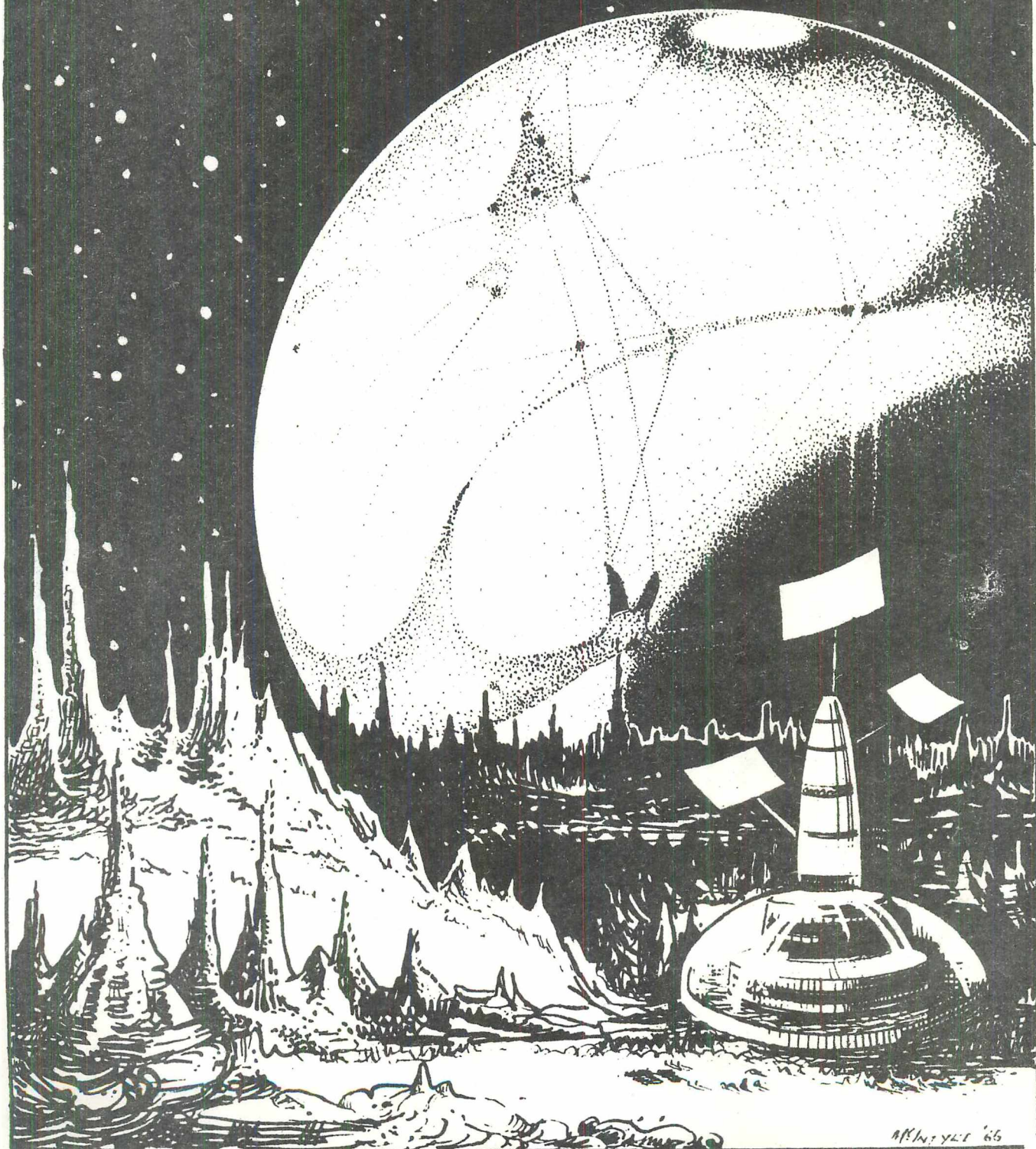


**Vector**

**31**



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## EDITORIAL

This issue of VECTOR will be the last one to be sent to members who have not renewed for 1965. VECTOR 32, containing the first part of Phil Harbottle's

WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION, will only be sent to people who have renewed at the time it is published. People renewing after VECTOR 32 has been published will not receive a copy unless any spares are available. So if you want it, make sure your subscription is renewed now.

With this VECTOR, you will find a voting form for next year's committee members together with candidates' plans for the various posts, (at least, full members will as they are the only ones eligible to vote).

Archie Mercer has declined to stand as Vice-Chairman, so that post will have to be filled at the Easter Annual General Meeting. All other candidates have shown willingness to stand.

TANGENT 1 bought a flood of mail in and orders are still coming in for the second issue. At the time of writing, I've had only three stories submitted for TANGENT 2. Until it is decided who next year's Publications Officer is, I can neither accept nor reject anything so if you send manuscripts in, don't expect a decision until after Easter. The majority of the mail has been comments on TANGENT with very few comments on VECTOR 30. These comments were not of general interest so there's no Mail Response this time. It will be back in VECTOR 32, though.

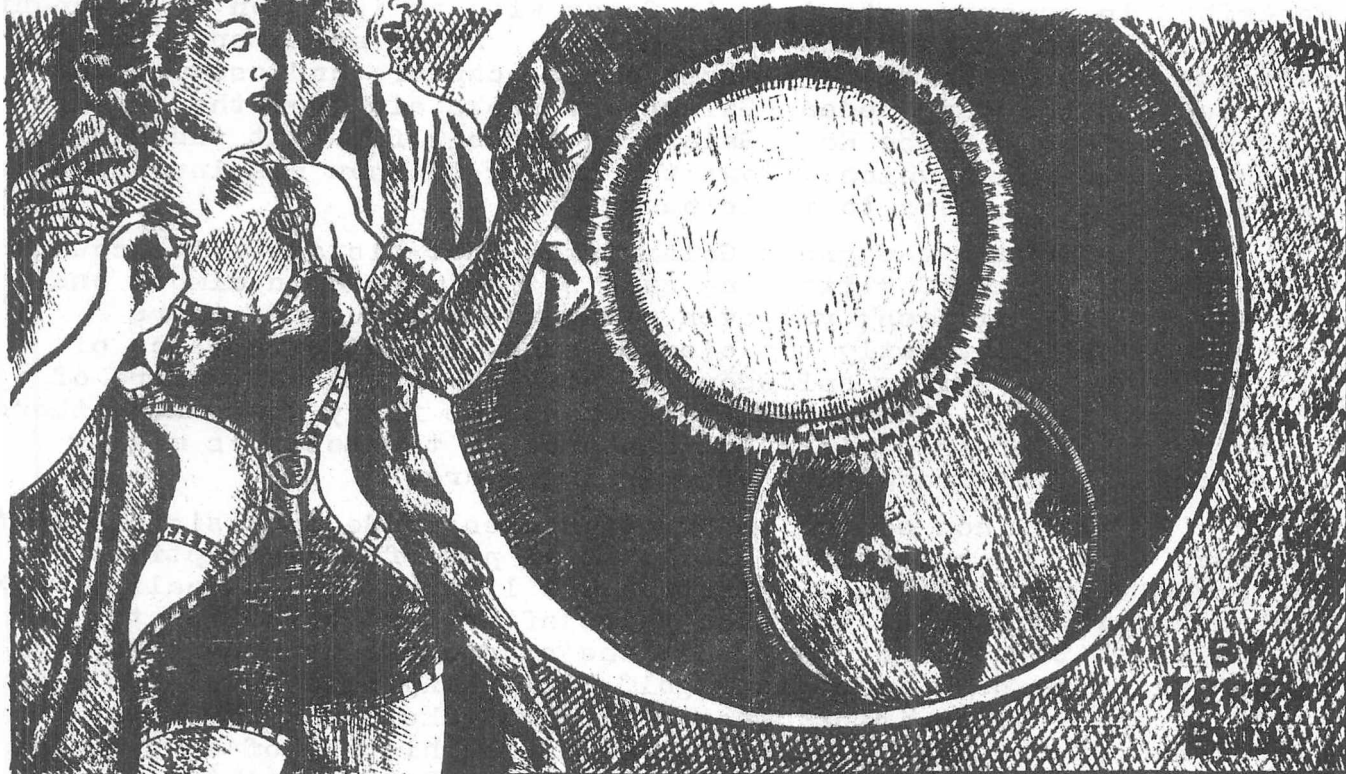
The films for the Easter Convention have now been decided on. There will be three big films - all classic SF films: "When Worlds Collide", "Forbidden Planet" and "The Conquest of Space" plus short films. Guest of Honour will be Harry "Deathworld" Harrison. 5/- enrols you as a Convention member and entitles you to a copy of the Convention Booklet. Send your 5/- to Ken Cheslin, 18 New Farm Road, Stourbridge, Worcs.

Dick Howett is using his own equipment to show the films at the Convention but he is having difficulty finding transport to get the equipment from his home to the Convention hotel in Birmingham. Is there anyone who will be travelling up to the Convention on the Friday morning, who can help Dick out? If so, can you contact Dick at 94 Ravensbourne Crescent, Harold Wood, Essex.

RGP

FS 1/50. E.K.B.

# THE WORLD SAVER RETURNS — EDMOND HAMILTON IN FOCUS



This is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of Edmond Hamilton's career in science fiction but merely an attempt to survey some of his later writings which are now available. For those who desire more bibliographical detail, Donald H Tuck's AUTHOR'S WORK LISTING contains a complete record up to February 1962.

Edmond Hamilton was born in Ohio in 1904 and made his first sale to WEIRD TALES with "The Monster-God of Marmuth" (August 1926). He followed this up with many stories and serials usually including an interstellar locale which earned him the epithet 'World Saver' (or among detractors as 'World Wrecker' - which has the advantage of alliteration). After this he moved on to 'Captain Future' - a hero who kept the magazine of that name running for four years and then appeared in another reincarnation in Standard Magazines. After the war, Standard Magazines became his main market until they folded when he sold to IMAGINATION and IMAGINATIVE TALES. Since then he has revised quite a few stories for book publication and graced last year's RepeterCon with his presence (together with his wife Leigh Brackett). Besides mentioning that HORROR ON THE ASTEROID, his first hardback collection published by P Allan (London) in 1936, brought so little revenue that his royalties were paid in stamps, he also warned against the impending publication of OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSE (Ace F-271, 1964).

This story first appeared in WEIRD TALES as a four part serial in 1929; it is not surprising, therefore, that its age shows.

The standard criticisms apply - no characterisation, banal dialogue, etc., and all the usual praise for pace, action and inventiveness. The Interstellar Patrol, an institution which Hamilton invented and described in numerous stories, is faced with an invasion by 'serpent creatures' from another and dying Galaxy. After an immense battle near the Cancer Cluster, a classic chase, capture and escape, the hero reaches the Andromedan Galaxy and seeks aid from the gaseous inhabitants who aid the Home Galaxy in the big fight at the end. Classic space-opera which allows the author to show his inventiveness and descriptive powers to their best;

"Looking toward the great Galaxy from that distance, its countless thousands of glittering suns seemed merged in almost one mighty flaming mass; yet even among those thousands there burned out distinctly the clearer suns, the blue radiance of Vega, or the yellow splendour of Altair, or the white fire of Canopus itself. Here and there among the fiery thousands, there glowed the strange misty luminescence of the Galaxy's mighty comets.....a great hive of swarming stars."

While much of the description uses crude emphasis and over-reliance on a few adjectives, it is still powerful description. While admitting that his imagination was limited in his dealing with distances, it was 1929, only two years after Lindbergh flew the Atlantic. Little wonder then that the spacecraft manoeuvre 'up' and 'down' and suns seem like giant golf balls hanging a couple of miles apart in space while intergalactic flights take but a few days. The importance of the Interstellar Patrol in the history of space-opera seems certainly as great as Smith's SKYLARK OF SPACE (AMAZING, July 1927).

While the mind boggles at the prospect of a galaxy enclosed in a force field with only one entrance guarded by huge steel forts, Edmond Hamilton carries this off with elan and striking description;

"Here was only a vast forest of dead and dying suns, stretched across the heavens, huge throngs of dark and burned out stars, cold and barren.....with, here and there, a few dying suns of dark smoky red, somber crimson stars in the last stages of stellar evolution.....Mighty metal forts that floated motionless in space set directly in the great wall of flickering blue vibrations."

Not a book for those who don't like space opera or dated plots, but certainly an interesting touch-stone when considering some of his later writing like THE HAUNTED STARS (Pyramid F-698, 40¢) which first appeared in 1960 and, as it is an original novel and not a rewrite, his latest full-length work.

Robert Fairlie, a linguist, is called on to decipher the language of the Vanryn, whose ancient and shattered base is discovered on the Moon. By what appears to be a fortuitous coincidence, their language approximates to that of the Sumerians and, as a consequence, a hyperspatial drive is swiftly discovered and a space vessel constructed in the utmost secrecy by the United States. A party sets out to land on the Vanryn's native planet, a satellite of Altair. In this novel, Hamilton makes a fairly



consistent attempt at characterisation and on the whole succeeds with good characters - no faceless supermen, like Captain Future. The conflict between the cautious, humane Christensen and the harsh fanatical DeWitt dominates the later half of the novel. On landing on Ryn, they find only the ruins of the planet's culture and the decadent, if peaceful, descendants of the Vanryn, who they have discovered were their own ancestors. The enemies of the Vanryn, the mysterious Llorn, put in an explanatory appearance at the end, in the suitably splendid setting of the ruined 'Hall of Suns'. A good science/adventure novel which illustrates the adaptability of Edmond Hamilton and shows how good space opera can be.

"She called to the wandering star-wind and it answered her from afar. She called again and it came to her with a leap and a trill, clear back across the galaxy, and Fairlie thought that anything, even a wind, would come to the calling of that voice.....like warm silver, never pinched or strained, never shrill.....the strangeness faded and only the eerie beauty of the sounds remained, weaving patterns of increasing complexity around the silver voice."

Not Shakespearean, to be sure, but sufficiently lyrically romantic (as is the whole novel) to evoke some response not found in the turgid and perfunctory descriptions which abound. Odd words jar and I have never heard of 'alienage' discussed later on in connection with the appearance of Ryn.

"For the first time the true alienage of the planet hit them ....chiefly it was the sunlight and the colours. Altair burned white-tinged-with-yellow in a coppery sky and all the landscapes ran tawny reds and shades of gold and brown....the colouring of the clouds was superbly impossible.....after that it was shapes and textures."

Austere description but not barren or unimaginative; in fact, startlingly fresh like the novel.

A new reprint is THE VALLEY OF CREATION (Lancer 72-721, 50¢) from STARTLING STORIES July 1948. A standard lost-race tale placed in South-West China with a band of Western mercenaries being hired to destroy one faction in the hidden valley of L'lan where Man and animals first gained intelligence.

"Like big bubbles of glittering jet, the spherical buildings loomed above the enlacing foliage. The round, slim towers with queer openings and balconies at their tops, pointed skyward like ebony fingers."

A rather negligent description for a piece of bread and butter writing with all the usual facets of style and plot, but none of the life which Edmond Hamilton can inject when on top of his form. Noticeable for the name of a city, Vruun, Mr Hamilton's predilection for names beginning Vr... or L'l... is a dauntingly obvious comment on his invention, which, like too many SF writers, is dangerously limited.

Just to confuse the issue, the comments on "What's it Like Out There?" (a story anthologised in A CENTURY OF SF) made by Damon

Knight, seem to indicate that while Edmond Hamilton was willing to experiment, his employers were not. The story, written in 1933, was a realistic account of the first expedition to Mars and it wasn't published until 1952 due to conservatism of editors who found it "too horrible". An excellent short story, it illustrates that Hamilton's style, or rut, was stuck to, not just because of the author's limitations but mainly due to limitations of the market.

His recent output of stories has been small and I don't intend to mention all of them but as they constitute his latest work they must be considered. In the April 1961 issue of AMAZING STORIES, "Devolution" appeared in the Classic Reprint section (originally appearing there in 1936). Another reprint appeared in the July 1963 FANTASTIC STORIES - "He That Hath Wings" (from WEIRD TALES, 1938).

In AMAZING, four noteworthy stories have appeared recently. "Requiem" (April 1962) - a moving 'atmosphere' fragment on the last visitors to Earth, although some see it as a 'soggy exercise in sentimentality'. A more traditional theme appeared in "The Stars My Brothers" (May 1962) - a spaceman preserved in the vacuum of space is awakened by political faction who wish to use him to further their cause and in a very moral tale he rejects their prejudices. "Sunfire" (September 1962) describes a meeting between men and the sentient but non-material children of the stars - a story with Stapledonian overtones. Finally, "Babylon In The Sky" - another morality play concerning a philistine party whose hatred of culture and knowledge sounds like the Know-Nothings or maybe the Ku Klux Klan Revived. All four are well written and all four have a moral to



Just to confuse the issue, the comments on "What's It Like Out There?" (a story anthologized in A CENTURY OF SF) made by Damon



please Mr Amis.

His best novel is a distillation of many standard plot-lines and all his abilities - THE STAR OF LIFE. First published in book form in 1959 from a novellotte in STARTLING (1947) and now available in Crest Books (s329, 35¢).

"Colossal ramparts of scattered and clotted suns rose up in front of them, gleaming hotly in clusters like great hives of stars or shining out like foggy witchfires through the farflung nebulae."

One phrase has come down from 1929 but the image is more impressive than the rather bald adjectival descriptions of OUT OF THE UNIVERSE. The characterisation is below that of THE HAUNTED STARS but Kirk Hammond, the heroic, if blundering and sentimental, protagonist, strides through the book with never a hair out of place defending virtue. The Hoomans (humans) are revolting against the tyranny of immortal Vramen who control spaceflight. After many perils they discover the secret of Vramen's comparative immortality on the planet of the 'Star of Life', Althar, and also the evolutionary dead end of the Vramen and their descendants' mental gifts (another Stapledonian revelation). The story is very superior space opera and enjoyable as such with fine descriptive writing;

"the hosts of stars marching forever across the black meadows of the Heavens, burning companies of hot gold and smoky red and ice-blue and green, trailing banners of nebulosity, a maze of light so vast that it was hard to think of each gleaming point as a mighty sun boiling with atomic fire as it plunged falling with its planets through infinity."

BATTLE FOR THE STARS has recently been published by Mayflower-Bell (3/6) over here. First published in 1961 and based on a version in IMAGINATION (June 1956). This novel concerns a clash between two opposing galactic powers after the collapse of the United Worlds Authority based on Earth. Jay Birrel makes a sympathetic hero as commander of a Lyran Space Squadron. He is sent to Earth to protect (?) it from the Orionids, who have designs on this politically impotent but psychologically important planet. The hero's growing attachment for Earth runs parallel with the plot and this, with the introduction of his Vegan wife, makes for a more mature if not outstanding story. There is the usual intrigue and the final battle, but some of his inventiveness is missing.

Three other novels deserve a mention because, although some are early works, they are still available. THE STAR KINGS was his earliest novel of space opera to be published as a book and as a consequence it is dated and rather tiredly melodramatic to the modern reader. THE SUN SMASHER (Ace D-351, 1959) followed up THE STAR KINGS with a very similar plot - a hero from the present suddenly thrust into the future and given knowledge of an omnipotent weapon besides being heir to a stellar kingdom. The same criticisms apply. THE CITY AT WORLD'S END (Crest s494, 35¢) was first published in 1951 and is his best-known and most often reprinted work. An American small town is thrust into the future by the

explosion of a super-atomic bomb. They find the Earth deserted and the story deals with their reactions to their predicament and the civilisation of the stars they discover.

Edmond Hamilton suffers from all the usual defects of science fiction writers, he tends his own plot-line with monotonous regularity (as Amis comments on many other writers). His characters are rarely more than names and despite the usual 'romantic' line with a kiss snatched here and there, this is just padding. He has progressed stylistically with the genre, however and his stories have a professional finish.

He is a writer for those who like space opera for his inventions are rare and subordinated to the plot, but as far as it goes, his action is fast and furious. Many of his novels are well above the field's usual run of space opera and his descriptive ability is unusually good, though limited.

Despite his many faults, Edmond Hamilton's output and his influence on science fiction has been tremendous.

Terry Bull

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#### SMALL ADS (Free to members)

WANTED - the following US paperbacks in new or good condition:-  
 TALES FROM THE WHITE HART - Clarke; WALL AROUND THE WORLD - Cogswell;  
 THE LOVERS - Farmer; MILE BEYOND THE MOON - Kornbluth; MAN WHO ATE  
 THE WORLD - Pohl; SPACE MERCHANTS - Pohl & Kornbluth; VENUS PLUS X -  
 Sturgeon; UNTOUCHED BY HUMAN HANDS - Sheckley; A MEDICINE FOR  
 MELANCHOLY - Bradbury. Also anything else (US editions only) by  
 Farmer, Anderson, Pohl, Brown, Simak, Heinlein and Davidson.  
 Roger Richards, 1 Lyndhurst Road, Ramsgate, Kent.

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WANTED URGENTLY - ASTOUNDING (BRE) Nov '39; Feb '40; Apr '41; Apr '44.  
 ASTOUNDING (Used) Aug '44; OTHER WORLDS May '50; A E van Vogt's  
 2,000,000 A.D. Also wanted less urgently - pre-1946 copies of  
 UNKNOWN (British & USA); Ballard's THE TERMINAL BEACH; FANTASTIC Aug  
 '53; WORLDS OF TOMORROW Jun to Dec '64; FANTASTIC UNIVERSE Jun '55;  
 IF Aug '64 to date; VECTOR no 13.  
 Michael Houghton, 76 Fox Lane, Leyland, Lancs.

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WANTED IMMEDIATELY - hardbacks, paperbacks, magazines, fanzines,  
 original artwork and anything of interest to the SF reader/fan.  
 Send anything you don't want immediately. These things will be sold  
 by auction at the Easter Convention in Birmingham. To be sent to  
 Rog Peyton, 77 Grayswood Park Road, Quinton, Birmingham 32.

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DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR BSFA SUBSCRIPTION!!!

# Ballard's TERMINAL BEACH

by  
PETER  
WHITE



When a biological survey team visited the abandoned Pacific island sites of the early atomic-bomb tests, about three years ago, the scientists knew just what to expect. Animal life had virtually disappeared from the islands; sterility and lethal mutation had wiped out the fauna. Those plants still able to breed displayed various mutated characters which, while interesting to the scientists, were hardly dramatic enough to excite the layman. But one sinister and unexpected radiation effect was discovered. Large numbers of dead marine turtles, in various stages of decay, were found well inshore, some distance from the sea. The genetic mutation provoked by radiation had resulted not in any gross physical change in those turtles born after the tests, but in a terrifyingly subtle change in instinctive behaviour. Normally, female turtles crawl onto the shore at night to lay their eggs just above the tide-line, then they return to the sea. These turtles no longer made the return journey. Driven by the fatal impulse of their transmogrified instincts,

they would wander further and further inshore until they died in the heat of the sun. The implications should be perfectly clear.

On more than one level, there is a correspondence between these suicidal turtles and the hero of J G Ballard's short story, "The Terminal Beach". Travens, a schizophrenic ex-wartime bomber pilot, who has lost his wife and child in a car accident, is obsessed with a belief that the Third World War is inevitable. He sees the time we live in merely as the pre-Third, suspended on the lip of a volcano, and significant only in terms of the future disaster. Our generation is raised from the dead; he feels his wife and child "met their deaths on the advance causeways to the global armageddon". But his attitude to The Bomb itself is ambivalent. On the one hand it represents horror and death, yet it is Alpha and Omega and the fire is also the rose. A double symbol of guilt and release, it "plays straight into the hands of the Unconscious", and is filled with crypto-religious significance. Travens journeys to Eniwetok, a disused test-island, in search of the key to his obsession, hoping for a new apocalypse. He feels that the deserted concrete bunkers, camera gantries and smashed test-dummies of Eniwetok, reflect the bleak future of the race:

"Here, the key to the present lay in the future. This island was a fossil of time future, its bunkers and



blockhouses illustrating the principle that the fossil record of life was one of armour and the exoskeleton."

The scenery of the island is not just a backdrop, but a coded concrete analogue of Travens's emotions. His inner life is projected onto his surroundings, while they in turn influence his thoughts, thus forming Ballard's inner space. Shortly before the story was published, Ballard said that it represented his most extreme expression of this interplay and that the entirely synthetic landscape of the island was the perfect mirror of the mental states of the hero. Striving to avoid obscurity, Ballard constantly reminds the reader that Travens moves among ciphers: camera apertures 'look out upon this scene like the tutelary symbols of a futuristic myth', and the architecture of the island focuses upon ground zero, which is seen not merely as the detonation area of the old test explosions, but as the psychic zero of the race, where the hopes and fears of mankind lie crucified on the fire-table, ready for the last communion.

Ballard combines a sophisticated imaginative response to the Bomb, and all its associations, with the chilly jargon of the nuclear age technology. His personal mythology is expressed in the vernacular of science. Thus he creates the ironic language of holocaust, the scarifying lyricism of doomsday:

"The series of weapons tests had fused the sand in layers, and the psuedo-geological strata condensed the brief epochs, microseconds in duration, of thermonuclear time."

The actual narrative framework of the story is interesting. The story opens and closes at the same point in time, while the prolonged flashback that forms the bulk of the narrative is fragmented by a series of parenthetical passages. In one sense, the story is an inverted, and desperately ambiguous Fall. Travens enters Eniwetok, an 'ontological garden of Eden', and is tempted by Osborne and the young woman. Travens rejects both their propositions and remains on the island. Delirious with hunger and fatigue, he loses all self-knowledge, as if the juices of the forbidden fruit had been excreted at last. He talks to God, in the form of a corpse, and finally we leave him dreaming among symbols.

At night, the bleached skin of the dead Japanese seems to glow, reminding us of another symbol of betrayed Mankind, Bartok's miraculous mandarin, and Travens is joined by the hallucinatory spectres of his dead wife and son. Japanese corpse, mother and child, and bomber pilot form a chilling tableaux of 20th century guilt.

It is quite possible to enjoy Ballard's work without having the slightest awareness of the allegorical content, as the many superficial admirers of his work will testify. "The Terminal Beach" succeeds because its allusiveness is never mere obscurity. In fact, it is amongst the most straightforward pieces that Ballard has written recently. To put it simply, "The Terminal Beach" is a meditation on the emotional impact of the Bomb.

In a recent review of "The Hiroshima Pilot", a book that attempted to destroy the legend that has grown up around Eatherly, John Wain wrote that it hardly matters what (Cont'd on Pg 14).



FOR YOUR

INFORMATION

by  
**Jim Groves**

Firstly we have a missive from my old friend Ron Bennett - "I once read a story in which the hero escapes from some group, society, organisation, entity, etc. He roams a city fearing pursuit. He tries to remain in no place longer than necessary and he moves at random through the maze of unknown streets. Eventually he turns a corner and those from whom he has feared pursuit are waiting for him. They have not followed him at all, but have merely waited there knowing that because of some inbuilt tropism, he would eventually come to that particular point. Can you please tell me the title and author?"

NO! The only thing that this resembles is the demolition scene in Bester's DEMOLISHED MAN. And that doesn't really fit it anyway. Sorry. Can anyone else help out here?

Next from Ray Bowen - "In the old pre-war ASTOUNDING pulps there was a series about 'metal men'. They were 'brains' from various worlds encased in metal structures and had fantastic adventures everywhere. One of the 'brains' was an Earthman whose body was seriously injured, rescued by the metal men and housed in a metal body. Can you give the author's name and tell me if these stories were ever published as a collection?"

The stories you are referring to are the 'Professor Jameson' stories by Neil R Jones. They appeared not in ASTOUNDING but in AMAZING STORIES (12 stories), ASTONISHING STORIES (4 stories) and SUPER SCIENCE STORIES (5 stories). There were also said to have been 3 others never published. The stories appeared between 1931 and 1950 and constitute what is probably the longest SF series ever written. If you want a listing please let me know and I'll send one along. As far as I'm aware, they have never appeared as a collection.

Then from P J Ashmore - "Please could you tell me whether the following are novels, or if they are not, what they are? - "Devil Ritter", "That Receding Brow", "John Ovington Returns" (all by Max Brand), "After a Million Years" by Garrett Smith, "The Terrible Derelict" by W H Hodgson and "The Runaway Skyscraper" by Murray Leinster. When and where were they published? Are "Stowaway to Mars" and "The Space Plane" by John Beynon (Harris) the same book? Did J W Campbell, as Don Stuart, write a book called "Forbidden Planet"? Bleiler and Dikty, in the USA, have had anthologies

published, titled "Best SF Stories: 1949" and "BSFS: 1950...and thence yearly. In England, under their name, books titled "BSFS I", "BSFS II", etc have been published yearly by Grayson and Grayson from 1951 to 1956, missing out 1954. Are the two series the same in content? Under whose name was "The Book of Wonder" (Heinemann; John Luce; 1912) published?"

Max Brand - "Devil Ritter", novellette FANTASTIC NOVELS May 1949; "That Receding Brow" novellette FANTASTIC NOVELS March 1950; "John Ovington Returns" short story FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES June 1941 (also in FANTASY FICTION May 1950 under the title "The Strange Loves of Beatrice Jervan").

As far as I can discover, Garrett Smith never wrote anything called "After a Million Years". Where did you hear of it? "The Derelict" by W H Hodgson appeared in FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES December 1943 and AVON FANTASY READER No 4 as a short story. It is also in the collection "Men of the Deep Waters" published by Nash (London) in 1914. "The Runaway Skyscraper" by Loinster is from AMAZING June 1926 and is a short story.

The John Beynon Harris story "Planet Plane" was published under that title by Newnes (UK) in 1936. It had also appeared as "Stowaway to Mars" in 1935 in a British newspaper (serial) and again in 1953 under that title as a paperback in the UK. This paperback was to have been the first of the Nova novels but the others in the series came out in a totally different format. For the paperback publication the story was revised and modernised by the author. A sequel to it appeared in TALES OF WONDER under the title "Sleeper of Mars".

The Stuart who wrote "Forbidden Planet" was William J not JWCjr under his Stuart pseudonym. "The Book of Wonder" is a collection of stories by Lord Dunsany published, as far as I know, under his real name.

The Bleiler and Dikty anthologies are analysed below, figures in brackets refer to number of stories.

## USA

## UK

|                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Best SF Stories: 1st series (13) = | Best SF Stories 1950 (8) |
| " 2nd " (18) =                     | 1951 (14)                |
| " 3rd " (18) =                     | 1952 (16)                |
| " 4th " (15) =                     | 1953 (13)                |
| " 5th " (13) =                     | 1954 (9)+ 1 other        |

And from R O Richards - "Can you tell me something about the International Fantasy Award (full title: The Annual Award for Artistic Merit in Creative Fantasy)? The only information I have comes from two back issues of ASTOUNDING (BRE Feb 1954 & Nov 1958). Can you tell me the winners of this Award? Can you please give me a checklist of Cordwainer Smith's present story-cycle of which I have read "The Boy Who Bought Old Earth", "On the Gem Planet", "The Ballad of Lost C'Mell" (GALAXY) and "Alpha Ralpa Boulevard" (F&SF). Can you tell me who uses the pen-name 'Mark Phillips'? Where can I get hold of a copy of a story by James Blish entitled "Turn of a Century"?"

The International Fantasy Award was originated by four British SF fans for the 1951 British Convention and it was awarded



yearly thereafter until 1957. Awards were made for fiction and non-fiction and took the form of model spaceship lighters. The winners were selected by a panel of judges from America, Britain and the Continent. The winners are as follows:

- 1951 EARTH ABIDES by Stewart and THE CONQUEST OF SPACE by Ley and Bonnestel.
- 1952 1st FANCIES AND GOODNIGHTS by Collier, 2nd DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS by Wyndham, 3rd ILLUSTRATED MAN by Bradbury: non-fiction THE EXPLORATION OF SPACE by Clarke, DRAGONS IN AMBER by Ley, ROCKETS, JETS, GUIDED MISSILES AND SPACESHIPS by Coggins and Pratt.
- 1953 CITY by Simak, TAKE-OFF by Kornbluth, PLAYER PIANO by Vonnegut, LANDS BEYOND by de Camp.
- 1954 MORE THAN HUMAN by Sturgeon, THE DEMOLISHED MAN by Boster.
- 1955 A MIRROR FOR OBSERVERS by Pangborn, MISSION OF GRAVITY by Clement.
- 1956 No award.
- 1957 LORD OF THE RINGS by Tolkein.

I can't help you as far as the work of Cordwainer Smith is concerned. As far as I know, no one has yet produced a checklist of his work. I don't like it myself so I haven't produced a private one for my own use. Possibly someone reading this can help you.

Mark Phillips is the pseudonym of Randall Garrett and Larry Harris.

I haven't heard of the Blish story you mention.

From Larry T Shaw, editor of Lancer Books, comes this correction to one of my answers in VECTOR 27:- "William Tenn is not Morton Klass; he is Philip Klass. Phil has never written SF under his own name, whereas Mort has. They are brothers, Phil being the older, both in age and as a successful SF writer. To complete the picture, Mort's wife, Sheila, also writes and has at least one hardcover (non-SF) book to her credit."

Please send your queries to me at 29 Lathom Road, East Ham, London E 6.

Jim Groves

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#### SMALL ADS (Free to Members)

WANTED - Information on stories about King Arthur and his Knights in the SF and Fantasy magazines, giving where possible the dates of the magazines. Ted Ball, 3 Ruskin Buildings, Millbank Estate, London SW 1.

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Are you a naturist? If not then for inside information read PADlock! The pros and cons with photos are featured in issue 3, out now. Also included is an article by William Aitken, plus features on Lon Chaney by Dave Cleveland. Order this special convention issue from Dick Howett, 94 Ravensbourne Crescent, Harold Wood, Essex.  
Don't be caught napping! Only PADlock is available for a 4d stamp!

BALLARD'S "TERMINAL BEACH" - Continued from Page 10

Eatherly's true motives were, for he has passed into the territory of myth, and the Eatherly legend is more real and true than the fact. By a similar argument, Ballard's Eniwetok may be a mythical island, but it is one of the most real places on Earth.

But Ballard's technique of solopsist impressionism could be dangerous. Too often the introverted meandering of artists such as Kerouac is mere self-indulgence, of interest perhaps to the artist's analyst, but not to the reader. "The Terminal Beach" avoids this trap for several reasons. Quite apart from the fact that the narrative possesses an underlying formality, Ballard's imagery, however luxuriant, is never mere ornamentation, but always bears a linkage with the theme, at one level of symbolism or other. Besides which, the theme of this story is of the most urgent relevance to us all. For unless we too, like the turtles and like Travens, are to embark on a terminal odyssey into the Eniwetok noon - brighter than a thousand suns - both as individuals and as a race, we must answer the question that so intrigues Travens as he sits amongst the blocks, watched by the sightless melted faces of the plastic test-dummies:

"What sort of people would inhabit this minimal concrete city?"

Peter White

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SMALL ADS (Free to members)

THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR by Walt Willis. An old-time favourite and fan writing at its most skilful best. To be reprinted in the summer at 3/6 per copy all inclusive. There are only 50 copies being printed.....with ATOM illustrations and an introduction by Walt. Available from Pete Weston, 9 Porlock Crescent, Northfield, Birmingham 31.

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WANTED - the following novels by 'Vargo Statten' - NEBULA X; THE SUN MAKERS; THE INNER COSMOS; 2000 YEARS ON; MAN IN DUPLICATE; THE LAST MARTIAN; THE NEW SATELLITE.

By E C Tubb - THE STELLAR LEGION.

Will pay full price for copies in good condition. W Summersgill, 48 Severn Drive, Guisborough, Yorks.

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WANTED - information on stories by Poul Anderson appearing in the pulp editions of FUTURE, SF QUARTERLY, etc. and the smaller, less known magazines (i.e. - ORBIT, OTHER WORLDS, etc.). Title, story length and date of magazine required. Rog Peyton, 77 Grayswood Park Road, Quinton, Birmingham 32.

# GeNeRaL...CHUNteRiNg

By...Ken..SLate

With the April issue, ANALOG will revert to digest size... this will be welcomed by almost anyone who has to mail the infernal floppy thing, but will doubtless create dismay in the hearts of those folk who have organised a six-foot bookshelf to take the next ten years' supply of 'large' ANALOGs...there may be only one such, but I do know there is one. He boasted of it about two months back!

Only other magazine news I have is that GALAXY and IF sub rates have been upped to even the increase in cover price, and are now \$3.50 for six in the case of GALAXY, and \$5.00 for 12 for IF...a fourth issue of GAMMA has appeared, centre-stapled and not very good stock...GALAXY's MAGABOOK No. 3 is out with Ted Sturgeon's BABY IS THREE (GALAXY Oct '52) and ...MY FEAR IS GREAT (BEYOND Jul '53).

Barton Werper writes on with his sago...sorry, saga...and the third and fourth titles are TARZAN AND THE SNAKE PEOPLE and TARZAN AND THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN. I particularly like a scene where the Yeti are breaking into an airplane, and one of the occupants is describing the events to Tarzan over the radio..."Quick, Lord Greystoke, get this down. They're at least eight feet tall and they have pointed heads." I couldn't read any more for laughing...it seemed so appropriate!

Science fiction 'comics' are far from scarce these days - in fact, there are more 'comics' than there are magazines...but when I discovered that a couple of recent issues of the 'Schoolgirl Picture Library' were straight-forward SF adventure yarns, I realised that the final barricade between enthusiasts of SF and the general public had fallen. If any publisher is looking for a title for a tiny tots' space tales magazine, may I suggest 'Infantasy'?

I learn that J Ben Stark will now be responsible for the publication of the MAGAZINE INDEX 1951-1960 which was to have been issued by Perri Press. I do not have any idea of the position on pre-paid copies, but I expect some agreement has been reached.

Recently I had a visit from Tom Boardman Jnr, and gathered amongst other things that SF HORIZONS first issue had lost heavily, and continuation of the publication was doubtful. As someone once said, what fandom needs is a millionaire.....

Pyramid will publish another collection of 'sword and sorcery' fiction, edited by L Sprague de Camp, to be called WIZARDS AND WARRIORS, in June. From Lancer will come in April, CONAN and CONAN OF CIMMERIA, two of the Robert E Howard books, edited by Sprague. He has out now, his own pair of novellas, "Divide and Rule" and "The Stolen Dormouse" published by Lancer under the title DIVIDE AND RULE.

INSIDE, the magazine for the devotees of the Macabre, has its second issue delayed. I understand that this should be out about the end of February or early March, however.



And the Guest of Honour for the 1966 Easter Convention has been chosen and has accepted, I learn. I can't give you his name (they tell me) but I can at least say he is a British publisher of science fiction, which doesn't exactly narrow the field these days....

See you at Birmingham, London and Yarmouth...the old appointment book gets fuller and fuller....KFS.

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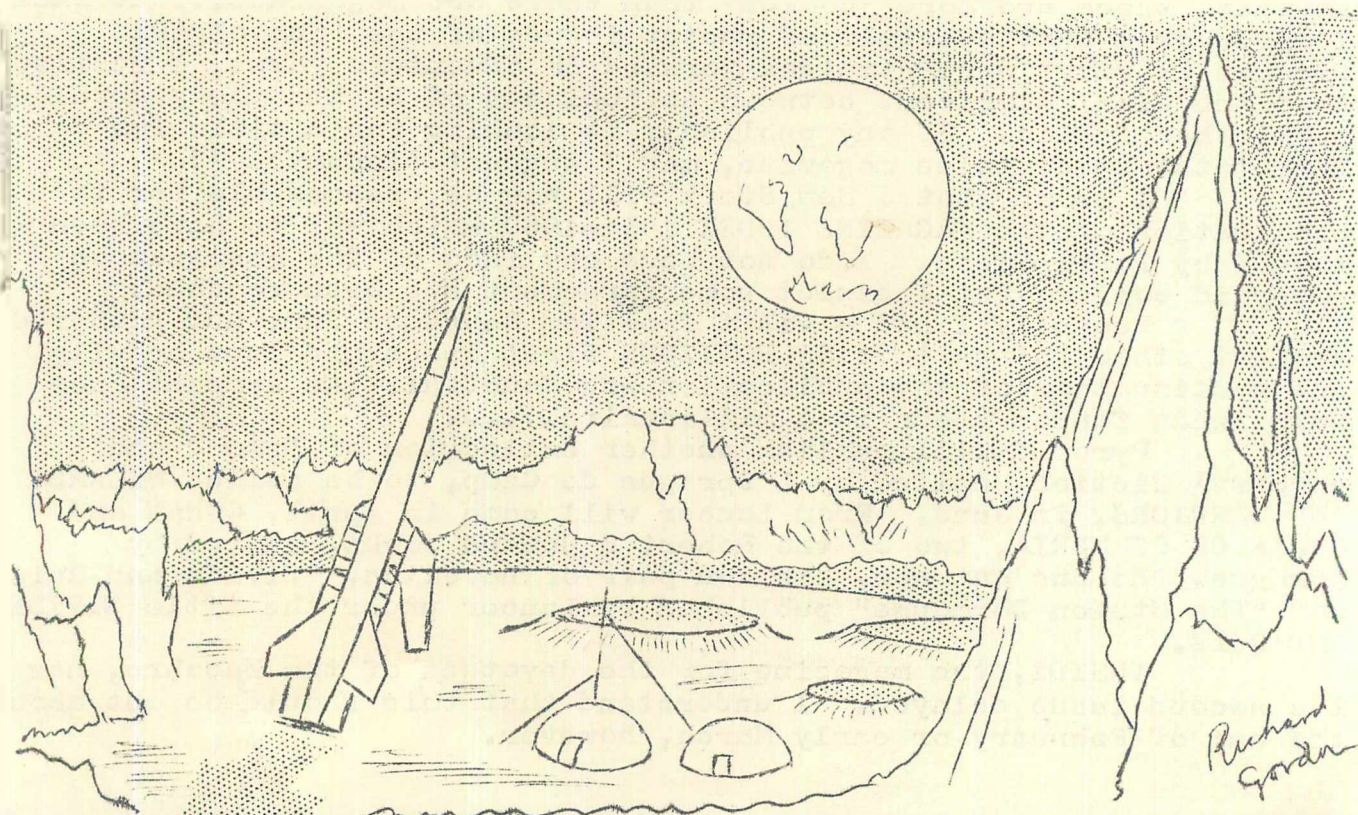
### NEW MEMBERS

A 569 ASHLEY M.R.D. 8 Shurland Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent.  
 M 570 MCKENZIE I.A. 30 Tormusk Road, Glasgow S 5.  
 A 571 SHARP M. 10 Meggitt Road, Colcot, Barry, Glamorgan, S Wales.  
 O 572 GODDEN I.H. 6 Lewry Street, Kyabram, Victoria, Australia.  
 M 573 MAIN R. 5 Dunearn Bank, Burntisland, Fife, Scotland.  
 M 574 CHARLESWORTH R.J. Flat 1, over 1 Duke St., Congleton, Cheshire.  
 M 575 CARTER R.G. 27 Greenholm Road, Eltham, London S E 9.  
 A 576 WARING R.D. 17 Rochester Avenue, Bootle 10, Liverpool, Lancs.

### CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Sheila Barnes (M 354) now Rush Green Hospital, Romford, Essex.  
 Roger Gilbert (A 485) now c/o 39 Sandhurst Road, Edmonton, London N9.  
 Charles Platt (M 398) now 325A Westbourne Park Road, London NW 11.  
 C.G.P. Smith (M 383) now School House, Village School, Culford,  
 Nr Bury St Edmunds.

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## IN MEMORIAM:

**H. BEAM PIPER**

by Pete Weston

H Beam Piper was a comparative 'old timer' in magazine science fiction, his first story appearing in ASTOUNDING in 1947. While never approaching the status of a really great SF writer such as Robert Heinlein, he nevertheless gained a far from negligible following as a writer of straight-forward and sensibly developed stories.

Piper was tall, dark and diffident, but a most pleasant and friendly personality. His personal politics are unknown, but much may be inferred from his stories and from quotes such as that which appeared in FAN SYMPOSIUM last year, for example, "I question if any reader of H Beam Piper will long labour under the misconception that he is a pious Christian, a left-wing liberal, a Ghandian pacifist, or a teetotaler."

His writing style was unobtrusive and quietly competent, and did not appear to change to any degree in the period between his first and last stories. Mostly, these appeared in ASTOUNDING/ANALOG although others were placed in GALAXY and SPACE SF for instance.

Piper's work can be divided into two main sets of story-ideas, with a few other works that fit neither. At this date it is difficult to judge whether or not these series were 'planned' - or whether they 'just grew'.

Originally his interest lay in time travel, or more accurately paratime travel - what we would call transdimensional travel. In this class I place his much anthologised "He Walked Around the Horses", his first story, "Time and Time Again" and the whole of his 'paratime police' series, comprising one novel and some half dozen shorts. According to a Campbell hint, Piper had some connection with crime detection, and this interest was blended with the mechanics of Trans-dimensional transfer ("Police Operation", a novellette appeared in ASF in 1947). "Time Crime" appeared as a novel in 1955 - there was a subsequent hiatus of nine years before his "Gunpowder God".

In the meantime, much happened. His interest switched to more conventional space-transposition, notably with SPACE's "Ullr Uprising", a surprisingly good space-opera at novel length. A background was introduced which was subsequently used as a minor part of his juvenile novel FOUR DAY PLANET some years later and also in the rest of his 'Future History' series, comprising "Ministry of Disturbance", "Graveyard of Dreams", "Oomphel in the Sky", "A Slave



is a Slave", "Naudsonce" and "Space Viking". All but one of these appeared in ANALOG, and that one, "Graveyard of Dreams", was extensively revised into JUNKYARD PLANET, a successful novel (re-titled by Ace Books as COSMIC COMPUTER).

The paratime series was vaguely reactionary - the Future History series was distinctly so, and the later work may well have been influenced by Editor Campbell and/or Robert Heinlein. Incidentally, "Space Viking" is, in my opinion, one of the most complete and successful syntheses of old time space opera and the moralistic, thoughtful modern approach.

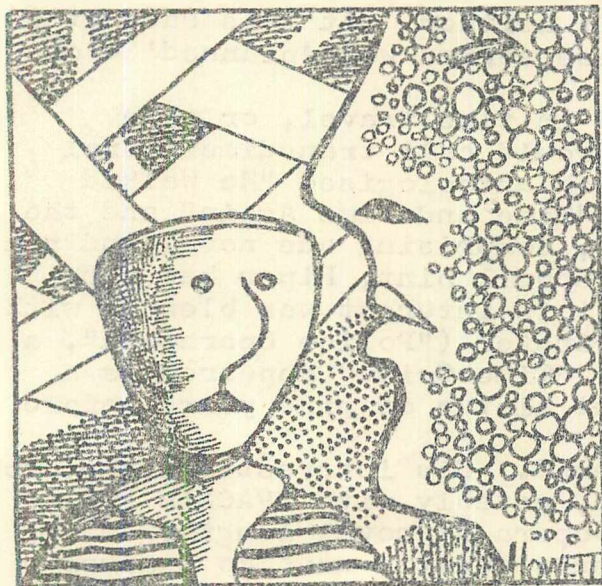
Treated separately here, but played in front of the same far-reading backdrop of the Terran Federation is the 'Fuzzy' series; LITTLE FUZZY, FUZZY SAPIENS (publisher's title - THE OTHER HUMAN RACE) - and the still unpublished FUZZIES AND OTHER PEOPLE. These books are mildly conservative - enough so to qualify as being common-sense, and quite delightful.

Apparently unconnected anywhere is "Null ABC" (published in book form as REVOLT IN 2140) which was written in collaboration with John J McGuire. This is mainly Piper's work, as the reader will discover by observance of the tight plotting, unexcitable style and dislike of 'progressive ideas' - in this case 'modern' methods of teaching children to read.

All in all, eight or nine novels and several dozen short stories. Not a wildly active career as an SF author, but a successful one, so much so that Mr Piper will be much missed by many people including this author. The science fiction field has lost a good writer and a good man.

Pete Weston

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ZENITH - Speculation. A magazine of review and comment on the SF scene. Schedule approximately quarterly, 2/- per single copy from Pete Weston, 9 Porlock Crescent, Northfield, Birmingham 31. A few copies of ZENITH 7 are left. No. 8 due out in April.



# BOOKS

## Reviews and News

THE DARKEST OF NIGHTS by Charles Eric Maine  
Published by PANTHER at 3/6. 199 pages

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John Wyndham need have no uneasy nights over this entry into the field of the 'world catastrophe novel'. According to the cover blurb, Kingsley Amis says of the author, "Maine's initial ideas are always good". This sounds very much as if he also went on to add, 'but he fails to do much with them'. If so, that bit isn't on the cover, but is certainly true in this case where the world is threatened by a new virus which threatens, if unchecked, to kill half the population of the world. The mechanics (psuedo-science?) of this virus are explained so many times that one suspects this was originally written as a serial.

Briefly, the story revolves around the premise that the Government would install all the VIPs in virus proof shelters. As a result, rioting and rebellion take place. The 'heroine', virologist Pauline Brant, whose only description is; "a young raven-haired woman", agrees to divorce her journalist husband, Clive, so he can marry Noelle, the daughter of his rich employer-to-be. Pauline meets Vincent, another scientist and the story revolves around these four characters as the rioting spreads.

Noelle gets raped, Pauline is taken prisoner, Vincent goes after her and performs like a zombie. The only character who has any life at all is Clive, who has a very hectic time all round as the other cardboard protagonists mouth their lines. The story itself starts moving about half way through, and after that moves along in high gear, although the plague itself never assumes any reality or threat....the only person to die 'on stage' kicking off on page 1. The rebels themselves seem to be walking all over the government and miraculously turn from a looting rabble into a highly organised movement within a few pages. Ideal stuff to get you through a long railway journey, but not for the bookshelf. Hair splitters will call it SF, but not to put too fine a point on it, this is purely escape type action fiction and light on the story line.

Terry Jeeves

THE WEIRD ONES edited and introduced by H L Gold

Published by DOBSON at 15/-.

165 pages

Titled mysteriously and misleadingly, this is an anthology of seven stories by well-known (more or less) SF authors from about 12 years back.

Introduction by Mr Gold is irrelevant and interesting - nothing more than a couple of pages on the hybridisation of languages.

The first four pieces are average pulp SF but, just as the reader is beginning to despair, the standard takes a sharp swerve upwards, and the collection ends with three extremely good stories.

First is "Small Lords" by Frederik Pohl, and, despite the honoured and respected name, it is disappointing. A sentimental gimmick story that sets out to prove that size might prove a hazard in inter-alien relationships - and that the cards aren't always stacked for the big feller.

"Sentiment Inc." is one of Poul Anderson's poorer pieces. Anderson has used a poor way of forming a 'plot' - taking an idea and using it as the basis of his story and then letting the characters get on with it - and this shows. But it is amusingly written and, as most of Anderson's writing, eminently readable.

Milton Lesser is one of the better-known pulp authors and his contribution "Name Your Tiger" shows us why. Good but typical space opera dealing with a Martian settlement (read Wild West town) set upon by a beast that can mimic its victims' secret fears by discovering them telepathically, and attacks them whilst they are weak with fear. Typical hero takes typical story to typical climax. Like most space opera, this moves along at a cracking pace, yet manages to remain interesting.

Another well-known (infamous?) space opera author(s) is Eando Binder, represented here by "Iron Man", in all ways the worst item in the book. A pointless piece about a man who changes into a robot that seems to be leading up to a punch-line but merely peters out in its direct way.

Mack Reynolds has long been among my favourite authors because of his collaborations with Fred Brown. Here, alone, with "The Haunted Ones", he shows once again that he can write good and literate SF - there's none of the grammatic and stylistic faults that jar so in the earlier stories. It tells of a super-hero - who is an alien - and a villainous, barbarous race - guess who?

The most memorable item in the collection - and the longest - is "Hail to the Chief" by Sam Sackett. More political speculation than SF this, as it postulates an American government that controls elections and the like by a master-plan, and is the real power behind a facade of government. Excellently portrayed.

Finally, Sprague de Camp furnishes a semi-humorous tale, "Impractical Joke", that would fit snugly into the GALAXY formula. Characterisation good, style flawless and plotting interesting. Mad millionaire finances expedition to snake-ridden planet - goes along - has terrible fear of snakes - and there is a practical joker on board....

Worth buying - cheap at 15/- - if only for "Hail to the Chief". A must for those newcomers to SF who have not yet explored

that wonderful world of pulp space-opera.

Graham Hall

THE SILENT SPEAKERS by Arthur Sellings

Published by PANTHER at 2/6. 123 pages

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English science fiction writers, more than their American counterparts, have had a leaning towards mainstream fiction. The most successful since the war, such as John Wyndham and John Christopher, have specialised in 'almost mundane novels' read by 'almost mundane people'. Brian Aldiss is a more recent example, even though the quantity of his work lately has diluted its impact.

Arthur Sellings' first novel - published originally in America under the ghastly title TELEPATH - carries on this tradition very well. It concerns an author, Arnold Ash, who discovers at a party that he is telepathic. The first part - and the strongest part - of the story is taken up by a detailed and deeply feeling account of how Ash and his partner in the first experience, Clair Bergen, react to telepathy; react and adjust themselves to it.

Adjust to the fact - and to the responsibility, for Sellings' telepathy is contagious.

Eventually, the Powers That Be get to know about it and the tone of the story alters for a smooth account of some people doing their best to carry on living reasonably sane lives to a number of jagged incidents which stick out of the book like sore thumbs. A typical example describes the traumatic experience Ash has when ordered to dig mentally into the mind of a deranged scientist of some importance. Sordid. Trivial. But giving the impression that that is what would happen, if you or I found ourselves capable of mind reading; that there'd be nothing grand about the government's reaction to telepathy. They'd just use it in the same expedient fashion they use anything else.

Definitely worth reading - especially if you want a change from galaxies and gadgets.

George Locke

THE SEVENTH GALAXY READER edited by Frederik Pohl

Published by GOLLANCZ at 18/-. 247 pages

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GALAXY SF first appeared in October 1950 and within a year had become one of the leading magazines because of its policy of publishing first rate science fiction. The situation has considerably changed since then. The stories in the present volume appeared in GALAXY between 1959 and 1964 and make up the 7th collection from the magazine; regrettably not one of them is either memorable or first-rate.

The best of a bad lot is "For Love" by Algis Budrys, which is gripping for most of its 23 pages, though the plot is not particularly novel and the ending is equivocal. Judith Merrill and Damon Knight are represented by routine stories despite the inflated claims made for Knight's story by Pohl in his introduction.



Several of the remaining stories are not science fiction except by somewhat elastic definitions and the rest contain a fine assortment of science fiction clichés both of characterisation and plot, though the Mad Scientist and his Beautiful Daughter are unaccountably missing.

On my reckoning, that makes one fair and two passable out of a total of fifteen stories. The collection is one of the most disappointing I have read and is not recommended except as a soporific.

Ian McAulay

A MAN OF DOUBLE DEED by Leonard Daventry

Published by GOLLANCZ at 15/- . 172 pages

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After an atomic war the world has been rebuilt; robots do most of the work, leaving humanity with plenty of time for enjoyment. The society is similar to that of Imperial Rome, with unlimited sexual freedom, and barbaric gladiatorial games to keep the population amused. When the story starts, the government is worried about the sudden rise of motiveless violence among young people and a committee has been set up to report on the advisability of establishing a "War Section" - a reservation where criminals can be confined. The 'keymen' - government-recognised telepaths who are secretly trying to shape the world the way they think best for mankind - are in favour of the War Section as an experiment. Claus Coman, who, unlike most keymen is a man of action as well as thought, is sent to persuade Marst, the chairman of the committee, to vote in favour of the War Section.

There is plenty of action as two psychopathic telepaths try to stop Coman from reaching Marst, but the author is primarily concerned with the character of Coman and the way he is affected by his telepathic powers. Coman stands out as a human being but Sein and Jonl, the two women he lives with, are hardly more than cardboard figures and the climax, in which Coman, Sein and Jonl develop a group mind, suffers.

The action and characterisation are well integrated but there are inconsistencies and irrelevances in the description of the society. The story takes place entirely on Earth and is independent of space travel, but Venusian farm labourers are mentioned and we are told of the Venusian belief that they are accompanied throughout life by an invisible being which will continue to exist if they die before the expiration of their normal life span.

This is Mr Daventry's first novel and in spite of a few odd faults, it is highly readable and I recommend it.

Ted Ball

SUNDOG by B N Ball

Published by DOBSON at 16/- . 210 pages

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For the first 20 or 30 pages, I didn't care for this book. The hero (who has a halo!) was far too mixed-up - even allowing for subsequent explanations - to be credible and human. Who would

laugh, as the hero does on page 16, when his internal organs were being re-arranged by a well-aimed boot?

However, the story of Space Pilot Dod's struggle against future tyranny, the mystery of his own identity and the enigma of the Aliens beyond Pluto, picked up surprisingly well. I found I wanted to read on and ended up enjoying the book. The writing, after a shaky start, got on the Ball....

Small points can be irritating to the reader and I found the author's continual use of "'ceiver" for "transceiver" annoying and unnecessary. It gives the impression of Dan Dare SF, which this book definitely isn't.

What should have been a dramatic moment (on page 30) was made comical by the sentence: "Dod felt the shrunken heads of the two Plagmen who had beaten him through the thick plastic cases." This is in the Coming-down-the-stairs-I-saw-an-elephant-in-my-pyjamas class. A little thought would have given it the drama required. There was another one - not as funny this time - on page 75: "The mixers said it was the best human story of the decade later."

When he's had a bit more writing experience - he seems to have 'graduated' to the novel a wee bit too soon - Ball's deftly-plotted and neatly-characterised work will be well worth reading.

Meanwhile, get this one from the library, or wait for the paperback.

Don Malcolm

NEW WRITINGS IN SF 3 edited by John Carnell

Published by DOBSON at 16/-. 179 pages

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This volume contains 7 short stories, one novellette, and a forward by the editor. It maintains the high standard set by the two previous volumes in the series and gives a good representative selection of present-day SF styles and themes.

"The Subways of Tazoo" by Colin Kapp is the novellette. Basically the story is a simple one. An alien planet has problems and a number of puzzling artifacts are found there. Once the true nature of the artifacts has been discovered, the problems are solved.

Told in plain English, one would imagine the story would not amount to much, but Colin Kapp has narrated it in a language that is far from simple. By use of much jargon, brain-straining sentences and generally unrythmic prose, he has made the story difficult and obscure, but strangely fascinating.

It is not so much a story, one feels, as an exercise in scientific phraseology. The language is of a type which one may not entirely enjoy reading, but which occasionally one admires for its display of technological erudition. Now and then, almost by accident it would seem, it verges upon the poetic.

Colin Kapp, in fact, is like one who tries to write poetry in mathematical symbols - and almost succeeds.

"The Fiend" by Frederik Pohl is much shorter than the previous one yet its impact is far greater. The story idea is excellent and it is narrated in concise and fluent language that is a pleasure to read.

"Manipulation" by John Kingston is again a story with a

good deal of scientific language. But the science is assimilated into the story. The plot is a good one - essentially it can be boiled down to the best and oldest plot in the world, boy-meets-girl. The characters are well drawn, the ideas intriguing and the story altogether well worth reading.

"Testament" by John Baxter is one of those stories which demonstrate the possibility of infinite variety in SF. Although the tale is quite short and simply told, the ideas involved are profound. A story that will linger in the mind long after the book is closed.

"Night Watch" by James Inglis is an expertly-written account of a galactic probe by ASOV - Automatic Stellar Observation Vehicle. The account has no boy-meets-girl plot - in fact no boys and girls are mentioned, nor mums and dads, but only gadgets and galaxies, nebulae and super-novas. It will delight A-level students of astronomy, and people who relish this sort of stuff. But lacking human characters it can hardly, to my way of thinking, be called a story. While admitting there is a lot of good, clever writing in this work, I must confess that I found it painfully difficult to read (like sitting through a travelogue about some place I'll never want to visit). But those who like their science fiction to contain lashings of science will no doubt lap it up.

"Boulter's Canaries" by Keith Roberts - a very good story, intriguing and exciting from start to finish. There is enough gadgetry to satisfy the most technically minded reader and enough human interest and excitement to satisfy anyone. Clever characterisation, a reference to an age-old psychic phenomenon, expert writing, and a first class plot all add up to a splendid piece of workmanship.

"Emreth" by Dan Morgan is a well-written tale about an alien planet - a Garden of Eden, but not, of course, without its serpent. Once more we have the boy-meets-girl plot - but with what a difference!

"Spacemaster" by James H Schmitz is, in my opinion, the best in the book. It has everything one could hope to find in a good SF yarn; a well-constructed plot, a galactic breadth of setting, a poetic, almost hypnotic fabric of language and an imagery that verges upon the dreamlike and the surreal - in short, a sort of egghead's space-opera - real good entertainment!

W T Webb

EARTHWORKS by Brian W Aldiss

Published by FABER at 16/-. 155 pages

Brian Aldiss must have spent more time over GREYBEARD than the book was worth to him in terms of money. Consequently he had to turn out some hack stuff quickly to make some more cash, and EARTHWORKS is the awful result.

Inside a sick and non-representative cover, we have an expanded magazine story that is padded unashamedly all the way through, most noticeably of all at the beginning, which includes a three-chapter flashback hardly relevant at all to the rest of the story.

The book is written in the first person by a protagonist



of dubious intelligence with whom it is impossible to identify. This would be bad enough, but the story just doesn't know where it is going or what it is doing. The opening is promising, in a way, since even the sedate, irritating writing style cannot completely diminish the action scene when the protagonist deliberately runs the liner he is captaining aground on a coral reef. But after this, everything goes to hell and the plot drags on laboriously until it just manages to reach a climax (passing through one more irrelevant flashback and some queer allegorical passages on the way), with a character switch-around that was obvious two chapters previously. The final page, where world war with nuclear weapons is advocated as a rational answer to the population problem, I found readable only because the end was in sight.

The plot is bad, the writing is inconsistent and laughably expanded to fill the space, the book is a formless mess. Even the political background, which starts off as being fairly believable, is ruined by lack of attention to its economic and social aspects.

Don't buy this book. Don't use a book token on it. Don't pay the postage to get it from the BSFA library. Don't expend the energy to walk down and get it from your public library. If you're given a copy, don't open it. It's just not worth the trouble.

Charles Platt

#### BRITISH SF MAGAZINES - reviewed by Graham M Hall

##### NEW WORLDS SF 147, February 1965 - price 2/6

No doubt the doubled pace of the new monthly schedule will cause a drop in the standard of material, but that is not overtly noticeable in this issue.

First off, the cover is excellent - a Jakubowski in the best Powers tradition. Possibly the finest NEW WORLDS cover ever - although there have been a lot of extremely good ones lately.

Another new feature in this issue is the introduction of science-fact features - one on biological electricity and another on visual illusions in space. I found them disappointing, but no doubt they would hold interest to the amateur scientist.

The issue is dominated by the concluding half of the Sellings serial "The Power of Y", which despite a rather irritating passage at the beginning of this episode, finishes in a remarkable and high-standard ending. The strangely psychic art dealer Max Afford leads through an unnecessary detective-style hideaway game to a twist finish. Mildly amusing, well-written but with that so frequent tendency of serials - a disappointing middle.

John Baxter is back again with a good piece "More Than A Man". An old, old variation of the old, old android idea, but Baxter brings that touch of freshness to it and it gleams like well-treated second-hand, if not new.

"When the Skies Fall" is a rather pointless fantastic vignette by John Hamilton, mixing God and the End of the World and a few other cliches.

A plot of van Vogtian complexity is woven by George Collin in a badly-constructed tale "The Singular Quest of Martin Borg".

This 'characterisation' takes some beating. Holds out through some good ideas, a lot of bad writing and finally turns out to be the good old time paradox theme done up. Poorest item in the magazine.

James Colvin gives us "The Mountain". After-the-bomb with a twist, containing good description, especially of landscapes. Colvin is the Constable of British SF - and I don't mean a police officer either. Otherwise this is uninspired - he would have gone down much better with a more original idea.

Richard Wilson, one of the few consistently-good SF writers, contributes "Box" - very extrapolatory and might well prove visionary.

Weight is made with Book Reviews by that man Colvin again, Alan Forrest and Hilary Bailey. Also a short and uninspired letter column. Illustrations to "The Power of Y" are childish scribbings - there isn't a fanzine in the country that prints worse, but Cawthorn's headings are as good as ever.

Altogether an issue treading water. Where we go from here remains to be seen. I hope its forward.

NEW WORLDS SF 148, March 1965 - price 2/6

Arthur C Clarke, J G Ballard, Donald Malcolm, Mike Moorecock, B J Bayley and R J Tilley is the line-up for this issue. One is tempted to leave the review at that. With such talented authors, it could hardly be a bad magazine.

There has been a lot of speculation - I mean, I can think of at least two stories - about the possibilities of light-powered ships. I think one tends to dismiss this as mere speculation, but when such a keen scientist as Arthur C Clarke the idea with a wealth of verisimilitude in the form of facts and figures, it begins to fall into place as a distinctly worthwhile idea.

Clarke does this in his "Sunjammer" in which he cunningly transports the old grain-clipper races into the future and space, and has a race between seven 'sun-yachts' from the Earth to the Moon. A typically excellent Clarke tale with every attention to detail and suspense.

"All the King's Men" by B J Bayley is an unusual tale about England under extra-terrestrial invaders and gives a fairly good explanation of why aliens might be so alien.....

Donald Malcolm proves once and for all that he is a master of the pen (or typewriter, as the case may be) with "First Dawn" which is beautifully written. Assonance, alliteration and other literary devices all add to make this one of the most evocative pieces of prose I've had the pleasure of reading for a long time. Good tale of the effects Terrans attempts to put an axial spin on a planet would have on its inhabitants.

Ballard's piece is prefaced by a description of its source, "The Drought" or "The Burning World". It sounds very, very similar to a reverse THE DROWNING WORLD. This piece is hard for me to judge as I am an avid Ballard anti-fan. More bumf is written about Ballard than anyone else writing SF today. But this piece is easily as good as most of THE DROWNING WORLD with its unsymbolic symbolism, first-rimagery and colossal obscurity.

Michael Moorcock's own tale, "Escape from Evening", is peculiar. It's hard to say whether it is bad or good. Generally, I didn't like it, but it produces a glimpse of a completely alien society. Moorcock constantly paints beautiful backgrounds and then neglects his main characters. Well written, descriptive, unmemorable.

Tilley's "The Uncivil War" is very pulp-ish in its narrative style. But this would be abnormally good for a pulp-zine, and manages to lose the stigma of its out-dated style and stand on its own feet as a fair yarn.

An editorial on symbols for the Sixties, a film review by Alan Dodd, a book review by Lang Jones, a sparse letter column and reviews of amateur magazines make up the 128 pages.

The cover is striking red and black and Atom's one heading is way above average.

### SCIENCE FANTASY 70, March 1965 - price 2/6

Keith Roberts, Harry Harrison and John Rackham appear in this issue and help to maintain the high standard it has reached in recent issues.

Two new innovations are an associate editor in the person of 'J Parkhill-Rathbone' and an interior illustration by the author for the heading of Keith Roberts' "The Jennifer".

Bonfiglioli's apology for an editorial contains little but the news that SCIENCE FANTASY will shortly be carrying a Brian Aldiss long story.

First piece in the issue is Harry Harrison's "The Outcast" which is a typical Harrison yarn in that it's readable and manages to lift itself above the space-opera by sheer wealth of good writing. The plot concerns the tribulations of a doctor whose name is despised throughout a quarter of the Galaxy as an unscrupulous researcher and who is called upon in an emergency to take up once more the scalpel to save a life.

Robert Wells' "Song of the Syren" is an unusual closed-room murder where the victim is a rare and difficult plant and the scene of the crime is a space-dome on 'Petra'. Hardly anything more than a classic detective tale dragged into space, but manages to be interesting without being either obvious or too obtuse. Well handled.

"Moriarty" is a second tale by Philip Wordley and is an amusing story of a good crook and a telepathic lady-cop which adds to the promise shown by Mr Wordley in his first story last issue. His easy style leads me to think that he may have had more writing experience - either in a different field or under a different name.

John Rackham, who is rapidly placing himself among the best British SF writers today, has a competent time-travel story, "Bring Back a Life", which proves his ability for conjuring up a different society and environment.

Anita, the lovable young witch, appears again in "The Jennifer", which is a beautiful tale of Mermaidland. Keith Roberts has, in no time at all, proved himself one of the best writers in the field today.



Unfortunate that the last two items should spoil a good collection, for R W Mackelworth's "A Cave in the Hills" is an unconvincing and obscure portrayal of a future society, whilst D R Heywood's "Hunt a Wild Dream" appears to be moving to an interesting state when, after six sides, we are confronted with a 'To be continued'. Unavoidable, no doubt, but still immensely irritating.

A Klee-ish cover sets off the magazine and, in all, the odds that a subscription would be good value have considerably shortened.

Graham Hall

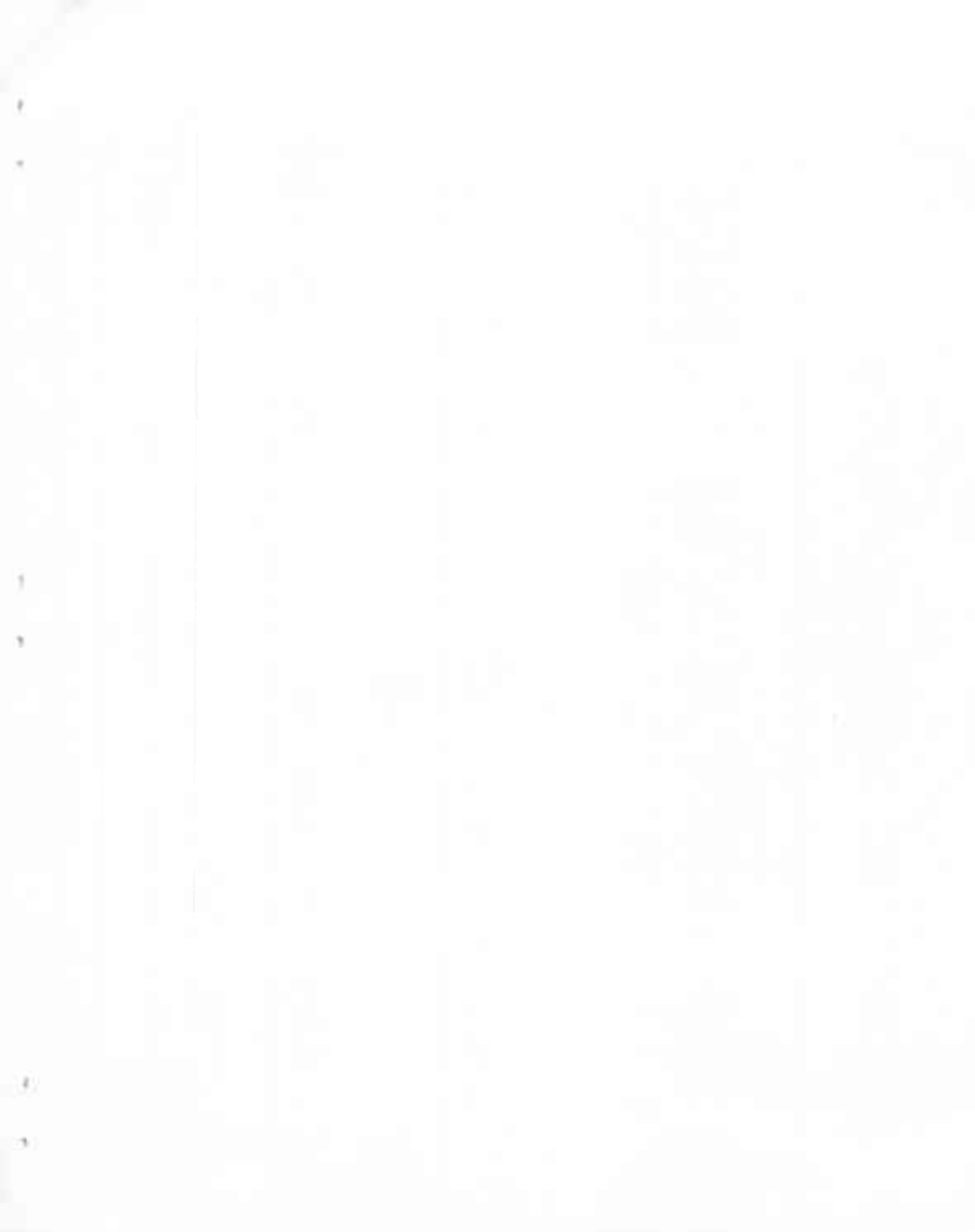
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### AMERICAN BOOK RELEASES

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 CENTURY OF GREAT SHORT SF NOVELS - ed by Damon Knight (Dell 75¢)  
 CRASHING SUNS - Edmond Hamilton (Ace 35¢)  
 ESCAPE ORBIT - James White (Ace 35¢)  
 PAIR FROM SPACE - contains "Giants in the Earth" by James Blish and "We, the Marauders" by Robert Silverberg (Belmont 50¢)  
 PSYCHEDELIC 40 - Louis Charbonneau (Bantam 50¢)  
 REASSEMBLED MAN - Herbert K Kastle (Gold Medal 45¢)  
 SHIP THAT SAILED THE TIME STREAM/STRANGER THAN YOU THINK - G C Edmondson (Ace 45¢)  
 SPOT OF LIFE - Austin Hall (Ace 35¢)  
 SYNTHETIC MAN - Theodore Sturgeon (Pyramid 50¢) ("The Dreaming Jewels")  
 TIME AND STARS - Poul Anderson (MacFadden 60¢)  
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 REVOLT IN 2100 - Robert A Heinlein (Signet 50¢)  
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### BRITISH BOOK RELEASES

NEW WRITINGS IN SF 2 - ed by John Carnell (Corgi 3/6 - March)  
 SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES - Ray Bradbury (Corgi 3/6 - March)  
 THE IMMORTALS - James Gunn (Corgi 3/6 - March)  
 TELEPATHIST - John Brunner (Faber 18/- - Feb 25th)







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