

RGK

fantasy newsletter



march 1980
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WARHOONS
— AN INCIDENT ON BARSOOM —

EDITORIAL PAGE

Over the past month, the amount of feedback on *Fantasy Newsletter's* new format has been increasing on a daily basis and my mailman's face looks a little wearier with each load he brings in. Everyone seems to be happy with the new format--some are downright jubilant--but opinions regarding the best features vary widely. "On Fantasy," "The Outlook," and "The British Scene" are all very popular, as was the interview last issue. Some of you have said you don't want fiction here and others wrote in to say they missed it in the February issue. One or two have said they don't like book reviews and others want them. And apparently, quite a few of you are not interested in film news; it's a bit early to make any decision yet, but I invite further comment on that subject.

Uniformly, everyone emphasizes that the news is paramount. Indeed it is! That's why I created *Fantasy Newsletter* (at a time when there was only one other newspaper in the field) and news will continue to take priority over everything else. Naturally, the amount of hard news will vary from issue to issue--it depends entirely upon how much news I receive. During the past few months, for example, there has been relatively little news to report in the realm of Specialty Publishers. (I'm waiting for the flood to hit.) I've also had relatively little "Work in Progress" news to report of late, although I will be getting some letters out shortly on that subject.

Interviews will also receive a relatively high priority because very few magazines in this field are interviewing fantasy authors on fantasy subjects. I was particularly happy to publish last issue's interview because I had never seen an interview with Hugh B. Cave. And I'm very happy to have the Manly Wade Wellman interview this issue; I've seen only two others and both were very short. Planned for future issues are interviews with Katherine Kurtz and Ramsey Campbell, among others.

Fiction, on the other hand, will receive a very low priority in terms of space. But it will receive a high priority with regard to quality--when I use it, it will be "different" and well written. I have rejected a great deal and accepted precious little. For the most part, it will be run on a space-available basis and I include it only to offer variety, in much the same manner that *Omni* uses it to break up the nonfiction.

Coincidentally, Bill Warren's column did not make it this issue, but it will be back next issue with some nice stills from some recent movies. Another column that didn't make it is "The Outlook," a victim of the holidays and busy editorial schedules. It should be back next issue, as well.

Another change you may have already noticed is the lighter weight cover stock. No, this is not an economy move (although I wish it were). It was a nice 80# cover stock, but it gave us enormous production problems. The paper is so heavy that it cracks and splits during folding. We tried just about everything--scoring the covers prior to folding and even folding by hand. Nothing seems to work well and my printer has not been able to find a reliable supplier of short-grain paper that we think would fold better. (I hope none of you ended up with the covers falling off your copies.) What you hold here is a 100# text enamel which should solve our production problems and still give the magazine a nice feel.

You may have also noticed that this issue is four pages longer and that is *definitely* not an economy move. This was an eleventh hour de-

(Continued in "Feedback" on page 33.)

CONTENTS

March 1980

Issue #22

News

Specialty Publishers.....	6
Trade Books.....	7
Magazines.....	10
Paperbacks.....	26
The Fan Press.....	28

Columns

On Fantasy.....	3
by Karl Edward Wagner	
The British Scene.....	11
by Mike Ashley	

Features

"On Call" (fiction).....	13
by Dennis Etchison	
Interview: Manly Wade Wellman....	16
by Dr. Jeffrey Elliot	

Departments

Editorial.....	2
Book Reviews.....	30
Feedback.....	33
Classified.....	34

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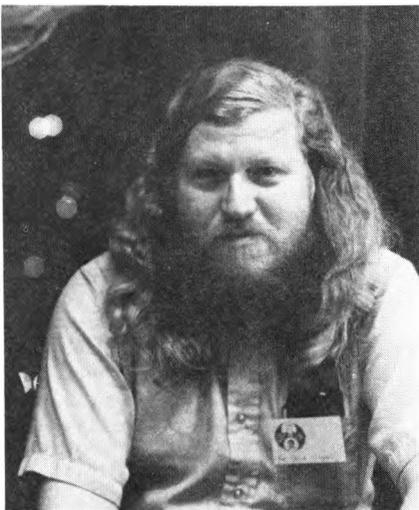
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ON FANTASY

by Karl Edward Wagner

"How Do We Get Here from There?"

or,

Yesterday Was Today Tomorrow"

As the decade ends, the temptation to reflect upon the past ten years and to speculate on the next ten is just too much to resist. At least, it is for me. Maybe that's just a hazard of a youth misspent in addiction to science fiction and fantasy. Just about the first adult science fiction book I read was Orwell's *1984*; it was a shock then to realize that its protagonist, who was *old*, was born the same year as I. The other day I signed a mortgage to buy our house; it calls for me to keep making payments through 2009. That's eight years beyond *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Ready or not, we're about to live in the age our science fiction prophets warned us about. That's as good an excuse to turn to a fantasy world as you could ask.

The decade of the 1970s was a good period for fantasy -- arguably the best we've seen. Evidence of this can be seen in the tremendous upsurge of fantasy paperbacks published during the '70s. This holds true all across the fantasy spectrum, from horror to heroic fantasy, with fantasy novels making regular invasions to the top of best-seller lists. At the start of the decade, I was still trying to buy a copy of every fantasy book that came out -- which meant springing for a few paperbacks each month, either at the newsstands or from Stephen's Book Service monthly lists. Now neither budget nor shelf space permits me to keep up even with the books I *want* to buy.

Fantasy paperbacks are everywhere now. Original works and classic (and not-so-classic) reprints. New authors and old pros. From staid publishers who only used to think of fantasy in the Freudian sense and from schlock houses whose previous offerings were mostly four-letter portrayals of said fantasies. You find them on the racks in gro-

cery stores, at newsstands, in "serious" bookstores, in the SF/fantasy specialty shops that are starting to spring up around the country. It might be Stephen King's latest childer, nurtured by the might and majesty of seven figures, or maybe just a barbarian-in-a-G-string thriller by some recruit from the fan ranks, cobbled together for a three-figure advance that its author probably won't ever see.

Waves of nostalgia overwhelm me here (I guess it's nostalgia). I spent the decade of the '60s trying to break into the tight fantasy market of the day, before finally seeing my first book published in February 1970 (the barbarian on the cover sported an orange jockstrap). After eking out another sale or two, I was able to find an agent, whose first advice to me was to quit writing fantasy and to turn to science fiction instead, where the markets were. Fortunately, neither of us followed that advice.

While it has been a busy decade for fantasy, the same might be said for science fiction. Still, in comparison, I think fantasy has come from farther back and, as such, has made far greater gains. To look back a bit, say to the decade of the '30s, when *Weird Tales* was at its height and the science fiction pulps included similar established magazines in *Amazing Stories*, *Astounding Stories* or *Wonder Stories*, fantasy and science fiction were on an equal footing -- that is, both were considered juvenile escapist fare, reading matter for kids and kooks, at best no more than trash and just possibly damaging to mind and morals. Science fiction became technologically respectable after World War II and literarily respectable in the '60s; you knew it had become legit when universities began offering courses in science fiction and *The Andromeda Strain* topped the best-seller list. Fantasy on the other hand had been unable to shake

its pulp-era reputation -- a heritage further blackened in the early '50s when the witch hunts moved from politics to comic books and proved that horror does indeed corrupt mind and morals -- although the rebirth of interest in Tolkien toward the end of the '60s was a harbinger of change for the '70s. During the decade of the '70s fantasy, too, became respectable.

Of course, in one regard fantasy was already respectable. Even your high school library probably had copies of *Dracula* or the works of Edgar Allan Poe, just as it did books by Jules Verne or H. G. Wells. But these were *classics*, written by the hallowed dead -- maybe not quite as safe as Charles Dickens (who, of course, would *never* have stooped to write fantasy), but safe enough just the same. The point is, popular fiction -- the kind being written and published right now -- as a rule does not become respectable except in retrospect, while science fiction and fantasy ranked somewhere down there between comic books and porn.

Several factors go into attaining respectability. Popular clamor and critical acclaim attract attention. Best-seller status and megadvances probably command greater respect in the minds of those who shape public opinion. (How can this be trash when the book has sold ten million copies worldwide in two weeks and Marlon Brando's going to star in the movie?) Excellence in writing, while it has no bearing on the above, still means something to those of us who like to distinguish between respectable and socially acceptable, and here, too, the decade of the '70s has been a good one for fantasy.

It was a good decade for fantasy hardcovers as well. Not only were the major publishers adding fantasy titles to their science fiction lines, but even the Science Fiction Book Club began to offer fantasy books. A greater boon for

fans, the '70s saw the return of the specialty publishers. Arkham House, despite the death of August Derleth, continued its ambitious schedule of publications. Donald Grant, after a long hibernation, returned with a series of lavishly produced Robert E. Howard collections and has expanded from there. Along with the established amateur presses, a new generation of specialty publishers was born: Gerry de la Ree, Carcosa, Fax, Underwood-Miller, to mention only a few. In an age of shoddy mass-market production, the fan presses turned back the clock with their superbly mounted deluxe limited editions. And if you didn't want to read the things, and you got tired of admiring the gorgeously produced volumes, then you could turn a quick profit by selling to some poor fan who wasn't quick enough to buy the book before it went out of print.

The only area where fantasy failed to make significant gains during the '70s was the magazine field. The Lowndes string of magazines (*Magazine of Horror*, et al.) died at the start of the decade, and while these were mostly reprint (and reprinting some fine stories), they did publish a little original fiction -- mostly by unknown beginners, whose ranks included Ramsey Campbell and Stephen King. *Fantastic* and *F&SF* survived the '70s -- the former continuing its tradition of chameleonism, the latter its changeless staidness. There were a few attempts to launch new fantasy magazines, but without success. *Haunt of Horror* comes to mind as the most ambitious failure; the rebirth of *Weird Tales* as the noblest failure. The picture for science fiction magazines wasn't any better, however, and the problem really lies in the continued decline of the fiction magazine.

If fantasy failed to score on the newsstand magazine racks, the sudden emergence of the semi-prozine made up for this lag. While the fanzine has been around at least as long as have fans, the semi-prozine was a new development. For one thing, the production values were much higher -- often surpassing those of professionally published magazines. But more important, these amateurly published magazines *paid* for their material -- often at better rates than the professionals offered. While the fanzines had published fan art and fiction, as a rule worth exactly what its editor had paid for it, the new semi-prozines offered stories and art by professionals. In the best of these -- *Whispers* comes immediately to mind -- the quality of content and

production easily outstrips the newsstand-distributed prozine. The development of the semi-prozines was probably the most significant factor of the '70s for the fantasy genre. Not only did these open up new markets for the established writers, but they provided a training ground for new writers whose work, regardless of merit, would otherwise have remained in the slush-pile limbo.

The importance of this last cannot be overemphasized. If a genre is to continue to thrive, there must be new writers. It is not enough to reprint the classics; it is not enough for the grand old masters to continue their craft. If there is to be growth, there must be new ideas, new themes, new techniques, new minds. There is another, gloomier aspect. We lost a number of familiar figures in the fantasy field during the decade of the '70s; during the coming decade we are certain to lose a great many more. A writer who was in his twenties during the decade of the '30s will be in his seventies in the coming decade. One of the sad realities of entering the future will be the loss of many of those writers whose work has helped the fantasy genre to develop from the golden age of *Weird Tales* to its present stage of popularity.

This current popularity causes one to wonder whether the fantasy boom will continue into the '80s. There was a boom in heroic fantasy during the late '60s, and once the market had been glutted with thud-&-blunder nonsense, the market was dead -- for any sort of heroic fantasy. It might well have remained that way, had not Conan conquered the comic book world and introduced heroic fantasy to a new and eager audience. The enormous amount of heroic fantasy now being published (and by heroic fantasy I mean all aspects of the world-where-magic-works subgenre) tempts comparison to the boom and bust of ten years ago. The comparison is perhaps valid, although there is so much *better* newly written heroic fantasy being published today than there was in the late '60s. However, if the present popularity should falter, I predict that the Conan movie, when released, will bring about a renewed surge of interest in heroic fantasy along with a new readership, similar to the impact caused by the Conan comic books in the '70s. The future for horror fantasy is perhaps harder to predict. Will books like *'Salem's Lot*, *The Exorcist*, *Ghost Story*, *The Shining* and others continue to head best-seller lists and frighten audiences on the screen? I think so. For one thing, people have always

enjoyed being frightened. This is why horror fantasy has a much wider general audience reception than heroic fantasy has had. Society works to destroy our sense of wonder from birth, but it nourishes our sense of fear.

The gloomy economic outlook -- at least as we enter the 1980s -- is the major negative factor that I see for fantasy in the next decade. Inflation has eroded the average fan's budget at the same time it has driven up the cost of his hobby; books will cost more and there'll be less money to spend on them. Fans will have to be more selective in what they buy, which will incline them to stick to tried and trusted writers and to overlook the new ones. For new writers to overcome this tendency, they'll need some sort of edge: excellent packaging, aggressive promotion, or vocal cult following. Inflation will hurt the entire book market, of course. Paperbacks will be less affected than hardcovers. Science fiction and fantasy books will be less affected than general fiction -- because a fan will do without lunch to buy a book.

The newsstand magazine, already a dinosaur, will probably either disappear or undergo radical change in appearance and promotion, following the lesson of *Omnibus*. The fan publishers will be in for hard times, as production costs soar and fan buying power plummets. Those who are overextended will disappear, while those who play it close to the vest will survive. The reason lies in the fact that their deluxe limited editions have always been luxury items, and the very nature of an amateur press makes for low overhead beyond paying the printer. There will be fewer fans with \$20 to spare for a deluxe edition, but they'll still be there. The dilemma extends to the semi-prozines as well, although to a lesser extent since there is less money involved. Again, rising costs will force up the price of an issue, while the reader will have less money to spare. But as long as the quality is there and the reader is satisfied with his purchase, the careful publisher will survive.

Basically it comes down to whether fantasy will maintain sufficient popularity to weather the grim economic situation in which we enter the next decade. It will -- so long as the writers of the '80s don't make the reader wish he'd opted for that Big Mac and fries instead.

-- Karl Edward Wagner

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Specialty publishers

UNDERWOOD/MILLER

Out now from the publishing team of Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller is an unbelievably beautiful deluxe edition of *Morreion*, Jack Vance's novelette of "The Dying Earth." This is a large format, 9" by 12¼" clothbound volume, running 108 pages, printed on acid-free paper.

What makes this volume so luxurious is the artwork by Stephen Fabian, which consists of the following: a full color wraparound dust jacket painting, a full color frontispiece (from the jacket), two-color end-paper illustrations, 17 black and white interior illustrations, and six other interior illustrations.

Two editions of the book are available: 200 copies signed and numbered at \$25 and the 1,000-copy trade edition at \$20. Reproduced here is the front of the jacket; for a view of one of the interior plates, see FN #17. Chuck Miller, 239 North 4th St., Columbia, PA 17512.

P.D.A. ENTERPRISES

Due out shortly from Pat Adkins at P.D.A. Enterprises is the first volume in a new series of *Jack Williamson* booklets, "Jack Williamson: The Collectors' Edition." Similar in format to his companion *David H. Keller* series (see FN #21), the series will reprint Williamson's previously uncollected fiction "as nearly as possible" in the sequence of original publication. All will be facsimile reprints. Volume one will include two 25,000-word novellas and a 10,000-word novelette: *The Alien Intelligence* (*Science Wonder*, July and August, 1929), *The Prince of Space* (*Amazing*, January, 1931), and "The Second Shell" (*Air Wonder*, November, 1929).

Each volume in the series will also feature a new introduction by Williamson along with comments by him on each story. Individual volumes are priced at \$6.00, postpaid, and charter subscriptions are being accepted now at \$25 for five volumes.

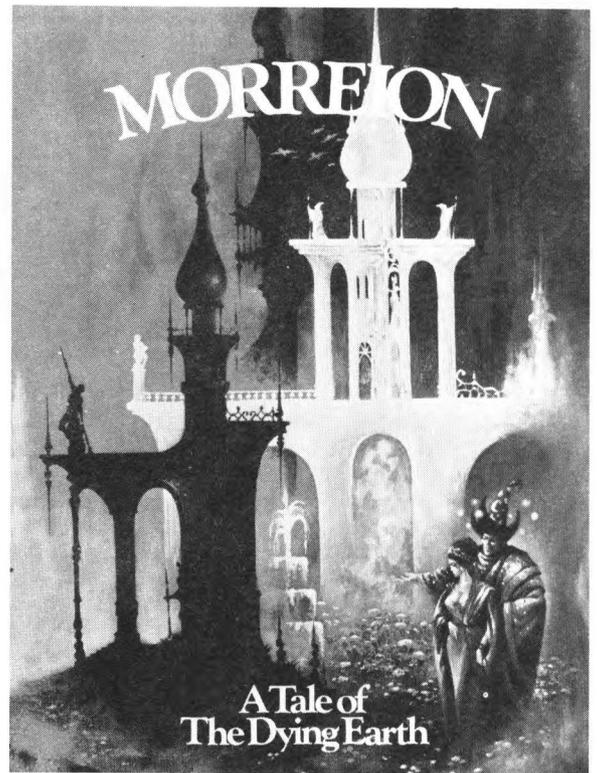
Volume two in the series is planned for late 1980 publication and will feature a 60,000-word novel, *The Birth of A New Republic*. It originally appeared in the Winter, 1931 issue of *Amazing Stories Quarterly* and has never been reprinted. Volume three will follow in 1981 with a 70,000-word novel, *The Stone From the Green Star* from the October and November, 1931 issues of *Amazing*.

Also scheduled for publication in mid and late 1980 are volumes three and four in his *David H. Keller* library, collecting Keller's classic "Tales From Cornwall." The Keller volumes are priced at \$5 and subscriptions are still being accepted at five volumes for \$20. Pat Adkins, P.D.A. Enterprises, Box 8010, New Orleans, LA 70182.

ARKHAM HOUSE

The Black Book by Clark Ashton Smith is the latest release from Arkham House, published in December. The 160-page trade paperback, with imitation black leather covers, is a collection of literary entries taken from Smith's personal working notebook, as compiled by R. A. Hoffman and Donald Sidney-Fryer. Its contents include prose fragments, story ideas, poems and other verse fragments, and witticisms such as, "It is better to go to hell in one's own proper and personal way than to go to heaven in someone else's proper and personal way." (Page 68)

Also included are appendices of finished poems and published epigrams and pensees, two lengthy memoirs by George F. Haas, a foreword by Marvin R. Hiemstra, and a note on the text by Donald Sidney-Fryer. The book is nicely illustrated with 12 line drawings by Andrew Smith and is priced at \$6. The 2,500-copy edition is available only by direct purchase from Arkham House. Arkham House Publishers, Inc., Sauk City, WI 53583.



SILVER SCARAB PRESS

Published in December by Harry Morris at the Silver Scarab Press is *H. P. Lovecraft: New England Decadent* by Barton Levi St. Armand. The 56-page, 6" by 9" booklet is a study of Lovecraft and his fiction that first appeared as an article in 1975. The text for this edition has been revised and included in the booklet are ten pages of artwork by Fuseli, Goya, Clark Ashton Smith, John Martin, Aubrey Beardsley, Sidney Sime and Gustave Dore.

In addition to the regular softcover edition, priced at \$4, a 50-copy, signed hardcover edition is available at \$13. Harry Morris, Jr., Silver Scarab Press, 502 Elm St. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106.

PHANTASIA PRESS

According to a recent letter from publisher Alex Berman, two new Phantasia Press titles should be available at about the time this issue sees print: *The Purple Pterodactyls* by L. Sprague de Camp and *The Ringworld Engineers* by Larry Niven. The former is a collection of 15 of de Camp's humorous Willy Newbury stories. The Niven title is the SF novel sequel to his earlier *Ringworld*, recently serialized in *Galileo* magazine.

Purple Pterodactyls is available in both trade and special editions priced, respectively, at \$15 and \$25. The volume sports a full color dust jacket illustration by

Artist: Vaclav Vaca

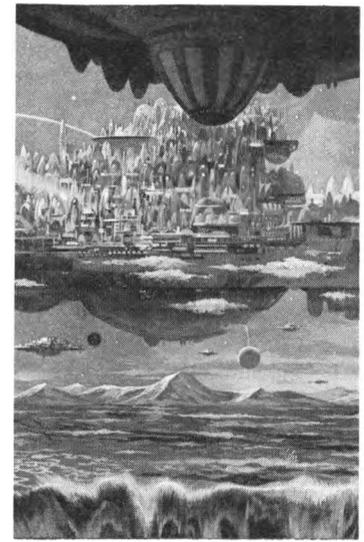


Vaclav Vaca.

Ringworld Engineers is available only in a special collector's edition, limited to 500 copies and priced at \$30. The book features a wraparound color dust jacket painting and color frontispiece by Paul Lehr. According to Phantasia, fewer than 50 copies remain available.

For information on forthcoming Phantasia Press titles, see FN #20. Phantasia Press, 13101 Lincoln St., Huntington Woods, MI 48070.

Reproduced at far left is the front half of Stephen Fabian's dust jacket illustration for *Morreion* by Jack Vance. At left and right are the dust jacket and frontispiece illustrations to *The Purple Pterodactyls* and *The Ringworld Engineers*.



Artist: Paul Lehr

trade books

GARLAND PUBLISHING

At long last, someone has published an extensive bibliography of adult fantasy fiction equally useful to the librarian, teacher, researcher and fan. In December, Garland Publishing, Inc. released *The Literature of Fantasy: A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography of Modern Fantasy Fiction* by Roger C. Schlobin. The heart of the volume is a 312-page bibliography of 1,249 adult fantasy books, including novels, collections, anthologies, and one-author reference works. With few exceptions, all titles included in the bibliography were first published in the English language between 1858 and April, 1979. The bibliography is divided into only two sections: novels and collections arranged alphabetically by author (with some one-author reference works noted at the end of each author section), and anthologies arranged alphabetically by editor.

Before I go any further, I should note a bias here: Roger Schlobin is a friend and I've been aware of his efforts on this volume for some time--I agree with much of what he has done and disagree with a little. In this volume, he attempts to cover fantasy to the exclusion of science fiction, horror and weird literature, although he does admit some overlap in places, and he includes some juvenile fantasy with adult appeal. His bibliography, regardless of how one splits hairs, includes information about much: more than 800 authors, 100

editors, 721 novels, 244 collections, 100 anthologies, 3,610 short stories, and 165 author bibliographies are detailed.

Each entry in the bibliography includes author, title, place of publication, publisher (invariably first edition), and date. For some entries, additional information is provided, such as variant titles, revised editions and reprints. However, he is inconsistent in providing reprint information for a few titles while ignoring many others. Another drawback is that U.S. editions are frequently not cited for titles that first appeared in the U.K. But these are minor objections. The information is admirably accurate and his frequently lengthy and thorough annotations are very helpful to the reader in selecting titles of interest for later pursuit and acquisition.

I could quibble at length over a number of omissions, but space does not permit that here, nor is it necessary: despite occasional omissions, this is the most complete adult fantasy bibliography of its kind available. Considering its scope, it is amazingly complete, even to the inclusion of complete contents listings for collections and anthologies.

The bibliography is supplemented by indexes, one for authors, compilers, editors and translators, and one for titles (including short stories). All of which is preceded by a mercifully short, but well-written introduction, "Fantasy and Its Literature." Schlobin is not

one for pigeonholing, hair-splitting and endlessly expounding his theories about fantasy, as so many scholars are prone to do. He has instead compiled an eminently useful guide to fantasy of value to both fans and professionals seeking information about what has been published in the field.

The 425-page, 5½" by 9" book is printed on acid-free paper with a library quality cloth binding, and is priced at \$30.

Also out from Garland in December is *The World of Science Fiction, 1926-1976* by Lester del Rey. Unlike previous histories of the SF field, del Rey's intent with the book is to provide "a guide to the interaction of the field as a whole for the student or newer reader who finds the literature and associated activities confusing as well as fascinating." Although the book contains much historical fact, del Rey places his emphasis on (in his own words) "the major forces in the subculture of SF" and "related developments that have shaped the literature." To a considerable extent, I think he has succeeded quite well.

The volume is divided into five sections: "Background," "The Age of Wonder, 1926-37," "The Golden Age, 1938-49," "The Age of Acceptance, 1950-61," "The Age of Rebellion, 1962-73," and "Parallels and Perspectives." Included in these sections are discussions of such topics as the rise of the pulps, the birth (and later growth) of fandom, the influence of WW II, the impact of the New Wave, the new respect for

SF in academic circles, the growth of conventions, the influence of the media and other factors that have shaped the SF field as we know it today.

Appendices to the volume include an annotated reference bibliography, a selected reading list for each section in the book, a listing of titles in the Garland Library of SF, and a thorough index. The 416-page, 5½" by 9" book is printed on acid-free paper with a library quality binding, and is priced at \$15. Garland Publishing, Inc., 136 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016.

R. R. BOWKER

A late December release from the R. R. Bowker Company is *Fantasy for Children: An Annotated Checklist* by Ruth Nadelman Lynn, intended as a guide to juvenile fantasy (for grades 3 through 8) for librarians, teachers and parents. The book is actually a lot more than the title implies. The main section of the book (196 pages) is an annotated bibliography of 1,200 children's fantasy titles, plus an additional 450 sequels and related works. Each entry contains: author, title, publisher, year of publication, translator (if any), illustrator, pagination, recommended grade level, and one of four recommendations (ranging from outstanding to marginal). Each entry is followed by a one or two sentence summary of the contents or plot with references to reviews in major periodicals.

Since children like to ask for

books "just like" ones they've read, Ms. Lynn theorizes, she has divided the bibliography into 13 chapters representing different types of fantasy (e.g., Allegory and Fable, Collected Tales, Ghosts, Alternative Worlds and Imaginary Lands, Tall Tales, Talking Animals). While I'm not normally in favor of pigeonholing, it seems to make good sense for this volume. Further, Lynn has provided very helpful cross-references for titles that overlap her classifications.

Each chapter is then divided into "In Print" and "Out of Print" sections. Annotations are not provided for out of print titles, which I think is a failing, but a minor one considering the book's great utilitarian value otherwise.

Appendices include a listing of titles available in the U.K. (with U.K. publishers), a directory of publishers, an author and illustrator index, and a title index.

Except for the obvious U.K. appendix, Lynn's volume covers only books published in the U.S. And you'll find no long sermons on fantasy here; just 288 pages of very useful information about children's fantasy. The 6" by 9½" book is library quality bound with illustrated cloth and is priced at \$14.95. R. R. Bowker Co., 1180 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10036.

GALE RESEARCH

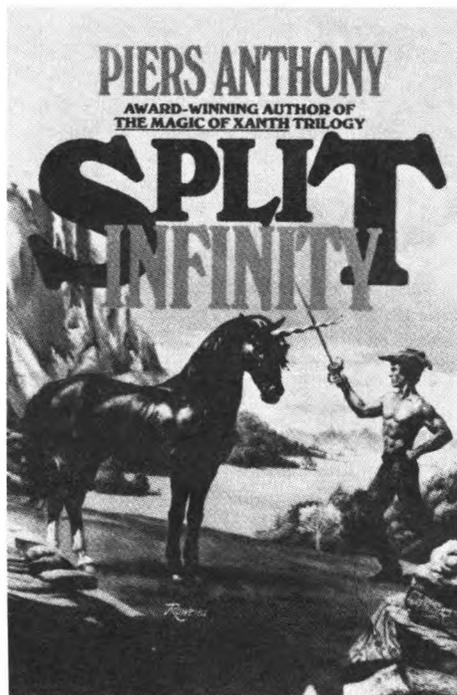
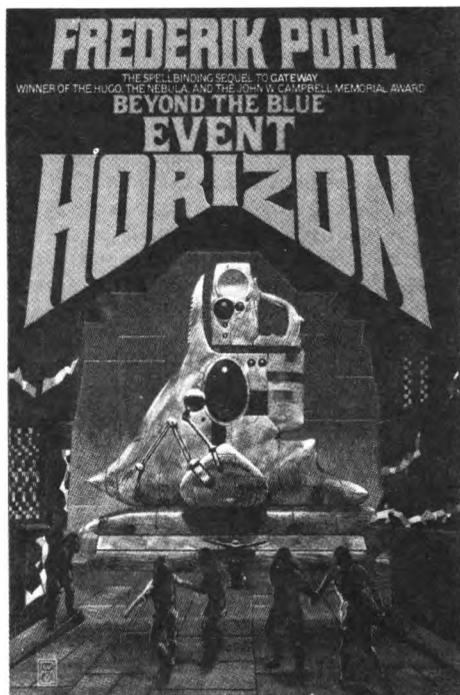
A monumental reference work published in December by Gale Research Company is *Science Fiction*

and *Fantasy Literature* by R. Reginald. This is a mammoth, 8½" by 11" two-volume set in hardcovers, with illustrated cloth, totalling 1,141 pages. The price is a hefty \$64 for the set and worth it.

Volume 1, running 786 pages, is *Indexes to the Literature*. The heart of it is a 577-page (two columns to a page) author index, providing bibliographical information on 15,884 English language first editions of science fiction, fantasy and supernatural fiction books and pamphlets published between 1700 and 1974. Additional information is provided on about 2,000 variant titles and pseudonyms.

Also included are a title index (naturally, of titles included in the author index), a series index, two indexes of awards—one by award and the other by recipient, statistical tables for winners of more than one award, and an index to Ace and Belmont double books.

The index covers all prose fiction, including collections and anthologies, but excludes drama and verse. Also included are nonfiction works in the field. Entries are listed alphabetically by author, then alphabetically by title. Each entry provides the first edition publisher (including both U.K. and U.S. if the U.K. was first), place of publication, date, pagination, type of binding, and the type of work (e.g., novel, collection). Occasional additional notes are provided to distinguish variant titles and editions or to locate a title's position in a series.



Artist: Rowena Morrill



Artist: Darnell K. Sweet

New hardcover releases from Del Rey Books: *Beyond the Blue Event Horizon* by Frederik Pohl, for February; *Split Infinity* by Piers Anthony, for April; and *The Wounded Land* by Stephen R. Donaldson, for June.

Volume 2 of the set is *Contemporary Science Fiction Authors II*, revised and expanded from its earlier incarnations in 1970 and 1974. Its more than 350 pages contain 1,443 biographical sketches of modern authors. Included in each entry is basic biographical data, with additional information in most cases regarding the author's career, awards won, memberships, interests, and the name and address of the author's agent. Many of the entries include lengthy statements by the author. Also included are many deceased authors, where Reginald was able to contact the estate for information.

Frankly, I'm overwhelmed by this incredible reference work. According to Reginald (actually Michael Roy Burgess), this work was five years in the making and 93% of the books cited were personally seen and evaluated by him. The remainder were evaluated by trusted colleagues except for "a handful" taken from secondary sources. A supplemental volume covering the years 1975-79 is in preparation.

Certainly, this is the most complete bibliography of the fantasy and SF field available. I have spent hours pouring over my copy and have yet to find an error (although I've barely begun to scratch the surface of this massive thing). I have found only a few omissions and they are extremely borderline; Reginald could well have ruled them out.

This is an impressive and extremely useful tool that no serious fan, librarian, or researcher should be without. Gale Research Co., Book Tower, Detroit, MI 48226.

DEL REY/BALLANTINE

Coming from Del Rey Books this spring are four new hardcover novels by some very popular fantasy and science fiction authors. Scheduled for February is *Beyond the Blue Event Horizon* by *Frederik Pohl*, the sequel to his popular and award-winning *Gateway*. In *Horizon*, a Heechee "Food Factory" is discovered in which basic elements can be transformed into food, thus solving the world's hunger problem. The hero of *Gateway*, now a millionaire many times over, helps finance an expedition to bring back the artifact along with possibly a Heechee. The book will be priced at \$9.95.

April will see the publication of the first volume in a new science fantasy trilogy by *Piers Anthony*, entitled *Split Infinity*. As noted back in *FN #10/11*, the trilogy combines science fiction with fantasy. "Being marked for death on one world

wasn't enough for Stile. Hardly had he escaped assassination on the highly technical, science-oriented world of Proton than he found himself on Phaze, a world of sorcery and magic, where yet another power was set on destroying him." Price will be \$9.95.

Dragon's Egg by *Robert L. Forward* is a "hard" science fiction novel, slated for May release, about an expedition to explore the surface of a neutron star named "Dragon's Egg." Living on the surface, with gravity 67 billion times that of Earth, are intelligent life forms to whom 30 minutes is equivalent to 60 years of human life. Price, again, will be \$9.95.

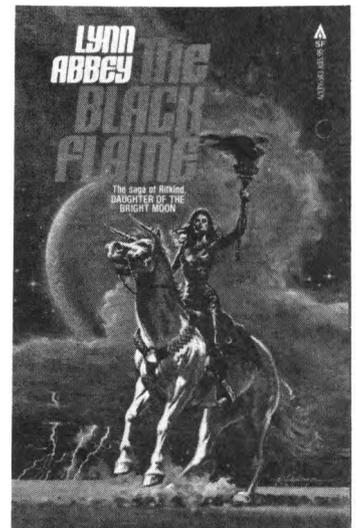
Coming in June is the long-awaited first volume in "The Second Chronicles of Thomas Covenant" by *Stephen R. Donaldson*, entitled *The Wounded Land*. "Perils and heroism beset Thomas Covenant once again as he returns to the Land he has restored to life after routing the evil Lord Foul. But evil still exists in the Land, and Covenant must continue the struggle to restore this strange Land of magic and destiny, sorcery and fantasy." This will be a thick, 598-page book, priced at \$12.95.

A related title of interest, scheduled for April release under the Ballantine imprint, is *Mermaids* by *Beatrice Phillpotts*. This is an affectionate 96-page study of "man's continuing fantasies about the beautiful creatures who inhabit the ocean," including 32 full color plates, plus black and white illustrations. It will be published in a trade paperback edition at \$9.95 and a hardcover edition at \$15.95. Ballantine Books, 201 East 50th St., New York, NY 10022.

ARIEL BOOKS

Due out from Ariel Books in February is a new science fiction adventure novel, *HML Bismarck* by *Thomas Durwood*. This is Durwood's first novel, about a future galactic war over mineral rights and a young military academy graduate who wants to be a combat hero but is denied the opportunity. Assigned to a remote asteroid outpost, the embittered hero is suddenly thrust into center stage when a massive starship attacks the outpost as the first target in the galactic war. The hero dubs the invader "Her Majesty's Lightship Bismarck" after the WW II dreadnought. The 320-page, 5½" by 8" trade paperback will be priced at \$3.95.

Following in March is a new fantasy novel, *The Road to Danisir* by *Peter Jackson* and *Ned Huston*.



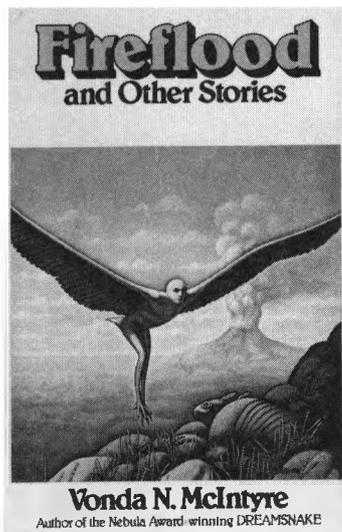
Set in an age known as the "Elder Times," a group of Galicians return to their village from a worship service to find that it has been destroyed by a roving band of the emperor's warriors. A small army of Galicians sets out via one road to take revenge on Danisir, while the hero of the novel sets out on a lone journey to take care of the emperor's council of wizards. His task is to secure three objects (a forbidden flower, the eye of a legendary beast, and a jewel), decipher a riddle and defeat the wizards before the army reaches Danisir. Described as "a dream come true for the sword and sorcery reader," the 336-page, 5½" by 8" trade paperback will feature eight full color paintings by *Dennis Andersen*, 16 black and white drawings, border designs and chapter headings. It will be priced at \$5.95. Ariel Books, 845 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022.

ACE BOOKS

Scheduled for March release from Ace is *Lynn Abbey's* sequel to her fantasy novel, *Daughter of the Bright Moon*; *The Black Flame* continues the story of Rifkind, Daughter of the Bright Moon, as she sets out on a quest into the swampland of the Felmargue. The volume features another cover illustration by *Bob Adragna*. Price will be \$5.95.

Out now, as previewed in *FN #19*, are *Masters of Everon* by *Gordon R. Dickson* and *Your Next Fifty Years* by *Dr. Robert W. Prehoda*. The former is Dickson's latest science fiction novel, about of a group of colonists

tion novel, about the efforts of a group of colonists to settle the harsh environment and ecology of Everon, and is priced at \$4.95. The latter is a nonfiction title pro-



Artist: Charles Shields



Artist: Jim Cherry



Artist: Michael Flanagan

jecting what our world will be like during the next fifty years. Price is \$5.95. Ace Books, 360 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10010.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

Out from Houghton Mifflin in December (as previewed in *FN* #15) is a new collection of stories by Vonda N. McIntyre, entitled *Fireflood and Other Stories*. Included in the collection are 11 stories: "Fireflood," "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand," "Spectra," "Wings," "The Mountains of Sunset, the Mountains of Dawn," "The End's Beginning," "Screwtop," "Only at Night," "Recourse, Inc.," "The Genius Freaks," and "Aztecs." Price is \$10.95. Houghton Mifflin Co., 2 Park St., Boston, MA 02107.

HARPER & ROW

Another new collection due out from Harper & Row in mid-January is *New Arrivals, Old Encounters* by Brian Aldiss. Included are 12 of his best recent stories: "New Ar-

rivals, Old Encounters" (originally "Horsemen"), "The Small Stones of Tu Fu," "Three Ways," "Amen and Out," "A Spot of Konfrontation," "The Soft Predicament," "Non-Isotropic," "One Blink of the Moon," "Space for Reflection," "Song of the Silencer," "Indifference," and "The Impossible Puppet Show." Price is \$9.95. Harper & Row, 10 East 53rd St., New York, NY 10022.

DOUBLEDAY

A new novel due out in mid January from Doubleday is *First Channel* by Jean LORRAH and Jacqueline LICHTENBERG, the third novel in their Sime/Gen series. In the far future, the human race has mutated into Simes and Gens; Simes kill Gens in order to obtain their life-giving *selyn*. However, in *First Channel*, the protagonist, who happens to be the son of a Gen breeder, grows up dreading the thought of having to kill his first gen. He happens to fall in love with a childhood sweetheart who grew up

gen and marries her. After discovering a way of satisfying his need for *selyn* without killing, they set off to start a new order.

The book is priced at \$10 and will eventually be followed by two more novels in the series, *Mahogany Trinrose* and *Channel's Destiny*. Doubleday & Co., Inc., 245 Park Ave., New York, NY 10017.

DAVID & CHARLES

December releases from David & Charles, Inc., are *Aries I* edited by John Grant, an original SF anthology, and *Who's Who in H. G. Wells* by Brian Ash. The former is a 191-page anthology that includes new stories by Christopher Priest, Garry Kilworth, Robert Holdstock, Steven Spruill and Bob Shaw, among others, priced at \$14. The Ash volume is an alphabetical presentation of the protagonists from the more than 70 short stories of *H. G. Wells*; the 299-page volume is priced at \$19.95. David & Charles, Inc., North Pomfret, VT 05053.

magazines

MAGAZINE OF F & SF

Scheduled for the March issue of the *Magazine of F&SF* is a novella, "Bouyant Ascent," by Hilbert Schenck, and a novelette, "The Lordly Ones," by Keith Roberts. Short stories will include: "What of the Night" by Manly Wade Wellman, "Before Willows Ever Walked" by Tom Godwin, "Steele Wyoming" by Ron Goultart, "Secrets of the Heart" by Charles L. Grant, "The Mindanao Deep" by Robert F. Young, and "Achronos" by Lee Killough. Book reviews will be by Algis Budrys, along with the usual departments, and the cover is by Barclay Shaw for "Steele Wyoming."

GALAXY/GALILEO

Galileo magazine has announced the acquisition of *Galaxy* magazine from Universal Publishing & Distributing Corp. in an agreement dated December 13, 1979. Now a 90% owner of the rights to *Galaxy*, *Galileo* has organized a subsidiary, *Galaxy Magazine, Inc.*, to manage the acquisition; no cash payment was involved.

The new *Galaxy* magazine will be published bimonthly, on alternate months opposite the bimonthly *Galileo*, although no start date has been announced. It will appear in a new 8½" by 11" magazine format and will stress adventure fiction for a younger college-age audience, with

added emphasis on features such as science articles and reviews.

Galaxy's new editor is Floyd Kemske, previously review editor for *Galileo*. Former *Galaxy* editor Hank Stine, now at Starblaze, will continue as a contributing editor. Issues will generally consist of 5 to 6 short stories, plus features, offering block payments of \$100 to \$250 for first world serial rights as opposed to a per-word rate. Fiction will average 5,000 words, although shorter stories are wanted.

The magazine's layout will be modular in approach with a "stratiform design," described as "a horizontal grid comprising three information layers."

The BRITISH SCENE

by Mike Ashley

Not quite the column I'd planned from last month as many of the publishers' new catalogues are not yet available. Nevertheless, there is still some news along publishers row...

Coronet Books (paperback imprint of Hodder & Stoughton): February 1980 sees the publication of **Robert Silverberg's** collection *The Feast of St. Dionysius*, originally published in the U.S. in 1975 by Scribner's. It contains the title story plus "Schwartz Between the Galaxies," "Trips," "In the House of Double Minds," and "This is the Road."

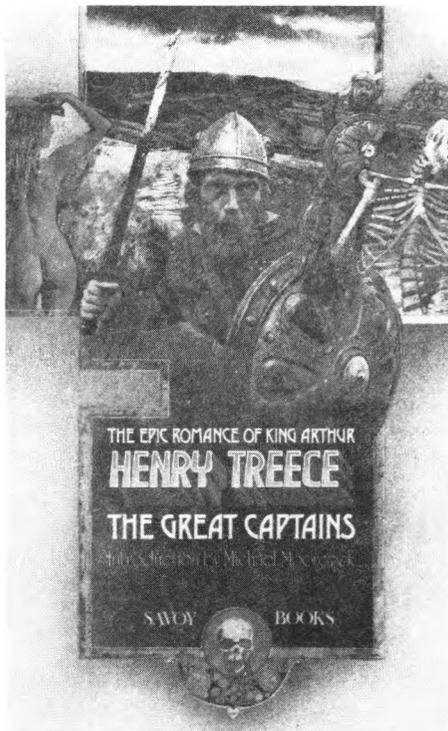
March 1980 brings back the 1958 **Jack Vance** book *Slaves of the Klau*, but the real month for **Jack Vance** fans will be May with the publication of the **Demon Princes** series, of which more next month. Also in March are the third and fourth volumes in **Edmund Cooper's** 'Expendables' series -- *The War Games of Zelos* and *The Venom of Argus* -- originally published under the **Richard Avery** alias in 1975-76. (For more on Cooper see the "Work in Progress" section.)

An associational item released in March for the first time in paperback is **Lyall Watson's** *Lifetide: A Biology of the Unconscious*, a sequel of sorts to *Supernature*.

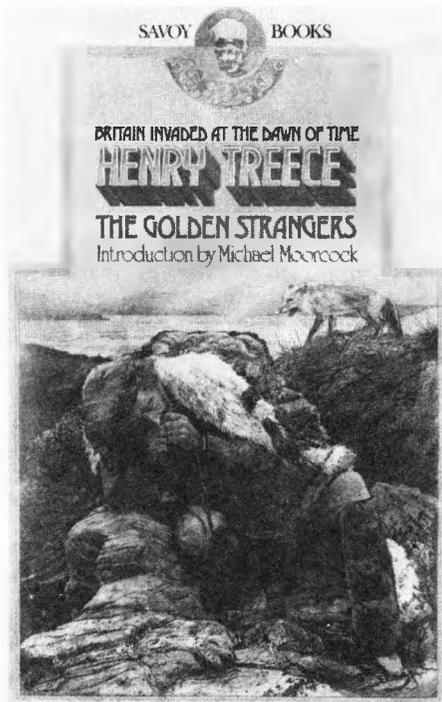
Fontana Paperbacks: A news flash from SF editor **Tim Shackleton** is that he's recently bought the UK volume rights on **Janet Morris's** 'Dream Dancer' trilogy for which Berkley paid \$150,000.

New English Library: Lead title in January from NEL in paperback was *The Woman Who Slept With Demons* by **Eric Ericson**, author of *The Sorcerer*. Ericson, who currently lives in Surrey, is a specialist in the occult and recently appeared in a BBC radio panel discussion on the subject. Also released in January is **Thomas M. Disch's** noted novelisation of *The Prisoner* to tie-in with a re-run of the classic series on British television (and I for one will be glued to the set again for the fifth time!). Also in January is *Involution Ocean*, a first novel by **Bruce Sterling** previously published in the U.S. by Jove/HBJ.

I'm especially pleased to see that in January NEL will be distributing Savoy Books edition of two works by the much overlooked **Henry Treece**: *The Great Captains* ("The



Two January releases from Savoy Books, distributed by NEL are *The Great Captains* and *The Golden Strangers* by Henry Treece, with introductions by Michael Moorcock. Also available is *The Dark Island* by Treece. (Cover artist unknown.)



Epic Romance of King Arthur") and *The Golden Strangers*, also set in Great Britain. Both editions have introductions by **Michael Moorcock**, and although historical novels, will be of interest to the fantasy fan. Treece, who died in 1966 aged only 55, was a terrific historical novelist and I rank his *Jason* as one of the best such novels of all time.

February releases begin with the first UK paperback edition of *The Stand* by **Stephen King**. A new novel from **Guy N. Smith** (author of *The Slime Beast* and *Night of the Crabs*) is *Thirst*, a disaster novel about a tanker-load of deadly weed-killer which crashes into a reservoir with terrible consequences. February reprints are two titles by **Lloyd Biggle, Jr.**: *Monument* and *The Light That Never Was*.

Major promotion in March goes to **Raymond Hawkey's** thriller with SF overtones, *Side Effect* labelled as "The best of its kind since *Frankenstein!*" Indicative of the promotional campaign is that it is being marketed as straight fiction. March also sees the reprinting of **Robert Asprin's** *Cold Cash War* plus the first UK printing of his new novel, *The Bug Wars*, with a striking **Rodney Matthews** cover. Like **John Varley** and **Orson Scott Card**, Asprin is one of those new authors who suddenly seems to be everywhere but, having just enjoyed *Another Fine Myth*, I'll be looking forward to this one.

Wyndham Publications: Wyndham's have acquired the rights to **Eric Van Lustbader's** fantasy trilogy *The Sunset Warrior*. W. H. Allen will publish the three books in hardcover: *The Sunset Warrior* in April, *The Shallows of Night* in May, and *Dai-San* in June. Star will follow up with paperback publication in 1981. Van Lustbader will be a big name in Britain this year as Granada have just paid £50,000 or so for his contemporary thriller, *The Ninja*.

In May, Star Books will issue the latest in **John Norman's** *Gor* series, *Explorers of Gor*. **Jim Burns** is doing the cover. There are also plans to reissue **Ursula K. Le Guin's** *Rocannon's World* and *Planet of Exile* in new covers in July.

Virgin Records who issue Mike Oldfield's albums, amongst others, and who recently produced **Mike Oldfield's** *Space Movie* are now going into book publishing with Virgin Books planned for later this year. There seem to be some hot plans afoot, but as yet I have nothing tangible. I hope, however, to be able to report fully in the near future.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Brian Aldiss recently returned from visiting China with a cultural delegation at the request of the Chinese government. Out of the visit came a new short story, "Frontiers," which concerns China only tangentially -- it's centred on the catastrophe in Cambodia. The story should be appearing in Charles Partington's new magazine, *Issue One*. Aldiss described the Chinese tour as a stunning trip but added that "I am still so disoriented by the impact of China that it is possible I shall have to write a couple more short stories on that subject." While in China Aldiss met a couple of SF writers, one of whom, Cheng Wen Kuang (author of *Flight to Sagittarius*), spoke a little English.

As regards Aldiss's current writing projects he is now working on a novel called *Helliconia*, about a world of that name, for which he is getting scientific advice from experts. He is also planning a second volume about Malacia, *The Igara Testament*. His next novel in print, however, will be non-SF and political in tone, *Life in the West*, due from Weidenfeld & Nicolson this spring.

My enquiry to Edmund Cooper brought about the news that he is still recovering from two liver comas and a stroke he had in 1979 which have only naturally slowed down his production. There is a new novel planned to be set against a backcloth of Britain in the 1990s and six stories completed and wait-

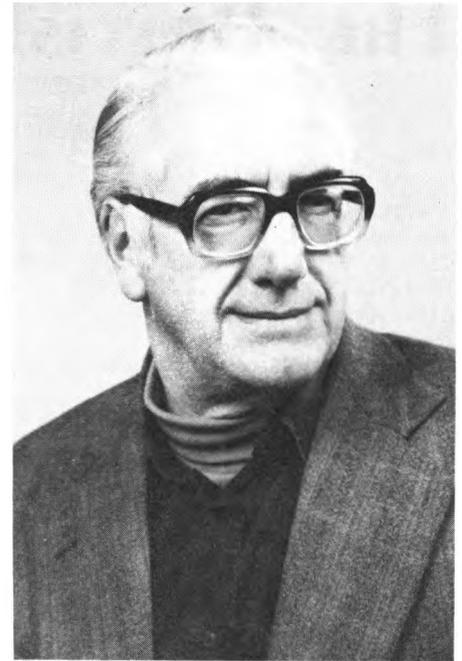
ing the final polish. Three are fantasy, three SF. I asked Cooper about his previous fantasy novella, *The Firebird*, included in the Ballantine Adult Fantasy *Double Phoenix*, but one of Cooper's most overlooked works. "It was written at white heat during three weeks in the summer of 1960," he replied. "I will not write any more in the same vein. You need the fire of a young man to pull off that kind of thing, and I no longer have it." *The Firebird* will probably appear in the first collection of Cooper's fantasy stories to be published, hopefully, late this year.

News from Adrian Cole seemed at first bleak. "I haven't written a novel for about eighteen months and have no plans to write any more for a long time." Two earlier novels, *The Pact* and *Our Brother Elementals*, remain unsold. However, brighter news was to follow. Adrian has collected his popular Voidal yarns into two volumes, *Well Met in Hell* and *Invoke the Voidal* and they are currently being touted in the States. New short stories from Cole include "Dragon Under Stone" set on Dartmoor and appearing in *Orson Scott Card's Dragon Tales*; "Second Coming," a religious spoof in which all the prophets and messiahs return on the same day, scheduled for the Christmas edition of *Penthouse*; and a long horror novelette, *The Revenant*, just completed and awaiting a home.

George Hay, who is forever active in a variety of spheres, is currently pushing for some major schemes in the educational field for science fiction, but full plans cannot yet be revealed. A collection of some of L. Ron Hubbard's best works that Hay assembled several years ago has yet to find a publisher. However, the paperback edition of *The Necronomicon* is due from Corgi Books this spring. In the book, George demonstrates links between the British and American towns of Dunwich.

Christopher Priest's latest book, *An Infinite Summer*, published last year in the U.S. by Scribner's, will be published by Pan in paperback in the UK and by Dell in the U.S. during 1980. Work is in progress on a new novel, as yet untitled. In the meantime, *The Space Machine*, perhaps Priest's most popular novel to date, has just been published in an authorised edition in the Soviet Union.

Brian Stableford's ability to be able to produce a constant stream of quality novels plus continue to write some of the most cogent and informed criticism never ceases to amaze me. His most recent new novel in Britain is *The Walking Shadow*



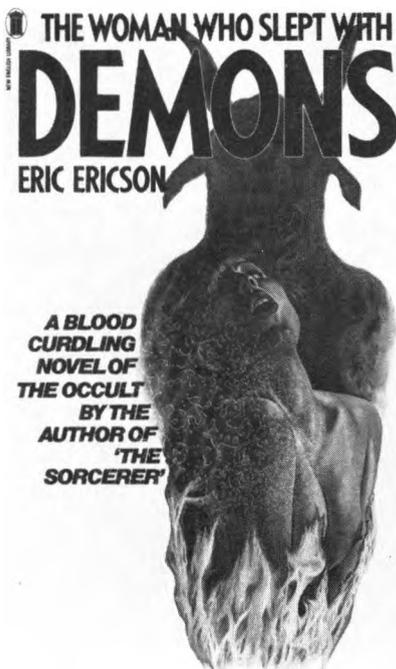
E. C. Tubb

(Photo courtesy of Mike Ashley)

from Fontana Books. It concerns Paul Heisenberg, a media-promoted messiah, who goes into a deep trance soon to be followed by thousands of followers, their bodies in stasis, waiting for an awakening in the far distant future. Since the publication of *The Paradox of the Sets*, the last of his Daedalus novels, Stableford has been working on some non-series novels. *War Games* will be due from Pan Books in the UK and DAW in the States this spring. He has also recently completed *The Castaways of Tanager*. As regards his nonfiction output, he has contributed a long article on "Man-made Catastrophes" to *Eric Rabkin's The End of the World*, scheduled for publication by the Southern Illinois University Press later this year. He's also researching for his contribution to the second edition of *Neil Barron's Anatomy of Wonder*, in which he's covering the period 1918-45. A completed but unpublished book is *The Stigmata of Evil: A History of Witchcraft*. This was rejected by the publishers (Doubleday) who originally commissioned the book from James Blish, and it is now wanting a home.

Andrew Stephenson was understandably cagey about discussing his work in progress as, like me, he feels it invites the retribution due all who tempt fate. Following on his very excellent novels *Nightwatch* and *The Wall of Years*, he is now planning a book tentatively entitled *The Incorruptibles* and set in the same universe as *Nightwatch* and his

(Continued on page 25.)



A January release from NEL, *The Woman Who Slept With Demons*, by Eric Ericson. (Artist: David McAllister)

Like most horror stories by Dennis Etchison, this one builds slowly, almost meticulously, in achieving its effect, and offers no easy answers. In submitting the story, the author termed it "literally a nightmare." It has a Kafkaesque feel to it. And I guarantee it will haunt you. Not immediately, perhaps. But someday, when you're waiting in your car for your wife to return...

On Call

by Dennis Etchison

"Read it now," called the blind newspaper vendor. "Many are dying and many are dead!"

Wintner geared down and rounded the corner, trying to spot an opening. He glided past a photo shop, a dry cleaners and laundromat, a stationers, a multi-leveled parking structure that covered half the block and, at the next corner, the florist stall. He felt a fleeting regret that from this lane he was unable to catch even a glimpse of the young woman who worked there; most days he noticed her on his way back from the freeway, her face moving in among the flowers there, and the cheerfulness of the sight, the very rightness of it, seemed to shorten the distance of his commuting and make his burden somehow easier to bear. But today was Saturday, anyway, he remembered. He kept going.

He would have to drive round again.

He could, of course, find a parking place easily enough in the municipal structure--but then Laurie never liked having to walk all that way from the Clinic entrance.

How long would his wife be this time? Ten minutes? More like twenty, he thought, if she's running true to form. Or thirty. *I only have to find out about the x-rays,* she had said. *It won't take long.*

God, he hoped so. He knew what happened to time when her mind got hold of it.

He circled the block once more, just as a black Mustang slid into a vacant space in front of the Clinic office. He groaned and set his teeth. He had lost track of how many times he had gone around. He turned his wrist to check his watch, but couldn't remember how long it was since he had dropped her off.

He neared the corner.

Already it was turning late in the day. He noticed now that the buildings had begun to resemble oblong boxes, row upon row of them set on end, as shadows filled the doorways and slanted down from the roof-

tops. He slowed to a crawl and saw that his car was actually pacing one of the pedestrians, a stoop-shouldered old man who was stepping laboriously along the sidewalk that fronted the Clinic. Wintner shuddered without yet understanding why and eased up on the block.

There was a taxi zone at the traffic light. He slipped into neutral and rolled in close to the curb. He cut the ignition, adjusted the rear view mirror so that he could see her when she came out, and sat listening to the ticking down of the engine as it tried to cool.

A meter maid cruised past his open window. She shook her helmet and motioned for him to move on. He nodded. When she came by a second time -- forty minutes later -- he started the car and crossed the intersection and drove until he found a place to park on the next block.

"I'm sorry," said the nurse, "but I can't find a Mrs. *Winter* -- is that the name? I don't see her down here in the book."

"She only stopped in to find out about her tests." He offered a smile, got a good look at the nurse and withdrew it. "It must have been about an hour ago."

"Well, just a sec. I'll ask the other girl."

Girl, he repeated to himself in wonderment. Only the very young -- and the middle-aged, like these -- call themselves that. How many more years will they be able to get away with it? Until their faces crack and turn to dust?

Wintner scanned the waiting room. Even, monotonous walls, a reading rack haphazardly stocked with plastic-bound magazines, a planter stuck full of dingy artificial flowers. An endless dose of taped music issued forth from a concealed speaker; reflexively he identified the selection as the theme from the movie *Doctor Zhivago*.

A second nurse appeared from behind the frosted partition.

"Sir?" she said in a precise,

controlled tone. Like a librarian, he thought.

She waited for him to approach her.

"Your wife's probably with one of the doctors. He may have wanted to go over the results with her. Why don't you find a seat for a little while longer? I'm sure she'll be out any minute."

There was a cool authority to her voice. It must come with the territory, he thought. Or maybe she had been a librarian once, a long time ago. He could have pressed her, but why bother? She was undoubtedly right. Besides, he was hot and tired and -- he let it pass.

He faced the waiting room. No. He shook his head. He certainly did not need to rub shoulders with a roomful of poor, sick bastards, not right now. He avoided looking at them. A permanent rain check on that one, he thought, sighed, and headed back out, past a rosy woman and her two apple-faced children.

There was a hofbrau on the other side of the street, barely identifiable by a fringe of old-world lettering. He took a seat at the bar, keeping an eye on the front of the Clinic building.

He ordered a schooner of Lowenbrau Dark and stared past the beef jerky and pickled eggs until the stein was empty.

Still no sign of Laurie.

He started on another Lowenbrau and, surprisingly, began to feel the effects. It hit him then: he hadn't taken time yet to eat today. It seemed that he had spent every minute on the run, placing calls, shuffling his schedule so that he would get her here before the Clinic closed...

As he reapproached the office, he couldn't help noticing how dirty it really was. The paint appeared to peel off the door even as he reached for it; the stucco was beginning to crumble from around the foundation, falling away into piles of pulverized dust like insect droppings. There was an official-looking notice tacked to the door, something about National Suicide Week. He didn't take time to read it.

A new, younger nurse glanced up. He spread his hands on the counter.

"And how are you feeling today?" she asked. Her eyes flicked over him, reading his features as she reached for a form.

"I feel fine," he began. "It's my wife. I know this sounds crazy but--"

He told her what had happened. When he finished she said, "I'll see."

He watched as another white figure materialized behind the opaque glass. He heard the first nurse recapping the story.

She concluded, "I thought maybe he should see Dr...." He didn't catch the name.

The other nurse, the fourth one he had seen today, looked him up and down. He was beginning to feel like a man caught without papers in a nudist camp.

She moved her head briskly from side to side. He could almost hear a mental *click* as she came to a decision.

"No," she said, "I don't quite think so." Then, to him: "Maybe she's incognito."

"What?"

"I say, she may be incognito, do you think so?"

"That's what I'd say," said the other nurse. "Try that."

"Incognito?" he repeated. He seemed to have missed something. He replayed the word several times in his mind until it lost meaning.

"You could at least check," said the first nurse, returning to her chair, as the senior nurse disappeared behind the partition.

He felt like laughing. He held out his hands helplessly, turning around to share the joke with anyone who might have been listening.

But no one paid any attention. Actually, he thought, maybe I should have waited here from the very beginning. Maybe I missed her, after all. Who knows?

Shaking his head, he returned to the door. He passed the same woman with the two children. What kind of place is this? he wondered. Those kids don't look like there's anything the matter with them. Plenty of color in their cheeks. What in hell are they doing here?

She was not at the car.

The sky was darkening rapidly. The street took on a grim, vaguely menacing facade as shadows lengthened over the dim, slick edge of curbing below the disturbing asymmetry of the architecture. Old cornices and abutments and rainpipes jutted like broken teeth too close to the glass panes, rendering the buildings awkward, topheavy, ready to topple; each step he took seemed to threaten to pull everything down around him.

He stopped by the hofbrau, trying to get his bearings. He felt like someone waiting for a train, one that might not even stop at this station.

He saw only a few scattered pedestrians out on the pavement. Even the traffic here had thinned until it was nearly invisible, though he was aware of an almost physical wall of sound from another part of the city. He turned toward the windows of the restaurant and squinted inside.

The faces grouped at the bar were old. All of them. It might have been an illusion caused by the unwashed glass, but he didn't think so.

One face in particular was oddly familiar.

Suddenly he was sure. Yes, he had seen the same man in the waiting room, seated calmly with the others, reading a magazine or -- no. He had been staring at the floor. Wintner remembered. The people in the room. They had all been staring at the floor. Waiting.

Only it was not quite the same man. Wintner seemed to remember him as younger, healthier.

He caught his own reflection in the coated glass. And took a breath. He was oddly relieved.

His own face, at least, was

more or less, as he remembered it.

As he crossed the street to the Clinic he checked the shops on either side. They were seedy, run-down. Most of them were already closed for the night. Not one was the kind Laurie would have gone into, anyway.

He thought he saw a figure shuffling away from his line of sight. It was the only movement on the sidewalk now. He could not make out who it was. It could have been one of the shopkeepers locking up and heading home, but for a second he almost recognized the gait.

The doorknob practically came off in his hand.

An elderly couple brushed past him on their way out, smelling of lilac and formaldehyde. He could see two new nurses, both younger than the others he had spoken to. As he neared the counter they stopped talking. He almost heard what they were saying.

"Did you have an appointment?" said the first one. She glanced worriedly at the clock which hummed high and white on the wall. "Most of the doctors have gone, I'm afraid."

"Listen," he said, and he began. He told her. Then he said, "I want to talk to whoever's in charge. Then I want her, or you, or someone to check the examination rooms, the offices, the bathrooms, for God's sake. I want to know if my wife's still in this building, and I want to know now."

"Just a moment, sir."

His fingers tapped the sterile counter.

As he stood there, a door to an inner office swung open and the woman with the two children came out. A nurse held the door for them. They needed it. The woman moved so slowly she seemed at death's door; the children were pale as ghosts.

He nodded automatically as they passed. The old woman raised her tired eyes, noted his face and muttered something unintelligible.

"This way, please."

At first he didn't know the nurse was talking to him. Then he saw that the white door was being held open like a protective wing. For him.

"You found her," he said, his muscles relaxing.

The nurse cleared her throat but said nothing.

He followed her. The hallway was as immaculate as her starched uniform. He heard the swishing of her white stockings as she led him to a room at the end of the corridor.

"The doctor on call will help

Dennis Etchison's short fiction has been appearing professionally since 1961 in a wide variety of magazines and anthologies, including science fiction, fantasy, mystery and mainstream publications. He has also written for a number of literary periodicals, fan publications and men's magazines. Upcoming stories are scheduled for Kirby McCauley's *Dark Forces*, Ramsey Campbell's *New Terrors*, and Stuart Schiff's *Whispers III*, as well as such magazines as *Whispers*, *Weirdbook* and *Mike Shayne's Mystery Magazine*. Recent works include a novelization of *The Fog* and a new terror novel, *The Shudder*, scheduled for fall 1980 publication. Also in the works is a new horror screenplay, *No Survivors*, and a new novel, *Tell Me How You Feel*, being written in collabor-



ation with Lynne Hill. The author resides in Santa Monica, California. (Photo: David Gibney)

you," she said.

"Just a--"

She shut the door behind him.

The office was comfortably appointed in leathers and dark woods. There was another door on the other side. He tried an overstuffed chair, but only got up again to pace the carpet. Books were everywhere, and entombed among them within the walls were various artifacts that appeared to be the taxidermied remains of small animals of unknown species.

He went over to the desk.

A sheaf of notes tucked under the border of a thick blotter. An open notebook filled with indecipherable scratchings. Behind the desk, an assortment of framed certificates from foundations around the country, including one from the Menninger Clinic in Topeka.

So that was it. He was a head man -- some kind of doctor for the monkeys of the mind.

Is that what they think I need?

He took a step back. His shoulder touched one of the book-cases. He turned.

A row of glass vials sealed in resin, each larger than the last. They contained embalmed extractions of some strangely familiar organisms floating in various stages of growth. His eyes followed the sequence. Near the end of the line the vials became bottles, then jars.

What have they done with her? he thought.

A thump sounded at the far wall, from behind the door to the other side. Without thinking, he closed his fingers around one of the glassed specimens.

The door clicked and started to whisper open.

His body jerked as his feet moved backwards too fast. He fumbled for the door to the hall, found the knob and stumbled out.

There was movement behind him but he did not look back. He heard the nurses' crepe soles squeaking across the reception room floor. He heard their nervous, practiced, too-young voices, saw their grasping hands in a blur as he ran past. He saw the vinyl curling around the aging magazines, smelled the waft of preserved death in the air. He smelled the chemicals on their skin, felt the cold, smeared door and the sudden rush of night air on his chest. He tasted the darkness and the clot of fear in his throat.

As he ran, voices struggled to be heard within him.

The nurses. What had they been saying when he came in? It had sounded like--like--

We live by death, he thought they had said.

And the newspaper vendor. Wasn't there something more the blind man had been shouting?

None of the dead have been identified, he thought it was.

And the old woman. What had she been trying to tell him?

We are the dead, she had said. *We are the dead.*

He wound down to a fast walk. He could almost see the ancient man who had been shuffling along the sidewalk earlier, away from the Clinic. A man who had once, not too long ago, perhaps not too long ago at all been so much more than he was now.

He found himself at the corner, next to the flower stall. It was dark, empty except for the sickly-sweet scented wreaths and arrangements waiting in the shadows.

He shuddered and crossed the street swiftly, mechanically, trying to make it to the car.

He passed the hofbrau.

The faces were inside. They were grouped around the dark wood bar, all of them old beyond belief now and sick unto death, staring into their glasses, waiting. They reminded him of faces he had seen before.

Then he saw the flower girl.

He pushed his way inside.

She was standing there. Her voice alone was almost cheerful as she began to move among them, asking questions, giving advice, making

arrangements. He noticed for the first time that she was armless on one side, her pink stump smooth and rounded under the opening in her summer dress.

How long has she been that way? he wondered. Or does it work the other way for her, too? He thought crazily, Was she born with even less?

He stood shivering, watching her animated form and the vase of wilted flowers at the end of the dark, polished bar. After a minute she became aware that she was being watched.

Slowly he held out his hand to her.

"I brought you something," he heard himself saying, still uncertain, trying to think of the right words as he handed her the bottle. "I--I thought you should see it. God damn you."

She turned in painstaking slow motion, her muscles stopping and starting, stopping and starting with each part of the movement, until at last her eyes met his.

"What?" she said.

There was a pause that seemed to go on forever. Then someone offered up a sound that was somewhere between a laugh and a death-rattle, and the black fear was on him.

-- Dennis Etchison

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INTERVIEW

Manly Wade Wellman

Dr. Jeffrey Elliot



(Photo courtesy of Manly Wade Wellman)

Perhaps more than anyone else, the writer must find what he is from within himself. For he is alone with himself, must understand himself and wield himself in all he writes.

Your life is measured, not by the time or ability or knowledge or reputation, but by the work you do. Faulkner said, Get it done. Take chances. It may be bad, but that's the only way you can do anything really good. Hemmingway said, Apply the seat of the pants to the chair and the fingers to the typewriter. Wolfe said, There can be no talent for writing whatever unless you have power to write. Hear all these things, but also hear yourself.

The road a writer follows is paved with words he writes. It may be long or short, wide or narrow. It is the only solidity on which his feet may travel. Every step forward on the road he makes goes into new, unborn country, full of wonders and perils and ecstasies he can dream of only as he encounters them.

It is never a royal road. Royalty rolls in chariots or is carried on the shoulders of slaves. Drudgery produces the words that pave your road. Nobody can give the words to you. You find and use them all by yourself, away from sight and sound of anybody you think might help.

What you find you must use. If you chew it too long in meditation, it becomes limp and lifeless. Remember the poet who knelt to thank God for an inspiration. When he rose from his knees, he had forgotten it.

Use everything. Don't hold back something for the next time. If it's good, if it fits, use it now and trust God, or whoever's up there pretending to be God, for more to use the next time. It is there when you need it. It always is. Inspiration never comes to you, it is there, a part of you, distilled from all you know and feel and dream and hope. It flows within you as your red blood flows.

But none of it is of any worth to you unless it is of worth to someone reading it. You don't know him. His face and eyes and mouth would be strange to you. But he must say to you, "I know what you mean and it is good, it is valid. It helps me, I'm glad I read it."

That's why you write in the Lonesome Valley, with only your thoughts like ghosts around you. For someone else, in some other valley, who reads you and believes you.

When you can't do it anymore, it's time to rest. Stop writing books and read them. Take two drinks every evening instead of one. You've come to the bottom of the hill. Maybe there'll be a soft place to sit.

-- Manly Wade Wellman, 1975

"Manly Wade Wellman -

Better Things Waiting"

Born in Portuguese West Africa (now Angola) on May 21, 1903, Manly Wade Wellman's roots reach far back into history, bridging the worlds of Colonial America and the Confederate South, with ancestral traces of Gascon French and American Indian. After his service in Africa, Wellman's father, a medical missionary, brought his family to the United States when Manly was still a young boy. During those early years, Manly lived in many parts of the country -- Washington, D.C., Arkansas, Kansas, Utah -- but never quite long enough in any one place to call it home. Like most boys his age, Manly loved to travel, and did so by hopping freights, on horseback, by car and on foot. As a youngster, he held a wide range of part-time jobs, among them harvest hand, house painter, soda bottler, cowboy and roadhouse bouncer (his favorite). In prep school Manly distinguished himself on the football field, a talent which won him a scholarship to attend Wichita University (now Wichita State). After graduating with a B.A. in 1926, he went to Columbia University, where he received a B.Litt. in 1927. From there he returned to Wichita to work as a reporter for the Beacon and, somewhat later, the Eagle.

For as far back as he can recall, Wellman wanted to be a writer. As early as 1925, at the ripe young age of twenty-two, he found a market for his poetry, as well as short stories, all written while he was in prep school and college. Despite his success at writing, he received little encouragement from family or teachers, who tried to dissuade him from becoming a writer. One of his first stories, "Back to the Beast," prompted a teacher to remark: "Your work is impossible!" That story later found a home in the pages of *Weird Tales* (November, 1927), and was his first professional sale.

From 1927 to 1930, Wellman worked as a reporter in Wichita until a personal altercation with a "hangover editor," who made the mistake of cussing him out for

something he hadn't done. Wellman promptly quit and turned to freelancing on a full-time basis. This was a particularly bold decision, as it was the height of the Depression and jobs of any kind were hard to come by. Wellman, however, persevered, wrote whatever he was asked, and made it by on a shoe-string budget. In 1930, he married music student, Frances Obrist, a Texan by birth, with whom he "ham and egged it" until better times came.

It was in this period that Wellman made his first foray into the science fiction field, with several sales to the poorly-paying Hugo Gernsback chain. Indeed, Gernsback bought a number of his early tales, including "The Invading Asteroid," a space-opera thriller, and the first of many novels to come. Clearly, though, Wellman could not make ends meet by writing for Gernsback at the "penny a word" rate he was getting. In 1934, hoping to improve his position, he moved to New York in order to be closer to the markets. Although times were rough, he made a number of quick sales to the Macfadden chain, and then, in 1935, sold "Outlaws of Callisto" to Astounding for \$150, a story that would later become one of his classic tales. This sale proved to be a major turning point in his career.

Although Wellman wrote prolifically and well in several fields, he remained, for the most part, a writer of science fiction and fantasy, at least until the end of World War II, when the bottom dropped out of the market. However, it was in the fantasy field that Wellman did his best writing, owing perhaps to his lifelong interest in the genre. During these years, he forged a close working relationship with Farnsworth Wright, of *Weird Tales* fame, for whom he wrote dozens of stories, and proved to be one of *Weird Tales*' most popular writers.

It didn't take Wellman long to crack all of the field's major markets, as well as most of its minor ones, selling numerous stories to *Unknown* and *Strange Stories*. His most famous fantasy series, though, appeared in *Fantasy* and *Science Fiction*, which published his popular stories of John the Balladeer, a wandering mountain minstrel who battled supernatural evil. These stories were later collected in "Who Fears the Devil?" and served as the basis for a motion picture which bore the character's name.

In 1939, Wellman moved to New Jersey, accepting a job as managing

editor of the *Gold Medal* syndicate. He quickly tired of the work, however, and joined up with golden age comic books, creating characters and writing stories for such well-known comic heroes as Captain Marvel, Blackhawk, Green Lantern, Captain America, Aquaman, Captain Midnight, and many others.

When World War II came, Wellman enlisted in the army, and served stateside as a first lieutenant. At its conclusion, he faced a critical career decision. Indeed, most of the major markets for which he wrote previously -- pulps and comics -- were on their last legs. Anticipating rough times ahead in the fantasy field, Wellman shifted his efforts to other areas of writing, chief of which were hardcover novels and nonfiction works.

In 1946, Wellman left New Jersey and moved to Pine Bluff, North Carolina, a move that satisfied his southern instincts and upbringing. An ardent student of Civil War history, he saw the move as extremely promising in terms of future research. In 1947, Wellman published his first hardcover volume -- "Find My Killer" -- a highly popular mystery novel. He then turned his hand to writing juvenile books, a move which later resulted in several awards and citations. And then, in 1949, Wellman published "Giant in Gray," his best-known biographical work. Based on his namesake, Confederate General Wade Hampton, the book served to win him a reputation as a first-rate Civil War historian.

Wellman moved to Chapel Hill, North Carolina in 1951, where he has continued to reside for the last thirty years. With that move, he extended his forays into mainstream and nonfiction writing, penning "A Star for A Warrior," which won the first Annual Ellery Queen Award (beating a story by Faulkner); "Dead and Gone," which won the *Mystery Writers of America* Award; "Rebel Boast," which was nominated for the *Pulitzer Prize*; and "Worse Things Waiting," which won the *World Fantasy Award*.

Despite his popular success in the science fiction-fantasy field, Wellman virtually stopped writing his popular yarns with the demise of *Weird Tales* in 1954. He turned his attention, instead, to hardcover writing -- juvenile books, mainstream novels, Civil War history, and regional history. He also taught classes in creative writing at the University of North Carolina and at neighboring *Elon College*.

In 1974, Wellman retired from

teaching. With more time to write, he decided to heed the mounting requests from editors who wanted new fantasy tales. His son, Wade, suggested that they collaborate on a series of Sherlock Holmes pastiches for *Fantasy and Science Fiction* (these were later collected into a book). Editor Jerry Page, of *Witchcraft and Sorcery*, urged Wellman to send him a new series (the *Lee Cobbett* series). And Wellman, who felt at home in his new mountain habitat, started writing stories about mountain people and their ways. Around this time, *Carcosa Press* published a collection of Wellman's best fantasy stories -- "Worse Things Waiting" -- which received high praise.

Karl Edward Wagner, one of the fantasy genre's premier talents and the publisher of *Carcosa Press*, has known Wellman for many years, both as a writer and friend. In a recent biographical essay on Wellman, Wagner summarized his career and speculated about his future, stating: "The dean of fantasy writers has buckled his sabre and revolver back on, and after a long leave of absence has mounted up and ridden back into the field... Several new fantasy books and stories will be coming out in the next months. And they won't be his last. Wellman, still in his prime as a writer, has more novels and stories in production. He won't quit writing, won't quit what he called the 'outlaw profession.' They'd have to shoot him first."

Elliot: Can you recall when you first thought about being a writer?

Wellman: I don't know when I first wanted to write. As soon as I could read, I suppose. For many years, my mother kept a story I wrote when I was six. When I was in grade school, I'd write in study period when I should have been doing my arithmetic, and the teacher would take the stories away. In high school, all my friends would read my stories and say nice things. By the time I was in college, I was selling. Wanting to do this was like wanting to be a doctor or a preacher or a policeman with other boys. I come from a family of writers, but none of us got much home encouragement. Things were fairly economical, making the realities of food and clothing more pertinent. Also, I seemed to neglect my school work -- I never did make exceptional grades. Only one or two teachers encouraged me; the others felt I was wasting time. In any case, a writer must write alone, and had better get used to that truth.

RBCC #151—SPECIAL HARLAN ELLISON ISSUE

Publication date: March 1st

The RBCC has had many special issues in the past devoted to such diverse topics as Ray Bradbury, Vaughn Bode and animation. But never has there been one like this.

Contents: 3 interviews with Harlan Ellison—One is from a radio talk show in 1976. The other two were both done in 1979. One deals largely with television. The other deals largely with comics, and was done especially for the RBCC.

"Basilisk" illustrated in comic strip form by Bret Blevins. Projected length: 15-20 pages.

"Soldier" illustrated in comic strip form by Kerry Gammill. Projected length: 15-20 pages.

Two installments of "The Harlan Ellison Hornbook" never before reprinted since their original publication in the *L.A. Free Press* in 1973.

"Ellison Wonderland: A Photo-Journal"—For the first time anywhere a photo-spread featuring the art and artifacts with which Harlan shares his daily life, including artwork by many famous names, and even a bigger-than-life-sized gargoyle. Whatever you have imagined his house to be like, it is that and much more. There are dream houses, and then there is Ellison Wonderland.

Jim Steranko's illustration for "Dogfight On 101" from the September 1969 issue of *Amazing Stories*.

There will also be other new artwork by Fred Hembeck, Marc Hempel, Hilary Barta, Eddie Eddings and others.



PHOTO BY RICHARD TODD

All this and more which is still being finalized including a full color cover by Bret Blevins from "The Executioner of the Malformed Children" and a centerspread by Bret from "Bleeding Stones."

This will easily be the most *special* special issue the RBCC has ever done. Price: \$3.50 + 75¢ postage or \$5.00 total sent First Class. Issue length: 84 pages.

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Elliot: Why did you turn to writing as a full-time career? What needs did it serve?

Wellman: I always wanted to be a writer. I sold my first stories when I was still in college. I worked for newspapers, and when I was out of a job at the bottom of the Depression, I'd already sold some things. I simply went full-time then, as I'd always wanted to do, and made it go. It was like running away from a bear; you know you can't, but you've got to, and so you do. Writing, as Jesse Stuart says, is the last independent profession. It's also a compulsion. I wouldn't do anything else. The need it serves is the sharing of experience and emotion with a reader -- a stranger, who becomes your partner in what you tell.

Elliot: Were you driven to write or was it more a question of writing simply to make a living?

Wellman: I was driven to write by an urge to write. I was as much urged to do that as someone else might have been urged to dive for sunken treasure, or preach to the heathen, or rob banks. What you grimly want to do, you more or less have to do. Psychologists call that being compulsive. Not that anybody pointed a gun and told me to write; quite the contrary. But I felt I had to write. Maybe I could have done well in some other profession, but I'm glad I didn't try.

Elliot: You've written both science fiction and fantasy. Do you prefer the latter genre? If so, why?

Wellman: Yes. I prefer fantasy to science fiction. I can't keep up with science as I should to write about it. A scientific mind is needed for it, anyway. I'm fascinated by how science fiction becomes science fact. As for fantasy, maybe I've been deeper into it, thought more about it. But both genres appeal to the human sense of wonder.

Elliot: What is it about fantasy per se that makes it a productive area in which to work?

Wellman: Fantasy writing spurs the imagination and the process of invention, takes you into world after world of wonder. You get fascinated with your own story as you tell it to yourself.

Elliot: What was the nature of the fantasy market at the time you began your career?

Wellman: When I began, back in the 1920s, *Weird Tales* was the only fantasy magazine, *tout court*. Yet many magazines bought fantasy now and then. *Cosmopolitan* did, and *Everybody's*, *Argosy*, and others. The impulse of wonder was recognized. I tried to sell wherever I could, and once in a while I succeeded.

Elliot: How was fantasy, as a literature, viewed by the public at that time?

Wellman: In the bracket of society where I lived, fantasy was more or less viewed as a novel trifle. Those I knew took it seriously only when it was written by somebody with a thundering reputation, like Arthur Conan Doyle or H. G. Wells, or maybe hoary old classics by Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne. That was an era when admired Americans were men like Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, and Charles Schwab, none of whom wrote anything, just made money, which, President Calvin Coolidge and others assured us, was the *one* serious pursuit. Now and then somebody got a fantasy printed, but it bloomed to blush unseen, like the flowers in Gray's country churchyard.

Elliot: You've said that you owe your development as a writer to *Weird Tales*, and its pioneering editor, Farnsworth Wright. What role did Wright play in your professional career?

Wellman: Farnsworth Wright was tremendously patient with anyone he thought worth the effort. His criticism was painstaking and constructive. He had considerable education and appreciated nuances in writing.

Elliot: What was it about *Weird Tales*, as you suggest, that helped push you to your limits as a writer?

Wellman: *Weird Tales* always made me feel like writing my best -- giving them the best asparagus I had in the store -- because it carried the sort of fiction I wanted to write. If you had any style at all, *Weird Tales* and its fine editor helped you develop it. The best authors in there were worth reading and admiring, and still are.

Elliot: You also wrote a number of stories for *Astounding*, until you split with its editor, John W. Campbell, Jr. What were your reasons for breaking with Campbell?

Wellman: John Campbell was a successful editor, but he wanted mostly to give you germs of stories to

(Photo: Manly Wade Wellman)



write, and wasn't so apt to like your own ideas. We parted ways when he couldn't see what I was driving at when I wrote *Twice in Time*. And I was selling to other markets quite well at the time. I didn't think I needed him; I certainly didn't need his dictatorial manner.

Elliot: You knew many of the legendary writers and editors of the period. Could you share some of your impressions of men like August Derleth, H. P. Lovecraft, and Robert E. Howard?

Wellman: Yes. I never knew Derleth face to face, but we had much friendly correspondence. He was an indefatigable worker -- if he had worked longer on a story, he might have written fewer and better stories. He pestered me into gathering and revising *Who Fears the Devil?*, in which he had great and encouraging faith. I felt that he was a loss when he died, as a publisher, writer and friend. Lovecraft, too, I never met. I was urged to write to him, but it seemed that you had to bow down to him, and I've never been good at that. His story "The Outsider" was his first to grab me, and I still think it's a jewel. I'll repeat my thought that he, as much as any single contributor, made *Weird Tales* successful. As for Howard, I never met him. He remains to me a tragic figure. He had little opportunity for education or intellectual companionship. It's recognized now that he was strange in some ways. I've wondered if his insistence on being burly and two-fisted wasn't too much of a protest. I also wonder if his suicide may not have had more reasons than just the death of his mother; if he wasn't

desperate in his effort to live by writing.

Elliot: To what extent was your writing influenced by Edgar Allan Poe? Can you detect the impact of M. R. James? What role did Lord Dunsany play? Did Lafcadio Hearn exert major influence?

Wellman: Influences on a writer are many. Everything he reads influences him. Poe was bound to be an influence; he virtually invented the atmosphere of the supernatural. I admire and constantly reread James, Dunsany, and Hearn. But I doubt if I write like any of them. I wish I wrote things as well as James did. In these writers, style is a precious jewel.

Elliot: Your most well-remembered fantasy series was *F & SF's* "John the Balladeer." What explains the extraordinary appeal of these stories?

Wellman: It isn't for me to say what makes people read you -- If I knew that, I'd be far more successful than I am. The stories about John have succeeded most gratifyingly, have been praised and valued highly and embarrassingly. Perhaps that is because I did my best, and still do, to speak for the Southern mountains and their people, in their own language. Some have called these stories "poetic." If so, I'm not the poet. These natural men and women are the poets.

Elliot: Would you agree that the John stories represent your best writing?

Wellman: I don't know what my best writing is. I've done a lot of mainstream fiction and nonfiction, and critics have mostly been kind. Whatever I happen to be writing at the moment is what I try to write best.

Elliot: You wrote an extremely intricate future history series -- "The Thirtieth Century" -- which spanned sixteen stories. Was it difficult to achieve consistency throughout the series?

Wellman: Once I came to some decision on what the solar system would be like in the Thirtieth Century -- not that it really will be like that -- it wasn't truly hard to be consistent. I think I started with a notion of what Martians would be like -- tentacled, chrysanthemum-faced -- and something about their cities, Pulambar and Ekadome. I visualized reptilian Venusians, and

colonists from the inner planets on what I chose to consider habitable moons of Jupiter. I kept sheafs of notes. I drew countless pictures of Venusians and Martians to help me out. Others, of course, have done this sort of thing, notably Robert Heinlein. But writing these stories was difficult. It's always difficult to write. It had better be, or the writing will be bad.

Elliot: Why did you turn your hand to writing for the comics? Did you enjoy the comics field? Was it challenging work?

Wellman: Writing for comic books was easy and paid well. When I began, I wanted to buy a house so my family could have it when I went to the war that was on the way. I didn't particularly enjoy writing for the comics. In those days, they were mostly garbage. Anyway, I didn't write just comics. I was contributing to a number of magazines. As for challenge, I didn't recognize one very much.

Elliot: Who were your most memorable comics characters? What role did you play in developing Captain Marvel?

Wellman: Most of the characters I did in the comics aren't memorable any more, except possibly as curious. I did Captain Marvels, but he was already a going concern. Others you may call to mind were Blackhawk, Plastic Man, the Spirit, and Aquaman. Some have to be forgotten -- Fu Chang of Chinatown, Bentley of Scotland Yard, Green Lantern, the Jester, Ibis the Invincible, Spy Smasher, and Navy Jones. You'd better be living close to editors and go in for conferences before you wrote these scripts.

Elliot: Can you explain the now famous Fawcett/DC plagiarism suit involving Superman and Captain Marvel?

Wellman: I believe that DC sued Fawcett, charging that Captain Marvel was plagiarizing Superman, because Captain Marvel was the *one* dangerous rival to Superman. He was humorous (Superman wasn't), and he was really a boy who turned into a hero by saying "Shazam!" Kids could, and did, identify.

Elliot: Was the sale of "Outlaws of Callisto" to *Astounding* a critical turning point in your career, particularly from a commercial point of view?

Wellman: Yes. "Outlaws of Callisto" earned me \$150 at the depth of

the Depression. That was enough money to give me the time to think and plan other stories better. It was just as materialistic as that.

Elliot: It was recently reported that most of your early work has either been lost or destroyed. Is that true? If so, what happened?

Wellman: I've lost a great deal of my early work, simply because the house isn't big enough for it. I've published seventy-two books and *circa* 500 magazine stories and articles.

Elliot: Why did you virtually stop writing fantasy and science fiction after the death of *Weird Tales*?

Wellman: I stopped writing fantasy and science fiction because I was busy writing Southern history and regional fiction, with good book contracts. I stuck with *Weird Tales* to the end because of affectionate memories.

Elliot: What explains your fondness for pseudonyms, such as Gabriel Barclay, Levi Crow, Gans Field, Juan Perez, and others back in the early days?

Wellman: I used pseudonyms, usually, because back yonder I wanted a cent a word, at least, if I was writing under my own name. Gans Field was used at the suggestion of Farnsworth Wright -- *Weird Tales* was using serials by me and might like to use Wellman stories in the same issue. Levi Crow was used on a series of Indian stories.

Elliot: Has your approach to writing fantasy changed significantly with the passage of years? Do you still experiment with new methods, new techniques?

Wellman: By and large, I suppose I've always tried to tell simple stories, written as plainly as I can, in language I hope people can understand. If I've changed, it's by experience and by observation of life, literary and otherwise. I hope I've become better by diminishing old faults. I hope I'm not turbid and rackety, as once I was. Yet you have to be conditioned by good writing all around you. It helps you to write better. Some think of Poe's stories as quaint and somewhat old hat. But if Poe had kept on living and writing until now, he'd be writing in a way to enchant the readers of today as he enchanted readers of the Federal Period.

Elliot: Do you do a great deal of

research in the course of laying out a story? How concerned are you that the story details conform to historical fact? Would you distort history in order to tell an engaging story?

Wellman: I'm a good researcher, and I do lots of it. It's painful to read something that shows a lack of research. I don't plot out short things in writing, as we used to have to do for themes in school, but any book I write has a carefully written organization, plus stacks of notes and pictures and things. If I write something historical, I do my best to recognize what happened in history. Lots of historical fiction suffers from distortion, but if this is true, it's the writer's fault. It's his responsibility to make fiction conform with fact. Too many readers are looking down your throat to see if the truth is there. You're in a mess if the truth isn't in you.

Elliot: You've written many stories, both in first and third person narratives. Do you have a specific preference?

Wellman: I've written stories in the first person, notably about John and his wanderings with his guitar, but I'm not in love with the first person. All things being equal, a

first-person story is like somebody telling it. A third-person story is like seeing it happen. Would you rather see a thrilling drama happen, or would you rather have somebody tell you about it? Yet, here and there, somebody can tell it in a way to share the experience with you. There are stories like that. Special stories.

Elliot: Are most of the names and places cited in your stories more the product of historical research or a fertile imagination?

Wellman: I use real places in my stories, and, now and then, actual people. I've used, fictitiously, Charles II, John Smith, George Washington, Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant, among others, always trying to recognize the realities. I've based characters on real persons I've known, and sometimes, with permission, used real names. Imagination goes into this, of course. But, if you're trying to make a story real, where is the faint boundary between fact and fiction? Nowadays, a great deal of stuff that is offered as fact is fiction, anyway.

Elliot: You're particularly adept at writing dialogue. How important is it to match a character with his dialect, especially in fantasy writ-

ing?

Wellman: It's important in all writing. I keep a ready ear for how people talk, because the talk proclaims the person. I deplore stilted dialogue, written out by an author for a character to read out loud, so to speak. For God's sake, let the man say what he's got to say in his own terms. Speech must be the greatest of all inventions mankind has achieved, and certainly what you say shows what you are. Perhaps one of the greatest modern masters of dialogue was John O'Hara. If any of his characters talked in a stilted fashion, the character himself was stilted. I like the talk of real men -- farmers, soldiers, hunters, workmen, sound professionals. And I don't like conected locutions, as with the far-out echelons of sociologists and advertising men and pedants generally.

Elliot: Do you find it difficult to think up engaging titles for your stories?

Wellman: Yes. I puzzle a lot over titles. Sometimes I write out several and try to choose the best. Often good titles are buried in the Bible or Bartlett's *Famous Quotations*.

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Frances and Manly Wade Wellman at the Fifth World Fantasy Convention in Providence, R.I. (Photo by Paul Allen)

Elliot: How interested are you in coming up with novel themes and plot ideas?

Wellman: Novel themes, ideas, and treatments are hard to come by, for me anyway, and coming up with something like that gives a glorious feeling of triumph. Sometimes editors aren't as enthusiastic as I am. But when you truly get something new, and it's truly there and valid, you're like Columbus sliding in to drop another anchor off the coast of San Salvador.

Elliot: To what or whom do you owe your lifelong interest in mountain music, folklore and legends?

Wellman: My interest in the mountains, their music and legendry, is, I suppose, part of my lifelong interest in nature and the natural. Things are natural in those mountains. I had the great good fortune to follow two eminent folklore people around. Long ago, as an undergraduate, I was with Vance Randolph among the then unspoiled people of the Ozarks. I almost went there to live. And later, I knew and visited around in the Southern Appalachians with Bascom Lamar Lunsford. These two good men introduced me to their friends and made them friends of mine. It was a tremendously rich experience.

Elliot: Plant life is prominently featured in many of your stories. Kelp, pitchers, and trees come readily to mind. Does plant life hold a special fascination for you?

Wellman: Yes. I'm interested in plant life of all kinds, just as I'm interested in animal life. My early boyhood years spent in West Africa may have fostered such interest. Wherever I go, I look at trees and

flowers and try to identify them. I think this love of plants is one of the reasons I hate to live in big cities, where there's no nature except human nature (not always at its best). I'm fortunate to have for my brother an internationally known botanist and plant pathologist. It's a great pleasure and profit to go out among the vegetable kingdom with him. Hearing this question, I wondered, isn't everyone interested in plants? Well, maybe not everyone, except as articles of the menu.

Elliot: Speaking of city life, it's clear that country people loom large in your writing. Why country people? What about city folks?

Wellman: I use country folks a lot in my stories because, by and large, I'm country folks myself. I live in the country and was never really at home in big cities. I've written about city people, too, and I hope believably.

Elliot: How much of North Carolina shows up in your work? Do you enjoy staying in your own backyard when it comes to writing?

Wellman: More than half of my many books have North Carolina backgrounds or associations, and so do many of my stories. I have become a North Carolinian during my thirty-odd years of residence here, and there is much to write about in the state. I was honored with the 1978 State Award in Literature, as someone who has contributed substantially to North Carolina writing. It's a splendid state and I am proud to be identified with it.

Elliot: Another salient motif in your writing is Indian folklore. Are you an avid student of Indian history? What personal interest does it hold?

Wellman: I've always read history with great appetite, and indeed I've written history. I don't understand those who say history doesn't interest them. Indian stories and beliefs fascinate me, and I like to hear these from Indians themselves. I'm proud of a small trickle of Indian blood in my veins.

Elliot: In the past, you've written convincingly about many supernatural staples -- the devil, werewolves,

vampires, and the like. What is the secret of treating these subjects so as to avoid becoming cliché?

Wellman: The devil, werewolves, vampires, ghosts, and witches are all familiar subjects -- yes, they can be called staples. As to clichés, that depends how you write about them. We're always told that there are only thirty-eight basic plots in all literature, and the Greeks used them all. I never saw a list of those thirty-eight plots, by the way. However, approach is everything; otherwise there would be no point in writing anything. In your imagination there are other vampires than Dracula, other mad scientists than Frankenstein; Satan can bob up again any moment with a new, intriguing proposition to trade for your soul, and if this house is haunted, so may be the one across the street. The problem is, don't chew again exactly as somebody else has chewed.

Elliot: Very often you employ a format where "innocents" wander into a bizarre happening and become actively involved. Is this an important element in the fantasy genre?

Wellman: Yes. The encounter of an "innocent" -- usually a child -- with the supernatural situation, is too manifestly dramatic to need much comment. Many fine writers have used this technique, notably M. R. James, John Collier, and H. G. Wells.

Elliot: You are particularly deft when it comes to making frightening things one would consider powerless to frighten. For example, theimps in "For Fear of Little Men." What is the secret of this skill?

Wellman: I find it hard to explain the successful effect of any of my writing. That, I suggest, is up to someone on whom the effect is successful. But the sudden frightening menace of small things is manifest. When I was in Africa, whole villages would get out of the way of a march of driver ants in their myriads; if you didn't get out of the way, they'd polish your bones. How about the Bishop of Bingen, devoured by mice? How about the excessive smallness of deadly germs? Small things can turn out horribly powerful. So much "For Fear of Little Men," and again for "Frogfather," where a cruel gigger of frogs suddenly come face to face with a frog the size and power of an aquatic grizzly bear. I've always liked stories of the short-end coming out ahead in a fight. I remember how a big buck Belgian hare stomped to

death an invading polecat. In our own chicken yard, a valiant rooster, father of his country, fought and killed a chicken hawk. I heard an old hunter in the Ozarks tell of watching while a razorback boar, protecting his young giglets, fought and killed a black bear. I say, don't figure the odds too confidently on such things until you see what odds pay off. There are damned unlikely victors in life.

Elliot: How prevalent in your work is the theme of ancient, natural forces that rise up against the presumptuous?

Wellman: In what I write, there is always the situation of strange power rising up against someone who, perhaps, is over-confident. Perhaps that is influenced by the fact that I was required to read the Bible all through when I was young. You have a terrible, commanding voice of power speaking to Cain when he has killed Abel; the overwhelming of Pharaoh's chariot-borne army when the Red Sea flowed back upon it; the wiping out of the Assyrian host by a supernatural plague, in one night. Things like that have their effect on a young mind, which is instructed to believe such disasters can come to the fiercest and proudest. But you don't need the Bible to convince you of this. It's constantly true in real life. Some people call it fate. What is fate, and who operates it?

Elliot: In many of your stories, people pray to Satan for a variety of reasons. Does the current interest in Satanism disturb you? Are you a God-fearing man? Does the notion of Satan frighten you?

Wellman: Satanism is being practiced a lot these days, thumb-handedly. What Satan seems to stand for isn't my fancy; but he's about as fascinating a personality as ever came along. My religion is one of questioning. I suppose I'm a Christian at heart, though not an awfully good one. Satanism doesn't frighten me, though on occasion it disgusts me.

Elliot: Do many of your story ideas come to you through dreams, such as "The Undead Soldier?"

Wellman: Maybe I haven't dreamed many whole stories, but often I wake up with something I can use in a story. It may be a strange but vivid landscape -- unknown and unknowable cities show themselves in dreams, sometimes -- or it may be a new character. That character may

be strange to my wakeaday life, or perhaps someone just briefly encountered who, in the dream, becomes important. Dream-women occur and are worth putting into stories, especially. I'm sure that if I described some of my dreams to a psychoanalyst, he'd be like a kid in a candy store.

Elliot: One theme that doesn't surface too often in your writing is the idea of a life hereafter. What are your thoughts on the subject, both personally and as a story device?

Wellman: I'm afraid I don't know what the life hereafter is, though I imagine there is such a thing. I haven't written much about it, except when I use a ghost in a story.

Elliot: Do you write with the idea of conveying a specific message to the reader?

Wellman: No. I've never thought of writing for "message," which suggests advertising copy. If I have a message, perhaps it is that life is interesting.

Elliot: How do you perceive your role as a writer? Do you primarily write to entertain or do you also have certain didactic goals?

Wellman: This is a tricky two-choice question. Entertainer? If I were going to be that, I'd have done better in show business. I was an actor once; if I'd stayed with it, I could play Falstaff or Big Daddy now. However, the other side of the question is: Am I going to be didactic, preach a sermon? I never truly wanted to be an actor or a preacher. I hope the point, or the lesson, isn't that simple. I start out by trying to be happy (though frantically busy) with what I write. Sometimes readers have been diverted, entertained to read it. Once or twice or more times than that, readers have confessed that they learned and were inspired. I suppose that the entertainer can inspire and teach now and then. Likewise, the preacher might amuse, as with Billy Sun-

day or Amy Semple McPherson. But here you've given me two extremes, and there's a little room between and on both sides.

Elliot: When writing a book, what kind of reader or audience do you have in mind? Does this assessment shape the scope and direction of your work?

Wellman: Except for the juveniles I've written, slanted at young readers, I think simply of writing for literate human beings. I've been gratified to find that I'm read and relished by readers of all sorts, ages and backgrounds.

Elliot: From your vantage point, what makes for a successful fantasy story? What ingredients must it possess?

Wellman: A fantasy tale should take the extraordinary situation, make it real, and make the reader believe it and accept it. Farnsworth Wright's favorite word was "convincing." I used to get tired of it, but I know how right he was to insist.

Elliot: What does it take to be a successful fantasy writer? Is a particular attitude required?

Wellman: A fantasy writer needs the sense of wonder in a high degree. I can't speak to "attitude" -- good writers of fantasy vary from happy souls like Seabury Quinn to bizarre, mixed-up tragic ones like Robert E. Howard.

Elliot: What other advice would you give to aspiring young fantasy writers? How should they approach the genre? Should they search for new themes?



Manly Wade Wellman and Karl Edward Wagner at the Fifth World Fantasy Convention in Providence.
(Photo by Paul Allen)

Wellman: Study the field; write the best you possibly can; study markets and try to suit them. And don't wait for the "mood" to strike; you may go hungry before it shows up. Writing is more than a profession, it's a priesthood. Approach it as such. As to areas heretofore untapped, try to find one, or more than one.

Elliot: Do you view fantasy, especially as you write it, as "escapist" in character?

Wellman: Fantasy is "escapist" literature, which, by the way, is badly needed these sordid days. Escapist literature is somewhat akin to dreams. If you dream a dream with a happy ending, you wake up and are happy to have dreamed it. If it's a horrible dream, you wake up and are glad you're awake. Escapism is sometimes used as a derogatory term. But I feel it's like falling into a cesspool. You're supposed to stay in there and brilliantly adjust to your environment. But if you scramble out and have a bath, you're an escapist. I wonder how people in hell feel on this subject?

Elliot: Like many fantasy writers, a number of your stories contain elements of violence and mayhem. Is this an integral component of the fantasy genre? Have you ever been criticized for excessive blood and gore?

Wellman: I hadn't thought my stories were full of these things. Now and then, old ladies of both sexes complain about violence in there, but I've tried to be restrained in that as in all else. Violence, alas, is an active principle of the human mind and soul.

Elliot: As you see it, what is the best means of ensuring the believability of a fantasy story?

Wellman: To make your story believable, get to believing it yourself. Thomas Wolfe said that, or something like that, in *The Web and the Rock*. For the time when you're writing, those people must be more real than the flesh-and-blood people who just might drop in and interrupt you. You must see every blade of grass, every rock and bush. If you have something uncanny, you must make it uncanny, don't just say it's uncanny. This -- the presentation of the monster or specter -- is hardest of all. M. R. James could do it. So, sometimes, could Algernon Blackwood, Lord Dunsany, and James Branch Cabell. I repeat, it's hard, and you'd better think and think and re-

wise and revise. And read how others brought it off, but don't copy them.

Elliot: How has fantasy, as a literature, changed since you first started writing?

Wellman: Naturally, the ways of fantasy have changed, but fantasy traditions are solid. Perhaps this can be attributed to the fact that so much of fantasy refers to old beliefs and reports, dating back to the beginning of communicated folklore. Of course, we learn to write in new ways. Published stories these days are, or should be, written in language that today's readers can understand and appreciate. Yet it is significant that people still read and like things written by old writers now long dead, who should be alive today to enjoy their success. This sustained popularity is one of the acid tests of good writing.

Elliot: Does writing come easier to you today than when you began your career?

Wellman: I hope I write better now than when I was young, but no, by God, I don't write easier than I did then. Maybe I have more of a writer's way of life; but if I wrote easily, I'd be suspicious of my own writing.

Elliot: Are there any fantasy writers who you wish you were more like, either in terms of richness of ideas or facility with language?

Wellman: I admire many writers, particularly the English ones. What I may most admire is style and perception. I should say here that the writers I most admire aren't necessarily in the fantasy field. Let's say Shakespeare, Dante, and Milton; Russians, like Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky; the French, like Flaubert, Maupassant, and Stendhal; the English, like Thackeray, Dickens, and more modern writers, like Hardy, Kipling, Conrad (though he was a Pole writing in England) and, later, Wodehouse, Waugh, and so on; Americans, like Twain, Whitman, London, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Hemingway, and Wolfe. I admire all these great gifts in richness of invention and the language in which to express it. But I can't let myself envy. Envy is a small, despicable impulse. I've been influenced, yes, but I work hard at being my own sort of man and writer. I don't want to imitate.

Elliot: Unlike many modern fantasy writers, you were quite shy and

withdrawn when it came to self-promotion. Why?

Wellman: When I was young, I was taught that self-promotion -- beating drums and waving flags for your own publicity -- was in bad taste. I accepted that viewpoint while I was rebelling against others, and I still think it's a good viewpoint. When people interview me and ask me questions, I do my best to be agreeable and helpful, but I hate to seek such things out. I know writers who do go in for melodramatic self-advertisement, and I feel embarrassed for them. I wish they didn't think they needed it. I'm grateful to those who know me best, who mostly seem to approve of me as a human being. And I'm grateful to those who don't know me personally at all, but like what I write.

Elliot: Have you, the artist, and you, the commercial writer, been able to work well together over the years?

Wellman: It's for others to evaluate me as an artist. As a commercial writer, I don't think I've tried to be that. Some people can do that brilliantly, but I don't think I know how. I'm afraid that I've thought more about trying to write the best I knew how. Maybe that got me some rejections years ago, though the rejections have been polished and sold later. I'd like to think that, in the last ditch, the editor can't reject you if only you've written well enough to break his legs and make him accept you. Of course, you must recognize the facts of writing life and try to cope with them outside any ivory towers. But I'm no great success at commercialism, or I'd have been the greatest advertising copy writer in the world.

Elliot: As you look back over your career, do you have any deep regrets, things that you would do differently if you had the opportunity?

Wellman: Mostly, if I had it all to do over again, I'd have stuck more faithfully to what most moved me to write, would have tried to spend less time in writing, as I had to, to get eating money. It would have been good to have been born a little later, to be still young in these times when the fantasy genre is so well accepted. As it is, I hope I have more or less succeeded with what I felt I must do. And who knows what I might have done with another life? The whole life-long experience has been intensely valuable to me, not only as a writer

but as a man. Every single damned aspect of it. If I'd done things differently, undoubtedly, I'd have been somebody else than who I am.

Elliot: Looking back, what accounts for your extraordinary staying power as a writer?

Wellman: I've written for half a century because I love to write and developed an early interest in it as a career. I wouldn't be happy if I weren't writing. I'd write if I had a million dollars a year, tax free. I've been lucky in having extremely good health and good opportunities to get published, as well as a sustained and sustaining interest in life and in finding out new things all the time. Yet it will be too bad if I don't know when I'm through and can't write any more. Nothing is so pathetic as somebody who didn't hear the whistle and realize the game was over, so far as he was concerned.

Elliot: If you were asked to assess your work, how would you do so? What are your primary strengths and limitations?

Wellman: They say that one who acts as his own lawyer has a fool for a client. It may be suggested that one who assesses his own work has a fool for a critic. So I walk quite delicately here. I can only hope that I have done honest work in the best way I can, and that it reads honestly and well. Maybe I've done something good with solid folk themes, complete with natural people as they act and speak and think. I've done my best to stay away from pumped-up, hyperbolic writing. My chief limitation, today as when I began, is in not writing as well as I wish I could.

Elliot: How do you view your own contribution to the fantasy field? How would you like to be remembered?

Wellman: If I've made an appreciable contribution, I hope it was for honesty and for writing my best. I've been flattered by the expressed opinions of folklorists that I have some value as an interpreter of the natural American and things he may believe. And I've tried to write with decent restraint, too, tried to do it without capital letters and exclamation points. One thing else I seem to have done, if I am to judge by what is said and written about me, is the capture and recording in my stories of old folk songs. I wish I could do more in that area.

Elliot: Do you still read much fan-

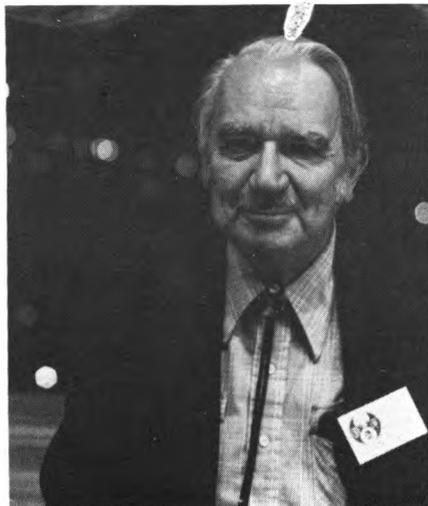
tasy? How would you assess the current crop of new writers? Who are your favorites in the field today?

Wellman: I read fantasy all the time, the old and the new. Among my favorites are many personal friends. Robert Bloch comes forcibly to mind. Of the British writers, I see Ramsey Campbell as coming strongly to the fore. Here in America, I think Karl Edward Wagner has taken the place Robert E. Howard had long ago. I can't name everyone.

Elliot: Finally, what do you most enjoy doing when you're not writing? What activities give you the most pleasure?

Wellman: At present I am well up in years, and don't do some things I used to do. When I was young I loved rough sports. I played football, I was thought to be a good boxer and fencer, and I hiked long distances, climbed mountains, camped out, watched animals, and studied plants and minerals. These days, I only watch sports. I travel when I can, and when I travel I'm always happy to make friends with good strangers. I'm a pretty sociable person. I like to go to parties with the right sort (especially writers to talk shop). I greatly enjoy good food and drink (my wife, who also writes, is way up there among the best cooks I've ever known). I like to listen to music -- all kinds -- from highflown classic to earthy, traditional folk. And when I have time I read and read. All these things, I hope, make me a good representative specimen of the human race.

-- Dr. Jeffrey M. Elliot



(Photo by Paul Allen)

"The British Scene" by Mike Ashley
...continued from page 12.

novelette, "The Giant Killers," which you'll find in the first volume of *Peter Weston's Andromeda* anthology series.

E. C. Tubb, on the other hand, is as prolific as ever. *Iduna's Universe*, the 21st volume in the Dumarest series, was published by DAW last November, and the 22nd (which will be retitled) should be out in the summer. Tubb is presently completing Dumarest 23, but also has plans for a new and different kind of central-character hero, separate from Dumarest. "All that remains," Ted comments, "is to work out the background, situations, central motivation, style, plot elements, etc. Those who say ideas are all you need don't really know what they're talking about." The Dumarest titles are being reprinted in the UK by Arrow Books with the latest in print being No. 14, *Jack of Swords*.

As for other Tubb novels, Robert Hale will publish *S.T.A.R. Flight* in hardcover this spring. Previous publications were in the U.S. in paperback from Paperback Library in 1969 and Warner in 1973. April 1980, however, sees a new novel from Ted Tubb, *The Luck Machine*, to be published in hardback by Dobson. Whilst in the U.S., Fawcett has bought *Pawn of the Omphalos*, a strong adventure yarn. It's good to know that Tubb, the most prolific, active SF writer, is still keeping us well supplied.

Interjection time. This column was completed at the end of November so as to avoid the Christmas postal chaos. In addition, I shall be totally occupied over the next two months producing the second *Fantasy Reader's Guide* devoted to Ramsey Campbell, and my definitive index for the fiftieth anniversary of *Analog*. So, if I miss the deadline for the next issue of *Fantasy Newsletter*, don't be surprised. I'm hoping that by then I'll have the publishers sufficiently trained to send me news without me having to ask for it. Any publishers, editors, writers and artists reading this in Britain and busting to let someone know what they're doing, just write to me, Mike Ashley, at 4 Thistlebank, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent, ME5 8AD and, through the medium of *Fantasy Newsletter*, I'll tell the world.

-- Mike Ashley

paperbacks

ACE BOOKS

Leading off Ace releases in March are two original science fiction anthologies. *Analog Yearbook II*, subtitled *Analog Yearbook 1980*, is edited by *Stanley Schmidt* and features new stories by regular contributors to *Analog*. *The Spears of Mars*, edited by *Reginald Bretnor*, is the second volume in Ace's projected three-volume anthology series, "The Future at War." Included in the 448-page book are new stories and articles by *Poul Anderson*, *Orson Scott Card*, *Alan E. Nourse*, *Fred Saberhagen*, *Carl Sagan*, *Robert Sheckley* and *Racoon Sheldon*, among others.

Slated for its first mass market paperback edition is *Space Pirates* by *Gordon Eklund*, the second volume in the new *Lord Tedric* series created by *E. E. Smith*. This was a trade paperback original from *Baronet* a year ago. Also making their first mass market paperback appearances in March will be *The Web Between the Worlds* by *Charles Sheffield* and *Janissaries* by *Jerryournelle*. Both were Ace trade paperback releases last year.

Reprints for March include *Soldier, Ask Not* by *Gordon R. Dickson* and *Lavender-Green Magic* by *Andre Norton*, in addition to a special nine-title *Edgar Rice Burroughs* promotion. The Burroughs titles are: *Lost On Venus*, *The Land of Hidden Men*, *At the Earth's Core*, *Pellucidar*, *Tanar of Pellucidar*, *Tarzan at the Earth's Core*, *Back to the Stone Age*, *Land of Terror*, and *Savage Pellucidar*.

Under the Charter imprint, watch for the third novel in *Barry*

Sadler's The Eternal Mercenary series, *The War Lord*. In this newest volume, *Casca* travels to China. Also scheduled is a quasi-SF thriller, *Sigmat Active* by *Thomas Page*, about the development of a new weapon that involves sending a laser beam into the ozone layer to direct solar radiation to the earth.

A Tempo Books release for March that was delayed from January (see *FN #20*) is *The Wizard of Oz* by *L. Frank Baum*.

DELL FANTASY & SF

On tap from Dell in March is a new horror novel by *Hugh B. Cave* entitled *The Nebulon Horror*, about a group of children that terrorize the small town of *Nebulon, Florida*.

SF releases this month include the first paperback edition of *Medusa's Children* by *Bob Shaw*, an SF adventure taking place on a water world. It was published in hardcover by *Doubleday* a year ago. Also scheduled is *Zelda M'Tana* by *F. M. Busby*, billed as "an action-packed space adventure" about a young woman shanghaied into space aboard a prison ship.

DAW BOOKS

Coming from DAW Books in March are additions to three series. Two are novels: *John Norman's* 14th title in the *Counter-Earth* saga, *Fighting Slave of Gor*, and the third volume in *Neal Barrett's Aldair* series, *Aldair, Across the Misty Sea*. DAW now has more than two million copies of the *Gor* books in print.

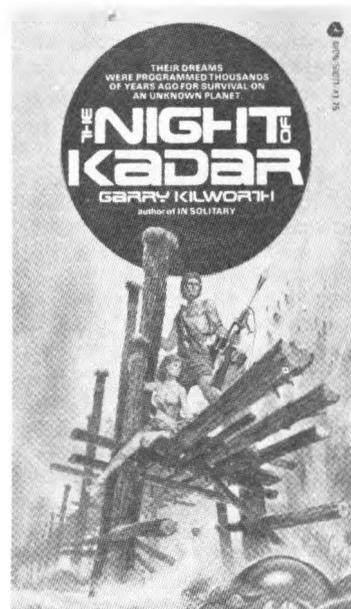
The third title is volume three

in the anthology series *Isaac Asimov Presents the Great SF Stories*, this one covering the year 1941. Included are "Nightfall" by *Isaac Asimov*, "Shuttle Bop" by *Theodore Sturgeon*, "Jay Score" by *Eric Frank Russell*, "Adam and No Eve" by *Alfred Bester*, "Snulbug" by *Anthony Boucher*, "The Words of Guru" by *C. M. Kornbluth*, and "Solar Plexus" by *James Blish*, among others.

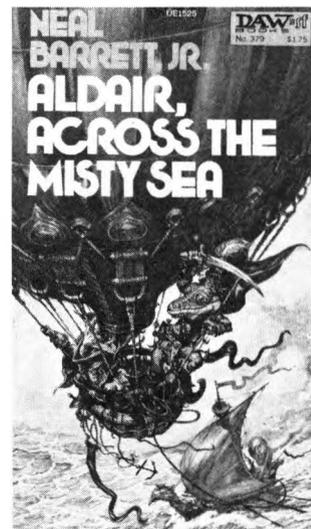
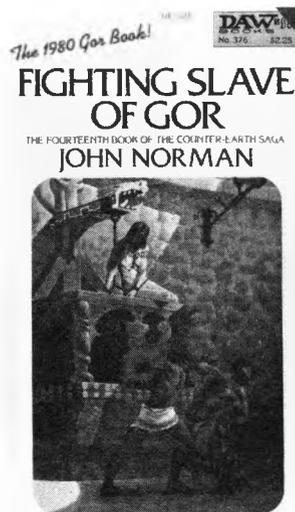
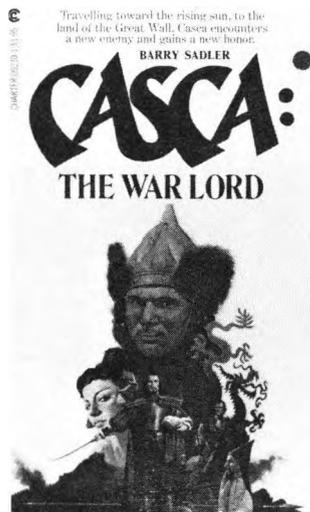
A reprint for March is *The Winged Man* by *A. E. Van Vogt* and *E. Mayne Hull*, and the reissue this month is *The Star Road* by *Gordon R. Dickson*.

AVON BOOKS

Due out from Avon in March as a mainstream release is an SF original novel, *Shiva Descending* by *Gregory Benford* and *William Rotsler*. The novel is about a 30 billion ton meteor due to collide with the Earth and the efforts of an international team of astronauts in attempting to



Artist: Gregory Morrow



divert it.

Another SF original in the U.S. is *The Night of Kadar* by Garry Kilworth, about a colony starship carrying frozen human embryos that lands in a swamp on an Earth-like planet. Thanks to an alien intruder who infiltrates the life support system, however, the colonists are unable to remember why they left Earth.

First paperback editions slated for March are *Necronomicon*, a handbook of the myths and rituals penned by the "Mad Arab" Abdul Alhazred, published in hardcover by Schenckcraft/Barnes; *The Lost Star* by H. M. Hoover, a space adventure for young adults, published by the Viking Press, about a young girl who discovers the last survivors of a lost civilization and determines to save them from distinction; and *Spore 7* by Clancy Carlile, a suspense novel about a mysterious disease that breaks out in a California coastal town, published in hardcover by William Morrow & Co.

POCKET BOOKS

Pocket Books originals for March are *The Demu Trilogy* by F. M. Busby and *The Orphan* by Robert Stallman. Included in *The Demu Trilogy* are Busby's first two previously published space adventure novels, *Cage A Man* and *The Proud Enemy*, and his newest novel, never before published and completing the trilogy, *End of the Line*. *The Orphan* is a fantasy novel about a young boy/werewolf who allows himself to become adopted by a farm family. Set in the Depression '30s, the novel is written from the boy/werewolf's point of view. A sequel is planned for publication next year.

Two new Star Trek titles for March are *Chekov's Enterprise* by Walter Koenig, an inside view of the

making of *Star Trek - The Motion Picture*, and *Stan Lee Presents the Full-Color Comics Version of Star Trek - The Motion Picture*.

Making its first paperback appearance in March will be *The Great Fetish* by L. Sprague de Camp, published in hardcover last year by Doubleday. Reprints for March are *The Eyes of the Overworld* by Jack Vance and *The Glory Game* by Keith Laumer.

A juvenile release is *Miss Pickereil Meets Mr. H.U.M.* by Ellen MacGregor and Dora Pantell, the third volume in the series for ages 8-12; it will appear under the Archway imprint.

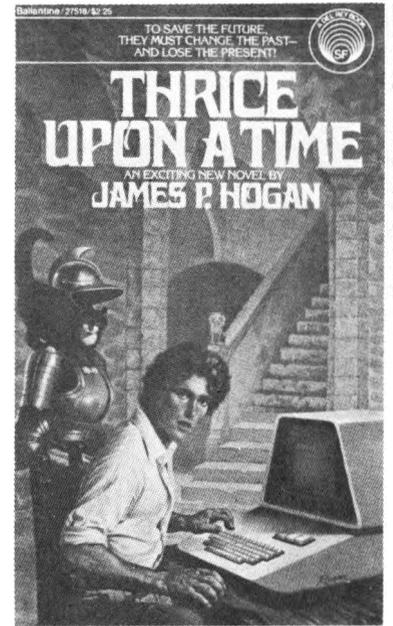
SIGNET

New titles from Signet in March are *The Best of Trek #2* edited by Walter Irwin and G. B. Love, a collection of material with eight pages of illustrations from *Trek* magazine, and *The Scourge* by Nick Sharman, a contemporary horror-thriller about remote programming of people's minds. A reissue for March is *Starburst* by Alfred Bester.

DEL REY BOOKS

Del Rey releases for March include two paperback original novels, *The Lure of the Basilisk* by Lawrence Watt-Evans and *Thrice Upon a Time* by James P. Hogan. The former is about the adventures of Garth, who is promised immortal fame by the Forgotten King if he can bring back the creature living in the ancient crypts under the bewitched city of Mormoreth. The creature turns out to be a basilisk whose breath is poisonous, whose touch is deadly, and whose gaze turns men to stone. The Hogan title is an SF novel about a machine that can send messages into the past.

Reprints and reissues for March



Artist: Rowena Morrill

are: *The Lovers* by Philip Jose Farmer, *Way Station* by Clifford D. Simak, *Fire Time* by Poul Anderson, and *Lifeboat* by James White.

ZEBRA BOOKS

Only one Zebra title to report on for March, but it should be a good one: Poul Anderson's first volume in "The Saga of Harald Har-drede," *The Last Viking*. Book #1 is *The Golden Horn*. Book #2 is scheduled for a May release.

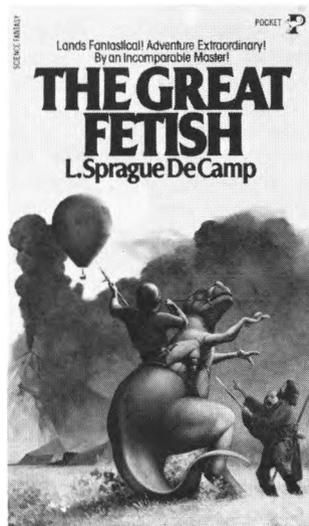
PLAYBOY PRESS

And, only one title to report for Playboy Press in March: *What Rough Beast* by William Jon Watkins.

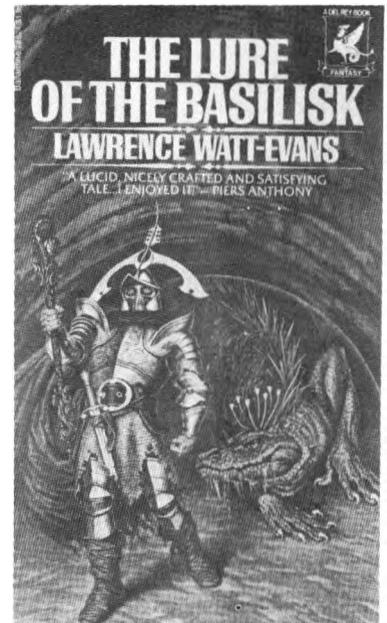
(Continued on page 34.)



Artist: Don Matz



Artist: Stine



the fan press



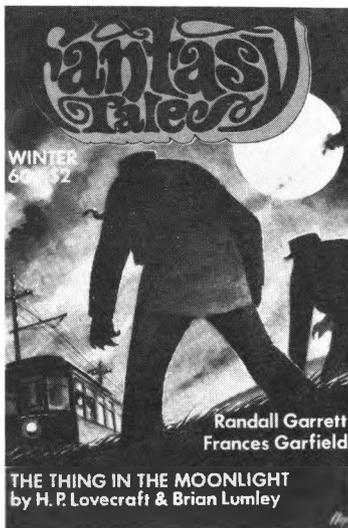
Artist: Thomas Blackshear

SHAYOL

Just about a year overdue (it was previewed in *FN* #?), *Shayol* #3 has appeared from the husband and wife team of Arnold Fenner and Pat Cadigan. It was well worth the wait. Fiction included in this issue is: "At A Time Very Near the End" by *Lisa Tuttle*, "Love's Heresy" by *Michael Bishop*, "Blue Eyes" by the late *Tom Reamy* (his final work and the idea behind a planned second novel), "Abaddon" by *Steven Utley*, "A Hero at the Gates" by *Tanith Lee*, "That's Entertainment" by *Lee Lacy*, "Horror We Got" by *Howard Waldrop*, and "Homecoming" by *C. J. Cherryh*.

Additional features include an interview with *Stephen King*, a short article on *Alien* by *Cheryl Tobler*, "Sorcery" (verse) by *Gordon Larkin*, "Flash Gordon Flunked Physics" by *Phil Bolick*, "Kirk's Corner" by *Tim Kirk*, and a portfolio by *Stephen Fabian*. Add to that a letters column, reviews, and more artwork by *Clyde Caldwell*, *Jan Schwab*, *Barbara Stitt*, *Robert Haas*, *A. Mason*, *Richard Corben* and *Hank Jankus*. The issue sports a nice full color cover painting by *Thomas Blackshear*.

Shayol is completely typeset and exhibits some outstanding graphics and design work. The 64-page issue is printed on a heavy, coated stock with heavier, enamel covers. Single copies are \$3 and subscriptions are \$10 for 4 issues. Flight Unlimited, Inc., 1100 Countyline



Artist: David Lloyd

Road, Bldg. 8, #29, Kansas City, KS 66103.

P*S*F*Q

A magazine new to me is P*S*F*Q the third issue of which recently appeared in my mailbox, dated "Fall-Winter-Spring-Summer-Fall 1978-79." The 52-page, neatly typeset, double issue features the following articles: "This is Another Fine Mess You've Got Us Into" by *Chelsea Quinn Yarbro*, an appreciation/bibliography of publisher *Donald M. Grant* by *Stephen Riley*, a checklist of *Robert E. Howard* Lancer paperback editions by *William J. Denholm III*, an article on feminist fiction by *Terry A. Garey*, "Kiss the Blood Off My Other Sword" (an article on the *Gor* books) by *Paul E. Moslander*, "A Woman Reading a Book" by *Avedon Carol*, a brief interview with *C. L. Moore* by *Dr. Jeffrey Elliot*, "On Becoming Visible" by *James Patrick Kelly*, "Transitory Thoughts" by *Nicholas D. Judah*, and an article on SF wargaming by *Jeff Pimper*. Also included is a lengthy letters column.

Artists in the issue are *Lela Dowling*, *Don Simpson*, *Marc Schirmeister*, *Tina Bear*, *Lee Nordling*, *Jack Gaughan*, *Richard Bruning*, *Joe Pearson*, *Grant Canfield* and *Ray Al-lard*. As noted on the cover, the issue is "easily worth \$3.00" and subscriptions are \$5 for 4 issues. *Michael Ward*, P. O. Box 1496, Cupertino, CA 95015.

FANTASY TALES

As previewed last issue, *Fantasy Tales* #5 has appeared from Britain. Stories this issue include:

"Extension 201" by *Cyril Simsa*, "The Thing in the Moonlight" by *H. P. Lovecraft* and *Brian Lumley*, "For the Life Everlasting" by *Brian Mooney*, "Don't Open That Door" by *Frances Garfield* (Mrs. Manly Wade Wellman -- the story is a revised version of "Forbidden Cupboard" from a 1940 issue of *Weird Tales*), and "Just Another Vampire Story" by *Randall Garrett*. Poetry is by *Gordon Larkin*, *H. Warner Munn*, *Simon Ounsley* and *Steve Eng*.

Artists this issue include *David Lloyd*, *Randy Broecker*, *Russell Nicholson*, *Dave Carson*, *Hannes Bok*, *Stephen Fabian*, *Jim Pitts* and *Alan Hunter*. The 48-page, 6" by 8½" magazine is priced at 60p or \$2 (and I'd suggest including 50¢ for postage on U.S. orders). *David Sutton*, 194 Station Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7TE, England.

TRISKELL PRESS

Now available from Triskell Press is the first in a series of new chapbooks, *Woman of the Elfmounds* by *Paul Edwin Zimmer*, a Celtic fantasy novelette. The 64-page, 5½" by 7" chapbook is perfect bound in textured blue covers and includes an introduction by *Evangeline Walton* and three interior illustrations by *Barry Blair*. The price is \$4 plus \$1 for first class postage.

Also available is a six-plate mini-portfolio by *Donna Gordon* entitled *The Harp of the Grey Rose*. Comprising the portfolio are six 4" by 6" finely detailed line drawings on card stock, wrapped in an illustrated, parchment-like envelope. Price is \$3 plus \$1 for first class postage. *Charles de Lint*, Triskell Press, P. O. Box 9480, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3V2, Canada.

THE ARGONAUT

Out now from *Michael Ambrose* is his largest issue to date of *The Argonaut* (#6), a 56-page digest size issue. Included are the following stories: "The Shadow" by *Albert J. Manachino*, "Black Things" by *B. F. Watkinson*, "The Thing That Counts" by *Randall D. Larson*, "A Good Sense of Humor" by *Lawson W. Hill*, "Alanna" by *Gordon Linzner*, "Valley of the Lost Soul" by *M. E. Tyrell*, "Forbidden Corner" by *Dewi MacS*, and "Manifest Destiny" by *John D. Kelly*.

Also included are a number of poems by such people as *Joey Froehlich*, *Steve Eng*, *Mark McLaughlin*,

Michael Danagher and William A. Conder, among others; book reviews by John DiPrete; a letters column; and artwork by Bruce Conklin, Gary Kato, Dale Hammell, Allen Koszowski, Stephen F. Schwartz and David Voburgh. Single copies are \$1.50 and 4-issue subscriptions are \$5.50. Michael E. Ambrose, P. O. Box 7985, Austin, TX 78712.

ERBANIA

Now entering its 24th year of continuous publication, *Erbania* #44 is a special issue devoted to the late John Coleman Burroughs, artist and youngest son of Edgar Rice Burroughs. Included are cover illustrations and much interior artwork by Burroughs and a tribute by Harry Habblitz and editor D. Peter Ogden. Additional material in the issue is a look at the Marvel Burroughs comics by James Cawthorn, a number of book reviews and a letters column. Additional art is supplied by Cawthorn, Tom Yeates and Roy Krenkel. No single copy price is noted in the 16-page issue, but subscriptions are \$4 for 4 issues. If you're a Burroughs fan, this is just about the only Burroughs fanzine left in this country. D. Peter Ogden, 8001 Fernview Lane, Tampa, FL 33615.

FAN PLUS

Fan Plus is the title of a new magazine published by David Pettus, serving as "A Forum for Southern SF Fandom." The first number is a 32 page issue, featuring an interview with Frederik Pohl, "The Screenwriter's Guide to SF" by Bob Tucker, "Southern Fandom--Whence and Whither?" by Meade Frierson III, "Atrophy, A Trophy, and Me" by Michael Bishop, "Teaching Physics With SF" by Gregory Benford, a profile of southern fan artist Charlie Williams, and about ten pages of book reviews.

Artwork is by Randal Spangler, Vincent DiFate, A. E. Trembley, Charlie Williams and Mark Rogers. Single copies are priced at \$2 and subscriptions to the quarterly are \$6 per year. David Pettus, Route 2, Box 274-B, Loretto, TN 38469.

SKULLDUGGERY

The first issue of *Skullduggery*, a new mystery fiction magazine, recently appeared from Michael L. Cook, publisher of the fantasy advertiser, *The Age of the Unicorn*. The 60-page, digest size issue sports a cover illustration by Frank Hamilton and features the following stories: "Strikes" by Bill Pronzini and Barry N. Malzberg, "The Little Dread Schoolhouse" by Michael Aval-

lone, "The Case of the Wayward Waller" by David Galvin, "Publish or Perish" by Joseph Lewandowski, "The Blood-Spattered Pages" by Mark Mansell, "The Big Nothing" by Will Murray, and "Irate Reader" (verse) by Paul Harwitz.

Skullduggery's format, as well as interior artwork, is pleasantly reminiscent of the old pulps. Single copies are priced at \$2.50. Subscriptions are \$8 for four quarterly issues. Michael L. Cook, 3318 Wimberg Ave., Evansville, IN 47712.

ETERNITY

Eternity, the very nicely done semi-pro magazine of SF that lasted four issues from 1972-75 has been reincarnated. The new *Eternity* #1 sports a wraparound full color cover painting by Darrel Anderson and runs 82 pages on high quality newsprint. Featured in the first new issue are the following stories: "A Knight for Merytha" by Roger Zelazny (reprinted from the original #3), "Final Solution" by Andrew J. Offutt (reprinted from the original #1), "The Interstellar Ragtime All-American Jazzband" by Grant Carrington (new), "Through A Wall and Back" by David R. Bunch (new), "The Chocolate Man" by John Keefawer (reprinted from the first #4), "After Stone and Steel" by Stephen Leigh (new), and "Marya" by Benton McAdams (new).

Regular columns include "Ozymandias" by Andrew J. Offutt, book reviews by Orson Scott Card, "Writing SF" by Darrell Schweitzer, film reviews by Edward Bryant, and "Science" by Karl T. Pflock. Additional features are "Artificial Intelligence: Visions of the Future" by Pamela McCorduck, poetry by Peter Dillingham, and a letters column.

Interior artwork is provided by Darrel Anderson, Jean Coleman, Al Sirois, Stephen Fabian, Michael Gilbert, John Peterson and Gary Raham. Published quarterly, *Eternity* is single copy priced at \$1.75 and subscriptions are \$6 per year. Stephen Gregg, P. O. Box 510, Clemson, SC 29631.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

Just for the record: all fan press publications reviewed here are offset printed and 8½" by 11" in format, unless otherwise noted.

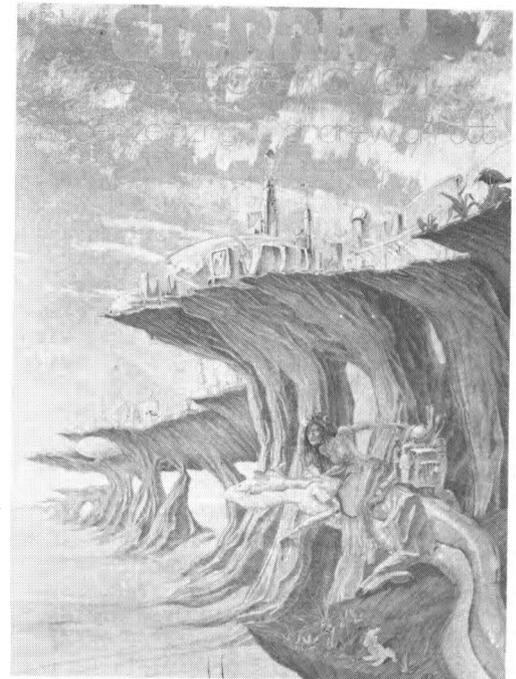
An "obituary notice" it grieves me to print: *Fantasy Crossroads* will no longer be published. Editor Jonathan Bacon is returning material to contributors and if you have any unsettled matters, contact him at 7613 Flint, Apt. A, Shawnee, KS 66214.

Steve Rasnic, publisher of *Umbra*, has a new name and a new address: Steve Rasnic Tem, 2330 Irving St., Denver, CO 80211. He should have a new issue of *Umbra* appearing shortly. *Umbra* is a quarterly journal of speculative poetry, although issue #4 is considerably overdue. (See *FN* #10/11.)

Francesco Cova, editor of the Italian fantasy magazine *Kadath*, informs me that issue #2 will be out in late February with a longer English language section. With issue #3, *Kadath* will become a paying market for original fiction (in English) and artwork. Fantasy and weird fiction only, please. Francesco Cova, Corso Aurelio Saffi, 5/9, 16128 Genoa, Italy. (See *FN* #20 for additional information.)

Room of One's Own, "A Feminist Journal of Literature and Criticism," is planning a special issue on fantasy and science fiction. Short stories in the 2,000-3,000 word range, poetry and graphics, as well as proposals for reviews and critical articles, by women, should be addressed to guest editor Susan Wood, 2236 Allison Road, Vancouver, B. C. V6T 1T6, Canada.

Finally, a brief note regarding Robert E. Howard: *Two-Gun Raconteur*. A couple of months back, I received a letter from publisher Damon Sasser indicating that issue #5 would be out in January. More recently, however, the post office has notified me that he has moved and left no forwarding address. Anyone knowing his new address, please contact me.



Artist: Darrell Anderson

Book Reviews

Shikasta by Doris Lessing. Knopf, New York, October 1979, 365 pp. \$10.95.

Recently, the *New York Times Book Review* featured on its first page a review of a science fiction novel. That, in itself, is amazing and quite remarkable. The book, *Shikasta*, by Doris Lessing, is not so remarkable in spite of some poignant passages that give some insight into humanity. But, since Doris Lessing, as a mainstream writer has an impeccable reputation (*The Four Gated City*, *The Golden Notebooks*, etc.), such a crossover merits some noise in the literary world.

And so far, it would appear that the crossover has raised eyebrows and garnered Ms. Lessing some disapproval.

I wanted to love it; I wanted to be able to applaud it because the field needs writers of excellence. But I can only say that it is a flawed piece of writing, well-meaning but slow and hard to comprehend. To begin with, it is written in the document form, the active voice has been hushed; we learn of events second hand and the entire novel reeks of sermons and lectures that go on much too long.

It is the first of a projected tetralogy and follows the development of Earth (*Shikasta*) as it is guided and manipulated by great galactic empires, primarily the good guys -- Canopus and its ally, Sirius and the bad guys of Puttorria and their colony, Shammatt.

As mentioned earlier, this novel is done in the form of reports, documents, diaries, letters, case studies, synoptic histories and explanatory notes.

The pace of the book drags and the writer overwhelms the reader with heavy pseudo-spiritual overtones...and sometimes outright clumsiness. No one should get away with "Substance-of-we-feeling," otherwise known as SOWF, a benevolent cosmic radiation that eliminates evil vibes in one fell swoop...no one.

A capsule of the story: After prolonged radiation from an exploding star, the proto-humans of *Shikasta* become absorbed into the Canopus empire after it subjects the planet to "an all-out booster, Top-Level Priority, Forced Growth Plan." Then it sends wise giants to tutor the natives as the SOWF radiates its heavenly power upon the natives. (There are also Little People.) But then, a sudden malignment (Oh, as-

trology!) among the stars causes the flow of SOWF to be radically diminished. And, on top of that, the bad guys are siphoning off much of that remaining SOWF. In short, the humans become dreadful creatures...and the Penultimate Time and the Wrath comes at hand. But, finally, the stars realign and the SOWF flows again and all is restored.

There is much "Biblical" toying, which I found offensive. (Yeah, you thought that was Noah, well it was really a guy from Canopus and Jesus...well, let me tell you...) Other than that, there are moments of tight writing that make you long for the book that might have been. And perhaps the next book in the tetralogy will be more cohesive, less rambling and more subtle.

Lessing has been known for her realistic approach and deserves respect. Her interest and new-found openness should be applauded, but I am disappointed in this book. Not only because of its faults (her writing is still heads over much of the writing going on in the genre termed science fiction), but because the literary world watches writers of her stature. In their judgment of *Shikasta* is also a judgment of science fiction in general. And, apparently, their judgment is not encouraging. I wanted mine to be, because of that judgment. Unfortunately, I must be honest.

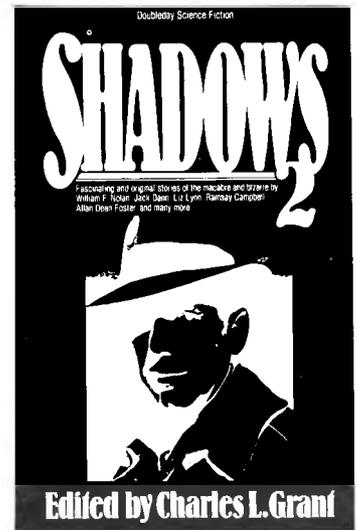
But one thing that I did enjoy was seeing *Shikasta* reviewed on the front page of the *New York Times Book Review*. Now, if someday we can discover that they have reviewed the latest from Silverberg, Wilhelm, Spinrad or Varley on the front page, etc. We'll see...but I'm not going to hold my breath.

-- Melissa Mia Hall

Shadows 2 edited by Charles L. Grant. Doubleday, New York, November 1979, 212 pp. \$8.95

Charles Grant proved a winner in his first effort at editing an original horror anthology. *Shadows* received the 1979 World Fantasy Award for best anthology, and included Avram Davidson's "Naples," which won that award for best short fiction. *Shadows 2* is the second installment in what promises to be a regular series of quality horror fiction.

Without doubt, the original *Shadows* set a high standard that would be difficult to repeat; and although *Shadows 2* does not equal



that standard, it is nevertheless potent and satisfying entertainment. An immediately apparent distinction between *Shadows 2* and its predecessor is the new volume's increased reliance on lesser-known authors. Absent are some of the familiar names -- Aickman, Bloch, Davidson and King -- as Grant gives exposure to developing talents. Nevertheless, the strengths of *Shadows 2* lie primarily in the stories by established fantasy authors.

The lead story, "Saturday's Shadow," is William F. Nolan at his best, a droll and labyrinthine (although ultimately predictable) first person narrative of schizophrenic breakdown. Manly Wade Wellman contributes "The Spring," another enchanting tale of John the Balladeer. Malzberg and Pronzini pay tribute to Poe in "Clocks," a modernized version of "The Tell-Tale Heart;" but, unfortunately, Grant also includes Lee Wells' "The Old Man's Will," a story nearly identical to "Clocks" in basic premise and resolution, thereby reducing the effectiveness of each story. Michael Bishop's tale within a tale, "Seasons of Belief," provides some comic relief while evoking memories of childhood fears. And Ramsey Campbell's "Macintosh Willy" is yet another superb ghost story from the undoubted living master of horror short fiction.

The capstone of *Shadows 2*, however, is provided by T.E.D. Klein's "Petey." This brilliant novelette chronicles a housewarming party at an isolated country home acquired in an unscrupulous transaction. Cut-away scenes at an insane asylum housing the previous owner combine with vague ruminations of the host and seemingly insignificant occurrences at the party to provide clues to the horror inexorably descending upon the house. Klein develops his story with mature effectiveness,

allowing the horror to ripen within the reader's imagination rather than explicating it by written word.

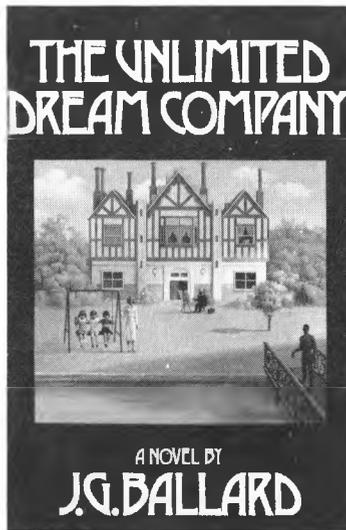
Eight other stories are included, with memorable contributions by Jack Dann, Elizabeth Lynn and Peter Pautz. There is not a weak story in the collection, and the diversity of Grant's selections strengthens the volume beyond the sum of its parts.

After two installments, the *Shadows* series reveals much about Charles Grant's conception of the horror tale. The *Shadows 2* introduction states that horror fiction has an "obvious purpose" of promoting an emotional reaction in the reader -- "a shade of fear...(and) a combination of wishes: that such things could be true, that they'd better not be true, that if they are true they'd better not be true here in this room as long as I'm alone." Echoing Campbell, Lovecraft and others, Grant would obtain this reaction through aesthetics of style, such as atmosphere, rather than by the use of dramatic devices. Moreover, he recognizes the irony that is an organic element of horror, and he selects tales of a perversely humorous nature with frequency. He rejects the role of revulsion (or the "let's slow down and look at the accident" syndrome as described in Stephen King's foreword to *Night Shift*), and the appurtenances of the Grand Guignol, often essential to the works of King and others, are conspicuously absent from Grant's selections.

Grant also espouses the oft-repeated, sentimentalized view that horror fiction represents the last vestiges of Romanticism. Although the Romantic view embraced by Grant has been effectively challenged by Jack Sullivan's excellent *Elegant Nightmares* (Ohio University Press, 1979), the editorial impact of Grant's Romantic construct seems limited to a decided preference for horror fiction that contains an element of the supernatural. Grant thus eschews the "terror" and "psychological suspense" vestiges of horror fiction. Indeed, only four of the *Shadows 2* stories involve premises capable of "rational" explanation as psychological phenomena.

Although less satisfying than its distinguished predecessor, *Shadows 2* provides a strong complement of effective and diverse horror fiction. I look forward to the promised *Shadows 3*.

-- Douglas E. Winter



The Unlimited Dream Company by J. G. Ballard. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, November 1979, 238 pp. \$10.95

J. G. Ballard deserves the recognition and appreciation of American readers of imaginative fiction. He is one of a disturbingly small number of writers in the field who are determined to produce mature, intelligent fiction, and who are consistently striving for literary sophistication and innovation. As such, Ballard is an author whose works demand to be read, whether they constitute the success of *High-Rise* or the brave failing of *Concrete Island*.

The Unlimited Dream Company must be counted as a success, and is worthy of the lavish praise from Anthony Burgess emblazoned on its dust jacket. Ballard's most blatantly symbolist work since *The Crystal World*, its substance is surreal and sensual imagery rather than the plot-oriented trappings of the naturalistic novel. And although its scenario is as enigmatic and uncompromisingly ironic as most of Ballard's work, there is an important departure from earlier themes of disaster and decay.

Dream Company presents the first person narrative of Blake, a young misfit obsessed with flight. Blake emerges from the certain death of an airplane crash in the Thames to become the apparent messiah of the film-making suburb of Shepperton. His dreams and visions evoke a pastoral fantasy that alters Shepperton's mundane suburbia into a primordial Eden. Catalyzed by Blake's anthropomorphic resonances, the populace regresses to a tribal consciousness, finally succumbing to their messiah and being granted the redemptive power of flight.

The reality of the entire novel is in question from the outset. The

narrative is an externalization of the psychic landscape of its protagonist, through which the physical world is inexorably sublimated to an obscure background. While this theme is often present in Ballard's works, it has perhaps never been so clearly explicated. As Blake narrates when viewing x-ray plates of his skull following the airplane crash: "It seemed to me that the whole world outside...formed an immense transparent image...through which the rays of a more searching reality were now pouring in an unbroken fountain." And Blake's externalized psyche embodies a psychopathology similar to that explored in Ballard's *Crash*: an institutionalized, morally "free" status, in which one may give vent to perverse impulses that reject the logic of the physical world. Blake finds reassurance for this view of his messianic role in the idea that "vices in this world may well be metaphors for virtues in the next." And indeed, several misdeeds in his pre-flight existence are re-enacted with virtuous effect in renaissance Shepperton, as smothering sexual assaults, child molesting and even a drunken attempt to copulate with a cricket pitch become god-like acts of transfiguration and salvation.

At the moment of his crash, Blake perceives an imminent disaster threatening Shepperton. It is soon clear that the transfigured Blake is the apocalypse visited upon the town; but whether Blake's New Jerusalem is a suburban pastoral myth or a degenerative holocaust remains the decision of the reader. By utilizing a first person narrative that is inherently untrustworthy and obsessively subjective, Ballard succeeds in producing a compelling paradox that carries much of the book's dramatic tension. Numerous theories are advanced for the underlying reality, ranging from concepts that the narrative is but the invention of a dying man trapped in his submerged aircraft, to its most literal interpretation as the self-told gospel of a modern messiah; but none is definitive. Along the way, brilliant and witty insights into the latent arrogance and vampirism of messiahhood are forwarded, and the novel continues *High-Rise's* wry commentary on contemporary suburban life. Ballard again demonstrates beautiful control of language, particularly the symbolist depictions of flight and conjugation reflecting Blake's inner conflicts and passions.

The Unlimited Dream Company merits critical and commercial success. It is a demanding and rewarding work, from an author whose importance and genius are undoubted.

A continued apathy from the American science fiction readership toward Ballard can only make one wonder whether the field deserves his maturity and intelligence or should instead continue to suffer the middlebrow punditry that passes as "good" and "meaningful" science fiction. The choice is yours.

-- Douglas E. Winter

Star Trek - The Motion Picture by Gene Roddenberry. Pocket Books, New York, December 1979, 252 pp. \$2.50

Almost three years after the starship Enterprise has returned to Earth, the end of its five year mission, three Klingon cruisers are destroyed by an awesome alien entering Federation territory at incredible speed and heading directly for Earth. This alien intelligence is composed of solid energy and is about the size of a small solar system. Starfleet Monitor station Epsilon 9 is the first to discover the intruding alien and so informs Starfleet HQ in San Francisco. There the decision is made to re-vamp the old Enterprise and recruit Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Scotty, Sulu, Uhura, Chekov, Chapel, Rand, and others to overtake the alien before it reaches Earth. There are a couple of new people, too. Captain William Decker, who is forced to hand over command of the Enterprise to Kirk for the duration of the mission, is understandably upset about the situation at hand. A new navigator from the planet Delta adds some sex appeal to the story. Her name is Ilia and, as is characteristic of all Deltans, is hairless and her body excretes a chemical substance, a pheromone, which causes sexual arousal in members of the opposite sex (and at the worst times).

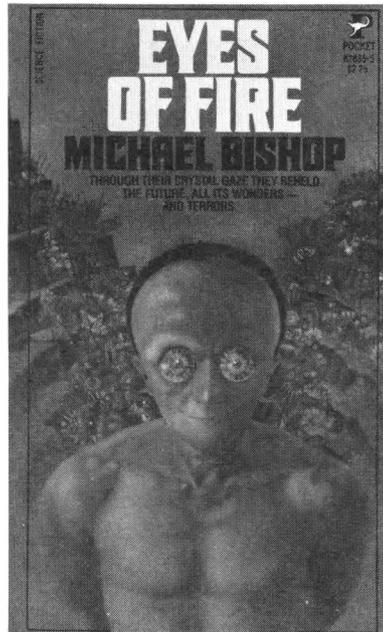
Pocket Books is undertaking the most comprehensive publishing program ever focused around a movie. Roddenberry's novelization of the screenplay is only one of seventeen books scheduled for release. David Hartwell, SF director at Pocket Books, is currently looking at forty potential "Star Trek" writers who will play a significant role in a new series of original Star Trek novels to begin appearing in the spring of 1980.

Despite Roddenberry's success as a screenwriter, *Star Trek - The Motion Picture* is his first novel. And it is a pretty good one. The writing is well above average, the characterization is excellent, and the story is fast-paced enough to keep readers interested. However, Roddenberry is just a bit weak when it comes to description. One reason

for this might be that he is taking too much for granted in adapting a visually oriented screenplay into novelized form. This is a common enough problem. There are books written by authors who take so much for granted that readers cannot fully understand them without seeing the movie version of the story.

Roddenberry adds nothing new to the Star Trek saga. It's the same old gang, on the same old ship (give or take a minor change or two), trying to communicate with the same old interstellar visitor. Still, I managed to enjoy it very much.

-- David Pettus



Eyes of Fire by Michael Bishop. Pocket Books, New York, January 1980, 262 pp. \$2.25.

Gunter Latimer, Abel Latimer, and Seth Latimer are representatives of the Langlish Division of the Om-mundi Trade Company. Abel and Seth are clones (of Gunter) and together, they travel to the planet Gla Taus, where Gunter gets himself killed and Abel and Seth become political prisoners. The Liege Mistress of Gla Taus, Lady Turshebsel, is a progressive ruler and makes a deal with Seth and Abel, promising them freedom to return home if they will travel to the planet Trope and persuade the Sh'gaidu to return with them to Gla Taus and work in the development of geographic resources south of the Feht Evashted, a very humid region of the planet that the Liege Mistress and her people have ignored for superstitious reasons.

So Seth and Abel go to Trope and negotiate with the Trope Magistrate, who takes a special interest in Seth and lets Seth wear his das-

cra, a sign of strong friendship or bond-sharing among the Sh'gaidu. But Seth becomes personally involved with a female named Lijadu, who steals the Magistrate's dascra from him. This makes Seth's diplomatic mission look more like moral betrayal and so he must somehow return the dascra to the Trope Magistrate and make things right with a religious subculture which he hopes to immigrate to another world without the use of force.

Eyes of Fire is actually a rewrite of Bishop's first novel, *A Funeral for the Eyes of Fire*, first published in 1975. It is not an expanded version of *Funeral*, rather, it is an entirely rewritten novel. There are numerous differences in the two books. In *Funeral*, Gla Taus is called Gla Parcus and very little background is offered regarding the planet. Though the Sh'gaidu are androgynous, there is no distinction by sex. All the character names are different, and the story is told from a first person perspective, rather than a third person perspective. There are a lot of differences, but the basic plot line is the same and both books end in essentially the same manner.

Michael Bishop is quite a literate fellow. He is knowledgeable about a great many things and this multiplicity of interests is evident in most everything he writes. More than anything else, however, there is an anthropological perspective that permeates Bishop's work. *Eyes of Fire* is certainly no exception. The "eyes of fire" make reference to the eyes of the Sh'gaidu, which are a living form of crystal. Bishop does a masterful job of describing an alien culture and the socio-religious implications of the crystalline substance, Jinalma, from which the eyes of the Sh'gaidu are constructed. Every Sh'gaidu wears a dascra around his neck, which contains the birth-parent's eyes, that is, the dust-like Jinalma from which the eyes are made. It is a form of ancestor worship and the Sh'gaidu undergo "auxiliary births" periodically. Each Sh'gaidu is a series of progressively more enlightened consciousness in the same body.

Bishop has long been preoccupied with the concept of reincarnation. The auxiliary births may be interpreted in this fashion, although many readers may feel more comfortable thinking in terms of cloning. In his novel, *A Little Knowledge*, and in selected stories in his collection titled *Catacomb Years*, Bishop makes obvious reference to reincarnation. Are intelligent life forms on other worlds

re-born humans? Are humans re-born aliens? This is the question Bishop poses and it is a pretty mind-expanding one, too. Bishop does not write "adventure" oriented science fiction. He puts much more effort into provoking thought than do many SF writers and, for the most part, he does it very well. *Eyes of Fire* is recommended.

-- David Pettus

Feedback

(Continued from page 2.)

cision and although I don't have quite enough advertising to justify it, I wanted to do it anyway. I have a number of book reviews I want to include before they become dated and I also want to expand the Feedback section this issue. I'm sure my printer will love it--he just finished installing a Moloch-like machine capable of collating, binding and trimming a 32-page magazine.

My purpose for including book reviews in *FN* is simply to provide a better, more in-depth coverage of new material appearing in the field that I cannot adequately cover in most cases in the news columns. Non-traditional fantasies such as the Ballard title reviewed this issue and mainstream books such as *Shikasta* are examples. And I will try to publish reviews on as timely a basis as possible.

One other change this issue: *FN* is now a legitimate second class magazine--and in record time--thanks to the efforts of the people at my local post office. I've been told that a second class mail application takes an average of four months to come back from Washington approved. My application was formally submitted to the Loveland post office on November 30th and was returned from Washington approved on December 31st!

Now let's take a look at some of the feedback I've been receiving and a good place to start is with a couple of corrections:

Two days after Christmas I received the latest issue of *FN*. That was as welcome as a late Christmas present. How you can manage to maintain such a high a level of quality is beyond me. You hardly ever slip up on anything.

I would like to call your attention to one error, though. *Who Fears the Devil?* by Manly Wade Wellman has been released in paperback previously. Ballantine issued an edition in November, 1964.

Jack Neigenfind

Dauphin, PA

Thanks for the good words, but I still manage to slip up more than I like to. A couple of other people pointed this error out to me, too. I also screwed up another one in January, which Brian Earl Brown pointed out to me: "The Avengers of Carrig" by John Brunner (from DAW) was published by Dell in 1969 and is a rewrite of "Secret Agent of Terra" published by Ace in 1962. Sorry about that, folks.

First, business. Here is my \$12 for a continued subscription to your *FN*. Second, praise. Stupendous! Wonneful! By Crom, Cthulhu and Krypton, the new *Fantasy Newsletter* is FANTASTIC. The news was as concise and up-to-date as ever (well arranged, also). The Wagner article informative; and moving. I enjoyed the Con pictures and the piece by Winter was haunting. All said, (all done), it was an excellent magazine. Count on my support in the future.

Bo Cribbs
Clinton, MS

First, congratulations on the "new" magazine, which arrived today (I don't know if that's good or bad mail service). It is really attractive. Speaking as a photographer, though, I think you should put photo credits beside pictures, or some sort of indication, early on, that "all photos are by Paul Allen." Good photos... (that one of Vicki Schochet is lovely--her as a person, though it doesn't show how attractive she is.)

Susan Wood
Vancouver, B.C.

I guess I just assumed that readers would assume that uncredited photos were by the editor. All uncredited photos in past issues are (or were) by me. As you can see, I'm now crediting all photographs. The mail service was good--that issue was mailed November 30th and reached you in ten days.

The newsletter's new format is just great, and I especially like the "On Fantasy" pieces. Karl Wagner's presentation of Manly Wade Wellman is a masterpiece--long overdue, too.

Thanks very much for getting #21 to me by first class mail. Not knowing the Jeff Elliot story was going to be in it, I wondered why you'd been so extravagant. Then while leisurely reading the issue through from page one, without first having looked at the contents column, I came across the interview

with me and nearly fell off my chair.

It's a thoroughly good job, I think--though I'm the last one who ought to have an opinion. Thanks again for the fast mailing, and for using the story in the first place. I hope you don't lose any readers on account of it.

Hugh B. Cave
Lake Placid, FL

I guess that will teach you to read contents pages in the future. I doubt that I'll lose any readers because of your interview, but it's good to hear you were pleased with it.

Darrell Schweitzer
Strafford, PA

I got the January issue and was muchly impressed. I think you should include non-news items, despite the occasional reader objections you get. The news will presumably continue in greater coverage than before, and other items (including reminiscences, interviews, critical and historical articles) will give the zine a value beyond the immediate and quickly dating news aspect.

Darrell Schweitzer
Strafford, PA

Enclosed is a check for \$12 for one year of *FN* via second class mail. I appreciate your bearing with me for two changes of address and doing it so rapidly. I paid no postage due.

Your new magazine is great. The Wellman biography was superb. I'm a long-standing MWW fan, but never knew this info. For those of us who never make it to conventions, the story and photos were much appreciated.

Your coverage of SF and fantasy remains unique. It really helps those of us on the fringes whose main contact with the field is via the bookstore. I appreciate your work and hope it continues to grow!

William Beute
Grand Rapids, MI

After reading your first two new format issues, let me compliment you. The expansion was smooth (little does he know, say you) and the results a pleasing blend of news and commentary. The news is still my primary interest.

You may wish to clarify your mention of the donation of the Ackerman collection in the February issue. By chance my wife, friends and I visited Forry a few months ago, shortly before his meeting with

(Continued on page 34.)

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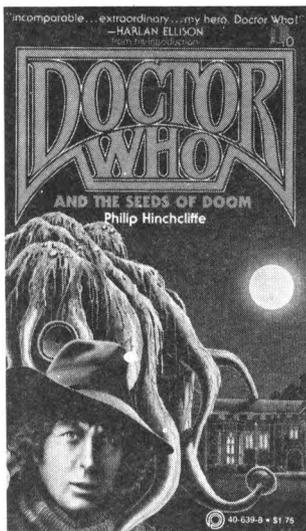
CBS PUBLICATIONS

A Fawcett Gold Medal original for March is *The Beast* by Walter J. Sheldon, a novel about a pilot who crashes near the Canadian border in Washington and discovers a "Bigfoot" colony. A Fawcett Crest reprint in March is *Star Gate* by Andre Norton.

PINNACLE BOOKS

I haven't been able to cover Pinnacle releases for the past two months, so allow me to backtrack a bit. Two January titles of interest, which should be on the stands as you read this, are the 11th volume in Basil Copper's Solar Pons series, *The Uncollected Cases of Solar Pons*, and Pinnacle's 9th Dr. Who title, *Doctor Who and the Android Invasion* by Terrance Dicks. There are no fantasy or SF releases scheduled for February.

Slated for March is Dr. Who #10, *Doctor Who and the Seeds of Doom* by Philip Hinchcliffe.



Mayor Bradley was scheduled. Your account--and that in *Locus*--suggested that the collection has been physically transferred already. I doubt this. I suspect he has simply willed it to the city but will retain possession until his death, or close to it. He wanted to have the city establish a museum-like facility and pay him to be its curator, but that's unlikely given LA's financial situation. But I am pleased that the collection will remain intact and accessible to interested readers and scholars.

Neil Barron
Vista, CA

Well, I tried to make the transition a smooth one...Lord, did I try... Thanks for the clarification on the Ackerman donation. I, too, was under the impression that no actual transfer had taken place, but didn't know what else (if anything) was planned.

FN #20 looks great, but I would like to support the comments of some of your letter writers: please don't cut down on "hot" news in favor of articles, etc. Have both by all means, but the monthly news content is absolutely indispensable and still unique. Another angle I hope you can look into occasionally concerns the delays and lack of information that arise with some publishers, in particular, the specialty editions. I'm thinking at the moment of Heritage. I ordered their de Camp book in June, 1978 when they were taking orders. Since then, all I've heard are rumors that they've gone out of business. There must be a lot of FN subscribers who'd like to hear more.

I hope you won't be too uncritical of books and publishers gener-

ally. There seems to me to be some danger of FN being used as free uncritical publicity for anything being published, with no regard to its quality or lack of it. Despite this comment, I think you're doing a great job.

Rodney O'Connor
Surrey, England

I, too, like to be able to keep more up to date on the status of specialty publishing projects, Rod. But it isn't easy. The average specialty publisher is a well-intentioned, but under-financed individual attempting to produce a quality product without sufficient time or resources at his disposal. In short, it's a labor of love and sometimes an emotional one.

In response to an article about the "disappearance" of Heritage Press in a recent issue of SF Chronicle, I talked with owner Richard Garrison by phone. As a full time, professional publishing house, Heritage has folded, but has not "disappeared." Garrison still hopes to eventually revive it as a part-time specialty publisher.

Garrison is currently paying off debts that resulted from much of his initial work in attempting to establish Heritage as a professional publisher. The only title on which he accepted paid orders was de Camp's "Heroes and Hobgoblins." He tells me he fully intends to honor those orders either with a book or a refund at some future date and that he has received a lot of cooperation from author L. Sprague de Camp and artist Tim Kirk (both of whom own the rights to their respective work).

Currently, L. Sprague de Camp is attempting to interest other publishers in producing "Heroes and Hobgoblins" in a deluxe edition -- the book itself was completed by Heritage but never went to press -- so that Garrison can honor the 200 orders he received for the book.

Garrison can still be reached at his old Heritage address (Box 721, Forest Park, GA 30050), although he's busy. He's working two jobs to pay off his debts and travels quite a bit.

Uncritical? Let's say impartial and objective -- that's what news is supposed to be. But when I think something is bad, I'm not afraid to say so. And I try to restrict my use of superlatives for those things I think are really good. I wish I did have more time for investigating and providing in depth evaluations. You can rest assured, though, that I'm not being "used." You should see the number of letters I write every month asking publishers to send me news.

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