

# Space Times

## Christmas Number



Harry Turner '54

DECEMBER 1953

VOLUME 2

NUMBER 12

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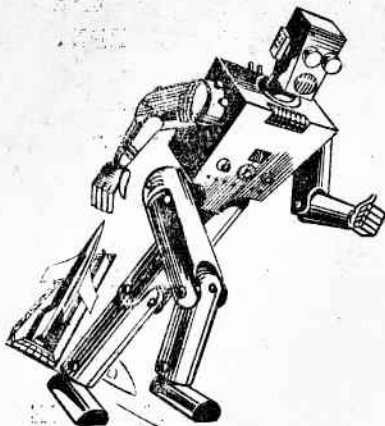
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# SPACE TIMES

CHRISTMAS 1953



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illustrations by TERRY JEEVES, PETER LUCAS, &  
KENNETH MCINTYRE

\* \* \* \* \*

# Editorial.

By ERIC BENTCLIFFE.

FANS are gregarious folk; they like nothing better than to meet with one another and solve the problems of the Universe. If there's a Bar handy that's where you'll find 'em, for talking SF is a thirsty business and to deal with an Einstein equation comprehensively one must first be suitably primed. They do other things, of course, besides discuss SF and it is the social (we apologise for using the word) side of fandom upon which we would like to discourse in this, our Xmas editorial.

During the past year it has given us immense pleasure to be greeted in various parts of the country by the local Fan residents and to visit convivially with them. First encounter of our '53 round was with Terry Jeeves with whom we spent Easter weekend. We talked of many things, of ASF and Madge ... We even wrote a story together (Bonovan's Drain) about a Custard coloured Callistan, which we feel will never get past any sane editor's desk. Recess, then, till Whitsun and the Coroncon, a feast for maids and men, (if one could ignore the program), where all was bright and happy, even the 'Bloody' Fen. The nighttime sessions were probably the most hectic yet undergone by U.K. Fandom and any passer-by can be forgiven for thinking they actually witnessed a Masonic convention.

Our annual vacation, two weeks in July, were spent mainly in London and its environs. The White Horse, of course, was revisited once with the Space Times duplicator, Paddington bound. Tony Thorne bade us welcome to Gillingham for the visit of the ILLUSTRATED reporter and photographer, and a meeting of the Medway Club. We spent a weekend with Vince Clarke, and evening going through his files (cardboard boxes of confusion), a night during which we were awakened by what appeared to be the Ghost of Ken Bulmer but which turned out to be only a Cow in need of company or Cud and finding the latter in the ivy.

The doors of the Rattigan residence became another portal mired by our Fannish feet. Jim was painting the day we called and also growing a beard. The painting looked like "Egg on the Moon", the beard we choose not to describe. Towards the end of our visit an American merchant ship arrived in London and with it Savannah Fan Jesse Floyd, who prefers London to New York. When met he had a pocket full of puzzles, all London to astound, we found an outdoor cafe and sat, with frowns, around. A visit to 'South Pacific' with Jesse rounded off our last night of vacation.

Sundry visits to Liverpool have interspersed our year, to shop at the Milercross and visit with diverse types. One incident here, in particular, we would recall - was it Halloween or just a practise for it? - some fifteen fan gathered round a table in the Lisbon Grill. Came the waitress, she "Could not remember all those drinks", so we put pen to paper and ordered. Rum seemed to be the staple tho' the variations were many; John Roles requested Monatomic Hydrogen but did not get it .....

South again, for the Medcon and a chat with Stu' and Brian, a memorable weekend spent in fannish frolic. Our one regret - we forgot to empty our water pistol before packing. Jim Rattigan, we noticed, no longer had a beard (What happened, Jim? Bert call you a 'Bloody Beaver'?).

A busy year, but a very pleasant one; the social side of Fandom, we feel, is its most brilliant facet. Thank you, folks, for all your favours and hospitality.



At this time of goodwill amongst fen we would  
like to devote a page to those who have helped in  
some way to produce this magazine

ERIC JONES

TERRY JEEVES

STUART MACKENZIE

HARRY TURNER

BRIAN VARLEY

'SANDY' SANDERSON

GEOFF LEWIS

GEORGE ELLIS (our mailer)

DALE R. SMITH

CONSTANCE MACKENZIE

JOY GOODWIN

J. NEWMAN

And for their encouragement and support.....

KEN SLATER

VINCE CLARKE

WALT WILLIS

ALAN HUNTER

BOB SWARTZ

PETER BAILLIE

PETER CAMPBELL

LEE RIDDLE

TONY THORNE

FRED ROBINSON

and the many  
others who have taken the time and trouble to write in and give  
their opinions of SPACE TIMES

MAY YOUR CHRISTMAS BE ONE OF

GOOD CHEER AND THE NEW YEAR

A PROSPEROUS ONE FOR YOU !

Eric Bentcliffe

\*\*\*\*\*  
DR. FRED L. WHIPPLE - "conquest of space", "man on the moon",  
writes in the Spring 1953 issue of DESTINY, " an amateur copy-  
tighted magazine", ..... "By conquering Space, Man makes one  
more step towards insuring immortality for the race, if not for  
the individual" That is one of the finest reasons we have  
ever heard for the building of satellites and space ships....eds

# VOICES

BY M.M. BADLER.



ILLUSTRATED BY LUCAS

IT WAS DARK, AND TOMMY WAS AFRAID. HE LAY TAUT in bed, with the bed-clothes pulled close to his chin. Why he was afraid, he could not say. The brown woolly Teddy Bear cuddled against his arm was not afraid. But then, of course, he

couldn't see the white coverlet draped on the chair across at the other end of the room. Tommy lay with his eyes open, staring at the chair. A man in a white mantle was sitting there, his arms folded across his chest and he was looking at him with an evil face exactly like the face of the man who lived in the clock by Tommy's bedside. They were talking about him, he knew.

The man in the clock said, "Tick, tock" and that meant: "We'll take him with us soon."

The man on the chair nodded his head with a gentle swish and Tommy knew that he was agreeing. Once he had tried to talk to them, but the Man-in-the-clock went on tick-tocking, and always the Man-on-the-chair swished and agreed.

Tommy turned his head toward the open windows, but it was worse. Any moment the friends of the Man-in-the-clock and the Man-on-the-Chair might come in through the windows and take him away with them. It was better not to look at the open window.

Tommy wanted the door kept open, as it had been when he was little, but Daddy wouldn't let him. He asked him every night, but Daddy, who saw the boy only at the end of the day, thought that such conduct was foolishness & always told him:

"When you were a baby we kept the door open so we'd hear if you cried, but now that you're nine years old there's no reason for it. Here you are, going to school already. No, you're big enough to sleep with the door closed."

Mommy would agree with him and say that anyway, it was healthier to sleep with the doors closed and the windows open. Tommy loved his mother and father and was willing to do anything they told him, so even though he was afraid, the door in his room was closed every night and the windows were left open.

They even wanted to take Teddy-Bear away from him because they said that he was too old to sleep with toys, but he cried so bitterly that they let him keep it. Even when Big Brother Bill laughed and called him a baby for crying, he did not stop. So, finally, Daddy gave in and said he might keep Teddy-Bear and Mommy sighed and looked at Daddy and said maybe now he'd stop crying.

It was so much better after they let him keep the Teddy-Bear. When the voices of the Man-in-the-clock and the Man-on-the-chair grew very loud, as they did in the middle of the night, he would put Teddy-bear over his ears as he hid under the covers, and then he wouldn't hear them.

Sometimes Mommy would put the coverlet on the table near the window and then Tommy couldn't sleep at all. He would hear the voices pass right over his head, so close that if he reached high enough he might touch them. Once in a while the voices would dip when they passed over him and he could feel them rustling the bed clothes. When they came really close, it seemed as if he could hardly

breathe at all. When this happened, he cried out and Mommy and Daddy ran upstairs. They switched on the light and there were the clock and the coverlet in their places, making believe that they had never spoken at all. The horrible things! Tommy was ashamed and said that he had had a bad dream. Mommy tucked the covers under once more and Brother Bill, standing in the doorway, called him a 'Fraidy Cat.

Even in the daytime, when the room was bright with sunshine, Tommy was afraid. There were pictures on the wall -- big pictures with ugly creatures painted on them. There were pictures of fishes and pictures of birds with long beaks. But the picture that Tommy feared most of all was the one of a terribly long snake entwined around a tree. If Tommy stood too close to the pictures he was afraid that the animals might reach out and draw him into the frame with them. Whenever the maid came up to dust the pictures, Tommy would clasp his hands and feel his stomach muscles tighten. But the animals never seized the maid and Tommy knew that they wanted only him, so he never went near the pictures and hardly looked at them.

His parents ignored Tommy and his ways. That is, they ignored them except for one time when they called in a friend of the family physician, a pretty lady whose beautiful hair Tommy still remembered. The lady, whose hair Tommy liked, was named Miss Carpenter. Daddy said she was a psychologist or something, but Tommy didn't know what that was so it didn't matter.

"The trouble is this, Miss Carpenter," said Daddy. "He's afraid of everything. Ever since he was a baby he's been scared of ---things. Now, big as he is, he still insists on sleeping with his Teddy-Bear."

"It was years before we could get him to sleep with the door closed," continued Tommy's father. "My wife and I are, naturally, very unhappy about it."

Miss Carpenter smiled at Tommy and offered him a picture of herself as a little girl. She, too, was afraid of the dark when she was little, she said. Tommy liked her & offered her a piece of the special glazed candy Uncle John had sent him from Florida. He didn't even mind when she suggested that Mommy and Daddy leave and let her talk to Tommy by herself. She sat there smiling and confident, facing the little nine-year old boy who was far from confident.

"Tommy, what is it that you are especially afraid of?"

"I don't know".

"Have you ever seen it?"

"No."

"Have you ever heard it? Smelt it?"

"No."

"Then how do you know it's there?"

"Because."

"Because what?"

"Because it's there."



This was as far as Tommy could go and Miss Carpenter did not press the point. She called his parents back into the room and the four of them went up to see Tommy's room.

Miss Carpenter looked at the bookcase, the closet and the pictures. She paused before the picture of the horrible snake and said, "My, what a lucky boy you are, Tommy, to have all these lovely pictures in your room."

Tommy looked up at Miss Carpenter. Suddenly he was afraid of her. Her lovely braided hair looked like the snake in the picture.

"I don't believe you were ever afraid of the dark. You're awful and I hate you. Get out."

She said nothing and walked out. Mommy and Daddy walked out with her but soon Mommy came back and made Tommy go to bed without supper for being so rude.

Since that day, one week ago, Tommy hadn't slept.

In the darkness of the room the voices grew louder. Instead of passing over the bed, they now travelled the length of the bed. They came closer. Tommy could touch them now. Some of the conversation stopped and got into bed beside him. Tommy's eyes were open and he could distinctly see the leering face of the snake on the wall. The voices crawled over him and he was deafened by their increasing loudness. Tommy put Teddy-Bear over his ears and pulled the bed-cover over his head. But still he could hear the voices. He buried his head in the pillow. The voices grew even louder and he heard them distinctly now.

The Man-in-the-clock said, "Tick, tock. We'll make him come with us soon."

The Man-on-the-chair swished in assent and added, "Now."

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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with gratitude that the Editor makes the following acknowledgements:

The two poems on page 13 are reprinted by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillans, from their anthology "Modern Poetry" 1922 - 1934, edited by Maurice Wollman.

Arthur C. Clarke's story, "How we went to Mars" was originally published in AMATEUR SCIENCE STORIES, issue of March 1938; the Editor of this 3-issue fanzine was Douglas W.F. Mayer; the Selection Committee was E.J. Carnell, Dr. W.A. Gibson, M.K. Hanson, F. Pragnell, and H. Warnes.

-----  
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## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

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FROM THE SECRETARY

Once again the festival season is upon us, and almost another year has passed with science-fiction booming beyond the fondest dream of the fan of four years ago.

This Christmas brings near the end of the fourth year of the NSFC's existence : four years in which scientific progress has brought us to the threshold of our dream - space flight.

Today the ordinary man in the street accepts the concept of a landing on the Moon in the near, foreseeable future. Such is the measure of the progress made in the short life of our club - let me hasten to add, not altogether because we exist.

This is the time of the year when greetings are passed amongst friends, and it is my happy duty to thank each and every one of you for helping to make the NSFC what it is today : to you, our members, I offer my sincerest good wishes, a very merry Christmas and a truly happy New Year. May you, with the NSFC, look towards a successful 1954 - and a successful Convention.

DAVE H. COHEN

FROM THE TREASURER

It is usually a Treasurer's unhappy chore to have to keep reminding his members that their subs are due, and that unless... Well, you know how it goes, but this time I am breaking away from the traditional "Note from the Treasurer" - renewal of subs can well be left for another spot. After all, it is Christmas, and I trust that my name has not yet been linked with that of Scrooge.

It is terribly easy to write down the usual platitudes which flow forth at this time of the year. I might well reel off a series of greetings culled from last years Christmas cards, or I could be awfully cute and do the same thing in French. This would be very nice. Indeed, it is quite possible that it would be accepted by the majority as very nice and Christmassy - but the fact remains that it would not be sincere. Then, maybe, as an alternative, since I am a fan, I could wish you Happy Spacing and a prosperous Planet-fall, with a witty(?) comment about dodging the wife's Flying Saucers. Again, very nice but not sincere. My point is that truth and honesty are most desirable. We appreciate honest criticism, but we deplore catty and unthinking remarks - of which there are, unfortunately, all too many. If our politicians, and those of other countries, could adopt a true Christmas spirit and adhere to it throughout the year, we should then be in a virtual Utopia. Sadly, though, I must admit this is an impossibility : therefore we must try to do this in a smaller way. Let fandom reign without rancour : tear Bert Campbell to pieces, if you must, but do it cheerfully and without malice. Allow for the failings of others, and recognise your own. Awa with the sly and hypocritical !!!

Therefore I wish you, not a Happy Christmas, but the ability to understand and make allowances.

BRIAN H. VARLEY

The poems printed below are re-printed from Macmillan's  
"Modern Poetry, 1922-1934", edited by Maurice Wollman

## A CAPTAIN COME TO PORT

A captain come to port, a dream-sick man,  
With far horizons staring from his eyes.  
Week-long his ship had been, wherever she ran,  
Caught in a stubborn bubble of the skies.  
Only his spirit had found land o' nights,  
Beyond the low-hung stars at the last rim.  
Now he, dark sailing through a host of lights,  
Came, drowned with seas, and earth broke over him.

And earth broke over him; men, rank on rank,  
Smashed down upon his dream that had prepared  
A different thing. And when he ate and drank,  
Sitting alone in smudgy inns, he stared  
To find a face his heart should recognise.  
No face would come but a slender ship only,  
Daring the drifting prison of the skies,  
For that last landfall of the odyssey.

Oh, folded yet with watery ply !  
Stemless forests wave their bines,  
And finny things that flicker by  
Winnow the dark streets that lie  
Unpaven yet of that city.  
But let him loose the snaky twines  
Of rope, escape the traffic, flee  
The harbour, and put out to sea

Orgill MacKenzie

\*\*\*\*\*

## SHAKESPEARE

When to the market-place of dreams I went,  
To bid a penny for the firmament,  
I sudden came upon a star-high man  
Whose mighty composition hid the sun  
With wings as wide as worlds; and when he ran  
In space, I thought that wind and he were one.  
Abrupt he checks those truceless feet and stands  
Deliberate with lightnings in his hands,  
Over the Sphinx. Created things attend,  
The speculations of the gods descend  
Upon Earth's human champion stood at bay.  
A moment's pause - slow subtle smile - and he,  
Murmuring, " Lord, what fools these mortals be ! "  
Heedless and headlong goes his boisterous way.

F. V. Branford.

# Across the Rain Barrier

or S/F as I try to see it ( even in Manchester )

by

J.J. ( Jock ) Curle.

Science Fiction Editor of Grayson & Grayson, Ltd.

I am always amazed by the fervour with which s-f addicts dig into the past in order to convince one that Science-Fiction really has a pedigree. Of course it has, for as long as there has been a past there must also, Q. E. D., have been a future --- and so people interested in it.

We have been going through a phase lately ( I think it is now nearing its end ) during which s-f has been rather narrowly interpreted by readers in general as meaning fiction in which the machine is all important. The " space-ship and blaster " epoch, one might call it. Of course, the machine is important, but what we have got to realise is that the thing which has always been and always will be of the most vital interest to man is -- Man. The kind of future story in which men are constantly " patting the machine on the back " and launching out into extravagant praises of its marvels simply is not true to fact. We already have machines - millions of them - in the world, but men don't stand in their back gardens, talking about motor-mowers and electric hedge-clippers as though they were minor deities; they take them for granted.

In fact, the further one gets into a machine age, the less one marvels at machines. Similarly, the further one goes into space the less one will marvel at space. The ultimate factor in space-travel will not be whether one can survive the " G's ", but whether one can survive the boredom.

No ! S-f is not a question of bigger and bigger, odder and odder, further and further. Its interest lies in the fact that it is a kind of Test-bench for MAN. What is man to become : how is he to think and feel and organise himself in order to survive ? What is the " good life " for him ? How is he to set about getting it ? All these problems can be mullied over in science-fiction, without the limitation of working in a world where the essential factors are bogged down in irrelevant detail.

This " mulling over " may be described as escapism. The same can be said of what a scientist does, working in his safe, sterilised laboratory to find the cause of a disease which is killing his friends. Much s-f is pure escapism - and none the worse for that, if we realise what we're getting - but I look upon the best work as what scientists call a " controlled experiment "; that is, an experiment in which the problem at issue is deliberately isolated, and can be dealt with in its simplest form. ( The institution of the Honeymoon provided a perfect example of this sort of thing ) By means of science-fiction we can project our problems. (next page)



metaphysical, political, social, emotional or economic outside the circumstances of the moment, and examine them with a real and instructive impartiality.

But the danger of using science-fiction in this way is that of over-simplification. It is so easy for everything to become either the blackest black or the whitest white, leaving out all the varied shades of grey, which actually make up ordinary life.

It is for this reason that the creation of life-like characters is specially important in this branch of writing. If one is not interested in an author's people, one will not identify oneself with their emotions or experience their problems. Those problems, too, will tend to become over-academic and inapplicable to ordinary life, unless they are filtered through the minds of real characters whose inhibitions, weaknesses and human imperfections make their reactions parallel our own.

Science fiction definitely has a big future - in the present. It has a lot to teach us and, if it can give us PEOPLE to learn from, then it will be what fiction of any sort must always be, if it is to survive — fun.

\*\*\*\*\*  
!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
\*\*\*\*\*

## W R I T E R ' S                      W O R K S H O P

One of the little appreciated functions of a fan magazine is the encouragement of those who want to write s-f. After all, the automatic desire of the fan is to read more and better s-f, but he sometimes tends to forget that before he can read the story somebody else had to write it. We believe that there is a good deal of writing talent tucked away in the dim recesses of fandom - that lots of fen think they could write a good story, but aren't sure of its reception.... remember that many of today's top writers were - and some still are - fen

Space Times has approached three men, all of them professionally interested in s-f, and all looking for new British talent. They are Herbert Jones, a director of Sidgwick & Jackson - an article by Mr. Jones appears elsewhere in this issue - Mr. Curle, of Grayson & Grayson, and Mr. A.J.B. Patterson editor of the new Vargo Statten magazine. These gentlemen have agreed to sit on a panel which will review a manuscript every month. The mss. will then appear in ST, with the panel's comments. Copyright will remain the property of the author: and we have been assured that there is a very fair chance that the story will be sold. Now is the time for every fan interested in writing s-f, as well as reading it, to get down to the job of turning out a good short story. Length should not exceed 2,500 words - that is 10 sides of quarto, typed double-spacing. If you can get the ms. typed, so much the better. Send the manuscript to "Writer's Workshop", at the editorial address. And, please, if you want it back, will you send a stamped addressed envelope.....we can't afford too much free postage !

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM  
THE PATRON OF THE N.S.F.C.

JOHN RUSSELL FEARN

CHRISTMAS, 1953

Readers, writers, and devotees in general of scientific fiction, let us at this time exchange the perennial greeting --- MERRY CHRISTMAS. Let us think further than that, too, --- beyond the festivities and merry-making which epitomise this season of the year : let us think for a moment of what Christmas really means. It began the era when Mankind glimpsed something of what can really be done by true charitableness and forgiveness.

Once having meditated upon this solemn fact we have, if only for a moment, placed ourselves in sympathy with the true meaning of Christmas. That done, then on with the turkey, the plum pudding, and the general production belt of indigestibles ( but not forgetting that oft unnoticed and unselfish woman who has made such an occasion possible ! ) We of the scientific era should thank the powers-that-be that we are still in one piece this Christmas : and there is nothing to stop our hoping that future Christmasses will also mean peace on Earth, and goodwill towards men.

Of the future we know nothing, for no science fictionist can really read the future as accurately as he would have us believe. We can only assume what is really meant by flying saucers. We can only assume that, maybe before many more Christmasses we will really set foot on the Moon --- and maybe Mars, Venus, and beyond.

These are dreams, my friends, --- but wonderful dreams. They paint a glowing vision of that day when the possibilities we, as a clan, have dreamed of will really come to pass. Meanwhile, let us be mundane and wish all and sundry, on this and neighbour worlds and satellites, a

MERRY CHRISTMAS !



HAVE YOU  
COMPLETED  
YOUR  
QUESTION-  
NAIRE ---

WHY NOT DO  
IT TODAY?

DOROTHY RATIGAN ERUPTS INTERNALLY

Explodes, then bashes Hell out of her typewriter

Dear Editors,

I am very seldom moved to impassioned comments, but the receipt of the October issue of Space Times created such internal eruptions that relief came only when I eventually exploded and bashed hell out of my type-writer.

What in heaven's name happened to the front cover? This is diabolical to say the least. The drawing itself is the result of too much haste and the printing hasn't helped matters. How this smudgy effort occurred I am not interested, I am only concerned with results and if this is the best Space Times can do then I suggest you quietly fold up and retire discreetly.

Needless to say, my aesthetic feelings were severely shaken at the pictorial theme of "Refuelling". Isn't it bad enough to have natural phenomenon (sic) ridiculed and abused by all and sundry without it appearing in Fanzines. Personally I can see nothing funny in the artist's conception and can only assume that for want of a better theme, has reverted (as so many artists do (including Radio and T.V.)) to the adaptation of perfectly normal functions, in this case, of a litter of pigs suckling the mother.

With the November issue I am pleased to note an improvement in printing, but, the art work appears to be aimed at confusing the spectator as much as possible; the front cover, for instance, consists of a number of dots and dashes with the result the picture has lost itself in a mass of unnecessary shadow work. This picture would have looked far better if the mountains had little or no shadow work at all which would have brought the monster forward in relief (at the moment he seems to merge into the general background); the men themselves could have been treated lighter, so that the whole picture would have had more contrast in tone than at present portrayed. For a much better picture see, "I'll teach you to purloin my 'Weird Tales' "!. Here the caves in the foreground have been lightly handled with a definite dark shadow forming the hollow, the treatment of the men is good but the animal skins could have been heavier; nevertheless the overall picture is one of tone values.

I do hope that my criticism will result in a more superior production of both printing and art work; I shall watch with interest any progress in this direction.

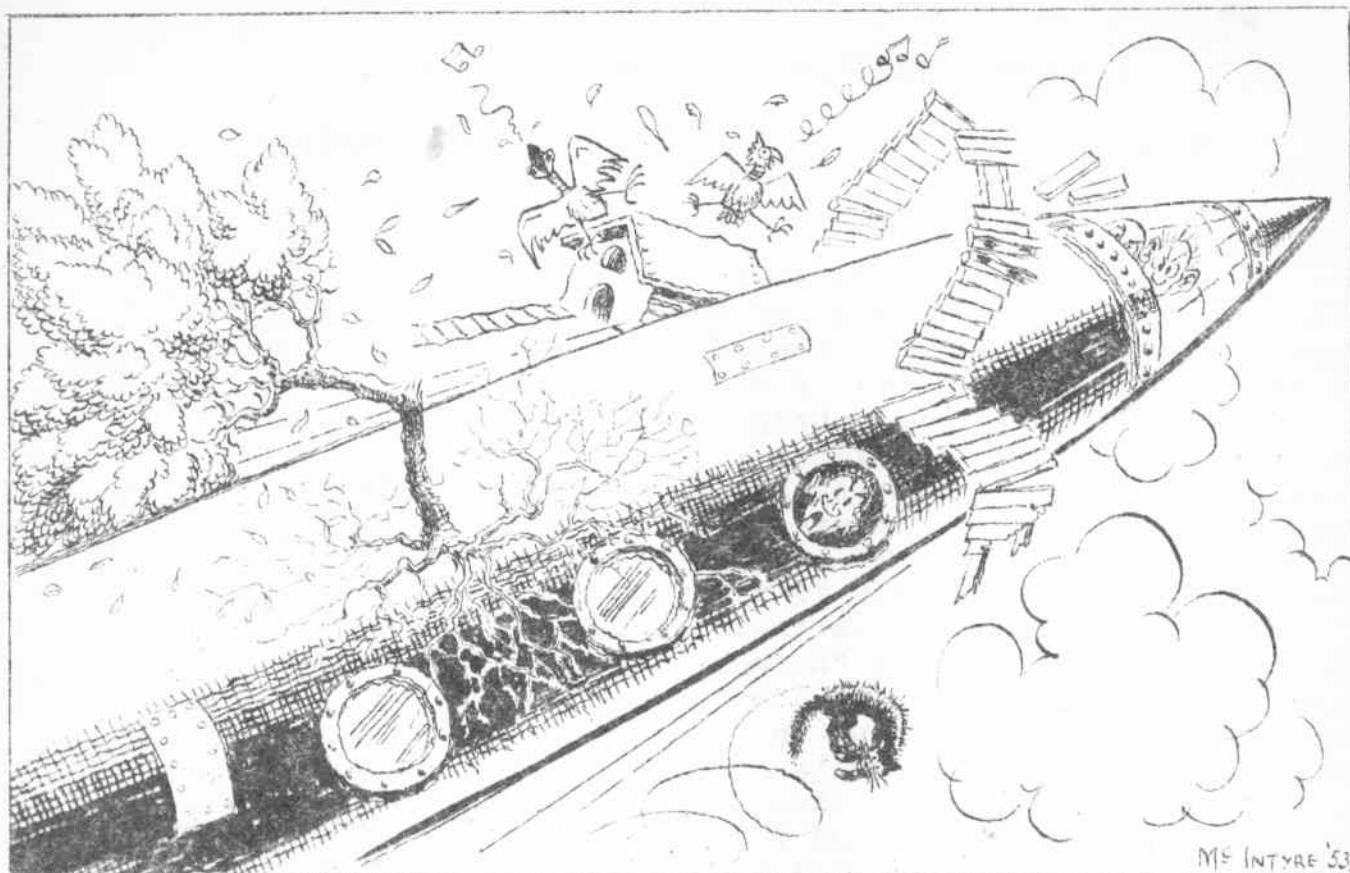
Yours faithfully,

DOROTHY RATIGAN (Mrs)

You will find a reply to this letter on Page .....57

(17)





# How we went to Mars

by

## arthur c. clarke

ILLUSTRATED BY MCINTYRE

NOTE: All characters in this story are entirely fictitious, and only exist in the author's sub-conscious. Psycho-analysts please apply at the Tradesmen's Entrance.....

IT IS WITH CONSIDERABLE TREPIDATION THAT I TAKE UP MY pen to describe the incredible adventures that befell the members of the Snoring-in-the-Hay Rocket Society in the Winter of 1968. Although we would have preferred posterity to be our judge, the members of the Society of which I am proud to be President, Secretary and Treasurer, feel that we cannot leave

unanswered the accusations - nay, calumnies - made by envious rivals as to our integrity, sobriety and even sanity.

In this connection I would like to take the opportunity of dealing with the fantastic statements regarding our achievements made in the "Daily Drool" by Prof. Swivel and in the "Weekly Washout" by Dr. Sprocket, but unfortunately space does not permit. In any case, I sincerely hope that no intelligent reader was deceived by these persons' vapourings.

No doubt most of you will recollect the tremendous awakening of public interest in the science of rocketry caused by the celebrated case in 1957 of "Rex v. British Rocket Society", and its still more celebrated sequel, "British Rocket Society v. Rex". The first case, which was started when a five ton rocket descended in the Houses of Parliament upon Admiral Sir Horatio ffroth-ffrenzy, M.P., K.C.B., H.P., O.T., after a most successful stratosphere flight, may be said to have resulted in a draw, thanks to the efforts of Sir Hatrick Pastings, K.C., whom the B.R.S. had managed to brief as a result of their success in selling lunar real estate at exorbitant prices. The appeal brought by the B.R.S. against the restrictions of the 1956 (Rocket Propulsion) Act was an undoubted victory for the Society, as the explosion in court of a demonstration model removed all opposition and most of Temple Bar. Incidentally, it has recently been discovered after extensive excavations that there were no members of the B.R.S. in the court at the time of the disaster - rather an odd coincidence. Moreover, both the survivors state that a few minutes before the explosion, Mr. Hector Heptane, the President of the Society, passed very close to the rocket and then left the court hurriedly. Although an inquiry was started, it was then too late, as Mr. Heptane had already left for Russia, in order, as he put it, "to continue work unhampered by the coils of capitalist enterprise, in a country where workers and scientists are properly rewarded by the gratitude of their comrades". But I digress.

It was not until the repeal of the 1956 Act that progress could continue in England, when a fresh impetus was given to the movement by the discovery in Surrey of a large rocket labelled "Property of the U.S.S.R. Please return to Omsk" - obviously one of Mr. Heptane's. A flight from Omsk to England (though quite understandable) was certainly a remarkable achievement, and not until many years later was it discovered that the rocket had been dropped from an aeroplane by the members of the Hickleborough Rocket Association, who even in those days were expert publicity hunters.

By 1961 there were a score of societies in the country, each spreading destruction over rapidly widening areas. My society, though only founded in 1965, already has to its credit one church, two Methodist chapels, five cinemas, seventeen trust houses, and innumerable private residences, some as far away as Weevil-in-the-Wurzle and Little Dither-

ing. Moreover, there can be no doubt in unprejudiced minds that the sudden collapse of the lunar crater Vitus was caused by one of our rockets, in spite of the claims of the French, German, American, Russian, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Swiss and Danish Societies (to mention only a few), all of whom, we are asked to believe, despatched rockets moonwards a few days before the phenomenon was witnessed.

At first we contented ourselves with firing large models to considerable heights. These test rockets were fitted with recording baro-thermographs, etc. and our lawyers kept us fully informed as to their landing places. We were progressing very favourably with this important work when the unwarrantable defection of our insurance company forced us to start work on a large, man-carrying space-ship. We already had a sufficiently powerful fuel, details of which I cannot divulge here, save to say that it was a complex hydro-carbon into which our chemist, Dr. Badstoff, had with great ingenuity introduced no less than sixteen quadruple carbon bonds. This new fuel was so violent that at first it caused a rapid change in our personnel, but by continued research it had been stabilised until the explosion took place when expected on  $97\frac{1}{2}$  occasions out of 100 - in which it showed its immense superiority over Dr. Sprocket's triple heavy hyper-hyzone (20 occasions in 100) and Prof. Swivel's nitrogen heptafluoride (probability of non-explosion incommensurable.)

The ship itself was thirty metres long and was made of moulded neo-polylite with crystallux windows, and consisted of two steps, which were ample thanks to our new fuel. The whole thing would have cost a great deal of money had we intended to pay for it. The rocket motors were made of one of the new boro-silicon alloys and had an operating time of several minutes. Apart from these features, our ship did not materially differ from any other designed previously, except in so far that it had actually been constructed. We had no intention of venturing far out into space on our first flight, but circumstances which I shall relate, altered our plans in an unforeseen manner.

On the 1st. of April, 1968, everything was ready for a preliminary flight. I broke the customary vacuum flask on the prow of the ship, christened it the "Pride of the Galaxy", and we (that is, myself and the five surviving members of the council of twenty five) entered the cabin and carefully sealed the door, squeezing chewing gum into all the cracks.

The ship itself was resting on a balloon-tyre under-carriage and we had a straight run of two miles over various people's lawns and gardens. We intended to rise to a height of a few hundred miles and then to slide back to earth, landing as best we could with little regard to life or property save our own.

I seated myself at the controls and the others lay in

the compensating hammocks which we hoped might save us from the shock of the take-off. In any case every space-ship has them and we could hardly do otherwise. With an expression of grim determination, which I had to assume several times before Ivan Schnitzel, our official photographer, was satisfied I pressed the starting button and - rather to our surprise - the ship began to move.

After leaving our grounds it tore through a fence into a vegetable garden, which it rapidly converted into a ploughed field, and then passed over a large lawn doing comparatively little damage, apart from setting fire to a few greenhouses. By now we were hearing a row of buildings which might offer some resistance, and as we had not yet lifted, I turned the power full on. With a tremendous roar, the ship leapt into the air, and amid the groans of my companions I lost consciousness.

When I recovered, I realised that we were in space and jumped to my feet to see if we were falling back to earth. but I had forgotten my weightless condition and crashed head first against the ceiling, once more losing consciousness.

When I recovered, I very carefully made my way to the window and with relief saw that we were not floating back to earth. My relief was short-lived when I found that the earth was nowhere in sight. I at once realised that we must have been unconscious for a very long time - my less robust companions still lay in a coma, or rather several comas, at the end of the cabin, the hammocks having given way under the strain, to the detriment of their occupants.

I first inspected the machinery which so far as I could tell seemed intact, and then set about reviving my companions. This I readily did by pouring a little liquid air down their necks. When all were conscious (or as nearly so as could be expected in the circumstances), I rapidly outlined the situation and explained the need for complete calm. After the resulting hysterics had subsided, I asked for volunteers to go outside in a space suit and inspect the ship. I am sorry to say that I had to go myself.

Luckily, the exterior of the ship seemed quite intact, though there were bits of branches and a "Trespassers will be Prosecuted" notice stuck in the rudder. These I detached and threw away, but unluckily they got into an orbit round the ship and returned round the back, catching me a resounding whack on the head.

The impact knocked me off the ship, and to my horror I found myself floating in space. I did not, of course, lose my head but immediately looked around for some method by which I could return. In the pouch on the exterior of the space-suit I found a safety-pin, two tram tickets, a double-headed penny, a football-pool coupon covered with what seemed to be orbital calculations, and a complimentary ticket to the Russian Ballet. After a careful scrutiny of



these. I came to the reluctant conclusion that they offered little hope. Even if I could bring myself to throw away the perry, its momentum would, I rapidly calculated, be insufficient to return me to the ship. The tickets I did throw away, rather as a gesture than anything else, and I was about to throw the safety-pin after them - it would have given me a velocity of .000001 millimeters an hour, which was better than nothing (by, in fact, .000001 mm/hour) - when a splendid idea occurred to me. I carefully punctured my space-suit with the pin, and in a moment the escaping jet of air drove me back to the ship. I entered the air-lock just as the suit collapsed, not a moment too soon.

My companions crowded round me, eager for news, though there was little that I could tell them. It would take prolonged measurements to discover our position and I commenced this important work at once.

After ten minutes' observations of the stars, followed by five hours' intensive calculations on our specially lubricated multiple slide-rules, I was able to announce, to the relief of all present, that we were 5,670,000 miles from the earth, 365,000 miles above the ecliptic, travelling towards Right Ascension 23 hours 15 mins. 37.07 secs., Declination  $153^{\circ} 17' 36''$ . We had feared that we might have been moving towards, for example, R.A. 12 hours 19 mins 7.3 secs., Dec.  $169^{\circ} 15' 17''$  or even, if the worst had happened, R.A. 5 hours 32 mins. 59.9 secs., Dec.  $0^{\circ} 0' 0''$ .

At least, we were doing this when we took our observations, but as we had moved several million miles in the meantime, we had to start all over again to find where we were now. After several trials, we succeeded in finding where we were only two hours before we found it, but in spite of the greatest efforts we could not reduce the time taken in calculation to less than this value. So with this we had to be content.

The earth was between us and the sun, which was why we could not see it. Since we were travelling in the direction of Mars, I suggested that we could continue on our present course and try to make a landing on the planet. I had grave doubts, in fact, as to whether there was anything else we could do. So for two days we cruised on towards the red planet, my companions relieving the tedium with dominoes, poker and three-dimensional billiards (which, of course, can only be played in the absence of gravity). However, I had little time for these pursuits, as I had to keep constant check on the ship's position. In any case, I was completely fleeced on the first day, and was unable to obtain any credit from my grasping companions.

All the time Mars was slowly growing larger, and as we drew nearer and nearer many were the speculations we made as to what we should find when we landed on the mysterious red planet.

"One thing we can be certain of", remarked Isaac Guzz-

baum, our auditor, to me as we were looking through the ports at the world now only a few million miles away. "We won't be met by a lot of old johnnies with flowing robes and beards who will address us in perfect English and give us the freedom of the city, as in so many science-fiction stories. I'll bet our next years deficit on that"

Finally we began our braking manoeuvres and curved down towards the planet in a type of logarithmic spiral whose first, second and third differential coefficients are in harmonic ratio - a curve on which I hold all patents. We made a landing near the equator, as close to the Solis Lacus as possible. Our ship slid for several miles across the desert, leaving a trail of fused quartz behind it where the blast touched the ground, and ended up with its nose in a dune of sand.

Our first move was to investigate the air. We decided unanimously (Mr. Guzzbaum dissenting) that Mr. Guzzbaum should be detailed to enter the air-lock and bravely sample the Martian atmosphere. Fortunately for him, it proved fit for human consumption, and we all joined Isaac in the air-lock. I then stepped solemnly out onto Martian soil - the first human being in history to do so - while Ivan Schnitzel recorded the scene for the benefit of history. As a matter of fact, we later found that he had forgotten to load the camera. Perhaps this was just as well, for my desire for strict accuracy compels me to admit that no sooner did I touch the ground than it gave way beneath my feet, precipitating me into a sandy pit from which I was with difficulty rescued by my companions.

However, in spite of this mishap, we eventually clambered up the dune and surveyed the countryside. It was most uninteresting, consisting solely of long ridges of heaped-up sand. We were debating what to do when suddenly we heard a high-pitched whining noise in the sky and to our surprise a cigar-shaped metal vessel dropped to the ground a few yards away. A door slid open.

"Fire when you see the whites of their eyes!", hissed Eric Wobblewit, our tame humourist, but I could tell that his joke was even more forced than usual. Indeed, we all felt nervous as we waited for the occupants of the ship to emerge.

They were three old men with long beards, clad in flowing white robes. Behind me I heard a dull thud as Isaac passed out. The leader spoke to me in what would have been flawless B.B.C. English had it not been for the bits he had obviously picked up from "The Voice of America"

"Welcome, visitors from Earth! I'm afraid this is not an authorised landing place, but we will let that pass for the moment. We have come to guide you to our city of Xzgtpk1."

"Thank you", I replied, somewhat taken aback. "I'm sure we're very grateful to you for your trouble. Is it far to Xzgtpk1?"

The Martian smiled. "Xzgtplk", he said firmly.

"Well, Xzgtplk, then." I went on desperately. The other two Martians looked pained and took a firmer grip on their rod-like instruments they were carrying. (These, we learned later, were walking-sticks.) The leader gave me up as a bad job.

"Skip it", he said. "It's about fifty miles away as the crow flies, though as there aren't any crows on Mars we have never been able to check this very accurately. Could you fly your ship behind us?"

"We could" I replied, "though we'd rather not, unless Xzg-- er, your city, is heavily insured with a reputable firm. Could you carry us? No doubt you have tractor beams and such-like".

The Martian seemed surprised. "Yes, we have," he said. "but how did you know it?"

"Just a surmise", I replied modestly. "Well, we'll get over to our ship and leave the rest to you."

We did so, carrying the prostrate Guzzbaum with us, and in a few minutes were speeding over the desert after the Martian ship. Soon the spires of a mighty city reared above the horizon and in a short time we landed in a great square, surrounded by teeming crowds.

In a trice, or less, we were facing a battery of cameras and microphones, or their Martian equivalents. Our guide spoke a few words and then beckoned to me. With characteristic foresight I had prepared a speech before leaving earth: so I pulled it from my pocket and read it to, no doubt, the entire Martian nation. It was only when I had finished that I noticed I was reading the lecture: "British Science-Fiction Authors: Their Prevention or Cure?" which I had given to the N.W.S.C. a few months before and which had already involved me in six libel actions. This was unfortunate, but from the reception, I am sure that the Martians found it of interest. The Martian cheer, oddly enough, closely resembles the terrestrial boo.

We were then taken, (with difficulty) onto a moving road which led to a giant building in the centre of the city, where a lavish meal awaited us. What it consisted of we never succeeded in ascertaining, and we rather hope it was synthetic.

After the meal we were asked what part of the city we would like to visit, as it was entirely at our disposal. We did our best to explain what a variety show was, but the idea seemed beyond our guides and, as we had feared, they insisted on showing us over their power-plants and factories. Here I must say we found our knowledge of contemporary science-fiction invaluable, for everything with which the Martians tried to surprise us we had heard of long before. Their atomic generators, for instance, we compared unfavourably with those described by many terrestrial writers (though we took care to secure the plans) and we expressed

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Preparation for Spring 1954

CHILDHOOD'S END by Arthur C. Clarke  
THE GREEN HILLS OF EARTH by Robert Heinlein

Write for details of the Science Fiction Book Club to  
44, Museum Street, London, W.C.1.

surprise at their inability to overcome those laws of nature that have been repealed by our economists and politicians for years. In fact - and I say it with pride - the Martians got very little change out of our party. When the tour finished I was lecturing the leader on the habits of termites and behind me I could hear Mr. Guzzbaum (now, alas, his normal self) criticising the scandalously low rates of interest allowed in Martian trade.

After this we were not bothered any more and were able to spend most of our time indoors playing poker and some curious Martian games we had picked up, including an interesting mathematical one which I can best describe as "Four-dimensional Chess". Unfortunately it was so complicated that none of my companions could understand it, and accordingly I had to play against myself. I am sorry to say that I invariably lost.

Of our adventures on Mars I could say a great deal and am going to at a later date. My forthcoming book, "Mars with the Lid OFF!" should be out in the Spring and will be published by Blotto & Windup at 21/-. All I will say at the moment is that we were very well entertained by our hosts, and I believe that we gave them a favourable impression of the human race. We made it quite clear, however, that we were somewhat exceptional specimens, as we did not want our hosts to be unduly disappointed by the expeditions after ours.

So well indeed were we treated that one of us decided not to return to earth when the time came, for reasons which I shall not go into here, as he has a wife and family on earth. I may have something more to say on this matter in my book.

We had, unfortunately, only a week in which to stay on Mars as the planets were rapidly moving apart. Our Martian friends had very kindly refuelled our ship for us, and also gave us many mementos of our visit, some of them of considerable value. (Whether these souvenirs belong to the Society as a whole or to the individual officers is a matter that has not yet been settled. I would, however, point out to those members who have been complaining, that possession is nine points of the law, and where the possessors are my esteemed colleagues it is more like ten)

Our return to earth was uneventful and thanks to our great reserve of fuel we were able to make a landing where and how we liked. Consequently we chose a spot which would focus the eyes of the world upon us and bring home to everybody the magnitude of our accomplishment.

Of our landing in Hyde Park, and the consequent evaporation of the Serpentine, enough has been written elsewhere, and the spectacle of three-inch headlines in the next day's "TIMES" was proof enough that we had made our mark in history. Everyone will remember my broadcast from the cells of Marlborough Street Police Station, where we were taken at the triumphal conclusion of our flight, and there is no need for me to say any more at the moment, since, moreover, it might embarrass my lawyers.

We are content to know that we have added something, however small, to the sum total of human knowledge, and something, however large to the bank balance of our society. What more than this could we desire?

THE END





# A MAGAZINE IS BORN.....

by  
ALISTAIR PATTERSON

(ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF THE VARGO STATTEN MAGAZINE.)

"Any fool can produce a magazine, but it takes a clever man to sell it!" That adage is as true today as when our primitive ancestors hewed their journals out of stone, then heaved them at their nearest editorial staff in the first frenzy of frustrated artistic talent.

THE VARGO STATTEN SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE was not born at this fiery level of inspiration. Nor did it stem from any sudden or greedy decision to join the ranks of S.F. magazine publishers. A preponderance of perspiration, the necessary leavening of inspiration, and a year's marketing research, all lie behind us: January 14th will confirm the wisdom of our findings, our reward or otherwise for the inoculation of enthusiasm we have put into the adventure.

During 1953 Vargo Statten Science Fiction novels sold over 250,000 copies - this is an accountant's certified figure! It was surely, then, a pardonable assumption that here was an author who enjoyed a more than ordinary popularity in this field, and who would therefore be expected to know the versatility of mind that represents S.F. reading. Even I realise that here is a field where the reader is an undoubted connoisseur, as well as being a field where the reader alone has moulded science fiction to the high degree it has presently attained. Inevitably it is impossible to please every reader every time. Were it otherwise, then we poor scribblers might as well duck out and disappear behind the nearest Iron Curtain, there to churn out our verbiage at the whip-crack of some literary dictator.

As things are, it is the wish of every author and editor to satisfy the reader's demands, at least as often and as well as he possibly can. For that reason the pages of the V.S. Mag will be thrown wide open to the brickbats and sometimes "misguided missiles" of outraged readers - with a preponderance of bouquets in the future, as and when the laws of supply and demand have been balanced. Only with the readers' help can we hope to reach that ultimate goal. It never happens that a successful editor is satisfied. Carlyle called it divine discontent. The editor must constantly strive to make the publication under his control into a living link between readers, stories, and authors. This is the task that Vargo Statten and his less illustrious colleagues are setting out to do. But that is a lot more easy to say in print, than to translate into magazine policy.

Our aim is an all-British S.F. Magazine that not only

tens existing wells of British authorship, but also offers a medium of expression for the up-and-coming new writers. We shall always be pleased to see fresh names among the manuscripts that already tend to obscure the view from our editorial window. There may be disappointments, but here we should like to remind you would-be authors that many of our greatest writers have started off their careers with a sufficiency of rejection slips to paper the study wall. In writing, as in every other worth-while trade, there is an apprenticeship to be served. This is the period during which the mental muscles have to be loosened up, the nice essay phrases from our school days forgotten. So take comfort! We are really nice types under the rough outer crust.

My own position in the editorial equation is a modest one. I am only the citizen who does the work, the literary progress-chasing, and the research. I make no pretence of being other than a novice at the S.F. Altar. A year ago my impression was that science fiction stank in the nostrils of normal man. That was before I began to read what had been written in this field, a period during which my wife made frequent and anxious enquiries about my health! What I then absorbed almost immediately convinced me that S.F. wasn't necessarily the outpourings of cranks attempting to extract the ultimate shilling from the "Sales Unresistant" teenager. I found the standard high, the plot sense good; and the reward among fandom's approval was something to make other authors green with envy. To be quite frank I am convinced that S.F., more than any other form of fiction, has had its present high standards dictated by the selective quality of its fan readers. Over the past 20 years there has been a gradual, but none the less consistent, improvement in quality with each year that passed. Here again our Magazine will not overlook this healthy critical faculty, without which no Editor can hope to find a yardstick wherewith to measure his successes and his failures.

It may be a portent. More likely still is the possibility that I belong to the incurable army of optimists. The fact remains that the Vargo Statton Magazine is appearing at a time when, more emphatically than in any past period, we are getting round to seeing the earlier gossamer dreams being translated into facts that may be realised in the not-too-distant future. The Zurich Conference produced the voiced belief that the First Man In The Moon was alive today. After Everest comes The Moon! Even dyed-in-the-wool newspapers have got round to expressing such opinions. Dr. Werner von Braun, who was head of the V2 rocket project, believes it will be possible to land 50 men in the Moon in 25 years' time, always provided that planning is started immediately. That in precis is the claim in his book "MAN IN THE MOON", published by Sidgwick and Jackson. Surely this must give the kick of

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the month to these oldsters. these tenacious visionaries who clung to their beliefs while still tickling the crystal with a cat's whisker. In the interim we have all got to maintain these beliefs and ambitions. In fiction and fact that again will be another aim of the V.S. Magazine.

There is a fable, about a man who spent his life devising Utopias. The Gods got tired of this smug practice, had their revenge by heaving him into a Utopia of his own devising. Down the years he has been heard crying bitterly for his release. That particular fable has been lodged in my subconscious mind ever since I entered the publishing world, has kept me from misguidedly believing that an Editor can dictate to his public as to what they should read. Actually the reverse is very much the case.

Literature is like shop-keeping. The reader is the customer, and the customer is sometimes right. That is on account of the fact that they lay their money on the line. The only difference is that we do try and place the relationship on a more modestly idealistic plane. There are three important personalities in this equation of magazine publishing - the Reader, the Distributor, and the Publisher. If the Reader is satisfied, then the Distributor and Publisher are automatically happy. All the publicity in the world won't convince the magazine buyer of the quality and appeal of a journal, if the journal fails to live up to the claims made.

We have created a Magazine. We shall publish the first number on January 14th. We are likewise sure that it is perfectly well produced, typographically comparable with the best in the field, illustrated by the most suitable artists we have been able to attract. Beyond that we are diffidently hopeful that we will receive more bouquets than brickbats. We are equally hopeful that, on the foundations we have striven so hard to create, we can build a Magazine for Science Fiction readers that will live. One of the bigger criticisms that I can foresee is that the V.S. Magazine will be labelled as a journal with a teenage appeal. May I be allowed to remind my friends, and my enemies (not too many, I hope) that the age of the Futurist does not date forward from birth. Admittedly we want to attract as many newcomers as possible to S.F. fandom, but more so do we want to retain and develop the interest and the enthusiasm of existing converts.

That is the gospel according to, one, Alistair Paterson, voiced at the "weighing in" before the race. The jockey is Vargo Statten; and I am the stable boy who leads the horse into the ring of competition. I can only hope that our joint favourite will be popular.

\*\*\*\*\*end\*\*\*\*\*

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( Advt )



WHICH WAY TO THE SUPERMANCON ??????

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PAGE 49 .....why not  
send it off this week to  
Brian Varley, who is  
eagerly awaiting your  
lovely and support for  
the greatest Con ever.....



# The Medcon and I.

by  
JOY GOODWIN

Before I reached the Medcon, I expected a slick production peopled by a large number of jovial drunks all tearing round with bottles of whisky (the result of reading too many American journals). However, I'm not sure that I didn't prefer the English version better than I should have done the American. I was rather nervous at the idea of attending a Convention all alone, as I neither knew nor was known by anyone there. Five minutes after my arrival, however, I was seated at a table stapling together the M----- J----- (wot, no advertising?) while several other people assisted in the assembly, and sticking on of backs - relieved at intervals with the aid of the bar.

By the time the millionth copy had been thrown on one side, we had heard from Vin Clarke, Pete Hamilton, Stuart Mackenzie and Eric Benccliffe among others of the merits of their rival magazines, questionnaires, writers and publishing houses.

There now exists in my mind a blank regarding what happened from after lunch until two o'clock (QUIET!) when the funfair opened. Even with Mrs. Thorne assisting in take-off and Ted Tubb encouraging: I couldn't hit a planet, and, as for rolling pennies down a slide, the bems would keep wriggling just as my penny looked like settling down.

Then Len Smith started what sounded like a most abstruse lecture (according to my programme on Cybernetics. What is/are cybernetics, anyway? They aren't mentioned in my collection of dictionaries and encyclopaedia.) At least, I thought it was Len Smith, but a jammed circuit soon enlightened me. The Medway S & FC appear to be the only possessors of a robot in the world.

Bert Campbell's tale of his travels though fascinating was at times inaudible. From the fact that he mentioned his visit to a studio of photographers who use nude models, I can only assume that there was a certain amount of censoring backstage and that the operator was turning down the volume when Bert came to the really juicy bits. However, the lecture (?) was most instructive, see Bert's next book to be published - "How I wangled an entry into the U.S.A."

At tea, Eric Benccliffe and Stuart Mackenzie assisted by Brian Varley concocted some "awkward" questions for the medcrank. (I wonder if Bert Campbell really does still wear comb--- all right, all right, Eric. I'll keep it clean.)

The filmshow was rather a disappointment to me, but, in the circumstances, the best was made of a bad job. At least, I now know what causes day and night. Rather odd, though, the crowd at the White Horse go about back to front and read ALUBEN and CITNEHTUA. (Perhaps they are visitors from another world.)

A certain person, who shall be nameless until the recording goes its rounds certainly did his best to reduce my recording to helpless giggles. However, having been told to expect a shock when they played back the tape, I listened intently. I got it! But more pleasant than otherwise. There will certainly be a dozen libel (or is it slander?) cases coming up shortly from what I heard.

By the time the playback was over, it was nearing 23.30 (11.30pm. . . all you normal bods.) and it was time I scarpered. My main impressions were that fen were a friendly crowd, even the authors with well known names showing no "superior" airs, that anyone could go to a Convention and enjoy themselves whether known or not, and finally that I have done myself a world of good in contacting other fen rather than remaining a lone reader.

My most grateful thanks go to Win Thorn, Tony and Jeanne Thorne, all of the Medway, and to Stuart Mackenzie and his wife, and Eric Bentcliffe for their assistance, support and encouragement.

I'm now looking forward to the Manoon. Roll on Whitsun!

---

THE EDITORS EXTEND THEIR GREETINGS - AND THE TREASURER  
HIS THANKS - TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS & SUBSCRIBERS :

Walt Gillings,  
115, Wanstead Park Road,  
ILFORD, Essex.

Chuck Harris,  
"Carolyn", Lake Avenue,  
RAINHAM, Essex.

2586626 A.C.2 Jim Walker,  
Hut 118, 13 Site,  
M.T.E.,  
R.A.F. Lytham, Lancs.

Tony Glyn,  
9, West Road,  
CONGLETON, Cheshire

Terry Peers,  
136, Gordon Street,  
LEIGH, Lancs.

Clifford Whalley,  
3, Byron Street,  
LEIGH, Lancs.

Frank Arnold,  
18, Endsleigh Street,  
LONDON. W.C.1

#### CHANGES OF ADDRESSES

Mrs. Dorothy Rattigan, now at  
6, Thorpe Close,  
Silverdale,  
LONDON. S.E. 26

Alf Hinds, now at  
30, Ansdell Road,  
North Ansdell,  
Nr. BLACKPOOL, Lancs.

Brian H. Varley, now at  
44, Ennismore Gardens,  
South Kensington,  
LONDON. S.W.7.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Will any Club members or subscribers PLEASE notify their change to the Honorary Treasurer, Brian Varley, at the above address. Too many recent changes have come to us by second-hand, third-hand or even telepathic means..... and then we have to carry the can when for some strange reason your S-T goes to the old address

# Where does Science-Fiction take YOU - up or down ?

by  
Herbert Jones  
creator of Britain's first Science-  
Fiction Book Club, and a director  
of Sidgwick and Jackson leading  
Science-fiction publishers.

The other day I tried to start an argument about science fiction with my secretary. Joanna is intelligent (B.A. honours. English); tall (-er than me); handsome; and with her fringe she always reminds me of that impressionist painting by Manet of the barmaid at the Folies Bergere. She is my right hand but she said: "I couldn't possibly become a science fiction fan. All this stuff about the future - it's so depressing."

On the other hand there are those of us for whom the fact that many people are interested in the future - far or near - is the reverse of depressing; it is a heartening, even an inspiring point of view.

The projecting of man's incredible future is perhaps the most important part of science fiction writing. But 'future' is a relative term. Tomorrow is my future; the 21st century is the future of my grand-children and the 30th century is the future of unborn generations, who will belong, nevertheless, to the human race.

As I see it, science fiction at its best is a means of communicating not only ideas but ideals. And in this latter category we are only at the beginning of a phase that may well be of immense significance for writing and human affairs in the broadest sense. Science fiction can occasionally make a contribution to the literature of social protest.

As to the other part of science fiction writing - the providing of entertainment - the author faces the same problems as any other fiction writer: he must give to the imaginary the semblance of truth. A very great deal of science fiction falls at this, the first hurdle. Merely to shock is not to appeal to the imagination. The secret of making his story 'believable' lies in the degree to which the writer can persuade the reader that what is being told is a discovery the reader himself is making. For example, in stories of detection the reader himself tries to solve the mystery, to anticipate the author as it were. He enjoys the story most when the ending coincides with his own forecast. This is not vanity on the part of the reader -

UNBORN TOMORROW by Gilbert Frankau. Published by Macdonald at 12/6.

This is a last story by a novelist more famous for his romances than for his essays into the world of fantasy. But fantasy this is and at times brilliant of its type. If you are one who only finds enjoyment when the science in a story can be proven, then this book is not for you: but if you like to dream and voyage into a future world which, if rather improbable, is highly entertaining, then this, Sir, is for you.

Sir David Ian Murella, Bart., rides to the hounds and ride he does with such vigour that his horse jibs at a fence and throws him. He awakes in the home of his descendants in the fiftieth century. The civilisation of this far time is highly diverting, the manners and customs of the day are that of the Ryalist days. The Genetics are a different thing, a thrown horse of a different size. Mankind now averages seven foot in height, pigs, five. All this has been brought about by selective breeding, since the end of the third global war. And here a brief history of the times twixt ours and the fiftieth century would be appropriate. During the third "War to end wars", one, Hyman Baumgarten invents the "Nuclear Detonator or Explosive Ray", and from a haven in Switzerland destroys the combatants' weapons, tho', were destroyed, but the fireworks of children hoarded for victory day, the internal combustion engines of all automobiles, gasoneters and, in some cases, kettles on the hob. As we stated in the first paragraph, this is not a story which bothers with the imagination restricting minor details of science. Its plot, like its Ray, is all embracing and has many facets. The Roman Church, for instance, has now full spiritual authority over the civilised world, and American radio announcers have Oxford accents. The Ray, since its debut and in future days (50th century), sweeps the globe to ensure that armaments can not be manufactured and another holocaust begin. Because of the Ray's effect on the internal combustion engine all transport, land, sea and air is now powered by electric motors and hence is in general slower than that used in our own time. A fascinating book this, if you like Fantasy .....EB.

"CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE".

it is the satisfying of his own sense of what is logical.

Narrative skill, excitement, suspense, all these are present in science fiction, as in other forms of fiction, in greater or lesser degree according to the gifts of the writer.

It is impossible to write about science fiction without facing the question of fantasy. Fantasy can be a vulgar debasement of artistry or it can be of the high order of poetry. Science fiction has produced as yet little that is beautiful.

Finally, as to the use of the word science. The method of pure science is to examine the past and the present, and from their inter-relation attempt to predict the future. This is precisely the method of serious science fiction writers and if sometimes we encounter wishful thinking, what of it? Man want his dreams to come true, not his nightmares!

# A LIGHT TO LIGHTEN

In a few day's time many of us will be celebrating Christmas - the festival which celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, nearly two thousand years ago, in a small Palestinian town.

Jesus Christ preached a doctrine of universal love and brotherhood.....As the year draws to a close one reflects upon the contrariness of mankind - here we all are, in the year of Our Lord One thousand nine hundred and fifty-three, suffering from an acute attack of cold-war nerves. At that, the war is still cooling off in Korea, and sufficiently warm as to be quite uncomfortable in Malaya, Indo-China.... No, not altogether cold war.

Those of us who are science-fiction fans have managed very successfully to overcome the artificial barriers which are state boundaries. SF Fandom is world-wide. Could this be an augury of happier international relationships ?

Let us not hesitate to preach our own gospel. The day of the spaceship is at hand. With it will come artificial satellites and bases on the Moon. They will control the Earth militarily. And if a would-be world-conquering power gets there first....

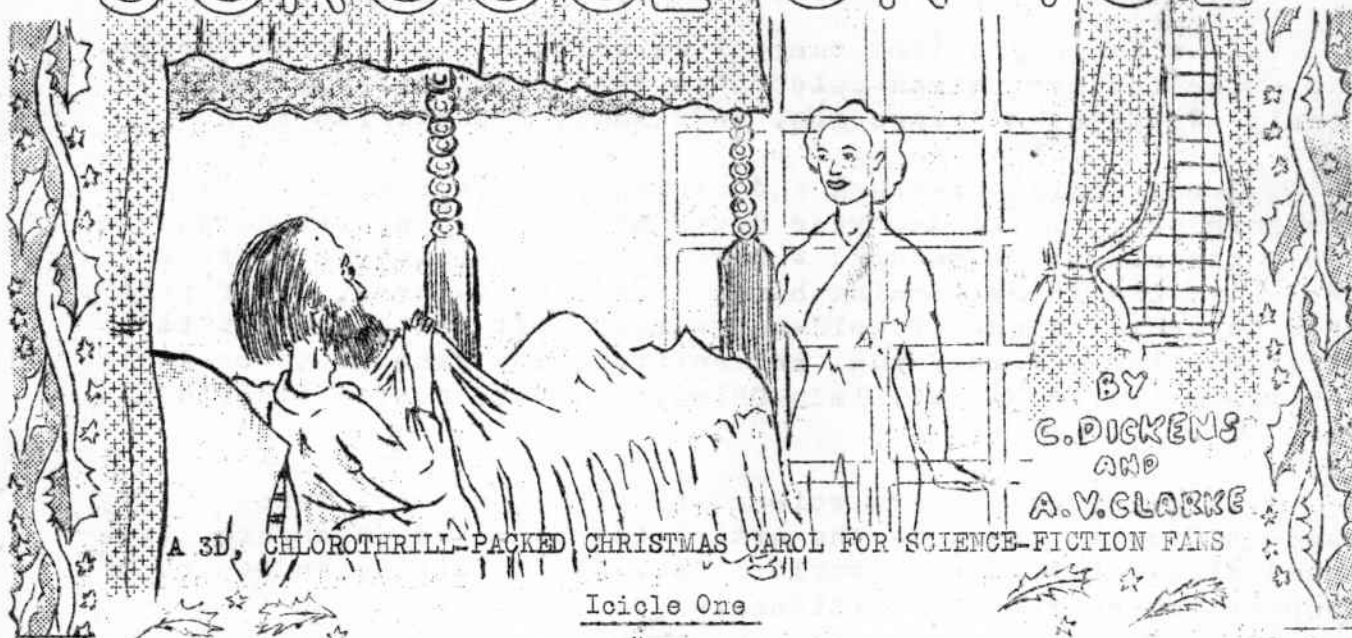
I believe that if the United Nations were to start a small economy drive, cutting down "investigations" of the colonial policies of the great powers, cut down on fruitless expenditure and futile effort in a doomed attempt to control individual states by committee rule, and were instead to devote all its time, its undoubted energy and apparently limitless financial resources to the building of an Earth-satellite station, then and only then would UNO be in a position to say "There shall be no war" and be in a position to enforce that ruling.

We would at last have peace on earth: the goodwill would soon follow.

What do YOU think ?  
-----



# SCROOGE ON ICE



BY  
C. DICKENS  
AND  
A. V. CLARKE

A 3D, CHLOROTHRILL-PACKED CHRISTMAS CAROL FOR SCIENCE-FICTION FANS

Iceicle One

Sixth Fandom was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. QUANDRY said so in its last issue, and what QUANDRY said went. Sixth Fandom was as dead as the Shaver Mystery. Joe Fann Scrooge knew it and he didn't care; that Christmas Eve he let himself into his house, and trampling savagely over a couple of fanzines and a request from OPERATION FANTAST for a charitable donation to the Officer's Benevolent Society ("What about your OBS?") entered his room.

It was dark; the night before, Scrooge had thrown his rocket-shaped desk lamp at a small errand boy who had passed by whistling Two Little Men On A Flying Saucer and had fused all the lights in the borough, but he lit a SLANT and by its weird green glow put the kettle on the gas stove, and, opening a tin of spaghetti, poured its contents into a saucepan. Once upon a time Scrooge saved all his money to spend on duplicating paper and stencils, but now he no longer cared. Now he was earning a living by writing s-f, and he ate nearly every day.

He thrust the burning SLANT into the fireplace, and a bundle of unopened fanzines piled there smoked and burst into flickering flame; as they did so, a curious moan seemed to echo from the four corners of the room. To say that Scrooge was not startled would be untrue; he felt like a barber meeting Bert Campbell. He stared around, but nothing met his gaze but a faint wisp of steam from the kettle. He eyed it with a far-away train of thought nagging at his mind, but an eerie whistle outside halted the train, and with a shiver he walked across and drew the curtains.

Avoiding the corner where a sombre pile of dust covered a duplicator, Scrooge returned to the fire and sat down. There was a story that he intended to finish reading whilst waiting for the spaghetti to boil, and he put out his hand to the shelf where he had left a magazine. A cold, clammy palm clasped his.

"Pleased to meet you," muttered Scrooge, an engram formed at Conventions momentarily in control; then he remembered, and with a cry snatched his hand away and turned. By his chair stood a tall, wavering Figure; the light from a burning fanzine played on hornrimmed glasses, a beard, a flickering propellor mounted on a curious headress, but even as he looked the thing changed to a young girl with ink-stained fingers, and then changed again to another male.

"Amazing!" Scrooge breathed the startled obscenity and sat up. "W-who are you?"

"I," said the Thing, "am the Ghost of Sixth Fandom." It smoothed its hair back, and some straws fell to the floor.

Scrooge brightened slightly; this spirit looked as weak as some prozine editors had always thought it. "And what do you want with me?"

It bent down, thrust an ink-stained finger at him. "To lead you on the Farnish Way Of Life," it whispered. "Work! Production! Sociability! International Friendship! Fun!"

"You sound like a Commie," said Scrooge irritably. "Where's the profit in 'sociability'? Where's the 'fun' in working for nothing? Anyway, I've got Gafia!"

"Aaaargh!!" At the word the Ghost sprang up, and, taller than an Irish fan, towered over Scrooge. Tearing off the beard it was wearing just then, it wiped its forehead with it.

"Never utter that word in my presence!" it hissed. "But...I see you still read science-fiction at least. You were reaching for this magazine."

"Uh-huh," grunted Scrooge, and opened the magazine. "Just listen to this:

"I said, 'Sure, baby, you did fine' and fired twice.  
She caught both slugs full in the belly. I could hear  
them go in from clear across the room."

The Ghost of Sixth Fandom breathed heavily. "We don't talk about things like that --- or at least, we don't put them in fanzines. Except in Liverpool," it added reflectively.

"De Camp quoted it in the S-F HANDBOOK," muttered Scrooge.

"Odd case ---never a fan," said the Spirit. "But you -- you must still be a True Fan to buy the HANDBOOK."

"I didn't buy it---I traded it for a NIRVANA and a SCIENCE-FICTION FIVE YEARLY." The Ghost gave a low moan. "I wanted it so that I could learn to write the stuff."

"For what purpose?" it asked with a gleam of hope. "To show young neo-fans the beauties of s-f; to emulate the Masters.....?"

"Money," said Scrooge brutally. "I want to buy a TV set."

The spectre set up another hideous cry, and there was the clank of a chain.

"What was that noise?" asked Scrooge.

The Ghost glanced down to the thick bundles of paper which Scrooge now observed were tied around its waist and lay on the floor behind it.

"A chain-zine," it said shortly, and glided to the centre of the room. "I shall leave you now -- I have an appointment in Savannah, and I want to preserve a fan in Bradford. But before I depart, take warning. You will be haunted by 3 Spirits."

"UNKNOWN, WORLDS BEYOND, and CAPTAIN FUTURE?"

"No."

"VOM, QUANDRY and SCIENCE FANTASY REVIEW?"

"You would do well to be haunted by those," said the Thing grimly, and disappeared like a glass of beer at a Convention.

## ICICLE TWO

Scrooge stirred uneasily in his bed and listened to the Town Hall clock. It struck regularly up to 12, then stopped. This often happened, but now he sat up in bed, cold sweat trickling down his spine as if he had been shot with a zap-gun.

"It isn't possible," he muttered. "Outside an s-f story, that is. I went to bed at one o'clock and it's still dark. Can I have slept for long? Three 35

thousand years? Four days, like that chap in Long Loud -er- Silence?" He listened. "Maybe it's 12 o'clock mid-day, and the Earth is passing through a cloud of cosmic dust that ---"

He stopped, for a light flashed, and Something stood by his bed. It was a strange figure, like a child, yet not so much like a child as like an old man viewed through some 4th dimensional warp. It looked like a serious and constructive Ken Potter.

"Are you the Spirit, Sir, whose coming was foretold to me?"

"I am! I am the Ghost of Fandom Past! Rise!"

It grasped Scrooge, who found himself floating in mid-air.

"Anti-grav yet!" he exclaimed.

"Spoken like a True Fan," approved the Ghost. "Come!"

They passed through the wall, and Scrooge saw that they were floating over a busy market-place. It was broad daylight, and below them he could see a magazine stall displaying copies of, not BRES, but ASTOUNDING STORIES and WONDER STORIES and AMAZING STORIES. Even as he looked, a boy strolled up, and after looking through a magazine, asked the stall-holder the price.

"Threepence to you, sonny."

The youngster shook his head regretfully. "Too much, even though it has a Fearn serial and an editorial on 'Gliding and Soaring'. Haven't you got anything cheaper?"

"We-e-ell, there's an old 1934 ASTOUNDING STORIES you can have for twopence."

"Right-o."

"Your lip is trembling," said the Ghost to Scrooge, "and what is that upon your cheek?"

"Saliva," snapped Scrooge, and made an effort to float down to the stall.

"Useless," murmured the other, and they soared away over a curiously un-damaged London, to descend by a building numbered '88'. Through a window they could see a crowd of young men gathered around a duplicator which was pouring out hundreds of blue-inked sheets.

"You recognise them?" asked the Ghost. "There's Bill Temple and Maurice Hanson and Eric Williams and Arthur Clarke turning the duplicator handle -- get off your knees, Scrooge -- and over in that corner Ted Carnell is selling Ken Chapman a MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES. In the other corner -- the one with the signed photo of H.G. Wells -- that is Edward Frank Arnold taking notes for his history of Fantasy."

"I don't remember it."

"Up to your era it had not been completed. And if it's all like that piece about Carnell that ZENITH mentioned....but no matter. Let us go."

In quick succession they visited Northern England fan centres, then flew the Atlantic to see Ray Bradbury publishing FUTURIA FANTASIA, Lester del Rey ankle-deep in fanzines, Kornbluth, Ackerman, Wollheim, Sykora, Moskowitz ---there were dozens of them. Back to England, and now the war was raging and the Ghost of Fandom Past looked thin and haggard and transparent. Scrooge could see its backbone, which was stamped FIDO-FIDO-FIDO, but before he could ask it any more questions he was conscious of being exhausted and overcome by an irresistible drowsiness; and further, of being in his own bedroom. He barely had time to reel into bed before he sank into a heavy sleep.

### ICICLE THREE

The last stroke of 12 vibrated through the bedroom with a roar like an s-f movie meteor, and Scrooge opened his eyes. A brilliant light was flooding the room from the direction of his living-room, and he got up softly and shuffled in his slippers to the door.

The moment Scrooge's hand was on the lock, a strange voice called him by name,

and bade him enter. He obeyed.

It was his own room. There was no doubt about that. But it had undergone a suprising transformation. The walls were hung with original cover paintings and Bonestell reproductions, and the ceiling was thick with rocket-ship models. Heaped up on the floor were piles of SPACE TIMES and HYPHENS and SPACE DIVERSIONS and OPERATION FANTASTS and PERIS and ANDROMEDA-3 and CAMBERS and ORBITS and SLANTS and thick multicolored fanzines with exotic American stamps stuck on their back covers, and seated upon a huge pile of duplicating paper was a ghost which bore a striking resemblance to the Spirit of Sixth Fandom, but was tired and thinner and somehow more serious-looking.

"Come in!" exclaimed the Ghost. "Come in! and know me better, fan!"

Scrooge entered timidly.

"I am the Ghost of Fandom Present," said the spirit. "You have never seen the like of me before!"

"Ummmm. You look just a little like the Spirit of Sixth Fandom."

"Eh? Oh, him. An old and distant relation; American-Irish mostly, and a wee bit touched. Me, ah coom from the North." It brooded slightly. "Bloody provincial that's me, lad."

"I wouldn't say that," protested Scrooge. "Not until after the Research Bureau Survey is published, anyway."

The Ghost of Fandom Present nodded, and its eyes closed. There was silence for a few minutes; then it gave a faint snore. Scrooge, who had by this time lost some of his earlier fear of this strange apparition, gave it a sharp kick. It yelped and opened its eyes again.

"Willis!" it snapped. "Don't -- oh, it's you. Excuse me -- that Bea and her all-night parties --" It rose.

"Spirit," said Scrooge submissively, "conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion and learnt a lesson which is working now. Tonight, if you've aught to teach me, let me profit by it."

"Profit -- schmoffit," grunted the Ghost. "Leave that to the vile pros and the filthy husksters. Touch my Dan Dare braces."

Scrooge did as he was told, and held them fast. Fanzines, models, paintings, the very room vanished instantly; they were hovering in another room where a meeting of some kind was in progress. Seated around the table were half-a-dozen people with sensitive fannish faces and another was on his feet addressing them and waving a gavel. Every now and then he would hit the table and, sometimes a head with it.

"Organisation!" he was yelling. "We must have organisation! We have to put on a SuperCon that will have Val Parnell on his knees begging us to produce the next London Palladium show. We can't let those dirty rats in London down. Now, we'll go through it again. At 11.30 I get up, and 3 seconds later start the opening speech of welcome."

"But shouldn't the Chairman....?"

"The bar will have been open half-an-hour then. The opening address will last 10 minutes and 24 seconds. We'll have a 3 minute interval for applause, and after that we start the Great Science Fiction Water Polo Match."

"But won't the cost of a water-tank..."

"Tank? TANK? Open the doors, man, open the doors! Then the audience can join in too. After that, the film show...world premiere of CONQUEST OF SPACE..."

"But will the money run to it?"

"We should get it free...think of the publicity they'll be getting. But I suppose....Norman, walk down the road and ask the Treasurer how much money there is in the funds."

"But Brian's in London!"

"Well, run then. Don't stand there arguing."

"I think we should have the Chairman's ruling on this point."

"Well, someone had better go up and see him. There's a good train at 7.45 with

a sleeping-car attached. Now, about the Masquerade Ball....."

The scene faded.

"Aren't they intense?" asked Scrooge in an awe-stricken voice.

"They were in a hotel," replied the Ghost with a strong Irish accent. "But look!"

The scene cleared again; it was the Saloon Bar of a public house this time. The fumes of beer, tobacco and orangeade swirled aside to let them see a small group conversing in a corner, one of whom was gesturing with a small gleaming object.

"The idea," he was saying, "is that you fit a gas-lighter flint and file-plate on the front, and fill the zap-gun with petrol. Then, when you press the trigger, the spark lights the spray, and you get a really hot shower."

"We'll probably need it up there. But isn't it dangerous?"

"We could use paraffin -- less likely to explode the gun."

"Then we could bring fire-extinguishers along too."

"Yes, I don't suppose the Manchester Fire Brigade gets much practise in a climate like that."

"Oh, I was thinking of filling the fire-extinguishers with paraffin."

"You'd be put out then. How about ringing up all the local florists when we arrive and getting half-a-ton of wreaths delivered to Dave?"

"On the Saturday or the Monday?"

"On the Monday. He'll need 'em then."

"If Dorothy and Pamela and Daphne will save up, we could take some sugar along and scatter it in the entrance of the hall. You know the 'scrunch' 'scrunch' 'scrunch' it makes when you walk over it?"

"But suppose the hall has a carpet?"

"We could use treacle."

"Do you think the hotel will sue?"

"Sweet Sue..."

"Of South Carolina, had a tesseract for...hello, Helen...had a tesseract for..."

"This conversation is beginning to sound like a HYPHEN back cover."

"Two browns, a shandy and a gin-and-orange, please Lew."

"It sounds like the POLICE GAZETTE back cover to me."

"Don't put that POGO near the beer."

"Anybody seen the latest ASF?"

"Yeah. It stinks. I hear Ted's sold to the States."

"A mild, a cider, and orange and a sherry, please Lew."

"How about having someone disguised as an American author at the Con? He could let fly at NEW WORLDS."

"Bert would love to do that."

"Anybody want a game of darts?"

"Ginger beer and a bag of crisps, Lew."

"Anybody seen the Visitor's Book? Couple of new people here."

"They don't look like fans to me."

"No, they probably read science-fiction."

"I got a polite letter from Chuck today."

"Arthur's next TV broadcast will be called 'From Here to Infinity.'"

"Sherry and sausage roll, please."

"Doing much writing lately?"

"Double top wanted."

The voices merged into a roar and darkness swirled down on the scene. Through it, dimly and at a distance, Scrooge saw a troop of khaki-clad figures, working, working, ceaselessly working, piling magazines on a lorry, a whole fleet of lorries, sending them off to the far corners of the world, bearing back huge sacks of mail in return; a busy hive of industry whose directing figure seemed to be spinning an intricate network thicker and thicker over the whole panorama of fan affairs. Busier



and busier the figure became, and the Ghost of Fandom Present became more serious albeit thicker all the time it worked.

"How strange!" He goes faster and faster! Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if this fan will survive, or whether, whirling in ever decreasing and faster circles, he will eventually disappear...?"

"I see a vacant seat," interrupted the Ghost, "in the Officer's Mess, and an Army Unit without a purpose, carefully preserved."

"No, no!" said Scrooge. "Oh no, kind Spirit! Say he will be spared!"

"If Army Demobilisation Regulations remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race," returned the Ghost, "will find him here."

"Then where...?"

"Perchance down South."

"Dixie?"

"Kent. Come!" In a moment they were speeding over hop-fields and orchards and paper factories, descending at last in a riverside town. Flashes of light lit a murky gloom here, and now and again there would be a dull explosion. The Ghost shook its head.

"I feared that something like this would happen. They had a duplicating machine, two printing machines, four tape recorders, and enough electrical equipment to build Venus Equilateral....duck!"

A fantasy plaque whistled by, followed by a red-hot bookend.

"Why couldn't they be satisfied with a jelly hektograph?" grumbled the Ghost. It reached out and caught a passing telescope, but before it could focus the instrument an explosion more violent than any which had gone before tore it away. A mushroom-shaped cloud arose over the town.

"That's arose between Thornes," said the Ghost. "Hah! Wait a moment." It produced from somewhere in its robes a large black notebook and wrote busily. Scrooge wiped some perspiration away.

"That reminds me....weren't there some fans in Northern Ireland...?"

"There were" said the Ghost. "Now they're all authors and artists and columnists in professional magazines. All except one brave soul; a True Fan. He collects Max Brand."

"Max Brand?"

"Yes."

"Max Brand?"

"Yes."

"The Max Brand who wrote - er--"

"Yes."

"Oh. Well, that explains that." Scrooge wiped his forehead. "Damp in these clouds, isn't it? By the way, forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask," said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe, "but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, unless you have four feet, protruding from your skirts. Are you a....mutant?"

"I might well be," was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. "Look here." From the foldings of its robe, it brought a child, a child with a lone-wolf gleam in its eyes but no trace of humour. It was carrying a pile of pocket books, and was peering at them shortsightedly. The Ghost nudged it and it looked up at Scrooge.

"Good evening, sonny," said Scrooge, and so changed was he that his heart was overflowing with kindness at the thought of this youngster starting out on the path of science-fiction. "Are you a science-fiction fan?"

"Oooh, yes. I read Vargo Statton and Ray Cosmic and Volsted Gridban --I think he's hyper -- and Ralph L.Finn -- he's my favourite -- and Brian Shaw and Gill Hunt and Astron del ---"

Scrooge started back appalled. "Stop, my boy!" he cried. "Have you never heard of Ray Bradbury, Robert Heinlein, James White, Isaac Asimov, even..Uncle Hugo Gerns back?" "Nah!"

Scrooge shuddered. Having it shown to him this way, he tried to say that it was a fine child, but the words choked themselves rather than be parties to a lie of such enormous magnitude.

"Spirit! Is it yours?" Scrooge could say no more.

"It is Fan's," said the Spirit, looking down on it. "It's name is Want."

"Want ---strangling?"

"Want showing the True Science Fiction and then True Fandom."

A bell struck twelve. Scrooge looked about him for the Ghost and the Reader, but saw them not. As the last stroke ceased to vibrate, he remembered the prediction of the Spirit of Sixth Fandom, and lifting his eyes, beheld a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded, coming towards him.

#### ICICLE FOUR

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approached, like Bob Shaw approaching a bar. It was shrouded in a deep black garment.

"Am I in the presence of....the Ghost of Fandom Yet To Come?" said Scrooge.

The Spirit answered not.

"You are about to show me the shadows of things that have not happened," Scrooge pursued, "the things that might be, like an Ackerman film news column." It gave no reply, but moved away as it had come towards him, and Scrooge followed in the shadow of its dress, which bore him up, he thought, and carried him along. They found themselves in a City, in a bookshop whose walls were lined with s-f; the M'Intosh trilogy and Clarke's two Fan Books and the complete Heinlein Future History and many others. Several expensively dressed gentlemen were talking to the proprietor, and observing that the Spirit's hand was pointing to them, Scrooge listened.

"No," said one, "I don't know much about it. I only know it's dead."

"What was the matter with it?" asked another.

"An attack of common sense, I suppose. After all, what was the good of it? A waste of time, if you ask me. Nobody will miss it."

"But won't it make a difference to the sales?"

"Good heavens, no! Make 'em better, if anything. Fans never did bother much about buying stuff...they either borrowed it, exchanged it, or ignored it."

"You're right. I'm putting up my US magazine prices again next week."

The Phantom glided out onto the street. Its finger pointed to two persons meeting, and Scrooge listened again.

"Hello, how's it going?"

"Hello! Oh, not too bad. Pushing our print order up another 5,000 for the next issue."

"Me too. Now I haven't got to bother about letters from fans, I can spend a lot more time on the magazine."

"Yes, they were a damned nuisance; not that I ever let it affect policy, but I like to keep friendly with people."

"Even fans?"

"Ha-ha. Yes, if you called 'em people."

"Fandom is....dead, then?" asked Scrooge. The Spirit made no reply, but beckoned again. They sped over rooftops, passed through the wall of a room where a gentleman was writing at a desk. Scrooge peered over his shoulder. It was the mss. for a History of Fantasy, the chapter heading was 576, and it started:

"The few remnants of London fandom that escaped the holocaust of the SuperManCon agitated for some time for the release of their comrades, but public feeling was too strong; 'Manchostrated' passed into the language as a verb denoting widespread destruction caused by

riots, and the phrase, 'a veritable Bacchanalia of the North' also has reference to this affair. In the US, a Super Big Pond Fund managed to aid a few refugees from British justice, in particular the Belfast group, which found..."

Scrooge looked at the Phantom in horror. "Was there no one to mourn the passing of fandom? Is there any person in the town who feels emotion caused by fandom's death?"

The Phantom beckoned, and they were in another study, and the man seated at the desk therein had his face buried in his hands and was shaken by sobs.

"The loss is too much" he moaned. "All that revenue gone. How can I balance the accounts?"

Scrooge looked at the Spirit in bewilderment, and in a second they were outside a glass-fronted door which bore the legend POSTMASTER GENERAL. The Spirit beckoned again, and again they passed over hop-fields and cherry orchards and paper-factories. In the riverside town, strange glistening figures scurried to and fro, printing fanzines, mailing them, writing more, printing them ....As Scrooge watched, 15 issues of the Journal were despatched. They were all identical. Robots have no originality.

They passed on again; a column of Army vehicles was below them, and they descended to the roadside. A group of soldiers were gathered around an officer.

"Private Taylor!" he was shouting; "The Army has been lenient with you; we have even allowed you to carry your duplicator with you as long as it did not interfere with your comrades. But when you start printing your abominable 'fan-zines' and throwing them from Army vehicles as we pass through towns...."

"But Lieutenant Buckmaster...."

"But nothing! Escort, SHUN!....."

"Phantom!" protested Scrooge, "Surely not all fans....!"

A panorama seemed to float in the air before them; in town and village, by Welsh mountain and Westmoreland lake, Bournemouth and Brighton, all over Great Britain, one-time fans were sitting by dusty duplicators and piles of correspondence, writing, writing, writing; peeping their walls with rejection slips, grabbing eagerly at cheques. A magazine catalogue appeared; half-a-column of the back page was entitled SPACE DIVISION and contained the news that the last local fan was working full time for the biggest s-f dealer in the North, and that this issue of the fanzine would be the last.

Only in the wilds of Wiltshire did a lone fan carry on, writing letters that were never answered, laboriously handwriting fanzines and sending them to prozines which never reviewed them, a small brave flame of fandom in the darkness of professionalism.

"Fan's course foreshadows certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead," said Scrooge. "But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!"

The Spirit said nothing, made no move.

"Spirit!" he cried, clutching at its robe. "Hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse. If I am the man I would have been if I had not been the man I might..." he stopped. "Assure me that I may yet change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!"

Holding up his hands in one last prayer to have his fate reversed, he saw an alteration in the Phantom's hood and dress. It shrunk, collapsed, and dwindled down into...a duplicator surmounted by a pile of dust.

## ICICLE FIVE

Yes, it was his own room; the gas stove was still alight with the spaghetti bubbling away merrily, and in the fireplace the last ashes of the fanzines were glowing red. Scrooge eyed them remorsefully, then darting to his overcoat, pulled out a handful of silver and ran to the window. Outside, a small boy was whistling Two Little Men On A Flying Saucer. Glorious! Glorious!

"Hey, boy! Do you know the all-night Post Office?"

"Yus, mate."

"What an intelligent boy!" said Scrooge. "He should grow up to be a fan. Go around there now, my little man, and tell them to send a messenger with some Postal Orders. Here, I'll give you a letter to take to them. Come back in five minutes and there's five shillings for you."

The boy was off like an A-bomb.

"I'll send for all the fanzines that I've ever heard of," whispered Scrooge, rubbing his hands and splitting with a laugh. "And an extra big one...no, two, for my membership of the Supermancon and a contribution to the Big Pond Fund."

With a sweep of his hand he sent story manuscripts and rough drafts flying from his desk, and sat down at the typewriter. Perhaps he could put out a one-shot fanzine to send with the postal orders? Ideas were bubbling up inside him; supremely fannish ideas that weren't worth a light on the market. Whistling merrily he started typing away.

On the gas stove, the spaghetti boiled over with a cheerful hiss.

CHARLES DICKENS & A. VINCENT CLARKE.



Curator: Jack Doggett

THE SPACE RAIDERS, Barrington Beverley. (Philip Allan, 1936.)

The theme of this book is the old one of invasion from space by visitors who announce their arrival by destroying an airliner. The invasion proper does not materialise as Professor Longdon deduces that the single marauder is an advance scouting party and takes steps to see that it does not return to base with the news that Earth is a future colony. With such a simple and well-worn theme, it is ideas that are needed and Beverley provides enough for a readable story.

Veteran s-f readers will know the art of extracting the goodness from this book, rather like, I suppose, getting the best from an over-ripe apple. Since it is typical of the period it can well provide an exercise in that art for those who have entered the asylum since the last war.

Don't let the corny love interest deter you. The Professor has a pretty daughter and guess who she loves -- yes, the Professor's assistant, of course, and it is while the said assistant is rescuing Kay from the enemy's clutches that we have our only glimpse of the raiders.

A VOYAGE TO ARCTURUS, David Lindsay. (Methuen, 1920)

The title of this book is misleading for it is not an interplanetary story in the strict sense but a fantasy which, in style, somewhat resembles C.S. Lewis's "Out of the Silent Planet". Whereas the motive behind the latter, however, is obviously religious, that behind "Arcturus" is obscure to the point of invisibility. It opens with a sequence at which some half-dozen characters are introduced and discarded at the end of the first chapter, a most disconcerting device. However, the reader follows the fortunes of three others, Muskull being the one round whom the tale centres. He finds that, almost against his will, he is to travel to Tormance, a planet of Arcturus. Lindsay here concedes brief mention of a spaceship -- it is propelled by Arcturian back-rays.

Muskull arrives on Tormance unconscious in Chapter VI which is entitled Joiwind and this and the remaining chapter headings are a fantasy in themselves. Oceaze, The Wombflash Forest, Lechallfæ are samples. Muskull awakes to find he now has a tentacle on his chest, a knob on his forehead and each side of his neck. All are functional but not permanent as he has no difficulty in exchanging them first for a third eye and third hand and later for membranes, multiple eyes and so on, during his journey across the planet. He is in pursuit of something but he himself is not clear what it is. (Continued on page 46)





Comments on the ANNISH.

PETER CAMPBELL. Congrats on your Annish, which was a fine job. I'm vaguely jealous.... you have more fiction in it than there is in ANDROMEDA. Vargo Statten (Fearn) had the best yarn.. he obviously can write when he wants to.

VINCE CLARKE. Last SPACE TIMES... the new duper seems to be working well; excellent reproduction. Your editorial thought-provoking; I remember laughing out loud at Elmer Rice's book VOYAGE TO PURILLIA some years ago (ask Doggett for info); but apart from those books which are satirically funny more than rib-bustingly funny.... Palmer's HESPERIDES, Marshall's UPSIDONIA, Hamilton's IMPROMPTU IN MORIBUNDIA, O'Duffy's SPACIOUS ADVENTURES OF A MAN IN THE STREET and KING GOSHAWK AND THE BIRDS (recommended, these two), there are very few books of humorous s-f...wait a moment and I'll take the typer on a tour of the house...

Well, here we are in the front room... it's a lovely evening... I can just see a little fog seeping through the window-frame. On the shelves here, we have... why, yes! Weirbaum's MARTIAN ODYSSEY collection, which had true humour; Richardson's wacky and little known EXPLOITS OF ENGBRECHT... fantasy, not s-f, but really funny; ummm... Sturgeon's WITHOUT SORCERY collection contains ETHER BREATHER and its sequel, BUTYL AND THE BREATHER, two really humorous stories from the wartime ASF, as well as several UNKNOWN yarns...BRAT, CARGO, etc; I can't regard LEST DARKNESS FALL as humour, and de Camp's other stuff is mostly funny fantasy if you think de Camp is funny.... no more down here, let's try the main collection upstairs...

Brrrrr...it's cold... some of Dunsany's stuff could slide into an s-f category; how about Wodehouse's LAUGHING GAS? Oh yes, and Radcliffe's LADY FROM VENUS...s-f? Little except unconscious humour here, by the looks of things... Father Ronald Knox's MEMORIES OF THE FUTURE... no, not really funny... BACK TO THE FUTURE, by Staniland, an allegedly funny satire... as de Camp remarked in OF WORLDS BEYOND, in his section on 'Humour in S-F', people find it hard to be funny about things they're sincere about or feel deeply about. Godber's AMAZING SPECTACLES? A poor book, by any standards, but some goons might think it funny; on a Thorne Smith theme. His are fantasy, anyway. Cox's THE PROFESSOR ON PAWS... ummm, something like Boshell's DOGS LIFE; not s-f as we understand the term. Belloc... his were fantasy too, with his pal Chesterton. VAN WAGENERS WAYS by Alden.. probably funny circa 1890... let's go into the bedroom as a last resort...

Ah yes, the pocket-books: Leinster's LIFE WORK OF PROFESSOR MUNTZ in S-F GALAXY, from TWS; Brown's STAR MOUSE;

and how could I have forgotten it... the best of the lot.. Tenn's VENUS AND THE 7 SEXES in THE GIRL WITH THE HUNGRY EYES; ROGUE QUEEN. side by side with Brown's SPACE ON MY HANDS and close to Kuttner's AHEAD OF TIME containing one of the Hogben stories... but they're fantasy, aren't they? Here's STAR SCIENCE FICTION with the Leiber's THE NIGHT HE CRIED and the Kuttner-Moore A WILD SURMISE...

And back in the sitting room again... there's various magazine stories in the humorous category, ranging from the Hicks Inventions with a Kick series in the pre-'30 AMAZINGS up to the KFCrossen yarns you mention in the editorial, but nothing I can think of with any real enjoyment. I think s-f has most of the humour it can stand without going into fantasy; for the rest I go Pogo.

SPACE TIMES again; I like the FANTASY ARCHIVES; good reviews and criticism, and a useful service to the newer fans. A. V. or A. - developing nicely.

Potter's article; hey, the boy is developing. You should have had your dictionary with you for spelling 'psychological'. And 'puppets': As for the article, phooey to a lot of his conclusions, even tho' it's nice meat for argumentative types. "Either psychological or action". Yah! Yah! Aristotelianism! What's the difference between an 'earmark' and a 'characteristic'?

Matter of fact, on re-reading the thing, I think I'd like to dash out a reply; Ken's a good boy, but a leetle too sure of himself. If I can manage it, I'll post you something within the week. If not, never.

George Whiting; the sort of lament that's usually reserved for editorials. How true it is!

Where's all this art work people are complaining about?

All in all, a good average issue, suffering from lack of ideas in lay-out but that may be the time factor. Keep it up, Eric.

HARRY TURNER: Herewith a questionnaire completed as conscientiously as possible: if everyone has as much trouble as I did in calculating the number of books they read during the last three months, you're causing a helluva lot of work all round! This is, I take it, the first of a series of surveys - I am interested in the results but fear that a postal survey will mean small returns and "witty" answers. Especially if you attempt to elicit more personal information in later questions! Ah well, we'll see...

(The idea is to get facts. If you have to think so much the better - perhaps until now you never realised just how much s-f you read. Your guess as to the first of a series is quite right. Hate to disillusion you but response has been extremely good and have only had 2 questionnaires giving principal hobby as "Women". As I know the characters concerned, I also know these are true answers.. JSM)

MAL ASHWORTH. Many thanks for the Annish of SPACE TIMES. I ENJOYED that. What with The Saints Jazz Band, their

singer. The Angel, a leading Fan club..two more 'zines and ST. Manchester has got something. Mebbe I've been deceived all along and there really is something in the air besides moisture. Anyway I LIKE ST. Harry Turner's inconsequentially stupendous colour cover which brightened up the appearance tremendously. Lee's superb heading for GENESIS, Gooch's modernistic title's. "Later than you Think". "At the Rise of the Moon". and "The Coated Tong"; this humorous last particularly. Nothing can be funnier or cornier (almost the same to fan) than fanzine humour- to fans anyway. Pile that on by all means. There was just a little too much fiction for my personal preference. I prefer articles in fanmags - but I'm probably out of step there. ((The reason for so much fiction in the annish was the time our artists take to illustrate material for illustration had to be sent to them several months in advance of publication because of this undated stuff ie - fiction outweighed articles. We try to balance out the normal monthly issues fifty-fifty. EB))

ROBERT BLOCH I was most taken with the format of your magazine as well as with the contents... hesitate to comment on any one item for fear of slighting others, and the array of material you offer is a distinguished one. Many, many thanks for letting me have a look at ST.

-----  
FANTASY ARCHIVES (Continued from Page 43).

During this pursuit Lindsay reveals his imagination, if not his skill, to be as lively as that of Clark Ashton Smith, in fact, Tormance could be the planet described by the latter in his "Dimension of Chance".

Muskull finally reaches the 'surprise ending' of the book, still without making clear, to me at least, why he has made his journey. Travel with him but take care, Tormance has dangers not the least of which is Muskull himself.

-----  
TED TUBB has at last left literary adolescence. His short story in the December NEBULA - "Tea Party" - proves that his earlier piece, "Dark Solution" was no flash in the pan. Altho "Tea Party" is hardly s-f it is one of the finest pieces of descriptive writing these weary eyes have seen in a long time. Watch this man Tubb: he'll be jogging the Heinlein elbow soon! Salaams, Ted, and thank you for a nice piece.....

REMEMBER the Monte Bello Islands, where they had a small A-bomb "do" a year ago? Biologists have come up with an interesting 'one year later' report. Seems that the rate of reproduction of the local turtle population has doubled. So it seems that Mother Nature has an answer to Atomogeddon. Just breed faster to replace the losses.....incidentally, no mutant turtles are reported....

D A N C I N G . T O T H E F O U R T H

Sleek and feline in her beauty,  
Caring nothing for her duty,  
Sheba strolled in the garden, proud,  
Her wicked thoughts an evil shroud.  
Thoughts of vengeance, thoughts of power,  
Soon would be her crowning hour.

Tom gazed at her, his love aspurned,  
Still the fire of passion burned:  
Lost, forsaken for another,  
Too old, too rough, to be her lover.  
Something moved, the bushes parted,  
Enter the Prince. . . The game has started.

Now Sheba's grace was well-renowned-  
Deportment, carriage, all quite sound.  
Her character was cool and haughty,  
Not the least bit gay and naughty.  
But, as her lover-Prince advanced,  
She lost all self control - and danced.

Tom watched her dance of sheer delight;  
Her mighty Prince came into sight.  
Tom watched him jump a low partition,  
And knew her dreams were near fruition.  
She leaped and twirled, with movements weird,  
Then, as the stars at dawn, she - disappeared.

The Prince stopped dead, with a puzzled frown,  
Surveyed the garden, up, then down.  
Alas, no sign of his queen he saw,  
So continued his walk, and puzzled no more.

Now, poor old Tom had witnessed all:  
The indifferent Prince had aroused his gall.  
Angered, he sat in desperation  
And tried to solve the situation.....  
Sheba's dance had been so queer.....  
THAT must have made her disappear!

Decision blossomed in his mind,  
To all else, his eyes were blind  
But to find his queen and make advances.  
So he began the twirling dances,

## DANCING TO THE FOURTH - continued

Then, behold on the seventh day,  
With little more than a gentle sway,  
A twist, a jerk,  
A tearing of nreves,  
Solids were liquids,  
Straights became curves,  
All whirling round in mad confusion,  
A mathematical dream of pure illusion.

All was quiet and still as death,  
Tom could hardly get his breath.  
The strangest beauty here prevailed -  
Even Time had tried, and failed,  
To round it off,  
To make inviting,  
To brighten up the dismal lighting.  
O dreary, sad, dim-angled world !  
Take care of those whom a dance has swirled  
Into your lap o' angle and square,  
Two beings are already there.....

### - Envoi -

Tom heard a mieow.  
His eyes were keen:  
He turned to face his lovely queen;  
He cared not less for her squared-off head,  
His was the same, when all is said.  
She rushed to him in sheer delight,  
Tom had become a welcome sight.  
A scraggy Tom.  
A Persian beauty.  
They settled there.  
She did her duty.

So on some lovely summer's day,  
When you kick your cat outside to play,  
And find, as many people do,  
Your cat no longer here with you,  
Be rid of grief and apprehension:  
But spare a thought for the fourth dimension.

D.B. Gooch and Sally R. Cryer.

\*\*\*\*\*

Space Times invites other fen poets to write for this magazine. Poems should in general be short, and it is preferable that they have some connection with either Science-Fiction or Fantasy.....eds



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## L O N D O N    L E T T E R

par  
Brian qui Boit

Christmas is upon us, Walt Willis is keeping his small relations busy drawing pictures onto post-cards in order to save money on Xmas cards and I've now finished writing to all my friends telling them what drinks would be most acceptable. (It's Whisky in case anyone feels benevolent).

Several items have been noted down for your consumption this month, and the first one is chosen simply because it is a Christmas item. Pontings, a large London store, have this year presented a trip in Dan Dares spaceship to see Father Christmas. The set-up used is simple in the extreme, take one corridor, build mock-up of a space-ship interior with two doors, children enter through door A, door is shut, interplanetary scenery including flying saucers floats past the port-holes, this is the usual moving scenery idea of painted canvas on rollers, destination reached out go the kids through door B into Santa Claus land. This description I hasten to add is not the result of personal investigation, but an adaptation of a fond mothers impressions.

Now to the more important news, first gem is that the London Circle are moving. Lou Mordecai is taking over another pub and the whole shower are going with him. Last Thursday was however quite a normal night, with the exception of Fred Brown, Vinç Clarke and Pete Taylor who were writing hundreds of envelopes to all who have ever signed the visitors book, truly a labour of love and all self-inspired. The name of the new pub by the way is "The Globe", which is quite a suitable name all considered. Whilst on the subject of suitable names I'm afraid that the Londoners will have to change the moniker of their 'one-shot', "Nag out of Stable" has now lost its point, pity after all the sweat that went into thinking up what name.

Now we get out our black habits to mourn the passing of a famous fanzine, "Quandry" is dead. The black-bordered final issue is out, Lee Hoffman has retired from active fandom. What a bad day it was for fandom when the energetic Hoffman decided to devote her talents to the world of professional writing. One point which seems doubly hard to bear is that La Hoffman is not writing Science-Fiction but is engaged in composing a Detective novel

Now to the cinema for a review of the CinemaScope and Stereophonic sound opus, "The Robe". The main purpose behind this review is not to discuss the merits or demerits of the story, yet it struck me that a short review of the actual story might be of interest to the more catholic of our readers.

In short this is the usual "Biblical Epic" which Hollywood puts out, the usual contingent of a Christian strongman, a beautiful Christian maid who makes a convert out of the handsome Roman captain, then of course we must have the nasty Emperor. Leaven this motley crew with racing charriots, vast arenas and a cast of thousands and you have the substance of the story. Without the use of CinemaScope this would have been a poor specimen when compared with "Quo Vadis", but the new technique goes somewhat towards lifting it out of the rut called mediocrity, but it still remains inferior to Q.V.

Now to the new treatment - firstly this is not 3-D, the wide, curved screen adds a certain amount of depth, it also gives a better effect of such scenes as a chariot race but its uses are limited by lack of height. A good example of this is given in the film itself where one character is lying full-length across the screen, in order to show him getting up the camera has to pan back abruptly, thus causing three-quarters of the screen to become devoid of interest. The photography is also rather fuzzy in parts and does not have the crystal clarity that we have come to expect from modern films. It would of course be foolish to expect perfection in any new device but the defect must still be brought to light. The other innovation is the Stereophonic sound which is in actual fact only of real value for effects like the rolls of thunder and heavenly choirs. There was at times the allusion that the people on the screen were actually speaking the words, but I was afterwards inclined to think that this was more a product of an overripe imagination than excellent technical devices.

To sum up the film is well worth going to see-- but not at West-End prices, and it appears doubtful as to whether the local cinemas will be able to afford the use of the wide-screen for a seven-day showing.

Now on we travel to more fannish territory, to wit a letter in Authentic No 39. A new fanzine is heralded under the title of "Fission", and the editor thereof, name of Colin Parsons, has been smitten with the idea of using small offset type which he apparently thinks is going to sound the fan world. Let me therefore gently point out to Colin the varied and good quality means of reproduction already in use in the British fanzines. 'Slant' for example has been using letterpress for some time now, O.F. has been making frequent use of photo-reproduction, and 'Zenith' is now done in litho. Still good luck to you laddie, we are eagerly awaiting a copy of 'Fission' for review in our somewhat archaic production.

(continued on page 55)

# Animal, Vegetable or Alien

By reason of the several issues of ST put out during the past few weeks, we are faced with a dearth of news. So for this month, we would like instead to reminisce upon our year's reading.

It's been quite a good year for the SF Fan; more magazines and pocket books have appeared than ever before. Not all, of course, have been of good quality and these (the spirit of goodwill, you know) we will ignore, because we would far rather write about the stories we enjoyed than the ones we would prefer to forget. ASTOUNDING, our favourite magazine, has had an "even" year, not many classics but very few poor yarns. Best story in our opinion was Hal Clements' magnificent "Mission of Gravity", one of the finest stories of an Alien environment ever penned. Of the shorter items the following stick in our mind: "These Shall not be Lost", by E.B.Cole (from the January issue) - this is a story reminiscent of the Anachron, Inc. series of 1943. March brought us John Loxmith's neat and very well written "Thou Good and Faithful..." Loxmith (John Brunner) appeared impressed with his own story; he spent several hours at the Coroncon reading it. April, we had the first instalment of "Mission of Gravity", and Chad Oliver's "The Ant and the Eye", based on the theme that prevention is better than cure; we would like to see this gambit followed through to the logical conclusion. "...And a Star to Steer Her By", the cover story for the June issue by one Lee Correy, who works on rockets and knows how to write about them too. Interesting, that the cover for this issue was a photo of a model "Fafnir", with cotton wool for clouds, made by the author. The July issue saw the return of Wing Alak, Poul Anderson's problem solver for the "League Intelligence Patrol", with a very neat solution of how to deal with an all-conquering dictator, in "Enough Rope". With a totally different theme, Anderson pleased us very much in the August issue with "Sam Hall": Chan Davis shared the honours in this issue with his poignant "Share our World." The Baldies found a partial solution to their dilemma in "Humpty Dumpty". Lewis Padgett tho', still allows scope for continuation of this series. We could go on for several more pages, on the merits of ASF but there are one or two other magazines which also deserve praise.

The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction has given us some memorable stories over the past year. In the April issue we had the "Cat", that very funny piece, by Reggy Bretnor, surely the best humourist yet discovered by the SF field? In '53 also, F&SF featured its first serial, "Three Hearts and Three Lions", by the ubiquitous Poul Anderson - a fine Fantasy this, the only comparable story published during this year was de Camp and Pratt's contin- (53)



uation of the Harold O'Shea series in "The Wall of Serpents". This item in Fantasy Fiction, the nearest approach to UNKNOWN that can be obtained today. GALAXY, too, has printed a number of yarns that linger: J.T. McIntosh gave us much pleasure with his "World out of Mind", and "Made in U.S.A.", two totally dissimilar stories but minor classics both of them.

And have you read STARTLING recently? If the novels they have coming up are half as good as some published during '53 you are missing some good stuff if you have not. "Halos Inc", "The Conditioned Captain", "Moth and Rust", "Journey to Misenum", (sequel to "House of Many Worlds"), "White Widows", not literary classics these, perhaps, but darn good entertainment just the same. To touch on half the good stories read in one year by the average Fan-reader would need a fifty page magazine and as we have no intent of hogging the contents of ST, that way, we will fold up our magazines and silently steal away. eb.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

#### THE LAMENT

Occasioned by the unfortunate non-appearance on the editorial desk of a promised 2,000 word ms. Said ms was to have been the AUTHENTIC account of the American adventures of Alistair Paterson's "unknown friend" Herbert J. Campbell, fcs, frhs, msci, fbis. Pine not forever, gentle reader - the wanderings of Campbell have been set down for posterity in the Nov. issue of HYPHEN, by the grace of Willis & Harris, a fanzine.

Alas! how oft does goodness wound itself,  
And sweet affection prove the spring of woe ! -Home

O THOU pale orb that silent shines,  
While care-untroubled mortals sleep !  
Thou seest a wretch who inly pines,  
And wanders here to wail and weep !

With woe I nightly vigils keep,  
Beneath thy wan, unwarming beam ;  
And mourn, in lamentation deep,  
That Campbell's piece we have not seen.

From ev'ry joy and pleasure torn,  
Life's weary vale I'll wander through;  
And hopeless, comfortless, I'll mourn  
A faithless writer's broken vow !

jsm

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-e-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

LONDON LETTER - continued from page 52

Finally, a word about the Vargo Statten Magazine. We have been informed from a very reliable source that a department is to be included giving pen-portraits of well known fans. No. 1 is the obvious choice - Capt. Ken Slater, OF Chief. Farther than that we cannot as yet go. Will fans be listed in order of fame (notoriety) or will the old be rubbing shoulders with the new? However the Editor decides to do it, it still remains a good idea, and one which ought to promote a good deal of controversy, especially if some comparatively known fan is apparently omitted while some neo-fan comes early in the list.

\*\*\*\*\*END\*\*\*\*\*

"The Moon belongs to everyone...." Or does it?

Robert Heinlein's "Man who sold the Moon" ( now available in this country from Sidgwick and Jackson at 9/6d ) raised a neat point that has yet to be settled in the International Court or by UNO - or someone.

Just who has got any territorial claims on the Moon?

SPACE TIMES makes a prediction : within five years the question will be aired internationally: then the fun and games will start and the lawyers grow fat upon the pickings as each of the Big Three tries to pin her flag - by remote control or telekinesis or some such gizmo, we assume -on a large lump of pumice a quarter of a million miles away in Space.

Another prediction ( we do this all the time...) The Union Jack will beat the Stars and Stripes to the flag-raising ceremony on Luna: Woomera will be the first Terran operational space-port.....jsm

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WE REGRET that owing to the lack of a full page we are not able to publish this month the results of the recent Examination for the Associateship of the Institution of Science-Fiction. The results will appear in the January issue, together with the comments of the Examiners.

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NOTED in the November issue of "Hyphen"..... Chuch Harris, of "Carolin", Lake Avenue, Rainham, Essex, denies any identity with or relationship to Chuck Harris of the same address. We are sorry, Chuch/k, no one told us you had multiplied yourself by the square root of 'Minus One'. How does it feel?

---

PARDON ME, FAN, YOUR SLIP-UP IS SHOWING.....YOU HAVEN'T REGISTERED YET FOR THE SUPERMANCON.....SEE PAGE.....4 9

### A NOTE ON SUBSCRIPTIONS

The commencement of the new financial year, as far as the N.S.F.C. and Space-Times are concerned, is upon us. For a number of our subscribers this is the last issue covered by their present subscription. This note, however, concerns all our subscribers so please read on.

In the interest of easier accountancy I intend to amend the subscriptions throughout the coming year in order that by January 1955 all present subscriptions will fall due on the first day of the new year. For example a sub. due in March will be 5/= to Space-Times or a full members charge of 6/3d, this will carry them through until the next Xmas issue — Get the idea ?

The rates this year will be the same as last year, 6/= for S/T only, and 7/6d to full members for the complete year, and all subs. falling due on the first of Jan. will be at that rate.

Those who are now due to cough up the requisite amount will see a very large cross against this, written in my own fair hand. It might seem to several who are gazing in horror at a dirty big hex that it was only eight or nine months ago that they last paid; this could well be so: owing to a change of Treasurer last year, and the ensuing hiatus, renewal notices were not sent out on time, but you have received twelve issues of S/T for your money.

Now before you rush out to the Post Office to get a Postal Order consider this present issue: the total cost to you is six-pence per copy including postage. I'm not bragging when I say, "Could any other fanzine offer such value for money ?."

I agree that this is the Xmas issue and therefore larger, but it is now standard quality of printing, indeed we intend to improve on this considerably throughout the year. For example we have high hopes of a multilith cover every month, good artwork to be photo-reproduced, in fact a whole host of new developments. We intend to live up to the title of "The Worlds Most Enterprising Fanzine".

Eric, Stuart and I would be pleased if you would comment on this issue and suggest changes that you think would improve the magazine. If the suggestions are within our financial scope we will make every endeavour to effect them. On this subject I suggest that all who are re-subbing and who have a suggestion to make should do both at the same time, but if you are not yet due to re-sub don't let that stop you writing.

One final point to all who have the hex appended. Your copy of the Janish. will be held for you until the 20th of January, after that we cannot guarantee your copy. Sorry but we anticipate more requests than ever after this present issue.

Yours Financially,

BRIAN H VARLEY.

Dear Dorothy,

Thank you first of all for the letter. You are the first reader to share our opinion, in print at any rate, of the printing of the October issue.....didn't we tell you so in our note enclosed with the issue....?

We are glad that the explosion had no serious after-effects, but really you should be more careful...typewriters are expensive things out of which to bash Hell - though it is a neat trick if you can do it.

Before we go on to answer the letter, may we point out to you that the editorial address is not 44 Ennismore Gardens ? As it happens, another Mackenzie lives there, but such is the fame of ST that I got the letter the same day as it was delivered ( and in confidence, mind you, I'm NOT the Editor, merely the Production and therefore Associate Editor ) But that is by the way.... And we'd better explain that this letter arrived the evening we were printing this issue but it was such a dilly that we HAD to print it as soon as possible. So away dull care! Tear up the make-up book....get this IN.

We regretfully admit that we share all your sentiments about the printing. Frankly if this were hand-illuminated on gold sheets it still wouldn't do the material half the justice it should...we too hope to see an improved standard. If you could only see the letters Eric Jones has written to me...yours is in the nature of a garland of roses after his!

Art work. A sore point here. Dear Dorothy, won't you use your undoubted influence to have your husband - whom we have asked before - send us some of his work? After all, we can only use material sent to us. Sincerely, we too would like to see lots of top-grade artwork coming in. Give us the shokels and we'll have a Bonestell cover in full colour on Art Paper every month.

Since you have dragged in aesthetic feelings....why pigs? And Dorothy dear, the mother suckles the young, not the other way round... all stencilled art consists of a series of dots and dashes, even when it is done electronically. I'm afraid we can't do much about that....shortly however we hope to multilith all covers. This will give better repro, but will not necessarily improve the quality of the art itself. ( Any artists who agree with Dorothy's criticisms will find the Art Director's address on Page 4. He is always wanting new artists and more artwork... )

Now it is your turn again - how is the art work in this issue? This time we have spared no expense - we even bought a new stylus last week, and acquired one of those funny wheel things. Much better than a winkle-pin. Printing is still not up to standard, we know, but as we have already personally told you, please bear with us for a little longer..... with bated breath we await your reply.....for but not necessarily on behalf of the other members of the editorial staff of Space-Times ----Stuart Mackenzie.

STOP

PRESS

SPACE-TIMES DOES IT AGAIN .....

Elsewhere in this issue you will find an announcement about the Space Times Project of a "Writer's Workshop".....

Recently we received the manuscript of a short story. It was a very good story indeed - in fact, one of the best we have read. Certainly we considered it sufficiently good to pass it to the Professional Panel for their criticisms and notes, This it seems was a mistake, for now, alas, we shall not be able to print this story. It was at once bought for the new Vargo Statten Magazine, and will appear in the second issue, dated February 14th: Oh, yes, we didn't tell you the name of the author - it is that very well known fan writer Chuck Harris.

Our statement that there was a good chance that Writer's Workshop stories might see pro. printing has therefore borne fruit even more rapidly than your editors, who are forever optimistic - otherwise they wouldn't be publishing this fanzine - had imagined. Let this be an inspiration to the rest of the fan writers : send us YOUR ms. soon.

Watch out for the announcement in the January 1954 issue of Space Times of another great ST project - the first Space Times Anthology of Short Stories, to be published professionally towards the end of next year..... if your story rates it, then it may go in the anthology:

Overheard at a recent London Circle meeting:  
Lancastrian Sam Youd ( who writes as John Christopher - that the initials are JC is merely a coincidence ) to Lancastrian of the Lancastrians Brian Varley:  
"What part of Yorkshire do you come from?"  
What's more, he wasn't trying to be funny.....

Survey questionnaires have now been received from Norway, Egypt, California, Florida, Illinois.....and of course the UK. Also from Northern Ireland..... have YOU mailed off your questionnaire yet?

**FLASH:** SPACE TIMES CONFIRMS THAT AS FROM JANUARY ISSUE ALL COVERS WILL BE MULTILITH. ARTISTS? GET YOUR ILLOS OFF TO TERRY JEEVES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.....





do you Smoke  
a trifle too much?

DON'T OFFEND -  
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An odourless, colourless and tasteless  
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Read what other sufferers say:

Dere Surs,

Afrend has saved meee lotz of munney. My furst one put me inn orspittle  
fore sick, jaunc and I couldn't spend a bene. NBG Little Snoring

Dire Sirs,

Afrend has stopped my husband smoking - I think. Since I put an Afrend  
in his pipe, he has not touched tobacco... WL, Piddington  
P.S. It was a lovely funeral.

Mr. Afrend,

By accident I dropped an Afrend in my wash tub. Please tell me how to  
get the weeks washing out, as mu old man wants a clean shirt badly.

Dear Sirs, Afrend in need is a friend indeed-ha, ha, do you get it? That is a very  
funny joke which you can send me £10 for if you use in your advts. Also I have tried  
Afrend but as I do not smoke I do not know if it has stopped me from smoking.  
However, I know that it did stop me from breathing.... JS, Mireton-in-the-Bogs

SEND 20/- in stamps or PO for £51.10.0. to SMOKE ABATEMENT SOCIETY,  
ROOM 504, IMPERIAL TABACCO COMPANY, LONDON. E.C.9.

## UNUSUAL FEN

In all cities in all places where s-f fatally fascinates there are fen who stand apart from the herd. They may be neo-fans, or old-timers, adherents of Sebenth Fandom or relics of an earlier age, intellectuals or common fen. BUT they are lively-minded fen who expect a fanmag to present interesting material in an imaginative fashion: they respect good writing be it serious or whimsical. And that is why they subscribe to

## Z E N I T H

the magazine for the mature fan. No further copies remain of the first issue, reviewed at length in Nebula 5 and Authentic 37. The second issue is now in active preparation - why not make sure of your copy by rushing a bob to Derek Fickles, 197 Cutler Heights Lane, Bradford 4, Yorks.

A special SUPERMANCON issue of A S T R O N E E R will be issued early in January! Contents will include a special write up of all arrangements made for the con at the time of going to press: a Jeeves' epic, "Superfan saves the Supermancon" "To the Supermancon in '54", a game devised by Ken Slater & Henry Ernst: fact, fiction and cartoons.

If you are a member of the NSFC the subscription is only 3/- for four issues. A few copies of the last issue remain. Subscriptions and contributions gratefully received by Harry Turner who is now toiling on the production of S-T's companion at 9, Willow Bank, Church Lane, Moston,

Manchester 9. (England)

## ANNOUNCING .....

## "CONTINUUM"

New magazine of the  
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## FANTASY

## ART

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Practicing artists, whether amateur or professional, are welcomed as members. Here is an opportunity to have your work criticised: to exchange friendly comment and advice on points of technique, presentation and printing processes. The FAS is in touch with many fan editors and helps to place member's work where suitable. Members have the use of a small library of instructional & illustrated books. A Newsletter brings news & comment at frequent intervals.

Write for details to Harry Turner  
9 Willow Bank, Moston, Manchester.9