

# PSFS NEWS

-- The Gazette Of Philadelphia Fandom --

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EDITOR.....OSWALD TRAIN

## EDITORIAL

Which shall it be, science fiction or fantasy? Thus the argument goes, and has been going on for many years now. There are fans who are enthusiastic over science fiction and who detest fantasy. Then there are those fans, whose numbers are ever increasing, who maintain that fantasy is best, that science fiction is done. Then there is always that third group, riding along in the middle, which doesn't give a damn whether a story is science fiction or fantasy or weird fiction--just so it is a good story, well written. As a member of the middle group which likes both types of fiction, we shall try to give our opinion of the matter. This is not a detailed review of the situation, but is to be considered more in the light of a passing comment.

Several fantasy fans have recently formed the opinion that science fiction is finished as a form of literature. Dead, kaput. This

group we shall fight to the last ditch, to the last rag of ribbon left on the typewriter. They hold the opinion that science is by far outstripping science fiction, and point out the development of the atom bomb, and jet planes, radar, and the like. So, therefore they figure that science fiction has nothing left to write about. They point out that everything scientific the writers create has been written up before in fiction. To those individuals I say phooey! There will always be the interplanetary stories, tales of the future, lost civilizations, other dimensions, time travelling, new scientific developments, and all the rest of the themes that have made science fiction what it was in the past. And new stories would be a rehash of what has already been done? Well, isn't that true of any type of writing? The charm of a great story lies not only in its subject, but in the freshness of its presentation by the author, by the realness of the characters, by the style of the author. What of their precious ghost stories? Aren't they practically all the same? That throws their own argument right back into their faces. Many great science fiction tales are to be written in the future; the present slump is due, not to the belief that science fiction is dead, but it is due to the fact that so many of the principal authors have been and still are serving in the armed forces

or doing government work, or were employed in various forms of war work.

And now for the other side of the fence. Those fellows who say they dislike fantasy so much. We maintain that science fiction and fantasy are so closely related to each other, that they must of necessity be nearly always together. There is no sharply drawn line drawn between these two types of fiction, a line so clear that all stories are either science fiction or fantasy. Who can say where science fiction begins and fantasy, or vice versa? Certainly not I, or any of the fans and collectors for that matter. Obviously, of course, there are many stories that are definitely either science fiction or pure fantasy, by their very nature but an analysis of the great majority of stories appearing in the many publications devoted to these forms of literature will reveal that they contain the essentials of both forms.

As an experiment, take almost any of these fans who "hate fantasy" and question them closely about stories and authors that they have read and admired in the past, and you will discover that they have been reading and enjoying fantasy without realizing it! I think that what these readers mean when they make such a broad statement is that they dislike stories of gruesome horror, horrifying monsters of the supernatural, and the like.

Well, this isn't supposed to be a detailed review of the situation as I said at first, so will let the matter stand at that.

At any rate, this is food for thought, and sets one to thinking about the future of science fiction and fantasy.

---Oswald Train

## MATERIAL

New material is always needed for the PSFS NEWS is always needed. It takes a great deal of material to keep such a magazine as this going, and it must come in steadily. We have a backlog of material present, the first time we have ever had such a backlog. The present issue does not leave a great deal of material on hand for the January issue, but enough for a good start upon it. But due to the nature of some of the articles, they all cannot be used in the same issue, as it would give too much similarity in a single issue. They must be spread out over several issues.

Several articles have been promised, and they should soon be in our hands. But we still want more, and more. If you don't know what to write about, why not review a book you have read and enjoyed, or a movie you have seen? Who is your favorite author? Couldn't you do a little research work and find out something about his life and background for a biographical article, or a survey of his principal works? There are countless other subjects. Use your imagination, plus a little ingenuity and you should be able to turn something out.

Then how about an occasional poem, or short story? We have one short story on hand right now which will see early publication.

Little fillers and news items of all sorts are always needed, too. They fill in those little spaces that are often left at the bottoms of the pages.



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## THEY CAN BE WRONG

"Along the highways will run electric lines on which you will find not only passenger, but express and freight lines. These lines will ply between the principal towns and cities of the country, they will gather up the products of the farm and dump them at the freight office of the great trunk lines. The familiar spectacle of the farmer driving to town with the product of the yearly harvest will be witnessed no longer. Instead he will merely haul his products to the nearest highway and have it shipped by electricity to town. The electric car will bring his mail to his door daily."

The above might have been from the pen of a bright high school boy of about the class of 1895. If that was your guess as you were reading it, you can give yourself credit for hitting the date pretty closely. But instead of a student, the forecaster was one of the outstandingly brilliant engineers of the period.

A reporter named Carl Snyder was interviewing Mr. G.W.G. Ferris, whose famous "Ferris Wheel" was one of the wonders of the World's Columbian Exposition, more familiarly known as the "Chicago World's Fair of 1893". The interview took up several pages in the "Review of Reviews," of September, 1893, one of the leading magazines of the English speaking world.

Mr. Ferris had completed and successfully operated an observation wheel 260 feet in diameter, capable of carrying the 2,100 people who could be crowded into its 36 cars at one time. The wheel was hung so that its lowest point was 18 feet above ground, so for his fifty cents the passenger was privileged to look down on the Fair Grounds from a

height of 268 feet. This would be a very creditable piece of structural steel engineering even today, and of course in 1893. It was the marvel of the engineering profession as well as of the general public.

Quoting further from Mr. Ferris, "Undoubtedly the greatest practical progress of the near future will be comprised within the expansion of the use of electricity and compressed air. Indeed I am persuaded that modern life will be absolutely revolutionized so far as its practical every-day work is concerned within the next ten years. And electricity will largely accomplish it....The condition which will determine the relative expansion of towns and cities in the next decade is the presence of waterpower....Any city which possesses this advantage must take the lead over any city that does not."

There was one of the world's foremost authorities giving a detailed forecast of the mechanical environment of the generation following 1893, AND COMPLETELY OVERLOOKING THE INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE.

Mr. Ferris didn't live to see it, but he might have seen, within 30 years or less, interurban electric railway lines being torn up and sold for junk, because the competition of the automobile, bus and truck made their future hopeless.

Some of our science fiction writers of today may well be making more accurate forecasts of the world of our grandchildren than could be made by even the best engineering and scientific brains in our grandparents' time.

Nobody on earth can tell today which of our contemporary science fiction writers are accurately

forecasting the future, and which ones are as far off the target as was Mr. Ferris, 52 years ago. But we can read their stories and use our own imaginations and scientific training, and get a lot of good mental exercise and fun doing it.

-- T. J. Mead

## DALI COMES TO TOWN

The noted surrealist artist and illustrator, and author of two fantastic books, is making his first visit to Philadelphia. His paintings have been called everything from crazy doodles to great art.

Several years ago, when Mr. Dali paid visits to New York, he made headlines by his crazy actions, such as wearing a boiled lobster on his head and crashing through a window with a fur-lined bath tub. But now it seems that he is on his good behavior, for when he appeared for his newspaper interview in Philadelphia he was respectably dressed in a blue pin striped suit.

Dali reveals that he collaborate on a new fantasy movie with Walt Disney, and that work will start on it sometime in January. This picture will introduce a new mythology, in which his ideas will be expressed with characters that are half animal and half vegetable. For example, one of the characters will have the body of a woman, with the necks and heads of live swans as arms. If you have seen any of Dali's paintings or illustrations, you will have an idea of what we mean.

Dali has often been criticized for being out of the traditions of painting, but the pictures of an early painter, Hieronymus Bosch, who lived in the 15th century,

show the same sort of caricature and imaginative forms which Dali uses more extensively. The public isn't familiar with what has been done in the past, and he is really not out of line, but right in the best of tradition.

Dali's latest paintings are are currently being displayed in a one man show at the Bignau galleries in New York, and he came from California to arrange the opening. He expects to return soon to his West Coast home for preliminary work on the motion picture.

## MARK TWAIN

In the year 1873 the celebrated author and humorist, Mark Twain, sailed on the S.S. Batavia across the Atlantic. The ship encountered a furious storm which created a great deal of havoc. The Batavia met a damaged and sinking ship in the wake of the storm, and in one of the most famous and celebrated sea rescues of all time picked up the crew and passengers of the sinking vessel. While the lifeboat crew was busy saving life at sea, Mark Twain stood upon the deck observing the rescue, and keeping those around him in good cheer.

My father was a member of the crew of the Batavia, and related to me an amusing incident which occurred one day while he was on lookout duty. Mark Twain came forward and stood looking over the port bow. One of the sailors came up behind him and made the traditional chalk line upon the deck, over which he was not supposed to pass until he had paid a fine. He was permitted to return aft, however, on promise of payment. Later on a half



sovereign was sent up with his compliments. Needless to say it was greatly appreciated by all the seamen concerned.

While this may seem to be a sort of holdup to some people, however it was an old custom among the sailors of that day and was taken in good humor.

Many years later my father saw a newspaper article concerning Samuel Langhorn Clemens and the rescue at sea by the Batavia, and wrote him concerning it. Mr. Clemens replied, and told him that he well remembered all that had happened, and that he had made a guess as to what was going to happen when the sailor drew the chalk mark upon the deck, and that he remembered the furious storm and the water logged vessel and gallant rescue of the men aboard her.

Among things left me by my father at his death was the letter from Mr. Clemens to my father, written by hand upon his personal stationery. Also, there was the clipping which had attracted the attention of my father, and also photographs of the Batavia, and of my father as he appeared in 1873.

-- Wesley Jorgenson

Editor's note: It is with great pleasure that we publish this article by Mr. Jorgenson, concerning one of the greatest of all of America's great authors. Samuel Langhorn Clemens, better known simply by his pseudonym of Mark Twain. For generations, the youth of America has read the adventures of Tom Sawyer, and Huck Finn, and Puddin' Head Wilson and the rest of his famous characters. And fantasy fans admit that their collections are incomplete without his great fantasies, principal among them being "Connecticut Yankee", "Mysterious Stranger," and others.

## THE SUPERNATURAL

"Men Who Wouldn't Stay Dead" is the interesting title of an interesting book that is still to be found in the book stores. The author is Ida Clyde Clarke, and the book is published by Bernard Ackerman, of New York, and the price is \$3.00 a copy. Containing "28 Ghost Stories from authentic records of the Supernatural," the book should be of exceptional interest to lovers of the supernatural and the occult.

The stories are often as wild as any fiction to be found in Weird Tales, yet each one is supposed to be drawn from recorded fact.

Examples are the white birds of the Hapsburgs, that appeared always to announce tragedy for that ill-fated family--among them Rudolph's suicide at Mayerling, and the assassinations that touch of World War I at Sarajevo; The white lady of the Hohenzollerns; the red man who appeared to Napoleon on three separate occasions and warned him of approaching disaster; the rector and the dead hand; Carl Schurz' vision of the ghost of Abraham Lincoln; the ghost that appeared to Gen. George Washington at Valley Forge, which showed him the future of the United States; Mark Twain's dream, in which he saw the body of his brother, Henry. And there are many others. These stories are supposedly based on fact, and there is an appendix at the end of the book giving the source material of the stories. Besides, there is a section devoted to the ghost stories, and other strange experiences of famous men. This book is recommended to readers and collectors who like this type of literature.

--Oswald Train

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## L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP

A recent distinguished guest of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society was the noted author, L. Sprague de Camp. The tall, handsome and likable writer made an immediate hit with the members of the PSFS.

The author of many magazine stories and articles, he is a keen student of languages so that the dialogue used in the stories is completely authentic. To date he is the author of four books, the first of them being non-fiction, "Inventions And Their Management," two collaborations with Fletcher Pratt, "The Incomplete Enchanter" and "Land Of Unreason," and "Last Darkness Fall." At present he is hard at work on another book, this time a serious work upon the subject of witchcraft which he says will be completed by next summer, and he has already done some research work upon a sixth book.

"Last Darkness Fall" is generally considered to be his best work in the fiction field, and the book has been out of print for some time now and is almost impossible to obtain. When it is available it brings prices more than double the original selling price. "The Incomplete Enchanter" is a combination of three short novels that appeared in Unknown, and "Land Of Unreason" was also originally published in the same magazine. All three of these books are much longer than they originally were, having been rewritten and enlarged by about 20%.

There are many who remember his other magazines serials and short stories that have not appeared in book form as yet. Among the best of these are "Divide And Rule," which was the first serial to run in Unknown; "None But Lucifer," "The Gnarly Man," "Nothing In the Rules," "The Wheels Of If," "The

Undesirable Princess," and a host of others. Then there was that fine article, "The Long Tailed Huns," dealing with the invasion of the civilized world by the rats and other pests. Now that Mr. de Camp has received his discharge from the U. S. Navy, it is to be hoped that once again his stories will start coming from his typewriter. At present, however, he is unable to do any work on fiction due to the fact that he is under contract to complete his book before a certain date, and he has time for little else but this.

Mr. de Camp has promised to attend future meetings as often as he is able, and he has been made an honorary member of the PSFS.

— Oswald Train

## BUFFALO BOOK CO.

The Grant-Hadley Enterprises have taken on another partner, Ken Krueger, and the new outfit will be known as The Buffalo Book Company. The first book to be published by this company will be "The Skylark of Space" and it will appear in the very near future. The book was on the presses at the last report, and should soon be ready. For a time they were stuck for an illustrator but the difficulty seems to have been overcome. John V. Baltadoni of the PSFS was wanted to do the illustration for the cover jacket but Johnny was unavailable as he was still in the Aleutians. The schedule for 1946 is indeed impressive, and we sincerely hope that all will go as well as planned. A list of the other titles, besides "The Skylark of Space," follows.



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"The Time Stream," by John Taine  
 "Twelve Mighty Seven," John Taine  
 "Skylark Of Valeron," E. E. Smith  
 "White Lily," John Taine  
 "Seeds Of Life," John Taine  
 "Skylark Three," E. E. Smith  
 "Tomorrow," John Taine  
 "The Forbidden Garden," by John Taine. 100,000 words, never before published in any form.  
 "The Mightiest Machine," John W. Campbell  
 "The Weapon Makers," A. E. Van Vogt.  
 "The Black Destroyer and Other Stories," by A. E. Van Vogt

These titles are among the best that have been published during the past fifteen years, they belong in the library of every collector. Up to now they had only been available in magazines long out of print and which command exorbitant prices. Now readers will thrill when they read these stories for the first time, old timers who have read them all years ago will be delighted to obtain them in this permanent form and will doubtless get as big a kick as ever out of re-reading them.

Order these books from Buffalo Book Company, 271 Doble Avenue, Providence 8, Rhode Island.

#### MINUTES: FRIDAY, NOV. 2

The meeting, held at the home of Miss Jean Bogert, was called to order by the President. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved, and the treasurer reported a balance of \$43.80 in the treasury.

A proposal was made that the club have a form letter to be sent to prospective members, and that we also have letterheads printed.

The latest issues of the magazines were discussed lightly.

Ossie Train read a poll card to the group which he had received from Walter Daugherty of Los Angeles. This is to be the most extensive fan poll ever taken, and will form the basis of a Who's Who of Fantasy Fandom.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the PSFS will be held at the home of Albert Pepper, 5652 Larchwood Avenue.

Alexander M. Phillips was present at this meeting, his first since before he entered the army in the early days of the war.

Those present were:

Albert Pepper  
 Oswald Train  
 Joseph Selinger  
 Jean Bogert  
 Lex Phillips  
 Charles Lucas  
 Vivian Selinger

-- J. Selinger

#### MINUTES: SUNDAY, NOV. 18

The meeting was called to order by the president. Held at the home of Albert Pepper.

There was no reading of the minutes of the previous meeting, as the secretary did not have a copy with him.

There was no treasurer's report, as Miss Jean Bogert was absent, convalescing from an operation.

Five hundred cards were print-

ed. These are cards to be mailed to members notifying them of the time and place of meetings.

A long and interesting talk on the subject of Witchcraft was given by Paul Skeeters. During this time; the members discussed various phases of witchcraft.

A list of titles on the subject was furnished by Mr. Skeeters, for the benefit of those interested in the subject:

"History of Witchcraft and Demonology," by Montague Summers; "A Popular History Of Witchcraft," by Montague Summers; "Mallens Maleficarum," by a 14th Century monk, with an introduction by Montague Summers; "The Philosophy Of Witchcraft," by Ian Ferguson; "Witchcraft And The Black Arts," by J. W. Wickman; "De La Demonomanie de Sorciers," published in Paris in 1580; "The Romance of Sorcery," by Sax Rohmer; "Encyclopedia Of Occultism," by Spence-Lewis; "Transcendental Magic," Eliphas Levi; "The Book of Black Magic and of Pacts," by A. W. Waite, and "Magica Sexualis," published by the Falstaff Press.

We had the pleasure and honor of having as our guest the well-known author L. Sprague de Camp, and we later gave him honorary membership in the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society.

We acquired three new members at this meeting. Sonny McDowell, Jay Klein, and Milton Moses.

Those present at this meeting were:

Albert Pepper  
Oswald Train  
Joseph Selinger  
L. Sprague de Camp  
Guy Vendter  
Mr. & Mrs. Dee Conant  
Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin L. Blank

Charles Lucas  
Vivian Selinger  
Mr. T. J. Mead  
Rita Dragonette  
Paul W. Skeeters  
Sonny McDowell  
Jay Klein  
Milton Moses  
Alexander M. Phillips

-- J. Selinger

## NEWS

We are glad to report that our treasurer, Jean Bogert, is rapidly recovering from her recent operation for the removal of a goitre. Already she is again able to attend meetings.... Cynthia was home for a few days over Thanksgiving, but was unable to attend any meetings as she had to go back to school..... Robert A. Madle writes that he is being discharged from the army in December, though they will have to hold him until some time in January. He still gets his furlough in December, though. .... Bob's brother, Charlie, was over in the Pacific for some time. His ship was ordered out to sea at the time of that big typhoon that struck the Japanese islands with such fury not long ago. The ship rode out the storm safely. You should see some of the pictures that he sent home from Hawaii. Wow!..... Rusty writes from California, and says that he may be in Philadelphia sometime next spring, when he will be due for another long furlough..... John V. Balta-donis may be home very soon now, too. A recent visit to his father brought us the information that he had already sent his belonging home from the Aleutians, and that he was expected home for Christmas. We can hardly wait to see Johnny!..... Lex tells us some



more hair raising stories of the near East, and of Egypt. Also about army life in general. Customs of the people in those far off countries are very interesting ..... Paul W. Skeeters will be leaving the PSFS very shortly now. He will be discharged from the navy on or about the fifteenth of December. At present he is on a fifteen day leave, and as soon as that is over, he will be discharged and will once more be headed back to Pasadena, California, where his home is located. Paul's associations with the PSFS have only extended during the past six months, but during that time he has been a faithful member. We are going to miss him..... Paul and Lex were located in the same building at the Navy Yard for some time, before they discovered the fact one day by accident..... L. Sprague de Camp may be at the next meeting of the PSFS. He says that he will be in Philadelphia until his new book is completed, and that he will attend meetings when he is able to spare the time. .... Ben Lesser attended two meetings in a row, after a long period of absence.. He has a little goldfish named Hitler, which has a little black mustache, and a black patch on top of his head looking like the dangling lock of hair. The resemblance, to say the least, is remarkable!..... Dee Conant has been losing some weight recently. If this keeps on, how can he look like the cherub he used to be? We'll have to find a new name for him..... Milton A. Rothman writes from France, and says that the way the point system is progressing at present he should be out of the army by February. Milt has written us a fine article for the PSFS NEWS which will appear in an early issue..... Mr. T. J. Mead is keeping us well supplied with material. We have two articles and a fine short story from him now on hand for early publication..... Jack O'Day says that there is a possibil-

ity that he may be discharged in the near future..... Joe Fortier is back in the United States again. He is in the hospital at present, receiving treatment for a lung condition caused by the Egyptian desert. He spent one day in Philadelphia, and visited Lex. There is a possibility that he will be able to attend an early meeting of the PSFS. Upon his discharge from the army, Joe and his wife will go to Oakland, California, which is Joe's home. .... Glad to see Rita Dragonette after such a long absence from the club meetings. We hope to see more of you in future, Rita... James Taurasi, well known New York fan, is back in the States after a long spell overseas. Jim is just as enthusiastic as ever over science fiction, and will be an active fan once again after he is discharged from the army. Jimmy's friends will be interested to learn that he has acquired a wife..... Sam Moskowitz and Julie Unger both promise a visit to Philadelphia in the future. So does Ronald Clyne, the artist..... Al Pepper's wife, Phyllis, has been ill recently. It is hoped that she is well again by the time you read this.... The meeting of November 18th was the biggest in the history of the PSFS. In all there were nineteen present. That sets an all time record. Now we'll just have to make an effort to break that record-- even make such an attendance commonplace..... The absentee list at the last meeting was rather large, however..... Jack Agnew is now a staff sergeant, and is an instructor in motor mechanics. He is still on Luzon, however, but by this time he should have just about enough points to get out of the army..... There are vague hints of more anthologies of science fiction making their appearance soon.... There are plans of books coming up soon.. That's all

## THE FANTASY OF FREDERICK FAUST

The story of Frederick Faust is as fascinating and fantastic as many of his tales of fiction. He has been referred to as "King Of The Pulp" and has written more than any other writer who has ever lived. He was killed in action on May 11th, 1944, in Italy where he was serving as a war correspondent for Harper's. His age was 52.

His writing output during just the past 28 years has been estimated at more than 30,000,000 words; an average of a full-length novel every three weeks.

Faust wrote under his own and some seventeen pen-names. Some of these are Max Brand (the best known), George Challis, George Owen Baxter, Evan Evans, David Manning, John Frederick, Dennis Lawton, Frank Austin, Frederick Frost, Nicholas Silver, Hugh Owen, Walter C. Butler, Peter Henry Moreland, and Peter Ward. There are supposed to be at least three other pseudonyms of this most prolific of writers.

I have compiled a list of more than 120 of his published books and have prepared an index of his works in the following magazines: Argosy, All-Story, Western Story, Munsey's, Flynn's Detective Fiction, Railroad Man's Magazine, Crack Shot Western, Cavalier Classics, Famous Fantastic Mysteries, All American Fiction, Famous Spy Stories, Blue Book, The American Weekly, Gold West Magazine, Far West Illustrated, Sport Story, Photoplay, Detective Story, Saturday Evening Post, Cosmopolitan, Collier's, Harpers, Country Gentleman, Adventure, Double Detective, Greater Western, N. Y. Sunday American, This Week, and Blackwell's Magazine. It is doubtful if anyone has ever compiled a complete list of his works.

In his most productive years Faust averaged two million words a year at the pulp magazines' top rate of four cents a word. It has been calculated that Faust has topped the combined output of E. Phillips Oppenheim, J. S. Fletcher, Edgar Wallace, and all the various writers who wrote as "Nick Carter."

For about twenty years he practically wrote Street and Smith's "Western Story Magazine" single handed. Often he had three or four serials running all at the same time under various pseudonyms. In the early 1930's Street and Smith cut their rate of pay. Their six leading and most popular writers resigned all at the same time, and they discovered that their six best authors were really one man-- Frederick Faust. Result: they hired him back at the same old rate.

Faust wrote practically all types of stories. The keynote of most of them was action. It is no wonder that he turned occasionally to the field of fantasy. Many of his stories, such as "The Untamed," had a definite suggestion of fantasy. However, I am reviewing here only those of his works that are definitely fantastic.

"John Ovington Returns" (by Max Brand) first appeared in the June 8, 1918 issue of All-Story Weekly. It was reprinted in the July, 1941 issue of Famous Fantastic Mysteries. The story concerns the return of John Ovington to his old ancestral home as owner and heir. Shown the old library by the servant, he discovers among the portraits one that seems to be a likeness of himself. It turns out to be his own great-grandfather of the



same name--John Ovington. He finds his diary and reads it. Then the balance of the story concerns John Ovington helplessly repeating his ancestor's history--even down to the final tragic ending.

He meets a beautiful girl, the closest neighbor, who is the great-grand daughter (with the same name) of the first John Ovington's sweetheart. Even the letters he passes back and forth with Beatrice Jervais are almost duplicates of the letters written by the first John Ovington and the first Beatrice Jervais. There various meetings are similar. And then another man enters the scene--and he is named Vincent Colver--the descendant of the man who carried away the first Beatrice from her lover.

A queer and brooding sense of failure grips the heart of John Ovington as he fights the battle for love....."It is hard to play against fate, and to come into the play with the stage set against me."

Later Beatrice writes him a note and as expected it is the same note the other Beatrice wrote the other John four generations before. She is planning to run away with Vincent that very night, and will take the Newbury Road.

John Ovington waits for them, and then suddenly--and for the first time, the fates are reversed. Because Ovington, as Vincent pulls a gun, falls him to the ground and rides away with Beatrice in his arms. "Dearest," he said, "after four generations of waiting I have returned for you and won you away from fate."

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"Devil Ritter," (by Max Brand) is a very fine fantastic novelette. It compares with the very best work of Tod Robbins, Philip M. Fisher, or Homer Won Flint. There is a

brooding sense of the weird about this story. It appeared in the July 13th, 1918 issue of All Story, along with part one of Giesy's "Palos of the Dog Star Pack."

Jim Crawley is intrigued by the terrible fear of a neighbor, Vincent Noyes. Noyes has a beautiful cat named Abdullah, which appears to have a human mind. He is being pursued by a woman named Ires, and has been followed all the way from India.

Some days later Crawley finds Noyes murdered in a deserted house and the next day apprehends a mysterious woman visitor in the dead man's apartment. It seems that she too is in the power of some weird force, and Crawley decides to help her. It develops that she is in the power of "Devil Ritter" who has developed a force called the "thought wave," a type of mental telepathy. He has the power to steal into another person's mind and use their brain. He can read thoughts across the world through the vibrations of the universe. The girl is Ritter's special "medium" through whom he is attuned to the thoughts of all his victims.

Through his hypnotic power Ritter calls the girl back to him after she has fled with Crawley. Crawley finds the address of Ritter's secret house in New York and goes to find her and kill Ritter. Ritter has a huge blonde giant named Boone, who guards him. Crawley breaks in on them, and conquers even the mighty Boone, and carries the girl away. She is in a strange trance.

The following night Ritter follows them up to New Haven where they have fled and enters their rooms. They are powerless before his will. And then when

hope seems gone--the climax comes in a most dramatic way. Abdullah the cat is up on the mantle over the fire place. He is afraid of Devil Ritter and in moving away from him the cat dislodges a heavy bronze satyr which drops squarely on the "Devil's" forehead killing him instantly. They are freed from the spell with his death.

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Perhaps the main reason why "That Receding Brow" (by Max Brand) is quite rare is accounted for by the fact that it appeared in the February 15, 1919 issue of All Story which also carried part one of the famous Merritt serial, "The Conquest Of The Moon Pool."

The story begins in a zoo where a foolish young man goads a huge orang-utan to attack him through the bars. He is saved by a queer old gentleman who seems to be able to speak the language of the Ape. The director of the zoo, Olaf Thorwalt, arrives in time to witness the scene. He is strangely attracted to the powerful old gentleman who has a receding brow and bears a marked resemblance to an ape. He goes to visit the old man that night. The balance of the novelette is a tale told by the old man (William Cory) about his experiences in Africa with the famous explorer, Alexander Middleton.

Middleton journeyed into the interior of Africa with twenty five picked adventurers in search of the missing link. Over half of the men die or are killed on the way. After enduring unspeakable hardships they at last reach the immense hidden valley and find that it is actually inhabited by a race of Pithecanthropus Erectus (erect apes).

Middleton makes friends with one

of the tree dwellers, and finds it to be halfway between the higher apes and man in the scale of evolution. As he starts to carry it back to civilization its mate comes through the trees calling it. It breaks away to go to its mate and in desperation Middleton fires, killing the female. The tree-dweller sorrowfully takes its dead mate in its arms and carried it away into the forest, and the greatest scientific discovery of the age is lost forever.

According to the voodoo guide, the tree-dweller throws a curse on the party saying, "all shall die but one, and he shall live in death." One by one the members of the expedition die on the return trip until only Middleton is left. He finally reaches civilization but is ill of fever for months. As he recovers, he changes---and becomes as the tree-dwellers.....(By implication the famous explorer, Alexander Middleton and William Cory, the old man with the receding brow, are one and the same.)

\* \* \* \* \*

"The Lost Garden," (by Max Brand) appeared in the January 3, 1920 All-Story and was reprinted in the December 1941 issue of Famous Fantastic Mysteries. As the title implies, it is the tale of a weird and beautiful garden and of a phantom love.

Henry Arsigny, a rich young American, settles down in a little village near Bordeaux and becomes a recluse. The years roll by and the teller of the story becomes a friend and is invited to dinner one night. The servants are serving the magnificent meal when he arrives. Two guest chairs are apparently empty, and yet the plates are



being served as though actual living people were present." It seems that this is the "special" night when Monsieur Arsigny must be alone with his imaginary guests. This night comes but once a year. When Arsigny see himself intruded upon he springs to his feet and draws his dagger--but seeing who it is he finally invites him to sit down, asking the servants to lay another plate.

Then he tells the story of "The Lost Garden," of Marie Vivrairie, his youthful lover in New Orleans, of that strange man, James Baron... who just dreamed of the lost garden of five hundred years ago---and of their second meeting in France--- of the enactment of the tragic event that had been foredoomed five hundred years before, when Baron and Marie in a queer flashback to a former existence step off the high balcony of the tavern onto the stairs that were not there--which had not been there for nameless generations.....

And so Henry Arsigny bought the old Chateau and restored the lost garden to life--and lived with his memories.....

\* \* \* \*

Under the pseudonym of George Challis, Faust makes an attempt to write a science fiction thriller. This novel, "The Smoking Land," was a six part serial in Argosy, beginning May 12, 1937.

Far to the north of any civilization, lacked in the jaws of the glaciers of the Ice Pole region, lies the mysterious unknown island called the Smoking Land. Smoky Cassidy is hunting for it because when his friend, Cleveland Darrell, disappears, he leaves a strange clue behind him: "Bound north of Alaska to the Smoking Land....."

finds it a strange and terrible place. The people dress in the strange garb of sixteenth century England and speak the archaic tongue. But in the subterranean caverns there is electricity, machines, and scientific progress advanced to an unheard-of degree.

From Sylvia, priestess of the nameless goddess, Smoky learns that the wise men who live in the core of the Flaming Mountain can tell him about Cleve Darrell. She offers to lead him there, past the Fountain of Life, which is nothing more than an open volcanic crater. To save her from spurting lava, Smoky carries her beyond the portal which is forbidden to all priestesses of the goddess.

For this Sylvia is put on trial for her life--and one of the judges is Cleve Darrell! The same Cleve Darrell, except for premature white hair and a haunting fear in his eyes. Showing no recognition of his old friend, Darrell rises and sentences Smoky and the girl to be be-headed.

Later Darrell visits Smoky in his cell and reveals that he was only acting a part and will try to save him. Darrell tells the story of his disappearance and something of the great scientific power of this lost race of people.

Smoky and Darrell manage to steal one of the great air ships and escape with Sylvia. However they have to crash land on an ice floe to escape the silver ships of their pursuers. They are bombed and thought to be dead but are saved by a cavelike opening. After weary months they reach civilization. Their strange story is not told to a skeptical public.

THE END

Reaching the land at last he

--Rev. Darrell Richardson

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## MAIL

Due to many delays, most of these letters are outdated for most real news interest in them, but they are still of general interest to all.

First is a letter from Bob Madle. Now Bob's furlough has come and gone, but we expect to see a great deal of him very shortly now. He informs us that he is expecting a discharge in January, and will soon be home for good. And isn't that real news?

Dear Ossie:-

Received the large 16 page issue of PSFS NEWS, and it is the greatest issue yet. You have really made of the NEWS a top-notch fan magazine of general interest to the fan public. "The Time Stream" by Sam Morkowitz was of extreme interest to me, bringing back as it did memories of the old fandom of 1937-1941, to my mind the greatest era in fandom. Perhaps my opinion is based on the fact that those four years were my most active, but I believe others will agree that the era of fan magazines and feuds will always be remembered. I like Sam's fan writing, because he too really lived in that era. Sam is one of fandom's "real" fans, the type that you know is a thoroughbred fan--one of the really great fans.

The rest of the material was also very interesting, especially the letters. I'm glad Rothman believes fandom was well represented by Speer's "Fancylopedia"--I'm sure no other PSFS member does. Speer fails to remember that Philadelphia was one of the three most active and dynamic fan centers of the "third fandom." Does he not remember that two PSFS members, Baltadonis and Madle, were considered two of the ten top fans of that era? Does he not remember the eternal niche the PSFS has carved for itself in fan history?

I expected to be discharged in December, but it appears that they won't let me go till January. At any rate I have a furlough coming up the first of December so I'll be looking forward to meeting you and the other fellows--especially Lex, whom I haven't seen since April 1942.

By the way I am formulating plans for the reincarnation of Fantascience Digest upon my return to civilian status.

Sincerely  
Bob

And now there are two letters from Jack O'Day.

Dear Ossie:-

How are things going? Haven't heard from you in some time and I am beginning to think that things are lagging in the club. Are you still putting out PSFS? (You bet we are!--ed.) Haven't received a copy in some time now.

There isn't much going on around here now and if you find this letter short remember that if you do nothing you can write about nothing.

All that has been done in the past few weeks is P.W. chasing. Quite a boring job if you ask me. You go looking for them but never find them. They change into civilian clothing and I believe the people give them the clothing

There has been trouble in Frankfurt and in Wiesbaden. The returning P.W.'s are very jealous of the girls having G.I. boy-friends and some have joined together in bands and any girl who has a G.I. for a boyfriend gets her head shaved. They have attacked soldiers but always got the worst of the deal. Here in



\*\*\*\*\*  
 Bad Homburg the people have not  
 bothered the soldiers.

Haven't done any reading since I last wrote you nor have I been to any movies lately. The latest news is that we are breaking up next month but I don't think so as the shipping situation is all all gummed up. We had a party the other night and it went over very well. Only about 20 got drunk and had to be put to bed. I chipped in with two dollars for the party and got stuck on guard. All I got out of it was one little sip of cognac.

Well, I guess there isn't much more to say for now so I will close hoping to hear from you soon.

Yours,

J.P.O'Day

And now for letter number two.

Dear Ossie\*

The August-September issue of the PSFS NEWS came as quite a surprise to me and I must confess that it was the last thing that I had expected to receive today. I had gotten everything today including a T.S. slip from our C.O. stating that my application for transfer had been disapproved.

Although I do not feel like writing to you as I haven't read any SF since two months ago when I came across H.G. Wells' story the Time Machine, I do feel that I owe you a letter of thanks for PSFS News. It was a very interesting edition. The article by Albert Pepper on "Ancient Beliefs" was very interesting and educational. Why not run this column as a regular monthly feature? One thing I believe that the mag is lacking is features. About three or four which appear monthly would help to put the News on top of all the present SF mags on the market.

Each feature would cover a different subject. Have each member who writes the article write it by himself and it would be the responsibility of the writer to have the article ready by the time the mag is ready to go to press.

Milton Rothman seems to be running all over Europe from his letter that you published. I wish that I could say the same thing. I've been stuck in this town since the middle of May and there is no hope of me getting out. I asked for a transfer but as I expected it was rejected on the grounds that I was essential in my present position.

On the side I do a paper for the Squadron newspaper called "The Road Back" In it are chiefly short biographies of the men who go home. I devote two nights a week to it interviewing the men who are leaving for the States. It is very popular and when the men get their travel orders the first thing they do is come and see me to get interviewed. I enjoy writing the article very much and I believe that I have gained a little experience from it.

Well, the dinner whistle has just blown so I better sign off for now.

Sincerely,  
 Jack

And now a letter from Rusty. Who by the way gives us a much deserved bawling out for not writing.

Dear Ossie:-

I have been wondering why I haven't heard from you. Yesterday I went to Los Angeles and discovered at Daugherty's that you are using an FPO address for me. I will have to check up and

see if any mail has come for me that way. It has been weeks since I've even checked my mail at the squadron mail room. All my mail comes here to the aerology office, you see, and I only used that address on about four letters back in September.

I have finally spread out somewhat in my collecting and have started picking up a few books. I have several of the Arkham House volumes and a few others. Leibscher ran across "Landslide" a couple of weeks ago in a store in LA. He grabbed one of the two that were left. I saw him that same evening and he told me about the remaining one and said he'd get it for me the next day. It is a regular little gem about a boy and his grandfather who make friends with some prehistoric monsters brought to life by a landslide.

Have you heard from either Balty or Agnew of late? It seems as though that practically all the rest of the gang have been pretty much in touch with you, but I am sorry to miss seeing their letters along with all the rest. And what has become of Jack O'Day? No letter from him in the latest NEWS. Give my regards to Lex if he is back there by now. I'd surely like to be seeing him again. It looks as though most of the gang will be back just about in time to get the new year started off right. Bob and Milt should both be back very quickly, and JVB surely has enough points to start bucking for his discharge. Newton and Agnew will probably take somewhat longer, but you should have things humming by Spring. You are doing a good job on PSFS NEWS and with a lot more support it should become even better. Sam is a good addition and I know that Bob will probably start pecking stuff out again before very long.

There is no certainty, but a definite probability that I will see you this coming Spring. I hope to take a furlough for three weeks or

a month after it gets warm enough back there to make travelling comfortable. I am making no definite plans as yet, but I'd like to make it to New York, Philly, Bloomington, Chicago, Fargo, and Frisco and spend a couple of days in each place. The Boston area might also be included in my itinerary if I can find the time.

Now then, how about a letter, chum? With Bob, I can understand the delay, but you I cannot find it in my heart to forgive so easily. If you don't come through you'll be hearing from me some more.

Rusty

And that's all the mail for this time. There are other items that we would like to include, among them a nice long letter from Milt. But space is far too small to include it all. So it will appear next time without fail.

PSFS NEWS has had several favorable write-ups in the fan mags recently. And letters from fans in different parts of the country give us plenty of praise, too. Harry Warner says the local news and general news balance nicely, and we don't waste time on such stuff as so and so had so many beers with someone on a recent visit. Fran Laney says there is too much local news and not enough general stuff, but he likes the mag. Les Crutch of Canada writes that he likes the News. E. E. Evans says that the paper is getting better and better and that the news of the boys in service is very gratifying. He also gives us the information that all told he has spent about a year in Philly! Look us up if you ever get here again!