that about a paragraph or more of it does not appear in the FANTASTIC version. Of course, there may be some other explanation besides editorial cutting. But it looks as if an American pulp-mag editor was taking it upon himself to edit one of the greatest of modern imaginative stories.

Browne also revealed the gladsome news that the old AS and FA will die with their January issues (or the issues out that month.) The issues, he suggested, would be collector's items. (No comment here.) Talking about the new, slick AMAZING, he mentioned the lineup of authors for the first issue. In addition to the leading sf writers (Heinlein, Clarke, Gold, Miller and Lenister,) all mentioned in the story in FANTASY-TIMES, he revealed for the first time the feature story of the issue, not revealed in F-T. It was--hold on to your hats, now--"Mars: Confidential" by Lait and Mortimer. This title would probably appear on a paper band around the issue, he said. (I wouldn't be surprised to see Hemingway in some future issue, with a title like "The Old Man and Space." Or maybe James ("From Here to Eternity") Jones. No sir, nothing will surprise me from now on, coming from Browne. Nothing cheap, that is.)

He also asked fans not to jump on him for running a Bradbury reprint in the

first AMAZING. Seems he planned on an original, but it was sold elsewhere, right out from under his nose. With Bradbury's name already on the cover, he was compelled to use "Here There Be Tygers" which had appeared only in one book-- "New Tales of Space and Time." "Most fans," said Browne, "haven't read this one." What he apparently didn't know is that Pocketbooks, Inc. is issuing a 25¢ reprint of the book, which should be out very soon now, before his first issue (due in February.)

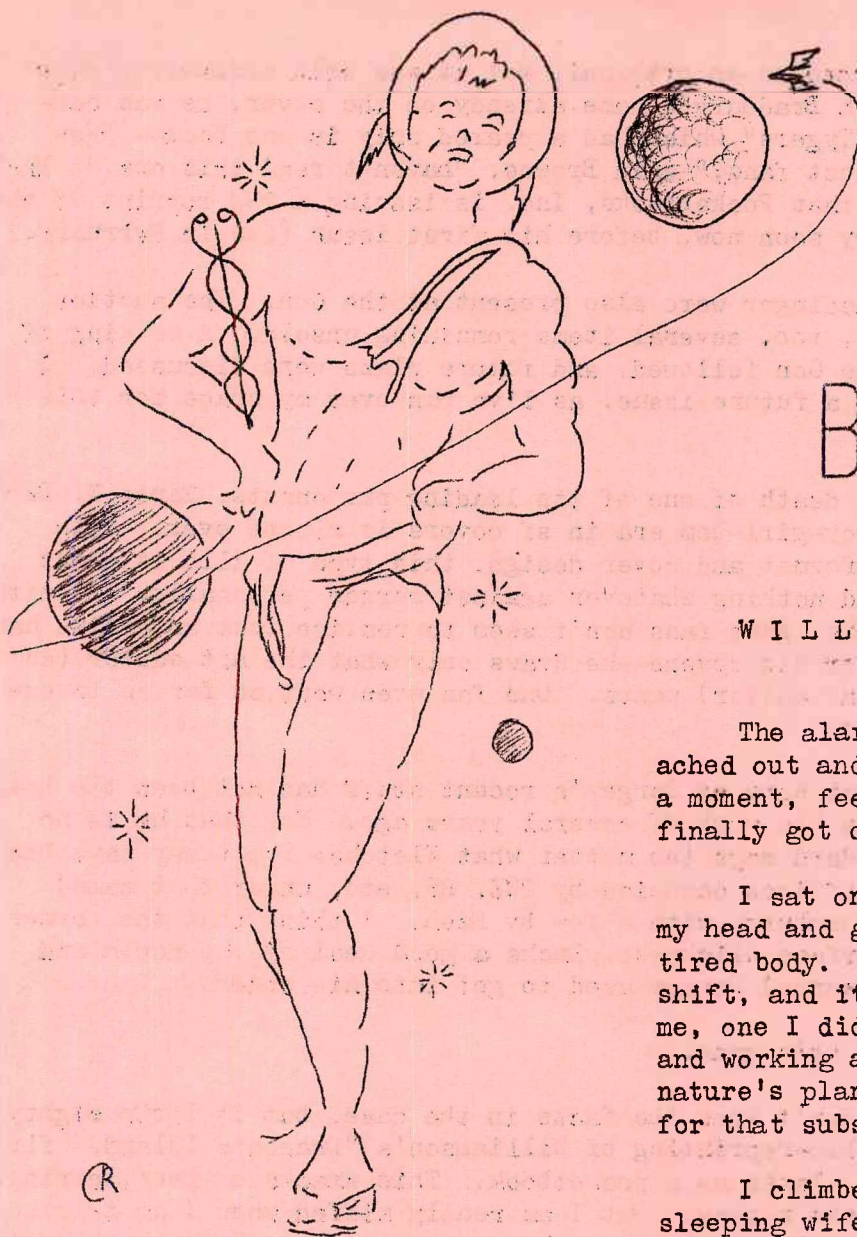
END OF AN ERA: With the death of one of its leading proponents, Earle K. Bergey, it seems as though the boy-girl-bem era in sf covers is almost over. With more mags adopting a maturer format and cover design, this type of illo is about dead. Unlike some fans, I had nothing whatever against Berger personally. Despite constant repetitions by editors, some fans don't seem to realize that an artist has no choice of subject-matter for his covers--he draws only what the art editor (as distinct from the mag's regular editor) wants. One fan even went so far as to express joy over Bergey's demise.

No, I'm by no means glad he's gone.

FILMS: Watch for "1 April 2000", Australian sf film with political connotations....."Invaders from Mars," a 20th-Century-Fox release in Cinecolor....."Women of Venus," also in Cinecolor, a United Artists release (probably the same film reported here as "Venus Women").....and "Spaceways," being made in England with Howard Duff and Eva Bartok, which concerns itself with the first experiments in spaceflight.

[illegible]

-9-



TOO BRIGHT

by

WILLIAM M. ROSE.

The alarm rang and I unconsciously reached out and shut it off. I lay still for a moment, feeling sorry for myself, and finally got out of bed.

I sat on the edge of the bed, rubbing my head and getting a little life in my tired body. I was new to the graveyard shift, and it was a different experience for me, one I did not like. Sleeping in the day and working all night seemed contrary to nature's plan. But one does strange things for that substance called money.

I climbed into my clothes, kissed my sleeping wife goodbye and walked into the empty kitchen. Pulling on my faded jacket,

(R)
I walked over and looked out the window. Nothing could be seen but my gloomy reflection staring back at me. My hand found the light switch and snapped it off. A faint gleam of star shine replaced my face in the window. Looking at the car crouched against the house I wondered if it would start tonight: it had been acting temperamental lately. I thought, "What a dreary night. Hope the car doesn't break down."

A cold damp wind shistled through my battered jacket as I left the shelter of the house. It sang around the corner, telling me I should be in bed. I mentally cursed the wind, the delapidated car, money, and things in general. Fumbling with my key ring, I sighed enviously, thinking of my wife, sound asleep. The old Chevy coughed and groaned as I drove down the dirt road to the highway and waited for the usual caravan of trucks that sheezed up the grade this time of night. It was a familiar sight, all the trucks on the road. It reminded me of a poem my wife had written.

Mighty noisy monsters
Grinding up the grade,
Waking up at evening
When the sun begins to fade.

Too Bright, II

Large and dusty tires,
Big and shiny hood,
Grumbling and muttering
Like a monster should.

Stretched along the highway,
Gleaming cold and bright,
A ponderous caravan of trucks
Rumble through the night.

She was an odd girl, writing poetry instead of listening to soap operas like most of her friends. Smiling as I thought of her, I pulled onto the highway, put the Chev through the gears and settled down at 45 miles an hour. I pushed the button on the radio, heard the vibrator hum, and tuned in Clyde, the all-night disk jockey. Poor fellow, it's bad enough staying up, without having to talk all night. But, like I said, what we won't do for money.

It was dark and cold as I drove the three miles to the transmitter shack. The sky was laced with stars gleaming coldly down on the highway when I coaxed the Chevy over the last hill, around the curve, and into the yard. The huge lights of the tower winked a lurid red, and I laughed when I thought of what Mr. James, the station owner, would say about the new lighting system the chief engineer had put up. He not only had the newest and brightest lighting system in the country, he also had the newest and biggest lighting bill in the country. But I had to admit he surely got his money's worth. That high voltage system with the special gas in the lamps lit up the countryside like a small moon, except for its weird shade of red.

Scotty met me at the door with his jacket half on, and after the usual stale jokes, left. Old Scotty had really degenerated since he started here, but I couldn't really blame him. There wasn't anyone to see or talk to, and you didn't really have to keep up an appearance.

I put my lunch on the desk, pushed aside the pile of magazines, and prepared to do absolutely nothing until morning except the usual meter reading. I poked through the drawers of the desk, smiled at the half-empty fifth of whiskey Scotty had hidden there, and found the magazine I had been reading the night before.

I read for a long time, until I had read the entire magazine. Just as I finished, I had the oddest sensation, as if someone was staring at me. I fought it until my back began to crawl, then fearfully turned around.

Nothing was there. I laughed at myself, switched on a few more lights and picked up the book I had promised my wife Joyce I'd read.

At two-thirty the room became rather chilly. I didn't mind at first, but at three o'clock it was very uncomfortable. I tured the gas heater up as far as it would go, but it still got colder. The flames in the heater were burning brightly enough, but the heat seemed to be sucked away before it could have any effect. I crowded up against the heater. It was so cold I was getting panicky. Then I noticed the frost on the ceiling and the queer glow. It started as a small circle and suddenly splashed down upon the room flooding it with a pale creepy luminescence. It drew all the color from the walls and gave the room a flat chalky appearance. When it reached the heater it flared to a new brilliance as it fed on the gas flames, until I had to close my eyes because of the glare.

The sound started low and small, but it got bolder and rumbled down from the roof, shook the floor, and knocked my thermos bottle off of the desk. The sound seemed to start in the middle of my head. It was a cruel grinding noise, not unlike

a dentist's drill. It became louder and higher until I could not bear it any longer. I must have been hysterical, because I remember shouting and screaming for it to stop. When it did, it happened so suddenly I did not realize it for a moment. It stopped just as every glass tube in the transmitter shattered.

Then I saw it. There just isn't any possible way to describe or explain what I saw; I don't know myself its size or shape. I didn't have the courage to face it, yet I was afraid to turn my back. I stood there against the heater, looking out of the corner of my eye, trying desperately not to go mad.

It had become so cold I could hardly feel my body. I don't believe I could have moved if I had tried.

A thousand eternities passed before it spoke. The hollow, ageless voice drifted about the room. It did not seem to come from any one place, just sifted through my paralyzed mind.

I was informed it did not usually bother with the triviality known as man, but we were becoming a nuisance. The stupid globes about the tower must be dimmed or they would be destroyed, along with the rest of the silly contrivance. The globes were far too bright and kept it awake. "When one has only a few thousand years that may be spent in sleep and eons that must be worked, one's conscience is not disturbed when a troublesome bug is squashed in order to rest easily."

I don't remember anything after that, until the phone jarred me back to reality. I picked it up by habit more than reasoning. The tired voice of the disk jockey stirred my numb brain, asking what the hell happened and when were we going back on the air again. I dropped the phone on the desk and pushed open the door. The old Chevy coughed and groaned as I tured off the highway, up the dirt road, and home.

I didn't like the graveyard shift, anyway.

-- William M. Rose.

[illegible]

WANTED!

These eight issues are not STF's, but I will pay \$3 for each one!

BREEZY STORIES- 8/'35; 3/'36; 4/'36; 7/'36; 5/'37

BLACK BOOK DETECTIVE MAGAZINE- Issue in the '30's ('34-'38) with story "One-and-a-Half Murders"

COLLEGE LIFE- Issued in 1928 with story "The Good Die Young."

FOR SALE! At \$1.00 each postpaid, or will trade all for any two of the
above...

AMAZING STORIES- 2/'31; 4/'31; 12/'31; 5/'32; 6/'32;
9/'32; 10/'32.

Send wants in the Science-Fiction and Fantasy line. Send haves in College Humor & Detective Magazines. I'll buy or trade. William Thailing, 5111 Guy Avenue, Cleveland 27, Ohio.

Dear Alice

I guess it's about time I explained something to you, Alice. You might have noticed how my letters often repeat something you'd told me previously? Well, that's because there are--well, a couple of other people who read my letters to you, and I repeat things so they can understand. Right now, one of them tells me he wants to know what happened to you when you attended the Tasfic. So I'll have to explain that, altho you'd have liked to attend, you never quite made it... Of course, he knows about the time you thot you where there--only to discover that it was all fictitious... But he doesn't know about...

Well, your train of thought had taken you to the subject of going to Chi, but you didn't know how to get there. The logical one to ask was the conductor, but unfortunately the only conductor you could find was copper, which seemed to be shockingly uninformed. Not knowing watt to do, or how to get ohm, you wandered on down the train, hoping maybe one of the passengers would know more about the current events.

The first one you met was a tall man with a bit of an accent. As you approached him, he was practicing saying "Begorrah. BeGORrah! Begorrrrah, ye spalpins!"

"Uh -- pardon me, sir," you said.

He looked up at you and smiled. "Ah, yis, lass; and how are you this foine morrrrrning?"

"Oh, I'm just foine -- fine, thank you. How are you?"

"Foine, foine; and tell me, how's my Irish accent, little lady?"

"Why, it sounded quite Irish, I thot, sir. Why are you trying to sound like an Irishman, tho?"

"Well, 'tis a long story -- but you see, Oi am Irish. North Ireland, where we speaks good King's English, being English territory, but everyone expects a brogue from an Irishman."

You found yourself liking this tall gentleman, and soon the two of you were deep in conversation.

"...and so," the tall man went on, "Arthur Wilson said, 'Want to order some much for breakfast?' and I said, 'Mush? What's that: Eskimo dog food?'" The tall man chuckled reminiscently. "And I'll never forget the Charteruse Chariot! That's a lorry -- truck, you know -- and it seems to have an aversion to running. Very slow to start. Truckulent...."

That one sneaked up on you. You were a little slow to get it, and when you did you quietly got up and went to the girls' room to get rid of it. ...And you thought again of how badly you wanted to go to the con; why, you might get to meet Walt Willis there!

The next passenger you bumped into was carrying a vacuum cleaner. You helped him to his feet, and he picked up his vacuum cleaner. "Sorry," he said, "I didn't see you."

Dear Alice, II

"No, it was my fault," you apologized, carefully brushing some dust off of his coat. You looked at his vacuum cleaner. "Are you with Hoover?" you asked politely.

"No, I'm a democrat," he replied. "I'm the head of the CCF."

"Oh?" you said, wondering if this was like the CCC or WPA or maybe the CIO.

"Yes. --Well, I hate to be brusque, but I really must go, I've got some cleaning to do. I understand there's a girl on the train who said --" here he stopped, stole a quick look around, and continued in a hushed voice, "I really shouldn't repeat this, but you look like a nice innocent young girl who probably won't really know what it means... Well, she said... 'Hal Shapiro...!'"

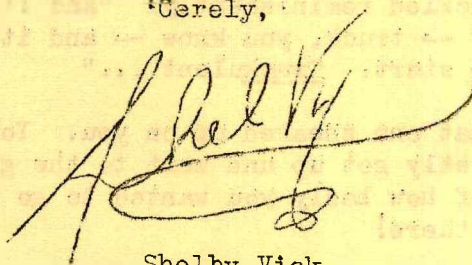
With that, he turned and rapidly disappeared down the corridor.

You shrugged; your mind wasn't on the little man and his cleaning problems -- besides, what was so dirty about a halshapiro, whatever that was? What was worrying you was missing the Tasfic. If you could make it to Chi, you might meet Russ Watkins. Or you might meet...

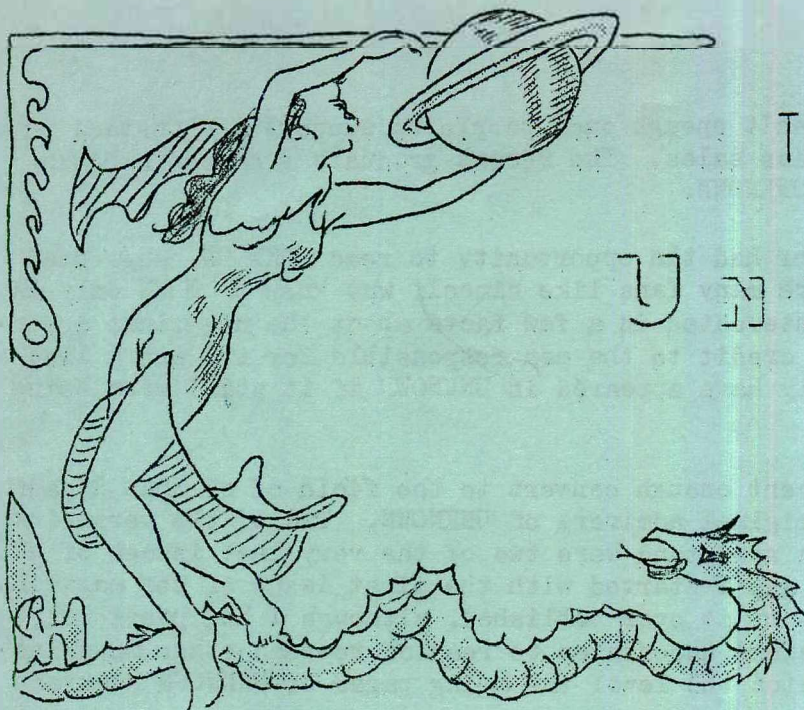
"Pahdon me, you-all" a soft feminine voice drawled behind you. You moved aside. "Sorry, honey; y'all were in mah way. Had to get back to me seat, 'cos I left my only copy of I GO POGO there." She had a rebel flag, big languid brown eyes and a POGO button. Almost resigned to having to miss the convention, you accepted her invitation to sit and talk with her about Pogo. Talking with a Pogo fan was as good a substitute as you could hope to find for talking with a s-f fan. It turned out that she owned a large share of FT. MUDGE STEAM CALLIOPEs (Ft. Mudge Steam Calliopes are milder, much milder, you found out) and had actually been to Ft. Mudge so you definitely didn't waste your time. But you kept wishing that you could have been in the Morrison talking with, say, Lee Hoffman...

When you sat down in the dining car for dinner, a big blonde fellow looking something like a football player sat down beside you. While waiting for dessert, you overheard him talking to the fellow across the table; you gathered he was an editor (seemed quite young for someone in so responsible a position) of something called...well, you didn't quite get the name; COMPAH!, perhaps it was. You didn't feel too guilty about listening in, because you overheard your name mentioned once. Only, of course, it wasn't your name, just another girl named Alice that he was talking about; must have been his favorite girl, because he called her 'Dear Alice.' But your mind wasn't on that; you were still having a few last, bitter thoughts about missing the Tasfic. It all seemed so unfair... Why, heck -- couldn't you at least have gotten to meet ONE fan -- if only...well, even Gregg Calkins would have been better than nothing....

Sincerely,



Shelby Vick
Box 493
Lynn Haven, Florida.



THE GREAT UNKNOWN

by

V. L. McCAIN . . .

It's something of a truism that science-fiction fans are indifferent or even antagonistic towards fantasy. Para-

doxically, it is also universally agreed that the hands-down winner in any competition among fandom to select the greatest magazine of all time would be an unblushing exponent of fantasy, John Campbell's late lamented UNKNOWN.

UNKNOWN (later dubbed UNKNOWN FANTASY FICTION and still later changed to UNKNOWN WORLDS) lasted for only 39 issues. By comparison, it is interesting to note that its only strong competitor for all-time top publication, sister-magazine ASTOUNDING, has produced over 250 issues. But even in its heyday (which coincided almost exactly with the period of UNKNOWN's publication) ASF never featured as many memorable stories over a similar period of time, never attained the high standard of writing associated with UNKNOWN nor the fabulous freshness of plot and ideas fondly remembered by the readers of UNKNOWN.

Quite probably other fantasy magazines have failed to compete strongly for the science-fiction audience because they were off-breed items, which never contained the vigor one associates with good sf. WEIRD TALES concentrates on ghostly chillers and it is extraordinarily difficult to send chills down the spine of the blase and bored citizen of the 20th century. FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES uses dull and dated British adventure stories with only the skimpiest measure of fantasy added. The other fantasy magazines have been shortlived or featured phenomenally bad writing.

UNKNOWN goes to the opposite extreme. Only the best science-fiction can compete with the average UNKNOWN story. And only a bare handful of stories in the science-fiction field rate qualitatively with the best of UNKNOWN. Yet modern sf has passed the quarter-century mark--UNKNOWN spewed out its greatness in a period of four years.....and UNKNOWN's great fantasy stories do not suffer much on a quantitative, as well as qualitative, comparison with the great sf.

Today UNKNOWN is gone. There is no single publication which can begin to compare with it among our packed magazine racks. UNKNOWN was killed by the wartime dearth of newsprint and the drafting of many of UNKNOWN's small stable of qualified writers. Never a tremendous seller, the promises of revival when the newsprint situation eased have been forgotten. Editor John W. Campbell's explanation is that publishing prices have soared in every department (a well-known fact) and UNKNOWN's margin of profit was too narrow for Street and Smith to be justified in reviving it now. There is irony in UNKNOWN's fate. It was just too good. UNKNOWN came so close to being the perfect imaginative magazine that its appeal was only to mentalities highly developed along both lines of logic and fantasy (I'm indirectly quoting Camp-

The Great Unknown, II

bell here) and there simply weren't enough such people to support a newsstand publication which must depend on mass sales. The recent graduate from comic-books found little to attract him in UNKNOWN.

Gregg Calkins, who has never had the opportunity to read UNKNOWN, suggested this article. He felt there were many fans like himself who knew UNKNOWN only as a revered name and who would be interested in a few facts about the magazine; a mention of some of its highlights, credit to the men responsible for it, and a list of recent stories which would likely have appeared in UNKNOWN if it still were being published.

I might add that I am a recent enough convert to the field of sf that I cannot claim to have been one of the original admirers of UNKNOWN. Two of the very first magazines I ever purchased off a newsstand were two of the very last issues of UNKNOWN. But a trifle over a year ago I started with the first issue of the magazine and read my way through every story it ever published, although I had previously read reprints of many. I have since undertaken to read or re-read other magazines and not even ASTOUNDING could match the level the aging pages of UNKNOWN maintain still today.

UNKNOWN was born in early 1939. Date on the first cover was March, 1939. That issue featured a full-length novel, "Sinister Barrier," by Eric Frank Russell. This was a favorite UNK novel throughout the magazine's publication and still remains so with many of the original UNK readers although its lustre has been somewhat dimmed by the countless hordes of imitations since written. Russell was not one of UNKNOWN's standbys. He produced only one other story for the magazine, a mediocre short.

The only other story of quality in the first issue was "Trouble With Water," a short story written by a man whose name is very familiar to present sfans, HL Gold. Gold contributed only four stories to the magazine, but he must be ranked as one of its more important contributors since his stories were of high quality and did much to establish the policies which UNKNOWN followed. "Trouble With Water" was the first humorous story published by UNKNOWN. UNKNOWN is best known for its many rib-tickling stories and the later ones seem to owe their genesis to three influences: Theodore Sturgeon's rapid-fire slapstick and punning (unforgivably hashed in imitation in other pulps since) has some influence as did L. Sprague de Camp's analytical studies of the moronic human race (which he had previously used slightly in aSF). But the dominant note of humor throughout UNKNOWN's history was a direct copy of the note struck in "Trouble With Water." Actually indefinable without demonstration the closest I can come by the way of description is to term it "the unfaltering and unflagging devotion by the world of the supernatural to the pillorying of some luckless mortal"--which doesn't sound nearly so funny as it actually is.

Later, Gold's novel "None But Lucifer" (only technically a collaboration with de Camp) investigated the possibilities previously only scratched in "Sinister Barrier" in 'just-supposing' some horrific situation lying around all of us in our daily lives of which we are unaware. This was later skillfully developed in such novels as "Darker Than You Think" and "Conjure, Wife."

The first half-dozen issues of UNKNOWN were pretty mediocre. As Campbell has explained many times since writers had never before seen such a publication as UNKNOWN and they had no idea what he wanted until he showed them. The UNKNOWN formula has since been described in various ways. Campbell liked to think of it as carrying scientific logic and reasoning into the realm of fantasy. Some writers have said that in writing for UNKNOWN they took an impossibility, assumed it to be true, and on that one impossibility carried to its logical conclusion, built the framework of the story. The simplest, and probably least accurate of the three descriptions was the phrase 'fairy tales for adults.'

The Great Unknown, III

But in its early days, UNKNOWN (then a monthly) needed something to fill its pages. Campbell used superior WEIRD TALES style stories for his shorts and rip-roaring (though not particularly cerebral) adventure fantasies. Many of these were written by L. Ron Hubbard. A couple were by Norvell Page, a writer gifted with a tremendous imagination but little technical skill--and one was written by Campbell himself, the last Don A. Stuart novel before JW forsook his typewriter.

Of these stories, only Hubbard's "Slaves of Sleep" is particularly well remembered today.

But throughout this period Campbell was managing to find an occasional item to spice up his pages with the flavor which was soon to become identical with UNKNOWN. The third issue included a horror tale, "The Cloak," which I can only describe as the work of a genius. Unfortunately, the writer, Robert Bloch, has never given any other indications of genius except perhaps in the humorous items he writes for fanzines. "The Cloak" would well find its way into textbooks a century from now to lurk side by side with "The Cask of Amontillado," by Bloch's idol, E.A. Poe.

The next issue had perhaps the best short ever written by de Camp, "The Gnarly Man," the tale of an immortal Neanderthal. L. Sprague de Camp comes closer to typifying UNKNOWN than any other writer. To think of UNKNOWN is to think first of de Camp, then of its other writers. And to those who have read most of de Camp's works it becomes clear that de Camp at his best was the man who wrote for UNKNOWN (and ASF of the same period.) De Camp wrote more novels for UNKNOWN than anyone else (nine in all) plus many shorts. But five of de Camp's novels were collaborations, so L. Ron Hubbard who comes in second with eight novels, probably is the champion word-slinger in UNKNOWN.

De Camp's third UNK novel, "Lest Darkness Fall," is probably the greatest work of his career (though it must be admitted the hardcover edition is greatly superior to the short version published by UNKNOWN.) His "Mathematics of Magic" series with Fletcher Pratt in my opinion are typical of UNKNOWN at its best. (I could be prejudiced since the first two of this trilogy in book form as "The Incomplete Enchanter" were my first encounters with true sf or fantasy. It's interesting to note that the first of these caused quite a stir since it managed to include in one swoop all the fantasy of history in the realm of science-fiction.

The October 1939 issue presented a new name, Theodore Sturgeon. Sturgeon, who had been quietly starving while selling one or two stories to a syndicate at \$5 per has since said that he saw the first issue of UNKNOWN and realized this magazine was for him. Campbell and the readers agreed. Sturgeon, probably the first man to ever bring a true literary 'feel' to sf writing, had more stories in UNKNOWN than any other writer. But most were shorts with a sprinkling of novelets. Sturgeon did not write any novels until after UNKNOWN folded. I've tried to mention the more outstanding stories in the case of other authors. This is impossible in Sturgeon's case. An even better writer than he is now, at least two out of every three stories he had in UNKNOWN would have to be included. Suffice to say that if Gold fathered the typical UNKNOWN yarn and if de Camp is most representative of the magazine, then Sturgeon is representative of UNKNOWN at its finest.

One of the greatest names in science-fiction, Robert Heinlein, had only three stories in UNKNOWN. But of these three, his two novels, "Magic, INC" and "The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag," were enough to establish him as an even more skillful manipulator of fantasy than he is of sf (which is like recovering 105% of the energy one puts into a machine--there just isn't any more skillful writer of science-fiction, though some writers may surpass him in other aspects.

Probably the most memorable novelet UNKNOWN ever printed was by an author,

The Great Unknown, IV

like Gold, now more famous as an editor of a quality magazine. This was Anthony Boucher's "The Compleat Werewolf." It is doubtful if anyone will ever wring more from the subject of lycanthropy than Boucher.

One of the half-dozen most frequent contributors to UNKNOWN was a writer of whom I know nothing except what can be gleaned from her stories. She seems to have come, written, and departed without even the inquisitive antennae of fandom having captured any data about her. Her name was Jane Rice, and if I didn't know otherwise, I would suspect this is a penname for Sturgeon, so deftly did she master the tricks and trademarks of his style; whether deliberately or by co-incidence I can not say. Her stories, both humorous and horrible (frequently mixed) were unusually fine, even for UNKNOWN. One crawly item, "The Idol of the Flies," deserves anthologization a dozen times over, though I believe it has never been so honored even as much as once. Miss Rice is probably the finest feminine writer the field has ever known though of course she is closely rivalled by C. L. Moore. Miss Moore appeared in UNKNOWN only once. However, this story, "Fruit of Knowledge," a re-telling of the story of the Garden of Eden, was unbelievably deft and an extraordinary pleasant experience to read.

During the latter days of UNKNOWN what with many of its writers in the service, Cleve Cartmill came to the fore, writing a number of good novels for the magazine. Along with de Camp, Hubbard, Sturgeon, Rice and Frank Belknap Long, Jr (one of UNKNOWN's poorest contributors) Cartmill enjoys the distinction of being one of the six writers to have written ten or more stories for the magazine. Not too surprisingly these six managed to do a great deal toward setting the tenor of the magazine and, with the exceptions mentioned above, are the chief writers of interest in its history.

The magazine died in a blaze of glory. Its last four issues contained three memorable novels; "Conjure, Wife" by Leiber (one of UNK's, and fantasy's, finest novels), "Hell Hath Fury," by Cartmill, and "The Book of Ptath" by van Vogt.

UNKNOWN was monthly during its first 22 issues. With the first 1941 issue it went bi-monthly maintaining that schedule for thirty-four months until its final October 1943 issue. UNKNOWN featured much better artwork on its covers than is customary on pulp magazines. Probably only the mid-forties ASTOUNDING which featured Alejandrov and Bonestell could surpass them. But in July 1940 UNKNOWN took a radical step. In order to shake the pulp stigma which was scaring off many of the intellectual snobs who would have most appreciated the contents of UNKNOWN, the magazine abandoned pictorial covers for a dignified and attractive format listing the contents of the issue with a blurb for the main stories and tiny line-cut illustrations for some of the yarns. Exactly what effect this had on sales I don't know, but it certainly made for the most attractive looking magazine stfans have ever had a chance to buy.

Since UNKNOWN perished there has been no incentive for writers to slant stories toward this market. But, as Campbell has pointed out, the magazine never paid extraordinarily well, so much of the writing was a labor of love.

Naturally, since writers enjoy this sort of writing, some UNKNOWN stories still get written. But where can they be sold? Only two quality fantasy magazines exist now, MAGAZINE OF FANTASY & SF and FANTASTIC, and these are fairly recent additions, neither one of them making a habit of printing long stories, and their shorts aren't generally slanted toward the UNKNOWN style, though each prints a percentage which appear to have stepped from the pages of UNK. The two best examples I can think of are Isaac Asimov's "If" in the first FANTASTIC (surprisingly, Asimov, one of Campbell's more prolific writers at the time, never appeared in UNKNOWN) and Evelyn Smith's "The Martian and the Magician" in the November 1952 MAG-

The Great Unknown, V

AZINE OF FANTASY & SF. The latter is typical of UNKNOWN shorts at their very best.

Even most sf magazines print an occasional fantasy. And since UNK shorts resembled sf more closely than other fantasy does, these have not too much trouble in finding a home. But the longer UNK fantasies have a problem. The novelets appear most rarely now, although UNK writers Henry Kuttner and CL Moore did manage to sell, under a penname, "The Oddysey of Yiggarr Throlg" to Sam Merwin a couple of years ago.

UNKNOWN reached its fullest flower, however, in the full length novel and it is these that are rarest and the most rewarding when printed.

Campbell has printed some which could have stepped from the pages of UNKNOWN. The line between sf and fantasy is hard to determine and UNK frequently printed sf if it wasn't too technical. ** Van Vogt's "Book of Ptath" was only slightly more fantastic than his other superman novels, most of which could have fitted into UNK nicely with a slight deletion of scientific detail. De Camp's 'Krishna' stories have less scientific detail than some of his UNKNOWN stories, and vary not one iota in plot detail, though the writing is poorer.

The ASTOUNDING novel which would fit most perfectly into UNKNOWN, though, was Eric Frank Russell's 1948 serial, "Dreadful Sanctuary," which was a sister piece to "Sinister Barrier" though handled with much more maturity and skill than the earlier work was.

Other novels which would almost surely have landed in UNKNOWN had it still been around were Fredric Brown's "What Mad Universe" which nailed down all fantasy in the sf field even more securely than de Camp and Pratt did with "Mathematics of Magic." Theodore Sturgeon's only full-length novel, the superb "The Dreaming Jewels," which appeared in FANTASTIC ADVENTURES in 1950; Fritz Leiber's "You're All Alone," in FANTASTIC ADVENTURES in 1950, also; and the most typically typical UNKNOWNish tale of them all and typical not of the run-of-the-mill novel but the very cream of UNKNOWN, Murray Leinster's STARTLING STORIES novel of early 1952, "Journey to Barkut." Leinster is another longtime prolific writer who never happened to appear in UNKNOWN, despite his obvious skill in the field.

Another novel which could well have come from UNKNOWN but didn't, appeared as a reprint in FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES in 1947. This was "The Devil's Spoon."

Not a very big list, considering UNKNOWN has been dead for nine years. Of course, I've only listed the outstanding stories which were the sort one would expect of UNKNOWN. Undoubtedly poorer novels have been printed which UNKNOWN would have used if they couldn't have obtained anything better. But UNKNOWN was so experienced at producing its type of story where none would have existed otherwise that I doubt if this would have been necessary very frequently.

No denying, the pickings have been lean. And those of you who never saw UNKNOWN but liked the above tales (or the reprints of the mentioned UNKNOWN yarns) now have an idea of the fabulous riches you've missed.

(continued on next page)

** Surprisingly enough Campbell printed a number of stories in UNKNOWN which were neither sf nor fantasy. Most of these were minor filler items, best forgotten. However, one, a full length novel "Sons of the Black Goat", though right at home in UNKNOWN, certainly wasn't fantasy and only by stretching the term to its ultimate could be termed science-fiction. It certainly must be classed as one of UNKNOWN's best written novels, however, even if it is a non-fantasy.

The Great Unknown, VI

We of the faithful have never given up hope that someday Street and Smith will revive UNKNOWN, although in the present overcrowded market the quality probably would not be as high as formerly. I never let an ASF questionnaire go by without demanding the revival of UNKNOWN, and I understand I'm not alone in this.

Lester del Rey, himself one of the better UNK contributors, is reported planning an UNKNOWN styled magazine as a sister to his two present publications. It is necessary to keep one's fingers crossed about this until it appears. Advance predictions of type and quality are notoriously unreliable. Naturally, it is to be hoped the magazine will be a success (actually, it is entering a commercial vacuum since no other even remotely UNKNOWN-styled magazine now exists and will probably either die from the rarified atmosphere or instantly expand to fill the long empty gap and prove the most profitable of del Rey's string) and inspire S&S and Campbell to revive the original.

The original copies of UNKNOWN, now a decade old, sell at fabulous prices much higher than any other magazine of the period, due to its desirability and low original circulation. Unless you have access to someone's private collection or are willing to fork over a sizable sum of money, you will have to depend on some new UNKNOWN style magazine for such stories, or depend on reprints. Though many UNK tales have been reprinted, the number is surprisingly few when one compares the quality of the magazine with its contemporaries. And practically all reprinting has occurred in the expensive confines of hard covers.

Though many ASF tales are beginning to seep into reprint magazines now, UNKNOWN remains virtually untouched. In its first issue, SUSPENSE reprinted Sturgeons "Green-Eyed Monster" under another title. The last MoF&SF reprinted editor Bouchers own "They Bite," as a good enough tale, but the poorest of all Boucher's UNKNOWN stories. As far as I know, these are the only occasions any UNKNOWN story has been reprinted in a magazine. Let's hope that someone somewhere in some remote editorial sanctum will wake up before too long and list to the mournful cries of the many of us who are devoted to the great UNKNOWN.

-- V. L. McCain.....

INDEX TO NOVELS APPEARING IN UNKNOWN:

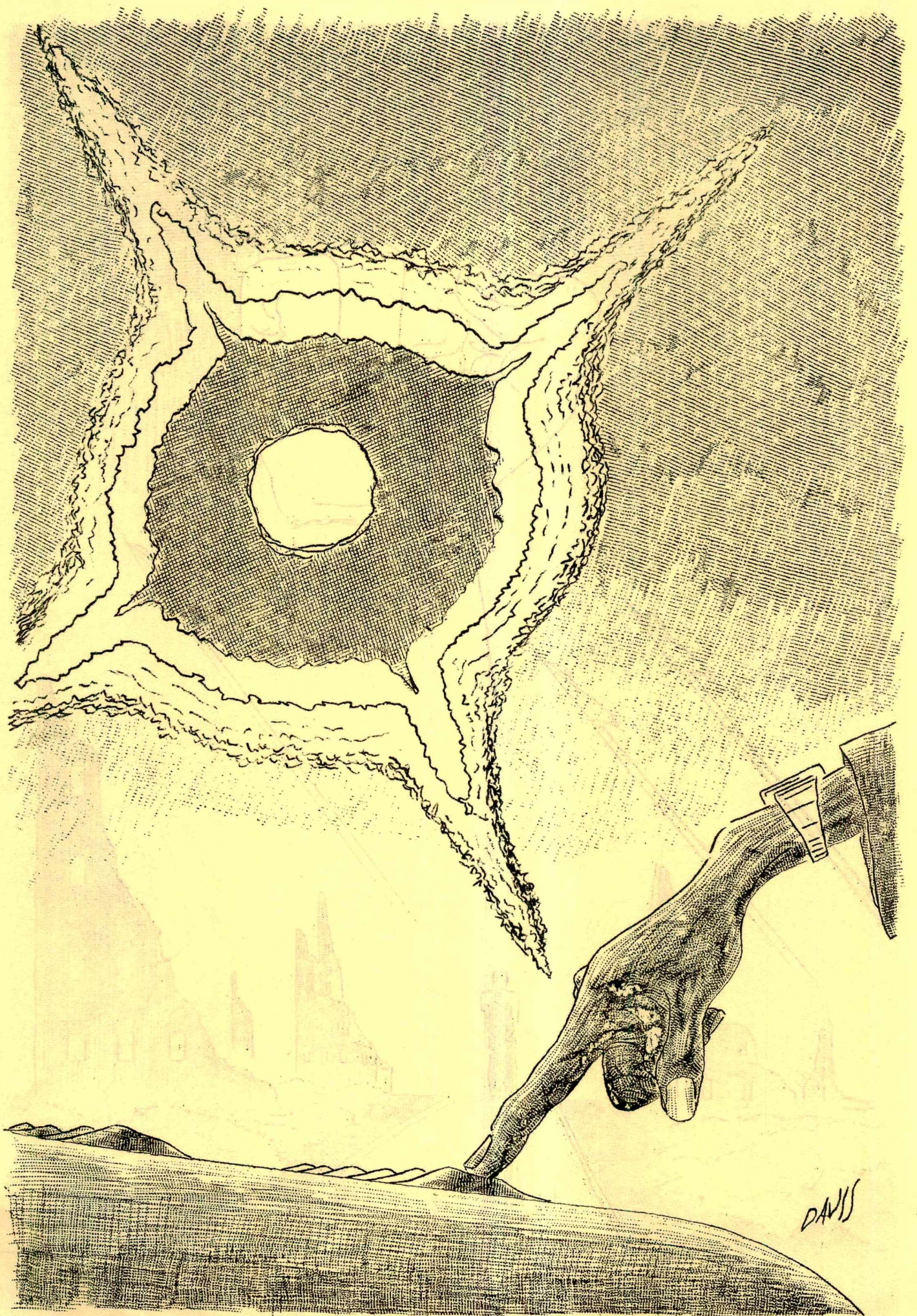
1939

March: Sinister Barrier - Eric Frank Russell
April: The Ultimate Adventure - L. Ron Hubbard
Divide and Rule - L. Sprague de Camp (Serial)
May: Returned from Hell - Steve Fisher
Divide and Rule - L. Sprague de Camp (Serial)
June: Flame Winds - Norvell Page
July: Slaves of Sleep - L. Ron Hubbard
Aug: The Ghoul - L. Ron Hubbard
Sept: None But Lucifer - H. L. Gold and L. Sprague de Camp
Oct: The Elder Gods - Don A. Stuart and
The Enchanted Weekend - John W. MacCormack (both short novels.)
Nov: Sons of the Bear God - Norvell Page
Dec: Lest Darkness Fall - L. Sprague de Camp

1940

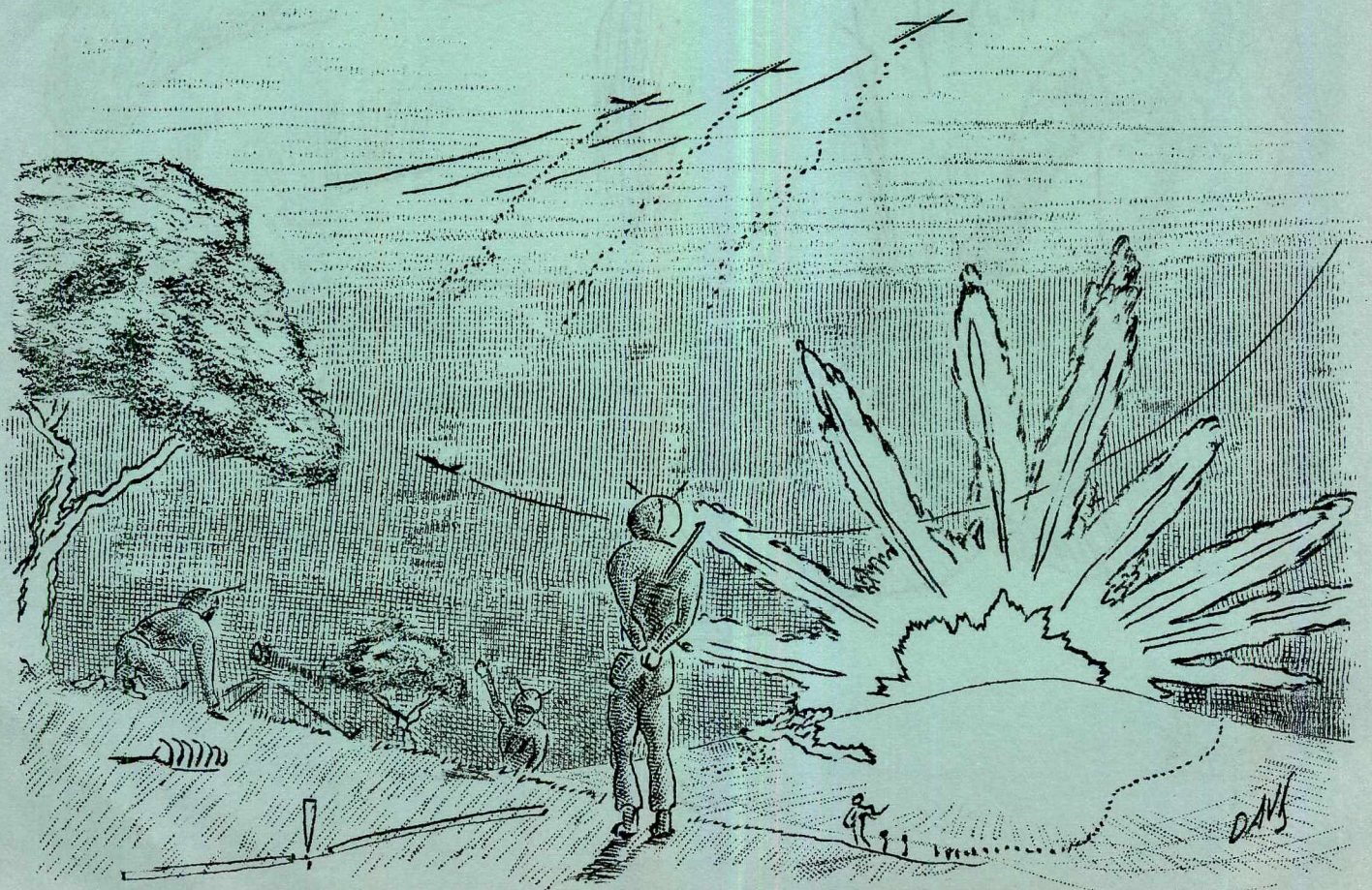
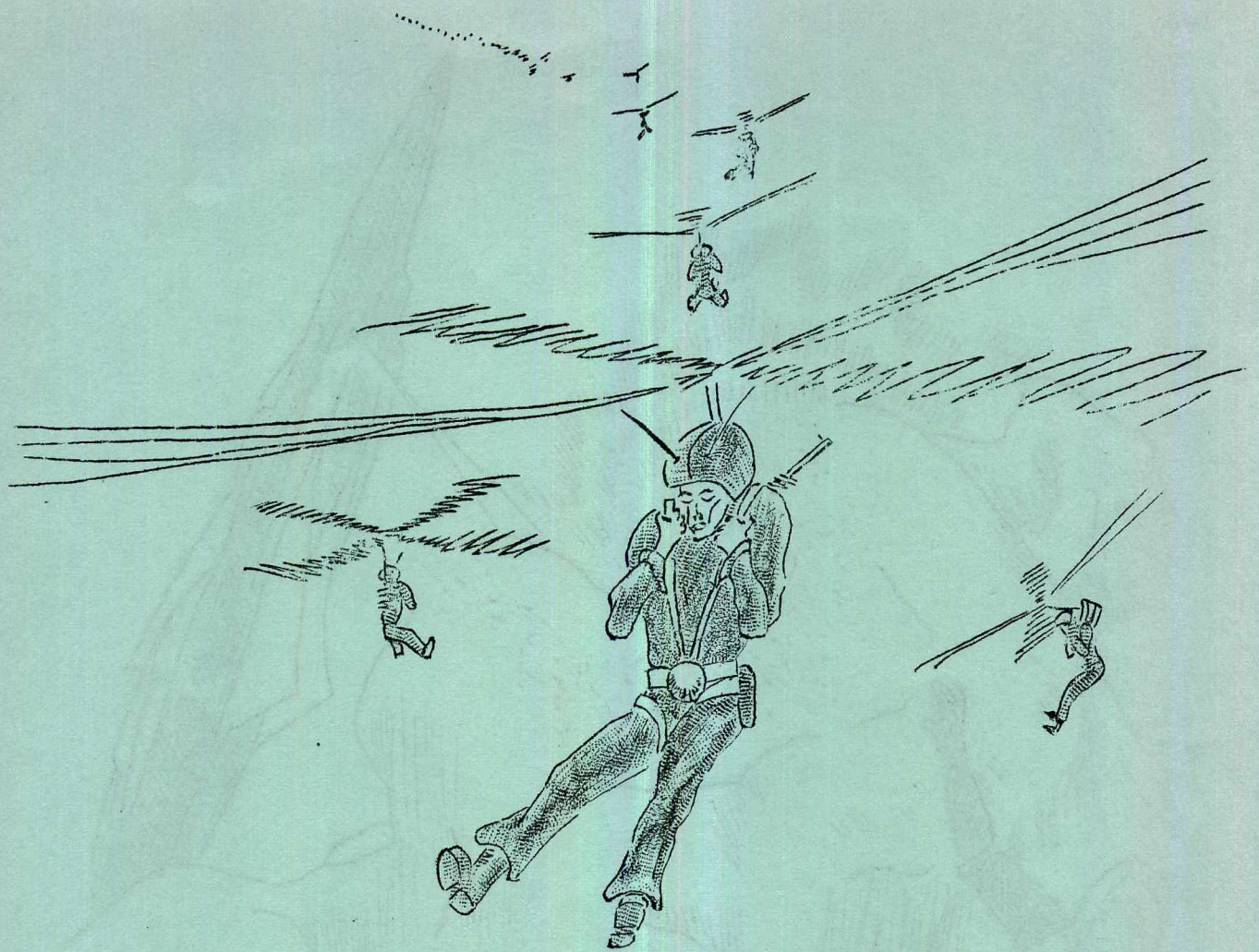
Jan: On the Knees of the Gods - J. Allan Dunn (Serial)
Feb: Death's Deputy - L. Ron Hubbard
On the Knees of the Gods - J. Allan Dunn (Serial)
March: The Sons of the Black Goat - (?)
On the Knees of the Gods - J. Allan Dunn (Serial)

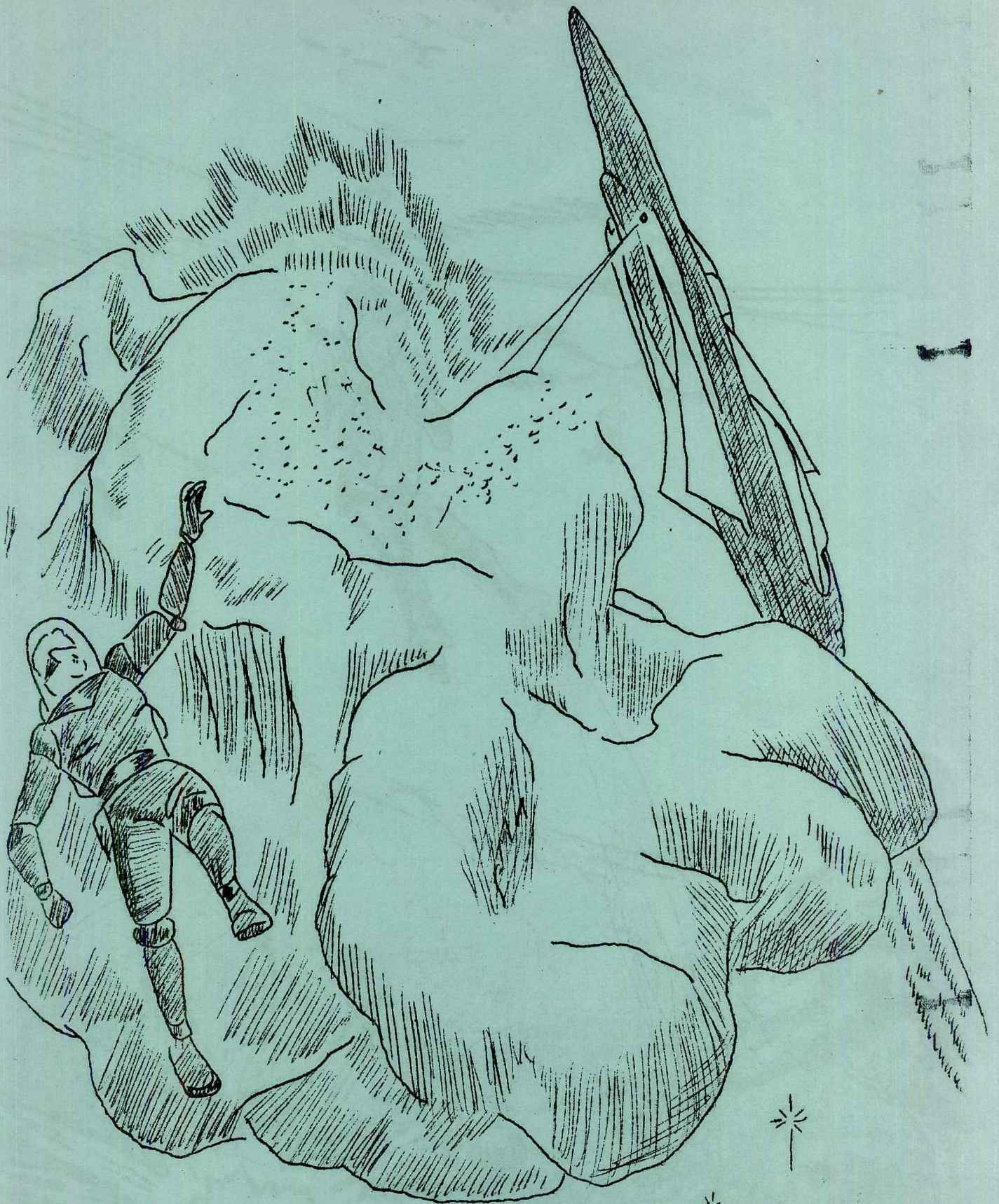
(Continued on Last page of WAW article) (39)



DAVIS

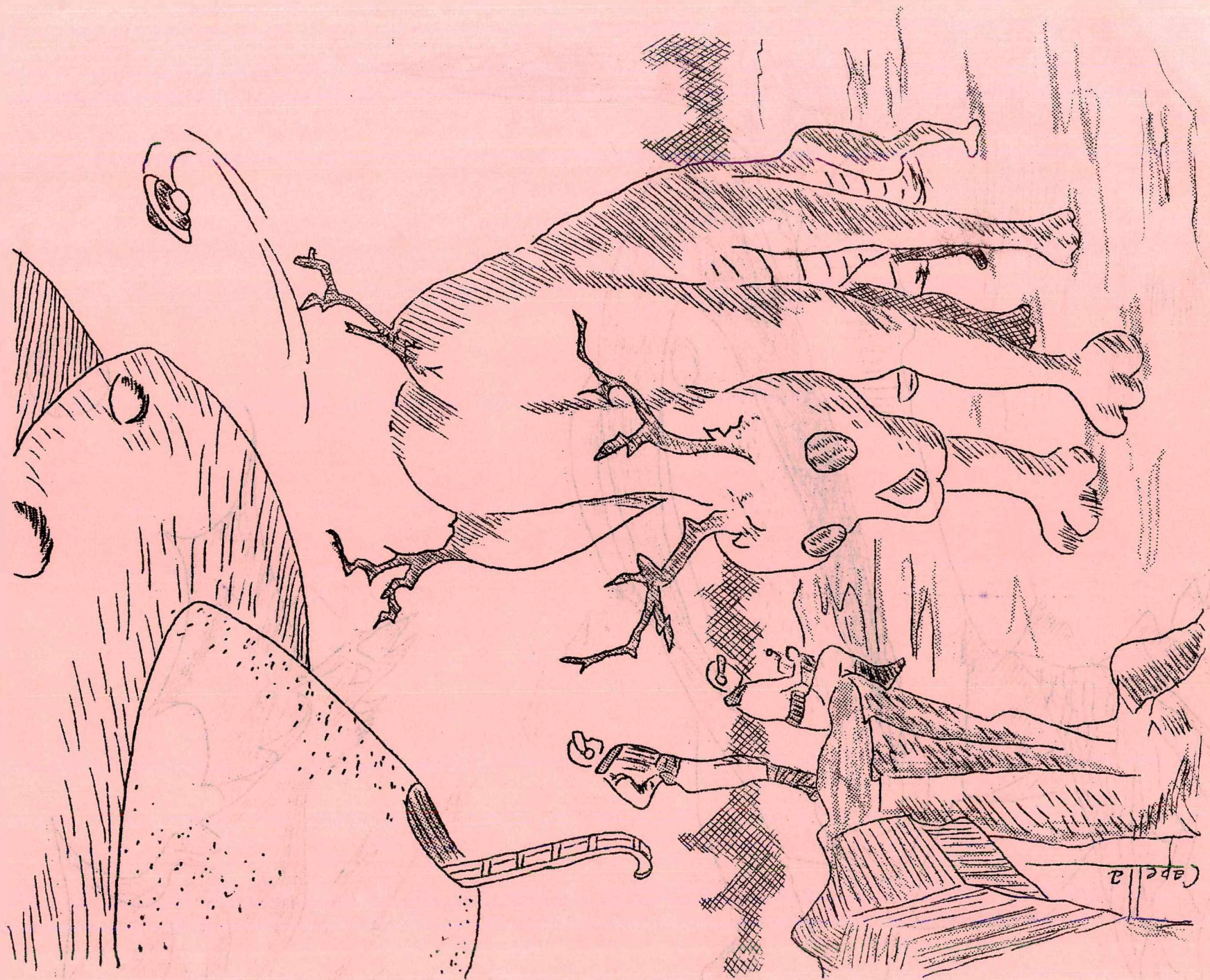


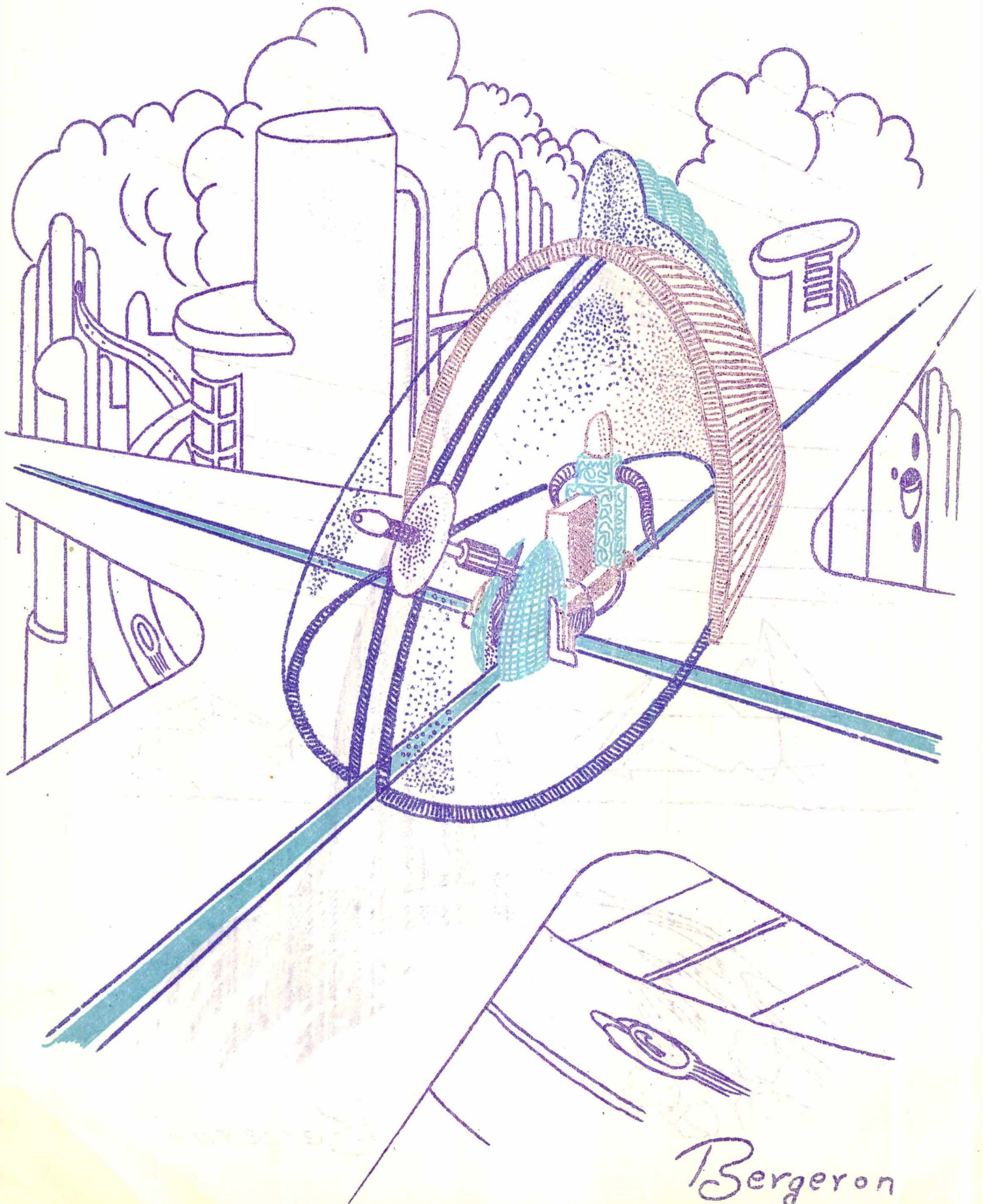




Capella



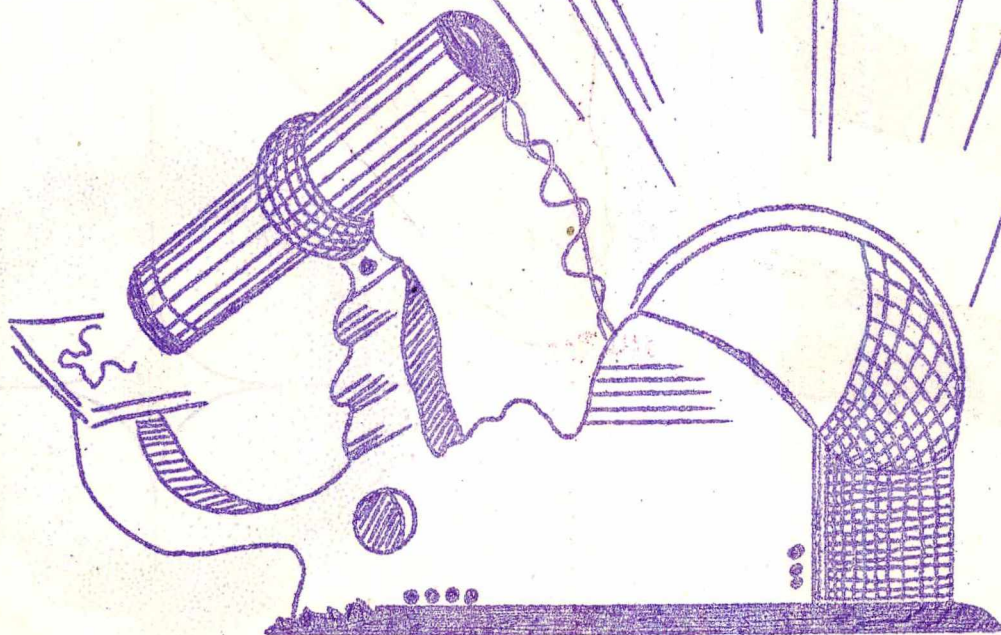
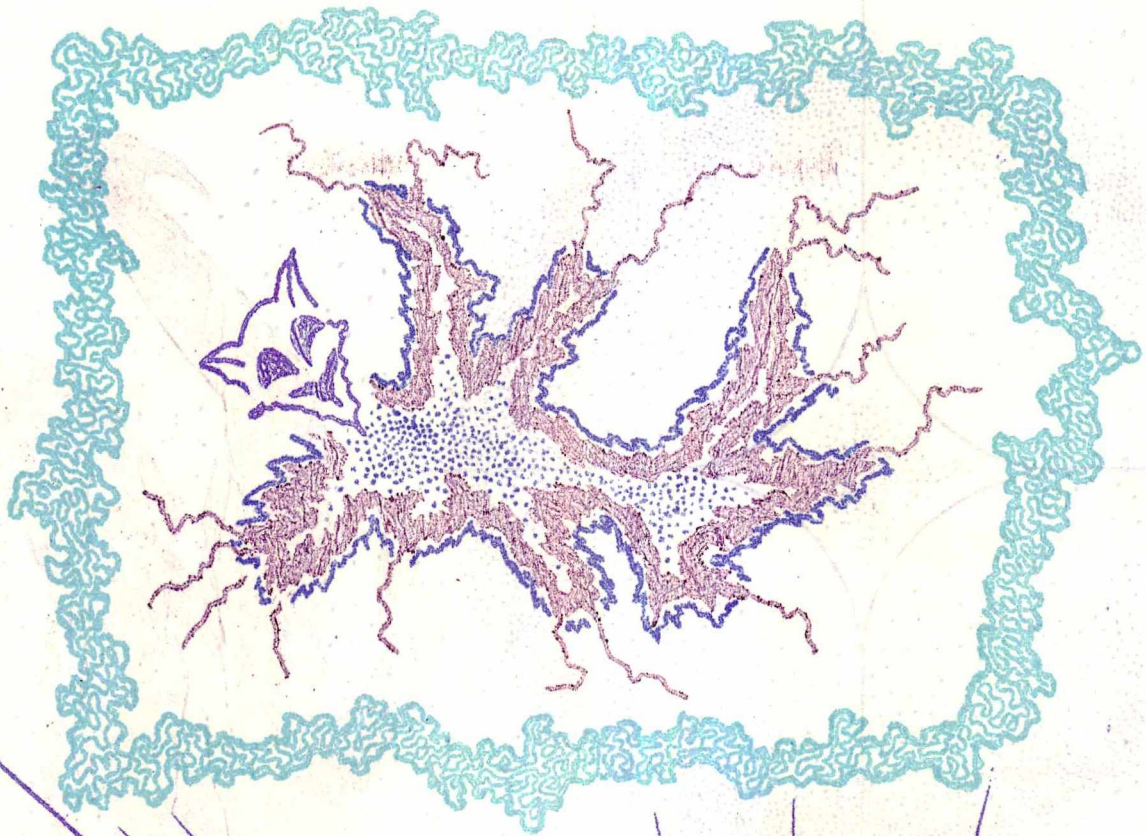




Bergeron



Bergeron



Richard L. Ward



Bergeron

AN OPENED LETTER TO MAX KEASLER

Enclosed is 25¢ for copies 7 and 8 of opus as my subscription has run out with the fifth issue and thanks very much for the two copies of number six which i forgot to comment on to you at chi among other things that are better left unsaid because jim harmon was sitting there and lee hoffman would have killed me anyway after harmon had turned me over to the silent man who gave me sharp looks while whittling his razor's edge all the time during the period after we returned to the morrison and i found you again after i lost you when i was talking to ganley or somebody on the balcony where he was trying to sell me a three issue sub to something called blague which has a very poor set of illos in it by don duke that were used again in the second issue which is very much like the first i think as i noticed that they both had the same rather blank looking cover or maybe the duplication on my copies was poor or maybe its just that i looked too quick when i threw them on top of a copy of opus in my pile of fanzines that i must read sometime when i can find it as all my time is taken up writing postcards of comment on quandry to bob tucker who tells me that just maybe the third issue of blague will have a cover that represents something more than the invisible man or shelby vick which is good news as i hate mags like these without appreciable covers by max keasler don't you too especially after you told me all about the peachy hoax you are planning that will scoop all fan-artists for all time because no one really expects you to present an all art issue of opus after you said you would not publish a copy without all our yesterdays in it because redd boggs would never read it anyway as he doesn't like sun dry letters more than aoy so you see i really don't expect this art thing to come off and i am rather glad anyway because i have just given most of my good ideas away to tyrann, oopsla, confusion and van splawn's fapamag and would not like to send you anything inferior that you would use just so that you and ward and stone and nelson and hoffman and fultz could all get back at me for the horrible thing that has happened in confusion thirteen because vick said he liked them and i know that the dirty rat can lie with a straighter face than claude degler's ruler and will be sure after seeing the letters of comment in cf and also because of...oh, but gregg wouldn't want me to tell i don't think because he wants to surprise all fandom with a really inferior issue of his little mag that is good to throw darts at but is not at all good for a doorstep as i already have quandry thrirteen there but anyways i just thought i'd tell you that i didn't think you were serious about that fanart anyway because you told me the invention was a hoax and that the midwestcon was held in minneapo'is and i don't believe one word that comes out of your fat head because you are such a filthy rat to be even seen at a convention with a rusty little neo like me when you could have been on a phone in belfast getting street directions and office hours from the wives of the conventioning fans over there and because i saw you steal out to walt willis' trunk room several times during the auction when korshak was selling finlay's like a popcorn vendor who had just lost his best friend at the zoo where she proved unfaithful as well as a monkey headed baboon like you who were trying to buy originals with some left over peanuts that dave english and a few other birds wouldn't eat because you had shucked them all to death with a copy of fanvariety number nine which the postoffice snapped a well streatched bann on and i guess that's all there is to say except to say please write as these one-sided conversations are rather expensive and boring but you see that really wasn't meant to be a nasty crack like it sounded, no i really like to spend money.

Best,

HAVE YOU got all the con fotos you want? A number of excellent clear shots are offered for sale elsewhere in this issue. Look for the advt.....

Richard Bergeron.

THE IRON CURTAIN DROPS!

- BOB TUCKER

(Editor's Preface: Jack Speer recently discovered in the daily press a news-item he thought worthy of fandom's attention, and passed it along to Redd Boggs. Boggs in turn passed the item to Tucker. The news-item was to the effect that henceforth all mimeographs in Czechoslovakia would be licensed by the government.)

* * * * *

Mr. Handel C. Ranker
Ministry of Mimeographs
Prague, Czech.

Dear Mr. Ranker:

A couple of weeks ago I sent 10¢ (American) to Imovar Slobarish who lives at 101 Wagnerstrasse, in Prague, for a copy of his fanzine PLEIADES PIMPLES but he ain't never sent it or sent my money (American) back. Please do something about this.

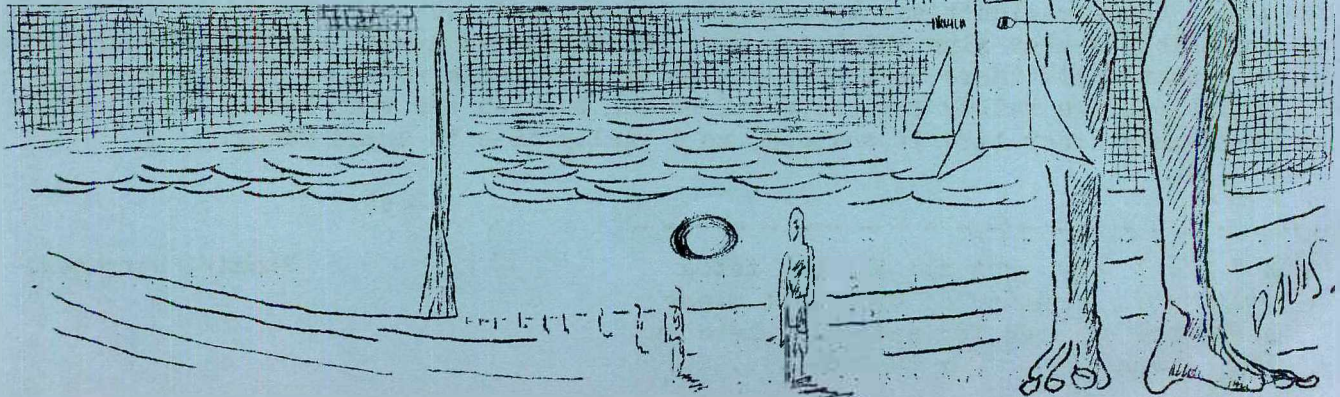
- Joe Fann

Mr. Josef Fann
Box 702
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Fann:

Imovar Slobarish doesn't seem to exist.

- Handel C. Ranker



The Iron Curtain Drops, II

Mr. Handel C. Ranker
Ministry of Mimeographs
Prague, Czech.

Dear Mr. Ranker:

Imovar Slobarish exists all right, because the same day I got your letter I finally got my copy of PLEIADES PIMPLES from him. But I guess he doesn't live at 101 Wagnerstrasse anymore because in his editorial he said he was going underground, so I suppose that means in a bomb shelter or whatever you people are building over there.

- Joe Fann

Mr. Josef Fann
Box 702
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Fann:

I am delighted to hear that at last you have received the publication for which you waited. We in this country strive at all times to cooperate with our friends in the western democracies. In order that I may assist Mr. Slobarish in the future production of PLEIADES PIMPLES, will you please send me the address from which it was mailed?

- Handel C. Ranker

Mr. Handel C. Ranker
Ministry of Mimeographs
Prague, Czech.

Dear Mr. Ranker:

That's pretty good of you to help out fanzine editors and I'll bet Imovar will be pleased and surprised when you drop in on him. The fanzine was mailed from the White Horse Inn, Upper Newtownards Road, Brunn, Moravia. I liked PLEIADES PIMPLES so much I've sent Imovar \$1 (American) for a year's subscription. Give good old Imovar a shot in the arm so he can start work on the next issue.

- Joe Fann

Mr. Josef Fann
Box 702
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Fann:

Imovar Slobarish doesn't seem to exist any more. I'm sorry we cannot refund your subscription, but apparently no records were kept.

- Handel C. Ranker

Mr. Handel C. Ranker
Ministry of Mimeographs
Prague, Czech.

Dear Mr. Ranker:

Sorry, but you're wrong again, old boy. No snide cracks intended, but I

The Iron Curtain Drops, III

guess bureaucrats are the same the world over. Good old Slobarish is still cranking them out and the latest issue arrived today--and a carckerjack number it is, too! Just about the best he's done, although the ink was a little thin in spots. In case you don't know it, Imovar is the number-one humorist of fandom and the lead article in this issue proves it. He has a three page article on the difficulties of producing PLEIADES PIMPLES and you'd split your sides laughing when he tells about bootleg fanzines, forged licenses, and smuggling copies over the border to be mailed. Why doesn't your office get behind this boy and give him a boost?

- Joe Fann

Mr. Josef Fann
Box 702
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Fann:

I was pleased to receive your letter and very glad to learn that Imovar Slobarish is still publishing. Believe me, this office wants very much to locate Mr. Slobarish and offer him our services. I would appreciate your sending me his newest address.

- Handel C. Ranker

Mr. Handel C. Ranker
Ministry of Mimeographs
Prague, Czech.

Dear Mr. Ranker:

I'd be glad to do a good turn for Imovar. The last copy came from 2215 Benjaminstrasse, Holmes-on-the-Seacoast, Bohemia. And listen, take along a couple of cans of mimeograph ink for him, will you? There were some thin spots in the last issue.

- Joe Fann

Mr. Josef Fann
Box 702
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Fann:

It becomes my sad duty to inform you that Mr. Imovar Slobarish no longer seems to exist. We at this office shall miss his sprightly wit and his publication.

- Handel C. Ranker

Mr. Handel C. Ranker
Ministry of Mimeographs
Prague, Czech.

Dear Mr. Ranker:

Say, what's got into you guys anyway? Believe me, we wouldn't tolerate such ignorance and inefficiency here in this country! Imovar ain't dead--he sent me another issue just a few days ago. But he certainly is having a hard time of it and your office doesn't seem to be shooting him any help. Why, would you believe it, this new issue was cranked out in the back of a truck! Imovar said in his editorial that he was on the move again and apologized for the sloppy mimeo

The Iron Curtain Drops, IV

work, but it couldn't be helped because this truck was rolling pretty fast and it bounced around a lot. Although he didn't explain, I got the impression that he was forced to move and so he turned out the issue during the trip. Why doesn't your office find this boy a permanent place to live? PLEIADES PIMPLES could be so much better then!

- Joe Fann

Mr. Josef Fann
Box 702
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Fann:

I have taken the matter of Imovar Slobarish and his publication to my superior officers, and we all now agree that the enterprising fellow deserves our closest attention. He has been given a priority, as you Americans would say, and we are leaving no stone unturned in the search for him. You will also be happy to know that Mr. Gregory Ratchet, our Prefect of Police, has prepared a permanent home for him when he can be found. In view of all this, I am sure you will send me his new address when next you hear from him, so that we can make him safe and comfortable as quickly as possible.

- Handel C. Ranker

Mr. Handel C. Ranker
Ministry of Mimeographs
Prague, Czech.

Dear Mr. Ranker:

Well, I've heard from good old Imovar again, but I don't think it will be much help to you or him. He didn't send a copy of PLEIADES PIMPLES this time--he said all his equipment had been seized. He dug up an old hektograph somewhere and printed this little one-shot while he was waiting for a boat, there on the seacoast of Bohemia. Imovar seemed rather unhappy about things--he's moving out of the country and wants to come to America. He said there was too much regimentation in his own country--you had to have a license for this and a license for that. And, too, some stool-pigeon has been making it tough for him these last few months, forcing him to be on the move all the time. The hektograph sheet wasn't too clear, but I gathered he was pretty sore about everything. I guess your office was too slow in helping him out.

- Joe Fann

Mr. Josef Fann
Box 702
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Fann:

Please rush me by airmail special delivery the name of the town where Imovar Slobarish is awaiting a ship. Perhaps it still isn't too late.

- Handel C. Ranker

The Iron Curtain Drops, V

Mr. Handel C. Ranker
Ministry of Mimeographs
Prague, Czech.

Dear Mr. Ranker:

It becomes my sad duty to inform you that Mr. Josef Fann no longer seems to exist.

- Imovar Slobarish



CON FOTO'S

The foto's advertised here were taken by myself at Chicago this year. Each print is clear and sharp, with good lighting. Money back if not satisfied. Please enclose 10¢ per print desired to cover cost and postage. ORDER BY NUMBER!!!!

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Doug Mitchell | 36. Henry Burwell on phone |
| 2. Shelby Vick and Joe Green with fake noses. | 37. Bea Mahaffey and Joe Gibson |
| 3. L. Sprague de Camp and Poul Anderson | 38. Sam Mines |
| 4. Henry Burwell on the rampage | 39. Su Rosen |
| 5. Lee Hoffman, Walt Willis, Max Keasler | 40. Manly Bannister |
| 6. Frankenstein at costume ball | 41. Van Splawn, Keasler, Vick, Green, Jacobs and others |
| 7. 1st prize winner at ball, Jim Schreiber | 42. Mack Reynolds and others |
| 8. Two winners, Jim Schreiber and Ginni Saari, both in costume (drool!) | 43. Walt Willis in excellent pose |
| 9. Calkins wearing false nose | 44. Joe Green and Sol Levin |
| 10. Hoffman, Vick and Ken Beale | 45. Bloch and Mrs. HL Gold (Evelyn Paige.) |
| 11. Joe Green, standing | 46. Joe Green and Bea Mahaffey (Green with back to camera) |
| 12. Ackerman and E. E. Evans | 47. Joe Green and Bea Mahaffey, again, both facing camera this time |
| 13. Line of fans at registration desk | 48. Mahaffey and Korshak |
| 14. Poor picture--doesn't count | 49. Mahaffey by herself |
| 15. Hal Shapiro | 50. Mahaffey and Calkins |
| 16. Gregg Calkins and Mel Korshak | 51. Bill Entrekin, Vick, Green, and Dewey Scarbrough. |
| 17. Bob Tucker with Huckster badge | 52. Vick and Mahaffey |
| 18. Ackerman and Mrs. Reinsberg | 53. Mahaffey by herself, again. |
| 19. Dave Kyle and Mr. Reinsberg | |
| 20. Bored elevator girl and fan | |
| 21. Joe Green and Dave Hammond | |
| 22. Joe Green, again, standing | |
| 23. Green and Vick running downstairs | |
| 24. RZ Ward, Honey Wood, G M Carr | |
| 25. Jerry Bixby | |
| 26. Harlan Ellison, Ian Macauley & others | |
| 27. Bob Tucker in another pose with the badge, plus cigar. | |
| 28. Dave Kyle with two dead soldiers | |
| 29. Vick, Green, Macauley and van Arnham | |
| 30. Rich Elsberry and Lee Jacobs | |
| 31. Vick, Betty McCarthy, Shapiro, Joe Green and van Arnham | |
| 32. Vick, Van Splawn and Keasler | |
| 33. Vick, pulling a face, and others | |
| 34. Ginni Saari | |
| 35. Elsberry, Robert Bloch, Norman G Browne, Vick, Green. | |

Well, there they are. 10¢ per, (they're in 2½ x 3½ prints) and you can order any or all of them. Each one is sharp and clear, well lighted, except 23 which is slightly blurred. Money back if not satisfied. When you are ordering fotos, order by number (!) please. And--ahem--you might try enclosing some money with the order, no?

Order directly from the editor, Gregg Calkins, % OOPSLA! Address on contents page of this issue.

Hope you like the fotos.

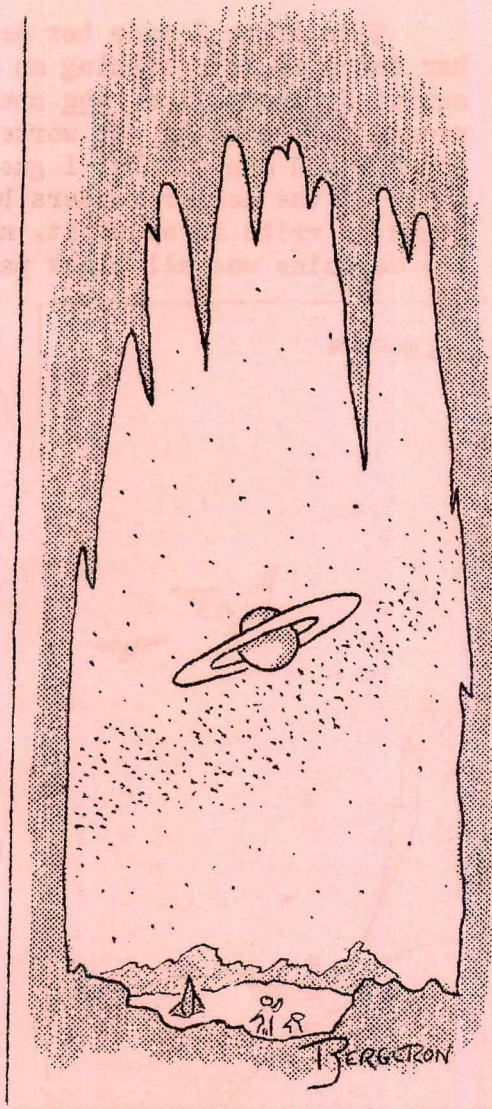
THE FAN FROM TOMORROW

by
WALTER A. WILLIS . . .

"Well, here we are with another issue of your favourite magazine and mine. Of course, yours must have been out for quite a while now, and mine is a bit late this year. Sorry about that, folks, but things have been kinda rough with your old pal Rap. First thing was, the Australians let off one of those phlogiston bombs of theirs and blew all my cows off their feet. That wasn't so bad, because the Russians let off another one and blew them all right way up again, and now I get my butter without having to churn it. But then the Chinese dropped a whole battery of bombs and blew all my carrots right up out of the ground. One of the really big ones came down again on Dick Shaver and hit him a terrible blow on the head. I'm afraid it's affected his brain, because he doesn't believe in the Shaver Mystery anymore. And from the special issue of DOUBT that came out the other day it looks to me as if a couple of those carrots landed as far away as New York and hit Tiffany Thayer just as he was leaving a meeting of the Fortean Society. This sort of thing has got to stop. I want to say right here and now that I'm getting mighty tired of all these governments pushing my crops around, when I'm perfectly able to rotate them myself. I warn them frankly that they'd better stop rightaway or I'll do another pocketbook. "The Coming of the Carrots" maybe. It wasn't so bad when the Government just messed up the weather--nothing but rain or snow or clouds or sunshine all the time--but what am I going to do with all of these carrots? I just don't know where to put them. Any suggestions?

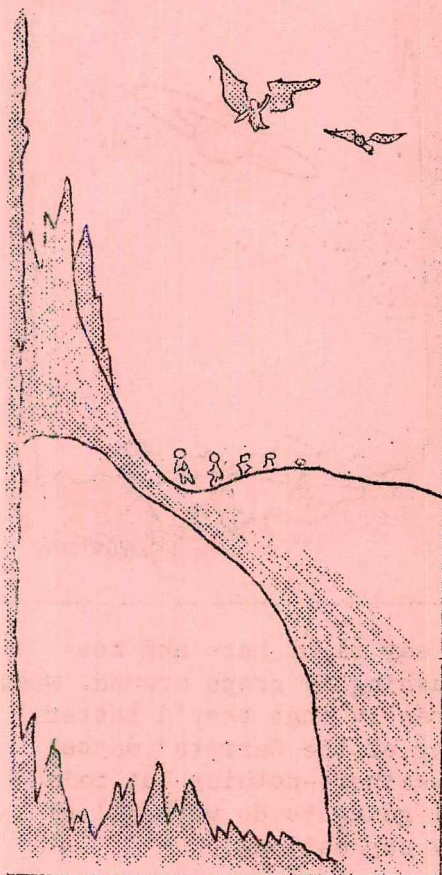
I'll bet you took one look at that contents page and sat right back on your seat. Right? What a line-up--Robert N. Webster, Richard S. Shaver, Frank Patton, A. R. Steber, Wes Amherst and G. H. Irwin! What more could you ask for? Well, some of you--maybe not more than a mere 99%, but I want all you readers to feel you have a say in 'our' magazine--have been asking what about all those stuffed shirt writers I used to run in OTHER WORLDS, people like Sturgeon and Russell. I'm glad you asked me that. Some of you don't know the full story of why I left OTHER WORLDS and I'd like to straighten you out on it.

Well, first off I got to admit it was all my own fault. Palmer is willing to admit when he makes a mistake and it was me and nobody else who promoted Bea Mahaffey to Associate Editor of OTHER WORLDS. I take full responsibility. Of course, I should have known what would happen from the way she called me a liar about "The Demolished Man" in my own letter column. But at the time it was the only way I could think of to keep her on the staff. As it was I had to fight my way into my own office every morning through a crowd of fans all waiting to propose marriage or something to her. It was just a question of keeping the wolves from the door.



Then after I made her Associate Editor I made my second big mistake. I let her force me into signing an agreement which said that if I could reject any manuscript I didn't like, she could reject any manuscript she didn't like. Well, that seemed fair enough. It worked fine at first, and it sure did mean a big saving in trouble and money. But I guess it was too good to last. After six or seven issues a few of the nosier readers began to notice there was something missing. They even began to write in about it, nasty sneering letters full of complaints, just because the magazine was all blank paper. They said they had always figured the best thing about OTHER WORLDS was that if they were stuck they could always read it as well. They said if I didn't start putting something to read on those blank pages pretty soon they'd go back to my old rival, Sears and Roebuck.

BERGERON



Well, I've made my reputation by playing both ends against the middle, and I knew that if I didn't put something to read on those blank pages soon nobody else would. I went along to Bea and showed her the letters. "Look, Bea," I said. "Read these letters. And think of Gibson and all those other poor letterhacks breaking their hearts trying to comment on the last issue so they can have an excuse to write to you. We just got to start printing stories and things again. I've got some terrific stuff here by Steber and Webster and Irwin. All good boys, and I happen to know they could use the money."

But she says no, if she printed that stuff she wouldn't be able to face the Beappreciation Club at the next Beacon. She's got a position to keep up, now. All these people looked up to her, and she couldn't let them down. Then she produced a sheaf of manuscripts she'd been given at South Gate, all by stuffed-shirt writers like van Vogt and Bradbury and Heinlein and Tucker and so on. Funny thing, they were all from men. Why don't you print these, she says. She didn't have to pay anything for them, she grinned, not even money. I took a look at the manuscripts and saw at once that they wouldn't do for our magazine. You just wouldn't have liked them. All dull heavy stuff, full of scientific jawbreakers. No caves, no deros, no half-naked goddesses. In a word, no human interest.

I tried to reason with Bea, but it was no good. I even called in Calkins and Burwell and Vick and Entekin, but none of them could get anywhere with her. So I gave up and left OTHER WORLDS to its fate and started my own magazine. And now OTHER WORLDS has gone slick with four-color interior illustrations and John W. Campbell as Assistant Editor. It isn't a fans' magazine any more.

You sure can't say that about our mag. This is a magazine for fans run by a fan, and pretty soon I'll be crowding those snooty slicks off the newstands. Just wait until you see some of the things I've got lined up for next issue. Right now my co-editor R. J. Banks is scouring the country, using all his influence to pick up the very best material we can afford. Why, the other day he picked up twelve original cover paintings by Ralph Rayburn Phillips! Picked them up out of an ordinary garbage can. (We're pretty sure they're paintings, and if they are, they're certainly by Ralph Rayburn Phillips.) Not only that, but if things go the way we hope, the next issue will have a three-color cover illustrating our new serial, "I Was A Captive In A Flying Carrot"; hektographed, of course, but—hold on to your

The Fan From Tomorrow, III

hats--the interior of the mag will be mimeographed! How about that? Surprised, eh? But that's the PALMER MYSTERY MAGAZINE for you. Yessir, whatever else you may say about it, it sure is a real fan zine!"

-- Walter A. Willis...

[illegible]

Continued from last page of THE GREAT UNKNOWN by VL McCain

1940 (Con't)

- Mar: Reign of Wizardry - Jack Williamson (Serial)
Apr: The Indigestible Triton - Rene Lafayette (L. Ron Hubbard)
Reign of Wizardry - Jack Williamson (Serial)
May: Roaring Trumpet - L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt
Reign of Wizardry - Jack Williamson (Serial)
June: But Without Horns - Norvell Page
July: Fear - L. Ron Hubbard
Aug: Mathematics of Magic - Fletcher Pratt and L. Sprague de Camp
Sept: The Tommynocker - Thomas Calvert McClary (Serial)
The Devil Makes the Law (Magic, Inc) - Robert Heinlein
Oct: Wheels of If - L. Sprague de Camp
The Tommynocker - Thomas Calvert McClary (Serial)
Nov: Typewriter in the Sky - L. Ron Hubbard (Serial)
Dec: Darker than you Think - Jack Williamson
Typewriter in the Sky - L. Ron Hubbard, (Serial)

1941

- Feb: The Mislaid Charm - Alexander M. Phillips
Apr: Castle of Iron - L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt
June: The Fountain - Nelson S. Bond
Aug: The Case of the Friendly Corpse - L. Ron Hubbard
Oct: Land of Unreason - Fletcher Pratt and L. Sprague de Camp
Dec: Bit of Tapestry - Cleve Cartmill

1942

- Feb: Undesired Princess - L. Sprague de Camp
Apr: Prelude to Armageddon - Cleve Cartmill
June: (No Novel)
Aug: Hell is Forever - Alfred Bester
Oct: The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag - Robert Heinlein
Dec: The Sorcerer's Ship - Hannes Bok

1943

- Feb: Wet Magic - Henry Kuttner
Apr: Congure, Wife - Fritz Leiber
June: Wheesht! - Cleve Cartmill (short novel)
Aug: Hell Hath Fury - Cleve Cartmill
Oct: The Book of Ptath - A. E. van Vogt.

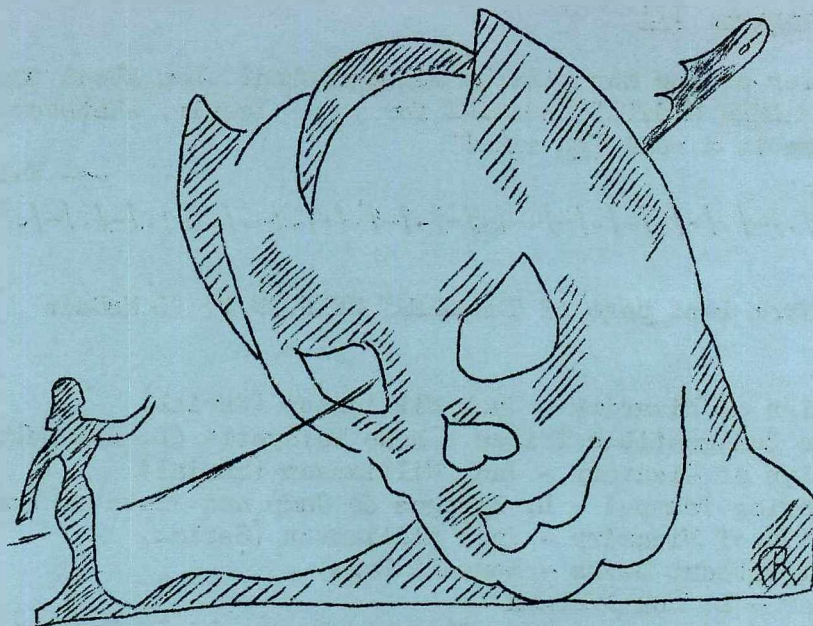
[illegible]

YOU CAN BE VERY HAPPY!

HOW?

BY MAKING OTHERS HAPPY.

AND WE'RE WILLING TO LET YOU START WITH US. MAIL ONLY \$1,000,000.00 TO US TODAY AND WE'RE GUARANTERING TO WRITE YOU AND TELL YOU HOW HAPPY WE ARE!!!



MEMOIRS OF A SCREWLOOSEOLOGIST

Case #714 from the files of Herman Z. von Sneezer...
N. de P., P.W., N.C.O., and N3F.

CASE #714. MR. SAM M_____.

On Wednesday, February 30, 1953, about three in the afternoon, my nurse-secretary...er...secretary ushered a middle-aged man into my office who obviously needed my help quite badly. He clutched his hat in a death-like grip, his eyes were wide and feverish, his breath came in quick shallow gasps, and...most important of all, his bright bow tie was askew! That last item prompted me to wave away Miss Hempstert and lead the faltering man to The Couch. He sank to its leather surface with a sigh of gratitude; he knew he was in good hands. I promptly took The Position and waited for him to speak.

"It's happened," he muttered, his arms flopping uselessly about. "It's happened at last. I knew it would. I told them and told them, but they wouldn't listen to me. Oh, no, not them. They knew it all."

He sat up at this point and turned to face me. His voice climbed the scale to a hysterically giggling falsetto.

"I'm a science fiction editor," he admitted, beating his breast and tearing his thin hair. "I edit Staggering Stories." Here he cringed back and resumed his prone position when he saw the uncontrollable revulsion that twisted my face for an instant. I recovered and clucked sympathetically. Poor fellow...a science fiction editor.

"It was yesterday," he continued, "and I was relaxing in my Sanctum Sanctorum when Edna...er...Miss Jones buzzed and told me a fan was waiting outside to see me. I quickly killed the bottle and walked into the dummy office. He--"

I interrupted at this point to ask him what he meant by "dummy office."

His eyes dilated and his whole body shook. "That's it," he yelled, "that's the

Memoirs of a Screwlooseologist, II

whole thing. All science fiction editors have a double office system. I warned the others, I warned them, but they outvoted me, and we had to stand together...."

I asked again about the double offices.

"Well...one office is where we loll around, drinking, carousing, pinching out receptionist's....well, that's where we spend most of our day. Sometimes we go out to see a movie or show, but most of the time we stay in and eat and drink and watch television. The other office is full of old dusty office furniture and equipment, piled high with manuscripts, its unpainted stale air...."

It was then that I noticed the second tell-tale symptom; this man did not know that his left shoe was about to become untied. I made a note of that, you may be sure.

"...I went into the other office, and maybe because of the scotch or just plain carelessness, I don't know...I left the door slightly ajar. I even forgot to take off my three hundred dollar smoking jacket." He wrung his hands and swayed back and forth and from side to side. "But it had to happen sometime, somewhere. It was just bad luck that it had to be me."

I then asked him what had to happen? He turned dead eyes to mine and began to weep.

"All gone," he blubbered, "all gone. The publisher will be sure to fire me. Just because of one slip."

I asked again.

"For many years," he explained, "we've tried to give fans the impression that we editor's are poor, that our pay is next to nothing, that our job is a labor of love, that we slave away that they may enjoy good science fiction. Nothing could be further from the truth. We own huge blocks of stock, our offices...our real onesare the epitomy of luxury, we do nothing all day but enjoy ourselves. When a fan comes up to visit us, we pop into the fake offices and pretend."

"And then yesterday came this fifteen-year old fanzine editor who was in town for only a few hours. Only a few lousy



Memoirs of a Screwlooseologist, III

hours, and now he's out spreading the news, publishing a full account.... Oh, I can't go on."

He broke down and sobbed like a small child. I calmed him as best I could, and urged him to continue the recounting of what had happened the day before. I also notided with satisfaction that the left shoestring was almost completely untied. Another violent movement should do it.

"He came in just as I was adjusting an old eyeshade. His reaction was like all the others. They come in with stars in their eyes, then after seeing the broken chairs, the grimy walls, the broken pictureless frames, the cobwebs, the gloomy light, the threadbare carpets....they go back to wherever they come from and tell all the other fans how tough we have it."



"We talked about the magazines for a while; Staggering Stories, Thrilling Blunder Stories, Vacuum Stories, Fantasy Story Magazine, and the new one I was planning, Captain Suture Annual. After a few minutes I was telling him how hard it was to put out a decent issue when he saw the slightly open door that led to my other office. I saw his eyes notice it, and I really did try to distract him, but he was curious. I could see the curiosity build up. Oh, curse the inquisitive minds of all the little monsters.

"Anyway, there I was, talking a blue streak, trying to get his eyes away from that door, and there he was burning up to see what was beyond it. He asked me what was behind it, and I told him just a place where we keep old back issues. God, had I only said anything but that. I should have known....I should have known.

"He was up out of that chair like a shot. I couldn't move. I sat frozen and couldn't move. I swear my life paraded before me in that horrible second. He took three steps and opened the door. Just like that. And I was ruined.

"He saw my other office in all its glory. He saw the deep pile chenille rugs, the rows of original Finlay's that cover the oak panelled walls, the solid mahogany desk, the indirect lighting, the deep-cushioned furniture, the portable bar that I had left open, the two thousand dollar, thirty-inch television set; he saw, everything.

"Then he turned to me and saw my smoking jacket, my imported English shoes, my sixty dollar slacks, my thirty dollar hand-painted cravat. He was puzzled at first,

Memoirs of a Screwlooseologist, IV

then....as I watched in horror, he...understood. He spoke:

"How about cutting me in on the deal?"

"I thought then the day was saved. We tried to work out something, but his terms were too high. There are some things a man will not do. He wanted me to print some of his stories in our magazines. He had a whole suitcase full of them. But, there are some things a man will not do...even for money."

So engrossed has I become in the man's story that I had neglected to keep a close watch on that left shoestring. It was now untied. I cursed myself bitterly for having missed that climactic moment. However, since that was beyond recall, I determined to clear up a few things that had puzzled me about the man's story. I asked him who actually did the work of putting out the magazine if all he did was play all day.

"Oh," he said, slightly annoyed because I had broken his flow of worry, "the office boy does that in his spare time."

And, too, I asked him how he could afford all the luxuries he spoke of in his story. Surely the salary he received was not that highly remunerative?

"Of course not," he laughed. "The real money is in the letters and fanzines the fen send in to the editor, which is me. Not real money in the letters, mind you, just the paper. Carloads of type-written and mimeographed paper. Why, you don't think we throw them away do you? We bale them all up and sell them to the junk dealers. I cleared ten thousand in the first month of this year."

I noted that his other shoelace was coming undone, but felt the long wait would not be worth it. I sent the poor man away, then asked Miss Hempsnort to send in the next patient.

-- Richard E. Geis....

WORLD'S END

by

William M. Rose

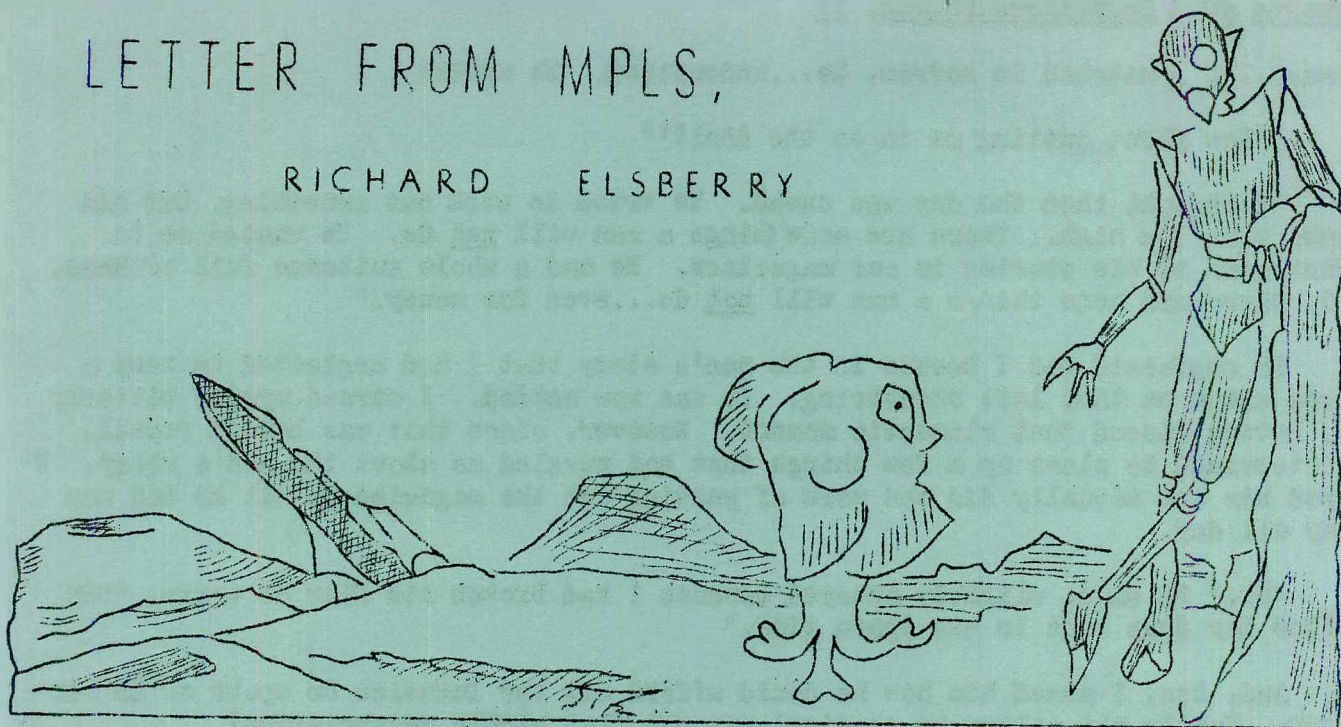
"'Tis strange, this world we've come across, Lomar.
But, then, we've never journeyed out this far.
Let us look close to see what we may see--
Perhaps we'll find some valued property."

"But, Modan, it's late and time is flowing by; If we are missed, they will question why."

"You're right, Lomar, I should not hesitate; I know the punishment if we are caught late. Here, take it up and drop it in your haversack, We'll grind it up and melt the metal out when we get back."

LETTER FROM MPLS,

RICHARD ELSBERRY



"YOU CAN FOOL SOME OF THE PEOPLE..."

On November 21st I received the following
typewritten post-card from Bob Stewart, (274 Arlington St., San Francisco, Calif.)

"Dear Richard:

A few days ago I received a manuscript from Terry Carr that was to appear in my fanzine, BOO! After reading it, I have come to the conclusion that Terry Carr is none other than Peter Graham (originator of the Willis death hoax.) I base my assumptions [sic] on the following: 1. Terry Carr's fanzine, Vulcan, that was recently reviewed in SS, was under Carr's name but Graham's address. 2. In all of Terry's columns is that same style of writing and that same ghastly sense of humor that is found in all of Graham's work. 3. After going over to 134 Cambridge St., ("Terry's" address) I found that it is a vacant lot. 4. Neither I nor any other fan has ever seen "Terry Carr."

(signed) Bob "

I had never heard of Bob Stewart before this card, and the checking of several club rosters proved futile. I wondered why Stewart was bothering to tell me this, and what he wanted me to do about it. I finally decided he wanted me to publish it. So I began running down the points that Stewart had made.

The first one was true. Vulcan was edited by Carr and the return address was publisher Graham's. I checked two issues of Carr's FAPA publication, Looking Backward, and found that in both cases Peter Graham was co-editor. As it stated on the contents page: "LOOKING BACKWARD is edited and issued quarterly for FAPA by the two-headed editor, Peterry Garraham: The left head...being Peter Graham, and the right head...being Terry Carr." These two issues gave Carr's address on the contents page. It wasn't much, but I also remembered that Carr, in his column in Jeep, talked quite frequently about being with Graham, and Lee Riddle in the July issue, writing on the Willis Death Hoax, said: "The sender of the post-card did not sign his name, but it is either Peter Graham or Terry Carr of San Francisco. It may be possible that both of them are involved in this caper, since the same typewriter and mimeograph is used to duplicate the card that they use to put out a Fapazine, VULCAN." Riddle also mentioned that both are about 13 years old.

Besides Looking Backward in the 60th FAPA mailing, I found another small 3-page zine by Carr called Booful.

Letter From Mpls., II

The second point was not so easy to check on. I had seen Carr's work in various fanzines, mostly Peon, but had never run across anything by Graham. In thinking back I realized I'd never even heard of Peter Graham before the Willis Death Hoax. All mention of Graham seemed to be coming from Carr's fanzines and column.

The third point didn't seem to make sense. Knowing Carr was a FAPA member I telephoned Redd Boggs, the official editor, and asked him if any of Carr's mailings sent to the Cambridge address had ever been returned. Boggs said that as far as he knew all the mailings had been delivered, and none had been returned; besides, how else could Carr review the previous mailing? Since I had never heard from either Carr or Graham, I asked Boggs to check what cards and letters he had from them for similarities in typewriter or handwriting. I thought perhaps Graham might be Carr, as things pointed more that way than the other. Boggs dug into his files and said he'd received a couple of handwritten post-cards from Graham, and a typewritten letter or two from Carr. One of the Carr letters had a rather lengthy postscript, and Boggs said he was fairly sure that the writing was not done by the same person. He had also never heard of Bob Stewart.

I couldn't check the last point, because of deadline, but I did dispatch a couple of post-cards to Frisco. In Peon, Carr had mentioned meetings of a group of fans, including Bill Knapheide. Knapheide's mimeo had been used to run off the issues of Looking Backward and Vulcan. I'd corresponded with Bill a great deal a few years ago, and remembered him as a highly conscientious fellow. I figured he'd know for sure, but naturally I couldn't hope to hear from him in time.

The obvious conclusion is that Terry Carr and Peter Graham are two different and real people. Had Stewart said Graham was Carr I would have been more inclined to believe him, but the foul-up about Carr's address was a bad one. Stewart must have known that mail would be delivered and that people would have soon suspected if it had come back marked "No such address." Then, too, Graham recently moved to Fairfax, California, while Carr remains in Frisco.

As to Bill Stewart, the title of Stewart's zine, Boo!, sounds too close to Carr's Booful to be mere coincidence, especially when they are both from the same city. And the Stewart post-card was postmarked from Frisco. If Stewart isn't a very stupid neo-fan, he is a pen-name and is trying to pull off another hoax. And, it is more than likely that Mr. Stewart's alter-ego is Terry Carr himself. Why Carr wants the publicity is more than I can fathom. ((See Dribblings column.))

THE SOUTH HAS RISEN!

Shortly after my "Open Letter to Harry B.

Moore" was published, I received a very lengthy letter from Harry that I feel needs publishing, in part at least. It is written on the stationery of the Baton Rouge Dianetics Study Group.

"...I am an ex-fan, Rich. No, not an insurgent: I take no initiative toward destroying fandom or pushing its components downwards. I receive and correspond with fans on such rare occasions as they seek me out. And I still collect, tho the field is passing thru one of its decadent periods... My endeavor and excursion into fandom has no over-supplied me with data. And I went into it and a long way along it telling myself after each of hundreds of let-downs that his was the exception--'that he wouldn't act this way if I could only make him understand.' How long and persistently did I blow against the steady unwavering wind! This...is merely an expression of my computation that fandom is Phantom, and so for maybe a dozen or so, contains only phantoms. I started to say that I see no reason for its existence. But I DO! It is its present existence that has no reason. ...what might (it) now be if idealism in fandom were real instead of vocal, constructive instead of dilatory and evasive! What might now be if Claude Degler hadn't been:

Letter From Mpls., III

an unwashable kleptomaniac, or if the people he visited had all acted as he thought they would! ...Where does a movement go, none of whose members follow any leader or leaders... Where is the fan of yesterday?

"He found that the greatest attainment possible in the movement was the production of beautiful and/or scholarly fanzines, and that he could kill himself in the hardest jobs in fandom, Con Chms., Sec. NFFF, without the slightest reward--not even the satisfaction of accomplishment! It's a treadmill!

"I no longer see getting together as an end in itself, and I did in my eager 1st-3rd-age-of-fan days. And far as they are from being real people, the pro who has absolutely NO tendency toward this feeling and thinks stf only for \$\$\$, is loved. John Campbell's letters allowing fandom to be strictly for the fans, and was especially, as far as he was concerned, is before me now. He couldn't get his ad in for our deadline even as advanced. He couldn't get us nor the Cinvention any originals--but he promises! And where the con is on the Big Publishing Circuit as in Philly or Chi, THEN he can appear. If JWC Jr. is not a Real Person, how can lesser entities of fandom stack up!

"Throw it up, Rich! A conscientious person is such a misfit in fandom that death could be a relief from his travails...YOU ARE PUNISHING YOURSELF--for what?

"Fandom contains knaves as well as fools. What they don't want they will spoil if possible. If you won't play their way, they will not only not play, but will do their damndest to ruin the con. Kepner attacked me for no reason at all! Pure spite! I have never even seen a KKK'er in "uniform". ...I could name forty persuaded not to come by Taurasi's editorials. The Norwescon had strictly ruled that non-attenders could have no voting voice in the cons. But I was to promise no Dianetics session beforehand and ignore the attendance at the Norwescon session and particularly what the NolaCon attendance might want! And after this Taurasi expects me to knock myself out extracting the other 2/3 of the Fan Vets money from Ferrara and Lashover. He should live so long.

"...I had as little as possible to do with the handling and balancing of the finances. Lashover assured me after the con that EVERYTHING was paid up. He reiterated this some weeks later when we divvied. I didn't bother looking at the books, merely thanking Ghod that that experience was over. Quite some time after arrived a polite prodding note from Van Houten requesting that the money be transmitted thus and so--I was thunderstruck! But the books and F&L on phoning confirmed this. But they were a bit short--had spent it "but would make it good"--arrangement in principle. Rang them up several times more, and it was after Easter I decided Taurasi could much better and more deservedly continue this effort and so sent my 1/3 and washed my hands of it. I don't know if L&F deliberately crooked with the money. If they did, it's the first time either of them ever exhibited any initiative.

"...I received one NolaCon ish of Quandry then no more, tho the next ish "was scheduled to enlarge at length on 'that fabulous character Harry the Bee Moore.'" Keasler sent me the NolaCon issue after I wrote and remarked about the carton of flashbulbs he got off with. (He told me they didn't fit, but I never saw them again.)

"And I could have written this on either NolaCon or NFFF stationery, but I did it by choice.

Yours sincerely toward being a real person,
(signed) Harry

Letter From Mpls., IV

DEL REY AND THE ALMIGHTY DOLLAR

It seems you can hardly pick up a copy of Fantasy-Times these days without seeing an announcement that Lester del Rey is editing a new magazine. Two are reality and several more have been planned. Well, hardly had del Rey gotten the words out of his mouth when someone jumped up and attacked him for flooding the market with a lot of magazines, the majority of which would be crud. And equally as quick someone else said that it wasn't Les' fault, he had to take orders from the publisher and was just doing his job. The publisher in order to sell his magazine has to get it displayed on the newsstand. The pulps don't get that display, and it was only natural that there was the shift to digest-sized magazines. Del Rey explained it was strictly for commercial purposes that Science Fiction Adventures would have that title (large on the Science Fiction like Astounding and small on the adventures) digest size, a thirty-five cent price tag, and the band down the left hand side a-la-Galaxy. It was just part of his method of incorporating every known sales device that has worked for other magazines.

I don't think it's any secret that both Space and SFA are published by different companies with the same editorial offices. The same editorial staff, substantially, runs both magazines, apart from the editor, assistant editor and publisher. Seemingly, that is. Del Rey edits Space and Phillip St. John, a well-known del Rey pseudonmy, does the job for SFA. Pete Leavy helps del Rey with Space and Micheal Sharra lends moral support in cranking out SFA. Someone named John Raymond publishes the former, while R. Alvarez holds the money bags for SFA. R. Alvarez, of course, is R. Alvarez del Rey, Les' real name. Whether Raymond is also del Rey is questionable.

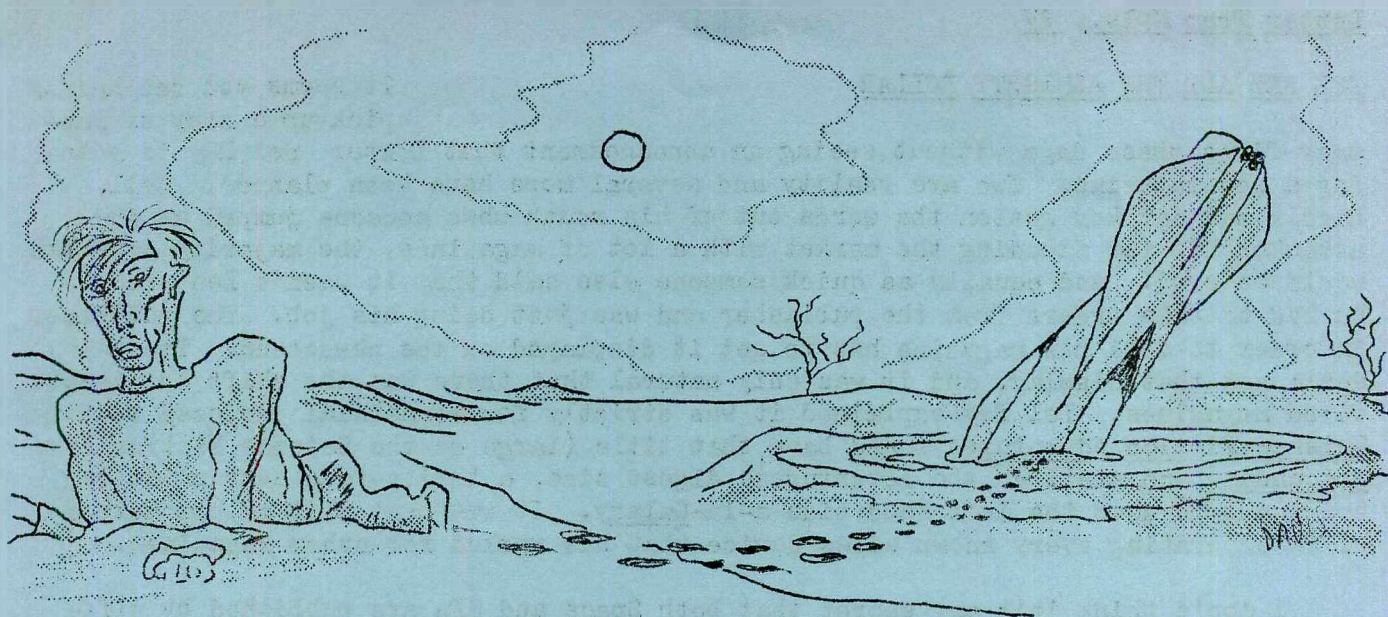
The problem here-in, though, is just how does del Rey go about running his magazines. He edits both of them, and publishes one. Naturally he would like to see the magazine he publishes do as well as possible. With manuscripts for both magazines coming into the same office, it is hard to see how del Rey can help but pick the best scripts for his magazine, SFA. And, with two editorships, you wouldn't think that del Rey would have to write, or would have time to write, for his own magazines---but he does.

This happy intertwining of editors seems to be working out fine for everyone, though. Micheal Sharra, assistant editor of Space, has the lead story in SFA, and someone named Micheal Sherman--thin, very thin--did the honors for the Sept. Space. Then, too, Boggs thought he saw del Rey hiding behind the moustache cup of Eric van Lhin in the Sept. issue. I suppose that Leavy will be trying his hand soon, but what I am really waiting for is del Rey to add Marion Henry to the payroll. It would add a sort of crowning touch.

NOTES AND COMMENT

Jimmy Stewart will play a New Yorker dying of atomic-radiation burns while he tries to run down the source in "Eastside General."Fred Robinson's sage quote in Straight Up #4 on King Kong: "Those who have never seen it--don't miss it."All the bopsters on the moon are singing that 'crazy' song, "How High the Earth"Bob Graettinger's "City of Glass" suite will be out from Capitol sometime this winter. Noel Loomis is not cut in for the royaltiesEric Frank Russell's Astounding story "Exposure" attained its bit of immortality by appearing in a new pocket anthology, "Let's Go Naked."NBC's "Surprise Serenade" mentioned a number titled "Overture to the Dedication of a Nuclear Reaction." However, they didn't play it, so I guess it was just a pile..Mack Reynolds in Mpls before November 4th beating the drum for the Socialist party. Also reports that he was writing political speeches, but then who wasn't..This years award for the finest piece of humor should go to the Chicon committee for their beautiful and delightful "financial report."

-- Richard Elsberry.



THE TAPE OF THINGS TO COME....

BY ROBERT BLOCH

(Editors Preface: As so many people who stumbled over his legs can testify, the writer of the following spent a good deal of time at the Chicago Convention underneath the bed -- in fact, more time underneath than is usually spent in one. The most charitable opinion presented was that he had merely passed out. But now the truth can be told. He was actually gathering news--as well as lint--for the following article. As a matter of fact, he had a tape-recorder under there with him. Although this may be regarded as a curious choice of companion, he is well satisfied with the results. The following is a transcript of an actual tape-recording, made in the room of a prominent huckster. Naturally, 60% of it--profanity, obscenity, and loud cries of "gimme another drink!"--has been deleted. But the remaining 40% is presented here; unedited, unexpurgated, and uncalled-for.)

CAMPBELL: Well, folks, I guess you all know what we're here for.

KYLE: Yeah -- a fast buck!

ESHBACH: No, not that. (Hastily) Well, not that alone, anyway.

MINES: Sure, we're going to talk about our plans for the next year, aren't we? What we'll publish in the way of magazines and books and anthologies for 1953.

PALMER: Gosh, if the fans knew we got together like this every year and worked things out together, they'd kill us!

BPOWNE: You mean they need a reason?

E. GOLD: Let's get organized. I can speak for Horace -- he wants to put out some fine --

BOUCHER: I can see you're new here. Never mind that stuff about what anyone wants to put out. Let's face our problem squarely.

HAMLING: Yes, let's grab the bull by the tail.

The Tape of Things to Come, II

KORSHAK: Folks, as I see it we have only one problem. We had it last year and this year it's even worse. We're just plain running out of material.

DIKTY: Sure thing. By Bleiler, in another six months there won't be a single story left to publish! At the rate we're going, with 28 science-fiction and fantasy magazines running --

HAMLING: -- and Conklin publishing an anthology a month --

DEL REY: -- there just won't be a solitary yarn left to print or reprint! Gentlemen, the situation is serious.

BROWNE: (Apparently waking up) Serious? Who said anything about a serious? I'm in the market to run a serious of yarns on --

E. GOLD: (Sweetly) Shaddup!

B. MAHAFFEY: But we've got to keep going. Can't we just dig up some more authors someplace?

GREENBERG: (Bitterly) "Dig up" she says! Take a look at some of the specimens attending this Convention and you'll realize that that is just what we have been doing. If the cemetery officials ever find out --

CAMPBELL: This is a grave matter. The condition of the market right now is monstrous!

BROWNE: Monstrous? That's what I want -- some stories about Bug-Eyed Monstrous --

PALMER: Please, Howard! Now, as I see it, our problem is this. Every writer we know of is working night and day to grind out stories to fill our magazines, and there still isn't enough material -- even tho we're, as usual, trying to write half the stuff ourselves. That's got to stop. It's reached the point where even if I can manage to knock out another story on flying saucers I can't find a writer to do a companion yarn on a flying cup.

KORSHAK: Yes, and to make it worse, I understand that some of the editors who aren't here--Mary Gnaedinger and Dorothy McIlwraith, for instance--are getting so hard up they're even reprinting reprints.

GREENBERG: You think they've got headaches? I happen to know that by June 1953, there won't be a single story left for any of the forthcoming anthologies. Already, 188 new collections have been scheduled for the year...and they don't have 188 yarns.

MINES: Well, here's a suggestion. Suppose we switch things around a bit? I mean, let's get together and throw all our remaining stories into a sort of pool --

KYLE: Yeah, and the deeper the better!

CAMPBELL: Now, let's not be facetious. As a nuclear editor, I must remind you we are facing a serious issue --

The Tape of Things to Come, III

HAMLING: We're facing no issue at all, unless we get yarns! Let's hear the rest of Mines' suggestion.

MINES: I was going to say, let's pool all the stories we have on hand and ration them out on a pro rata basis --

BROWNE: Basis! That's what I'm looking for! Stories about basis on the moon, basis on Mars, basis on --

ESHBACH: Quiet, or I'll take away your zap-gun. Sam, that sounds like a good idea, but how will that help us hard-cover publishers?

DERLETH: Yes, what about us book publishers? That doesn't find us any new material for anthologies. Up to now, we've had a good thing of it, just reprinting others' reprints, but it can't go on.

BOUCHER: Wait a minute, I think I've got that particular problem solved for you. Has anybody ever complained about this present method of reprinting each others' reprints over and over again in anthologies?

B. MAHAFFEY: No, I guess not, come to think of it. They're actually all the same, really. You know the typical anthology line-up as well as I do.

DEL REY: Sure. "Thunder and Roses." "The Green Hills of Earth." "The Million-Year Picnic." "Knock." "Mimsy were the Borogoves." Hell, I could edit an anthology with my eyes shut!

E. GOLD: How do you think Conklin edits them?

B. MAHAFFEY: Well, the point I'm making is this --

BROWNE: (Waking) What's the point? I'll cover that bet --

B. MAHAFFEY: So help me, if I wasn't the Least Bug-Eyed Editor in Science-Fiction, I'd slug you! Anyhow, what I'm saying is, in anthologies the contents don't matter. As long as you keep on thinking up new titles and new angles for them, the public will keep on buying.

CAMPBELL: Of course! I get it, now. We've had them on "possible worlds" and "invaders" and "time travellers" and a humorous one, and so forth -- the gimmick is just to keep putting out the same old stories under new titles, such as --

DIKTY: --- ADVENTURES IN MATTER AND ENERGY. IMPOSSIBLE WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION. OUT OF THE FOURTH DIMENSION AND INTO THE FIFTH--

BROWNE: (Eagerly) Fifth? Who's got a fifth? Open it up, quick --

HAMLING: (Ignoring him) I get it, now. Just switch the titles. And for science-fiction novels we can do the same thing. Take Doc Smith's books. We can run the same stuff with new names. THE BLUE LENSMAN, THE RED LENSMAN, THE POLKA-DOT LENSMAN. Or SKYLARK FOURTH, SKYLARK FIFTH --

BROWNE: Who's running in the fifth?

The Tape of Things to Come, IV

PALMER: Sure, who actually reads the stuff anymore?

KORSHAK: (Excitedly) Wait. You just said it!

PALMER: Said what?

KORSHAK: You gave us the answer we need. For magazines, too. With 28 going all at once, who reads the stuff?

BOUCHER: By McComas, the man's right! Most of the fans have to spend all their waking hours just haunting the newsstands--and believe me, some of the fans here look like they spend their time haunting--in order to pick up the magazines as they come out. There's never enough time for an actual fan to sit down and read!

WILLIAMS: You're right! I was talking to Quinn about that just the other day and we agreed no fan ever reads the stories. No true fan, with a sensitive fannish face, ever buries it in a magazine. He just collects, and trades, and mostly he sells the back-issues to other fans --

E. GOLD: Yes, and they collect and trade and sell the back issues to still other fans who --

GREENBERG: Collect, trade, and sell to junk-dealers.

BROWNE: (Heatedly) Wait a minute, no name calling here, please!

CAMPBELL: Gosh-wow-boy-oh-boy, if that's true, we're saved! Saved, do you hear? All we got to do is keep printing and reprinting the same stuff over and over again. We just change the titles and nobody will ever know the difference.

KORSHAK: But think of the authors. The poor authors! They'll never be able to sell any more new stories!

ESUBACH: Yeah -- ha ha -- isn't it marvelous?

B. MAHAFFEY: Then it looks like our problem is solved for the coming year. I'm going to double our printing order.

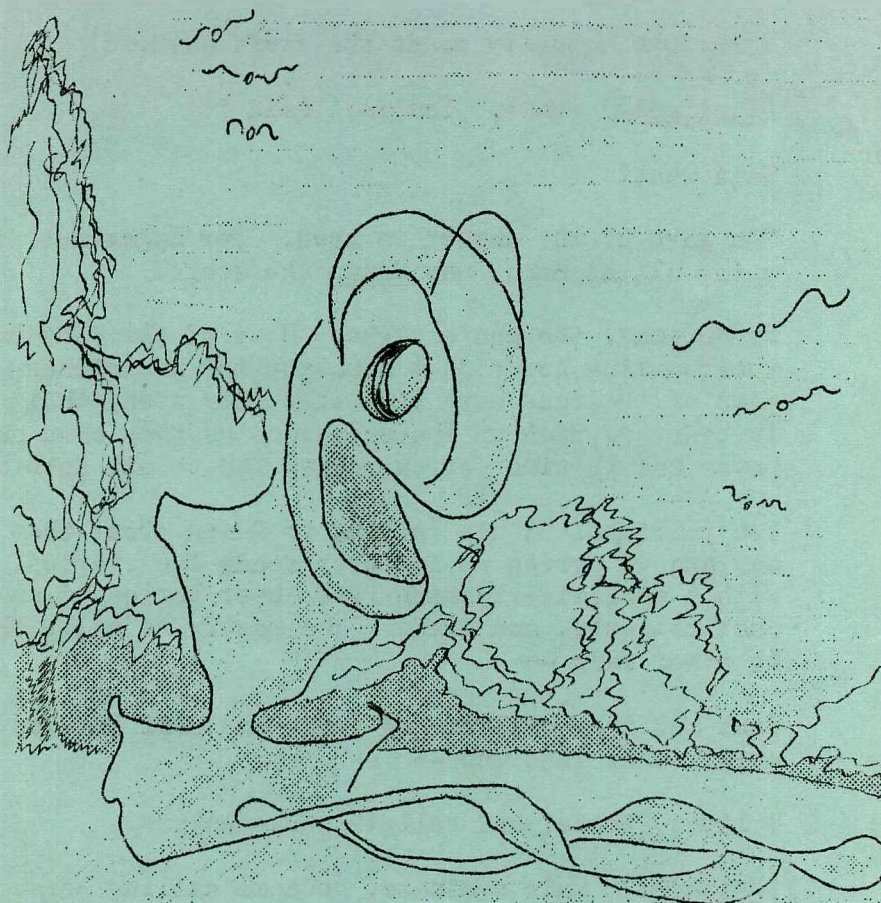
HAMLING: I'm going monthly, myself.

WILLIAMS: And I'm printing twice as many titles next year.

MINES: Ok, we're all set. We can adjourn until next year. And one final word, hucksters. Remember that oath we all signed in blood -- author's blood -- that we must keep our little conspiracies a dark secret. No one must ever suspect. Next month I want to see us all writing our usual editorials, taking pot-shots at each other the same as ever. And speaking of pot-shots --

BROWNE: I know. The poker table is all ready. Let's go!

(FINIS.)



D R I B B L I N G S . . .

Anybody want to write an editorial? Six or eight pages of one? That's what I thought, you don't want to, either (whups....down, Graham...I don't want you to do it.)

This issue serves a dual purpose: it winds up the old year, and it ushers in the new. With the new year, OOPS is going to need a little more help. As you know, I have always felt that any zine can use artwork, and that a doodle of some sort on a page--any page--helped dress it up quite a bit. So, I've used a good deal of artwork, most of it by Fultz, Capella, Ward and Stone. Alas, Ward seems to have disappeared from the field, and I hear dire sounding news from Silverberg that Ward is out for good--he just doesn't have the time. Fultz, it would appear, has given up acti-fandom, and prefers to just read s-f and listen in, not taking much of an active part. I rather doubt if I'll be getting more artwork from him soon. Capella, never very prolific, is helping out more than ever of late, but I'm just a wee bit worried that before long Uncle Sugar will have found a rather busy place for Ray to be. And Stone--well, he promises to help out as much as he has time for, but that might not be a great deal, and besides, one person can hardly carry the load alone.

Of late, Bergeron has helped out tremendously on the art side, and I'm depending on him a good deal from here on out. But that's hardly enough--Capella, Stone and Bergeron to carry the entire load. So, how about a few of you hopeful young artists dropping me some samples, and we'll see what we can find, um?

Dribblings, II

Trying to figure up a new way to cut costs on OOPS, I ran across this idea of selling address labels. I call them address labels, because that's what I use them for, but actually you can use them for anything you wish--small bookplates, claim stickers, advertising labels, like those used by Project Fan Club and the N3F...anything you wish, using not more than four lines of copy.

Those of you who correspond with me know that I use them for return address stickers on the corner of my envelopes. Believe me, they cut down time and effort a good deal--I'd be lost without them.

The labels themselves are $\frac{3}{4}$ " by $2\frac{1}{2}$ " in size; two, three, or four lines of copy; either plain black and white, or with colored borders, whichever you prefer. In the color, you get over 15 different colors. They come in four different sized lots: 300 in a handy plastic box for \$1, 1000 in a paper box for \$2, 2000 in a paper box for \$4, or 4000 in a paper box for \$8.

If you are at all interested, I wish you'd drop me a line and if there are any points you're not clear on, I'll try and explain them. Write to the OOPSLA! branch of the Calkins Huckster Corporation. Seriously, if I can get enough label orders coming in regularly--and you'll order regularly once you see how good they really are--I can cut the cost of OOPS a good deal, perhaps dropping back down in price to 10¢ again, something I'd like very much to be able to do. Also, sales would guarantee OOPS staying on a monthly basis--a rather moot point just now, because I don't know if I can afford costs of keeping OOPS monthly, altho I'll try.

So much for huckstering.

This being the time of year it is, nominations are in order for just about everything that happened during 1952. I have some nominations, myself. First, let's step over into the ranks

of prodrom and see what they've done that is worth while during the year. They've been busy as little bee's, this year, what with the sf boom, you know. Oh, I'm sure you've heard of the sf boom, haven't you? Seems some guy named Gurnsbeck, or something, spoke at some sort of convention, and ever since then, SCIENTIFIC SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS has been having remarkable circulation increases--sometimes as much as five copies per issue!

Nominations for the most original and unique title of the year go to Henry Hasse for his "Three Lines of Old Martian" in the February, 1953, issue of SPACE STORIES. Such originality is to be commended highly!

(I might explain here that although some of these awards appear in magazine issues dated 1953, they were nevertheless released during December 1952, and I am counting them as part of the 1952 output.)

Dribblings. III

Nominations for the top three prozines of 1952 go first to editor Samuel Mines for STARTLING STORIES; because of its quality fiction mixed liberally with fandom, through the letter column, editorial, and fanzine review department: second, to editor John W. Campbell for ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION; because of top quality fiction, dependability, looks, and general editorial attitude: third, to either or all, FANTASTIC, THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION, THE AVON SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY READER--because of general quality in fiction.

Nomination for the best professional editor of the year goes easily to Samuel Mines: for editing #1 magazine, STARTLING, in a manner which ties fandom in with prodom closer than any other existing magazine; for presenting five different sf mags, all quality, from one editorial desk at one time; for taking over Sam Merwin's place and proving he had more on the ball than even Merwin did, by making SS monthly and FSM bi-monthly, and then adding SPACE STORIES; and for printing more of the best stories of 1952 than any other editor or magazine group put together. Some of this credit undoubtedly goes to Jerry Bixby along with Sam Mines, but how much I cannot say without knowing how much of the editorial work Bixby does at Standard.

Nominations for the five best stories of 1952 go to George O. Smith for first and second place, with his "Hellflower" and "Troubled Star," both stories appearing in STARTLING. Third place to Murray Leinster for "Journey to Barkut," also appearing in STARTLING. Fourth place to one of ASTOUNDING's rarer fantasies, "Frontier of the Dark" by A. Bertram Chandler. Fifth place finds a tie by two novels, neither one of which I found particularly enjoyable, but both deserving a top spot for 1952 because of the discussion they caused--"The Demolished Man," appearing in GALAXY, written by Alfred Bester, and Philip Jose Farmer's apparently earth-shaking "The Lovers," appearing in STARTLING.

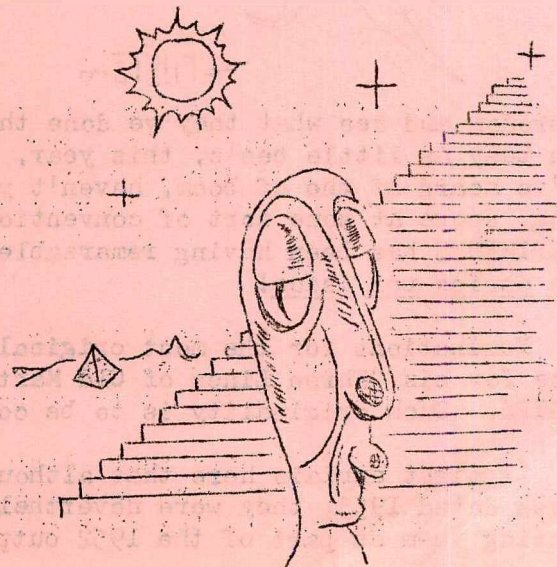
Honorable mentions for the best stories of 1952 go jointly to an old sf editor starting up a new magazine, and to a new sf writer starting up an old, old theme. Special notice goes to Howard Browne of FANTASTIC and Mr. Mickey Spillane for his much-discussed, unbelievably high-selling "The Veiled Woman."

Nominations for the best cover artists of the year go easily to Chesley Bonestell, with Walter Popp, Emsh, Schomburg, and Bergey all close to second place. Interior artists nominations are Finlay for top spot, Orban following closely, and Lawrence in third position. Honorable mention cover artist, Jack Coggins.

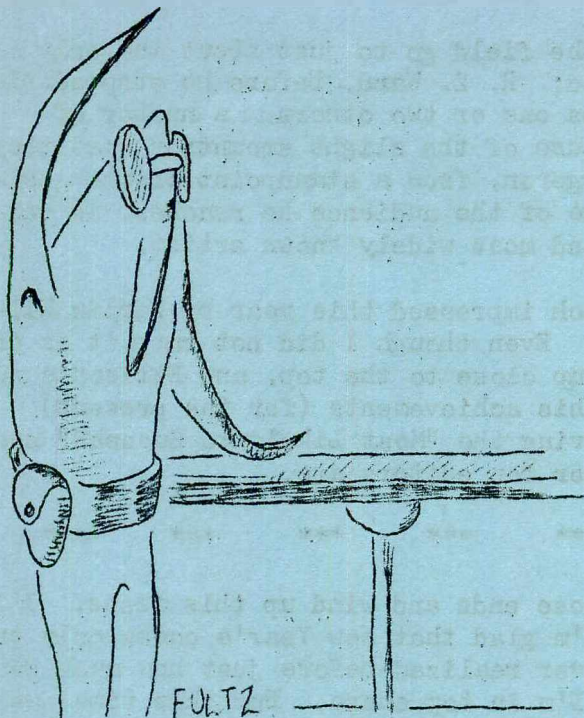
Nominations to book publishers are a little harder to make. So many books, anthologies, novels, etc., in the sf line have been published during 1952, that to pick out a best one, or a best publisher, is extremely difficult.

My choice for #1 publisher during 1952, for selection of titles, for organizing an entirely different line of publications of collector's items, for quality of binding and dust jacketing, as well as material, and for his general attitude towards the fan as well as the publishing field, goes to Lloyd Arthur Eshbach of Fantasy Press.

Best book published during 1952 was the ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION ANTHOLOGY edited by John W. Campbell, Jr.



Dribblings, IV



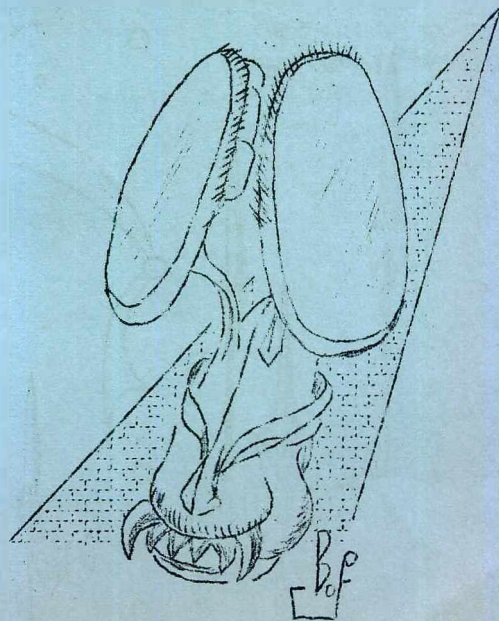
In the fan field, things are a wee bit more jumbled and mixed up than in the pro field. It's hard to put one finger down and say this is the best fanzine, this is second, and this is third. Fanzines just don't run that way.

My choice for the most enjoyable fanzine in the field would be either or all three, OPUS, CONFUSION and QUANDRY. Max Keasler, editor of OPUS presents his magazine with a Pogo-ish style that immediately catches your fancy because it is free and uninhibited. Shelby Vick puts out CONFUSION with the general air that its title suggests, and you find it a lot of good fun, with something always new to surprise you when you relax a moment. Lee Hoffman constantly imbues QUANDRY with an air of easy-going fannishness that cannot be ignored when you are choosing a top fanzine. And so I find three fanzines in the

top position as 1952 draws to a close. Of course, there are many other fanzines, some new, some old, some printed, some offset. Some are more regular than the ones I chose for the top three, some are much better as far as printing and reproduction go, and some have much better fiction and material. If I appear to be overlooking these fanzines, it is because the top three have something a little different to offer in each case--and it all boils down to one thing, essentially: editorial ability.

And, by that virtue, Max Keasler, Shelby Vick and Lee Hoffman are the three most capable editors in fandom today viewed from the point of their present production and the results they are constantly achieving.

To pick five of the best articles and stories from fandom over the year 1952 would be well-nigh an impossibility with the number of fanzines being produced today. It is much easier to forget individual efforts in most cases, and choose only the author. Certainly Richard Elsberry must come in for the top five with his consistently good writing, most important among them this year being "The Sportsmen" and "Prelude to the Afternoon of a Con," as well as his regular columns in the field. Never to be omitted long from the ranks of the top ten is Bob Tucker, who, though not very prolific in fan writing this year, nevertheless belongs right up there. The man who cannot be forgotten is that Tall Man from Ireland who is so very very prolific a writer, Walt Willis. Surprisingly enough, from a writer of such great capacities for length and abundance, we find also quality writing. Everything Willis writes is quality, and everything that is quality, Willis writes. Finding two more writers prolific enough to fill the last two top spots is hard, and perhaps it would be far better to leave them open to your own choice, as the names and stories are always changing. But you can always count on the top three.



Dribblings, V

Nominations for the best fan artists of the field go to just about the only regularly contributing fan artists in the field: R. Z. Ward, before he stopped his output, Richard Bergeron, Bob Fultz and perhaps one or two others. A number of other artists are present but not counted because of the slight amount of work they do, or the limited field that it reaches. Bergeron, from a standpoint of the quality of his work, his creativeness, and the size of the audience he reaches, is perhaps the most deserving of them all for best and most widely known artist.

One last thing on fandom, 1952. I was much impressed this year by Harlan Ellison's editorship of SCIENCE FANTASY BULLETIN. Even though I did not rate it as one of the top three fanzines, it is nevertheless up close to the top, and Ellison's editorial ability cannot be overlooked, even if his achievements (for the present) can. Ellison would appear to me the fan deserving the "Most Likely to Succeed" nomination. A real editor, much more so than other fan editors are.

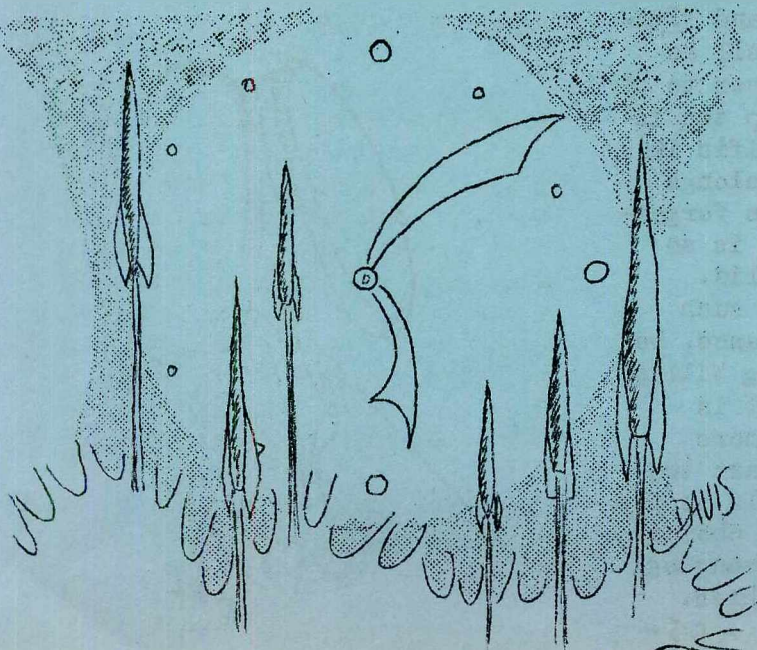
*** *** *** *** *** *** *** ***

So much for that. Now to tie up a few loose ends and wind up this issue. I'll be glad to get it off my hands. Believe me, I'm glad that New Year's comes only once a year--I'd never make it, otherwise. I've never realized before just how much four pages of editorial exhausts me--or five, when I'm in top shape. But this time--well, I rather think that counting both editorials, I'll have about ten pages! I'm shot!

(Cutting the other fifty pages wasn't so easy, either.)

In this issue, OOPS is running some of the only fiction that you'll find in these pages, either past or future. Some of it is serious, ranging from what I considered quite good to only average. Some of it is satire, and that I usually found rather funny. Some of it is just fiction. I wish you'd drop me a line letting me know what you did and didn't like in particular, why, and whether you would like to see OOPS start running whatever fiction I can find around the field. Before, it has been my main aim to concentrate on the fannish article and satire, and leave the fiction alone, but the fannish article is getting harder and harder to find in any originality, and the satire is very rare. If some of you better writers won't write something good for me, I'll have to fall back on fiction. How do you feel?

Very interesting thing arrived in the mail the other day. At first I didn't quite know what to make of it, but after a short struggle I deciphered the letters on the cover to say SPACE PATROL OFFICIAL HANDBOOK, and furthermore that the book was issues from Space Patrol Headquarters, which apparently are at 16 Sydenham Park, London S.E. 26. Horrors! Do you suppose anybody has told Tom Corbett, or is he still lazing at some non-existent port in the USA?



The booklet contains some rather interesting shots from sf movies, a few scientific facts about the sun and planets, a rather naive calendar of the future, a ditto glossary of interplanetary languages and space patrol code, and a rather useful index to sf films, 1933-1951.

Dribblings, VI

Gives the first progress report on the 11th World SF Convention, already--all over the place. One came because of my buck, one arrived in CONFUSION, one came with FANTASY-TIMES.....all I can do now is wait for SFNL and QUANDRY under their joint-editorship to follow suit. I am swamped with progress reports.

"You know what this swamp needs...?"

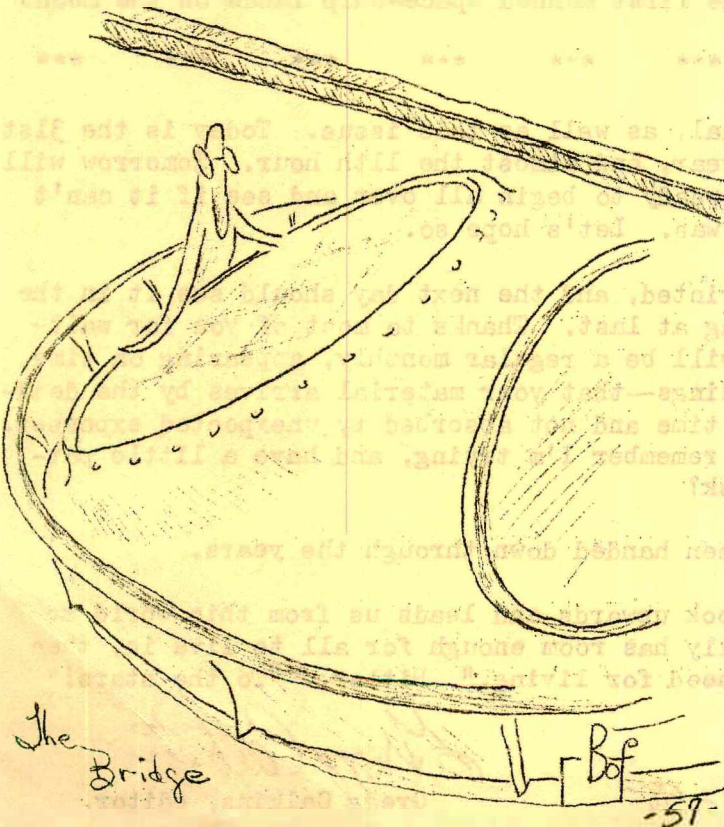
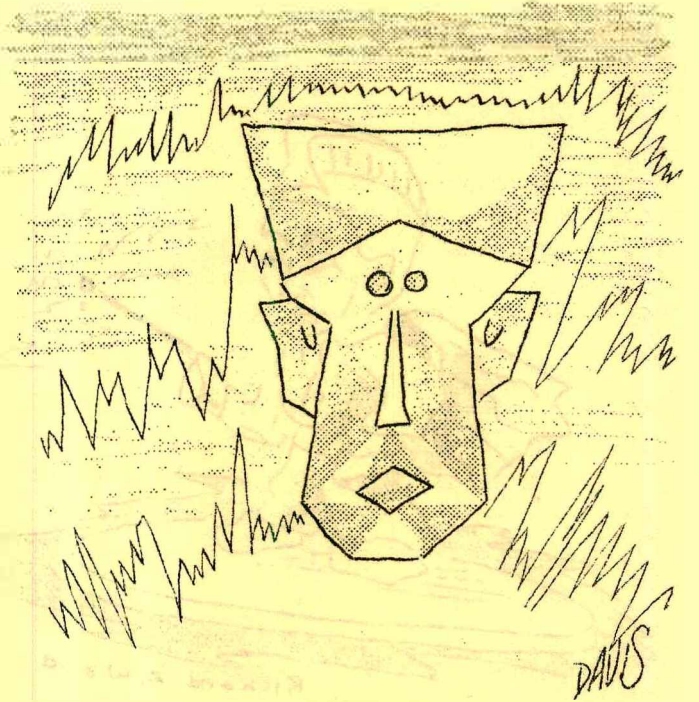
Looks from here like it'll be a wee bit expensive, huh? One page of advertising, even at fan rates, sticks you a mere \$15 in the hole. (Looks like some few of us don't advertise this year, um?) Seems just a bit funny, tho, when you consider the booklet will be photo-offset to "cut costs" and SCIENCE FICTION ADVERTISER, that peer of offset fanzines, will bill you only \$6 for the same amount of space. From any other editor save Dave Kyle it would look awfully funny, and even with Kyle editing there's a strange smell someplace--a smell that is suspiciously like that of profit-hungry hucksters.

Hotel rates are also just a wee bit higher than the already exorbitant rates Chicago charged, though I rather doubt if anybody we know is making the profit in that line.

I wonder how high they can raise banquet prices without blushing?

While I was looking through a few of 1952's most memorable issues of sf a few moments ago I ran across some things of importance in the slick magazines. In its March 22, 1952, issue, COLLIER's magazine ran an article titled "Man Will Conquer Space Soon," written by a number of leading scientists, among them Wernher von Braun, Willy Ley and Fred L. Whipple. The issue gave space travel as fair and as accurate a treatment as that kind of magazine could.

In October, for the issue dated the 18th, COLLIER's again presented a couple of articles on space travel titled "Man on the Moon," again by von Braun and Ley. This article was followed the very next week with a second set of articles, this time with Whipple added once again. These two sets of articles concerned themselves with man's trip to the moon, and his exploration of it when he got there. Once again the treatment was as fair and accurate as could be expected. COLLIER's made no statements as to the contents of future issues.





With its December 8, 1952 issue, LIFE magazine began its "greatest series of science stories in pictures and text," on the theme of "The World We Live In." Part 1 concerned the birth of the earth.

Fairly unimportant from the sf fans point of view of action and future rocket travel, it is nevertheless quite important if you wish to understand anything at all of the formation of suns, planets and solar systems (as well as star clusters, and galaxies), and how life may be formed on planets.

The first article is accompanied by a number of Bonestell pictures which are worth the price of the mag-

azine by themselves. Although the text is not much to rave about as to scientific accuracy, its only real fault is a bit of under-explanation--a few points it gives and then neglects to mention that the points are only one of two or three alternatives. But, all in all, a satisfactory issue.

Of more interest--if not importance--are future issues, of which LIFE says there will be about a dozen, one or more of which will concern themselves with "the far frontiers in space which lie beyond the earth."

During 1952, TIME magazine also devoted part of its issue (along with a rather poor--although the editors doubtless thought it was extremely applicable) to space travel, and, in a measure, science fiction. However, TIME took a rather dim view of these proceedings, especially man's part in them. TIME magazine will no doubt forget all of their past views when the first manned space-ship lands on the moon.

*** **

Which about winds up this editorial, as well as this issue. Today is the 31st of December--the last day of the old year, and almost the 11th hour. Tomorrow will be 1953--the first day of a new year, ready to begin all over and see if it can't be a better year than its predecessor was. Let's hope so.

Tomorrow should see this issue printed, and the next day should see it in the mails--a whole month late, but arriving at last. Thanks to most of you for waiting so patiently. From now on, OOPS will be a regular monthly, appearing on time in all cases, depending on only two things--that your material arrives by the deadline, and that my pay-days are all on time and not absorbed by unexpected expenses. I'll do my best. When I slip, please remember I'm trying, and have a little patience with me. Is that too much to ask?

A few thoughts, now, that have been handed down through the years.

"Astronomy compels the soul to look upwards and leads us from this world to another." Plato. "If this earth really has room enough for all to live in, then one should give us the space that we need for living." Hitler. "To the stars!" Unknown.

Gregg Calkins
Gregg Calkins, editor.

A
NOTE
OF
EXTREME

IMPORTANCE !!!

Today is January 5th, 1952. This is very definitely the last stencil to go into this issue of OOPSLA! In fact, the other pages are already printed. Therefore, this is the FINAL word concerning OOPS.

This issue will be even later than my second mailing date. If I am lucky, it will hit the mails by the 10th. If I am not lucky.... At any rate, it's later than it should be.

But the important news is this. Regardless of countless statements to the contrary in this issue, OOPS will not go monthly in the near future. It will not even stay six-weekly. Due to circumstances entirely beyond my immediate control, the next issue of OOPS is hereby postponed for an INDEFINITE length of time. If I am lucky, it will appear on schedule, February 1st. Most likely the next issue will be mailed March 1st. If I am extremely unlucky, don't expect an issue until even later. But I'll do my best.

Let me repeat, for those of you who worry when a fanzine is the least bit late, OOPS will not be out in February barring a miracle, but will most likely be out March 1st, tho even that is not definite.

Sorry to make you wait like this. But thanks for waiting!

Editor.

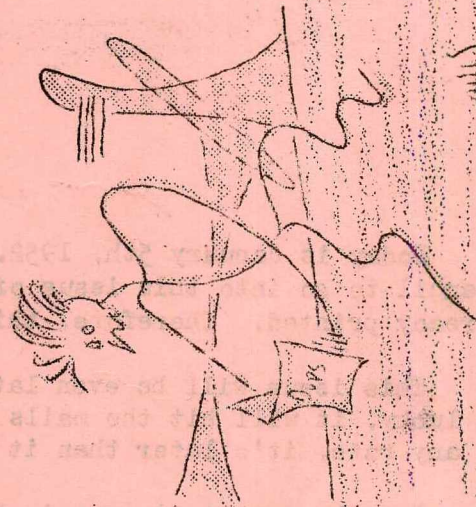
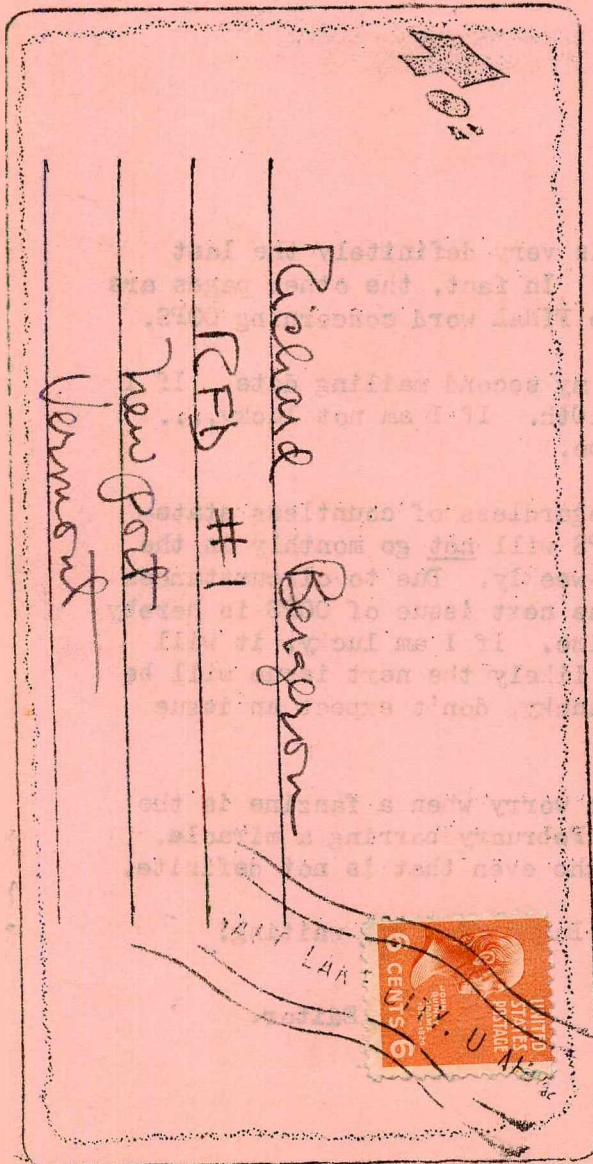
OOPS!A!

GREGG CALKINS, EDITOR

**1429 TALISMAN DRIVE
SALT LAKE CITY 16, UTAH**

Mineographed Matter Only.
Return Postage Guaranteed

*A poll of our own:
how did you discover
fardon? (Ask to members
of both fardon) (EC comics)
(Bill Kanapiede in Psy)*



**LAST
COPY**