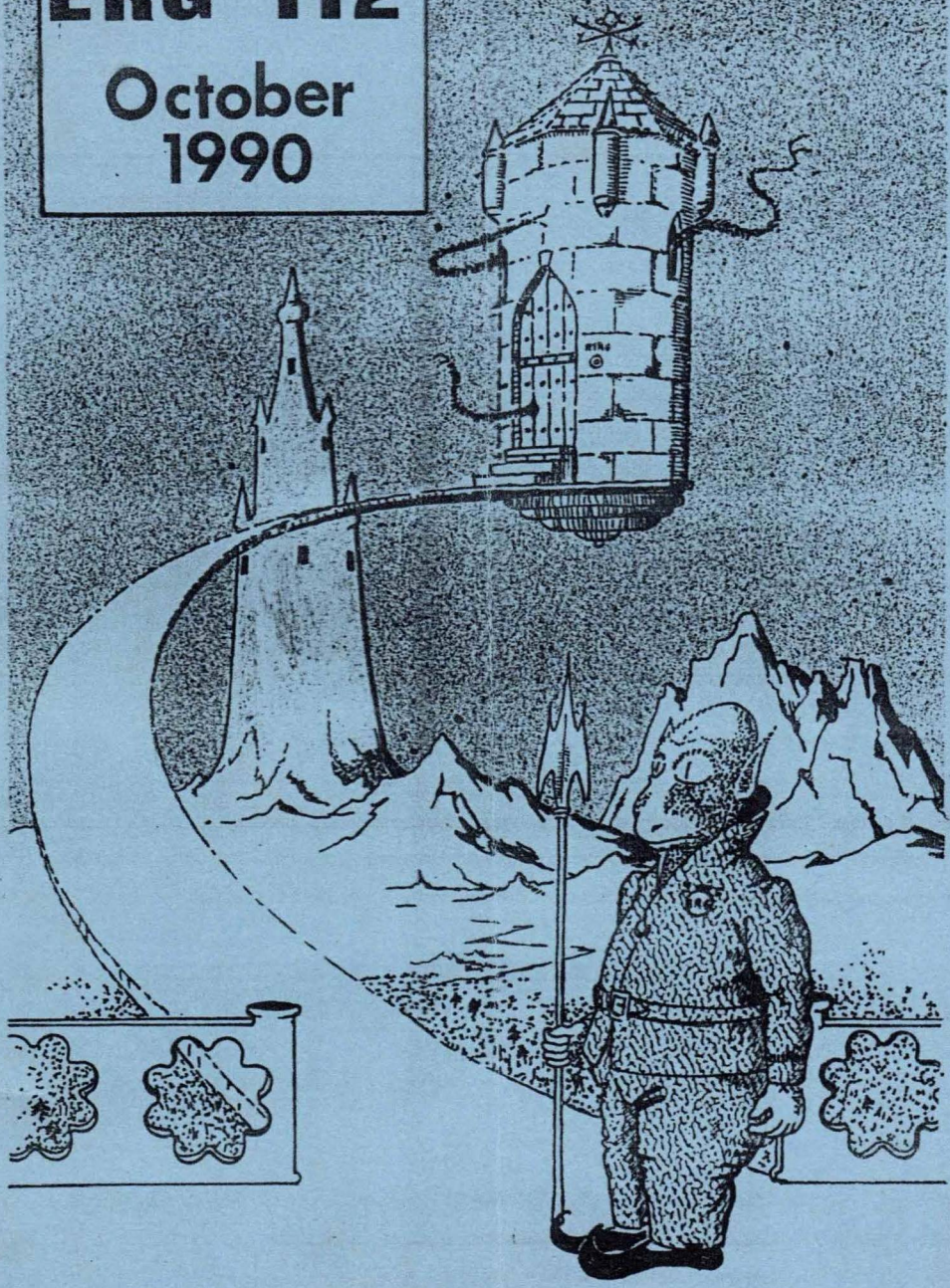


PP

ERG 112
October
1990



ERG 112

B. T. JEEVES
56 RED SCAR DRIVE
SCARBOROUGH
N. YORKSHIRE YO12 5RQ

Phone (0723) 376817



Dear Reader,

October 1st. saw me reach the venerable age of 68 and ERG reach a not inconsiderable 31 years and six months; a record which I fancy will not be easy to beat. However, various factors have made me decide that with this issue, ERG will finally fade from the fannish scene - at least in its Quarterly form. Postal costs have just risen once again, whilst response has fallen. Last issue brought in less than 20 letters. ERG has always been a fun thing to produce, but that isn't much fun. In future, I hope to devote more time to my other interests - writing, painting, modelling, photography and suchlike. In addition, I am thinking of re-appearing every so often with a yearly issue of ERG, so don't write me off completely as yet.

I'm not GAFIating, I hope to keep up my correspondence with everyone, I shall try to LOC all incoming fanzines and Val and I hope to be at the Mexican in Harrogate. Any faned who can use either my writing or my artwork, has only to ask and I'll try to oblige. I hope to refund any outstanding subscription money, but if you think I've missed you, please holler.

This issue is a bit delayed, as the Beeb has just spent two months in dry dock when the computer refused to handshake with the printer. An obscure fault which took a long time to trace. As a result, some pages have been typed on the Olympia and some on the Brother 'golf ball'. My apologies for the variation in typefaces.

Once again, I can access my sales files of near mint, ex-review copy titles. If you are interested, send me an SAE and say which lists you'd like - I have Paperbacks, Hardcover, Magazines, Fanstuff, Aerospace, US. Bookclub Editions and even Cigarette Cards.

Any offers for the first four mimeo issues of Vector, O-D of the BSFA? No.1..44pp, No.2..38pp, No.3..40pp, No.4..38pp. All as new apart from two peg-binding holes from my filing case. Offers also wanted for 220 issues of GALAXY.USA from No.1 to 1973, and a near complete set of Astounding Analog (only five issue missing).

BACK ISSUES OF ERG - Mimeo issues ..70(21st annish,32pp), 86(25th annish,40pp), 91(28pp), 94(32pp), 95(32pp), 96(28pp). All six issues, £5 inc. p&P.

Printed issues. 100,102,104,105,106,107,108,109,110 and 111. 24pp each, All ten issues £5.00 inc. p&P.

A CHECKLIST OF ASTOUNDING. Part.3 (1950-1959) 53pp mimeo, card covers. Last few copies of my contents listing by issue, by title and by author, plus a listing of pseudonyms. £2.00 inc. P&P

Now some homely natter--

Having now lived in Scarborough for three years, it occurs to me that I haven't described the place for those who have never been here. The town can be reached by no less than four main roads. For the convenience of the visitor, these all merge into one as they pass through the centre, thus allowing the tourist a leisurely, restful drive punctuated by frequent stops during which he can admire the roadside shops, traffic lights and large lorries stopping to deliver their loads. He can travel in a happy holiday parade with many other vehicles, all hooting tunelessly as their drivers merrily wave their fists in the air and call out jovial

quips to one another.

There are plenty of parking spaces throughout the town. Occasionally, you may even find a vacant one. Halting both lanes of traffic whilst trying to reverse into such a space always causes great merriment to all concerned.

At least six more parking spaces are available up by the remains of the castle which dominates the headland. These may be inspected on payment of a nominal pound or two. Maps are available to explain just which heap of rubble used to be the inner bailey, and which formed the keep. There are also many interesting stones lying around.

Nearby is St. Mary's Church. Ann Bronte is buried in the graveyard, as are many other less famous people; all of whom are now dead. Down on the sea front shops, arcades, cafes, pubs and stalls abound. Here you can buy lettered rock, winkles, crabs, mussels, fish, chips, candy floss and other gourmet foods. You can purchase funny hats bearing amusing slogans guaranteed to have your friends in stitches. Itching powder, stink bombs and rubber biscuits are also available if required.

There is a delightful little harbour which is flooded twice a day to allow ships to move in and out - or vice versa. A long jetty leads you between the marina full of small boats and the working harbour holding the huge, twenty-passenger 'Regal Lady'. There is also the speedboat 'Crazy Lady' on which, for a ridiculously small sum, you can simultaneously bucket across the waves at several hundred miles an hour, get soaked in seawater and acquire either a hernia or severely strained muscles.

On reaching the end of the jetty, you may look at the lighthouse and inspect the Naval Gun. This was recovered after several years on the sea bed and unfortunately, is not in working order.

Both sides of the Promenade are decorated by pretty, double yellow lines as well as small signs warning you not to park 'at any time'. These ensure there is always somewhere to leave your vehicle, although traffic wardens do occasionally leave little messages of greeting on cars in this area.

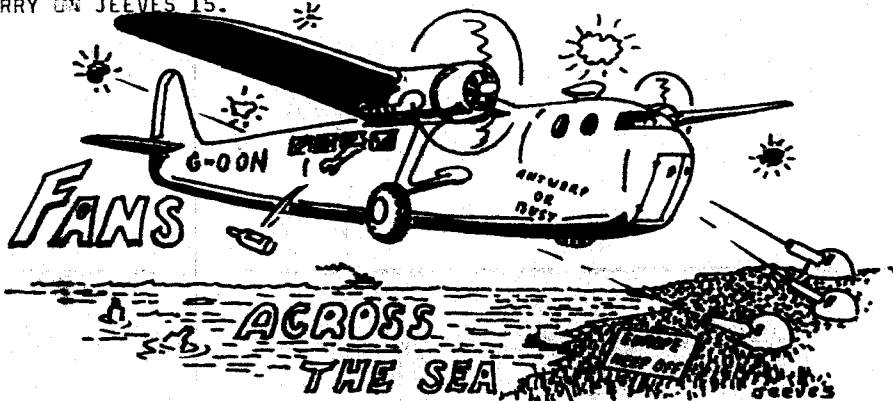
Visitors may also enter Scarborough by rail. If you want to collect them in your car, there are at least five parking spaces. The imposing tower above the station holds four large clocks - all stopped at different times. This ensures that at least eight times a day, one of them is exactly correct.

The Crumbling Jeeves' Mansion is about 3 miles from the centre, in the village of Scalby. This means we never get troubled by tourists, yet can be in town after a short drive along the sea front. We love being here, the Dalby Forest Nature Reserve starts 300 yards away at the end of our road. I've joined the local Writer's Society, the Art Circle and the Conservative Club (where I play snooker once a week, on Monday). Wednesday, I go to Church with Val, this rotates between Scarborough, Filey and Bridlington. These trips, plus regular visits to my 99-year-old aunt in Sheffield clock have clocked up 22,300 miles in the new car's first 20 months. Thursday is our fish and chip day down town. Throw in the concerts, dancing, and local activities and there's no doubt about it, our life here is much more varied and much more fun than it was in Sheffield.

Finally, I would appreciate your comments on this issue and hope to continue corresponding with you all for many years to come.

All the very best,

Terry



The hurtling express of British Rail crawled into St. Pancras less than an hour late. Unloading my fanning gear, I staggered off down the platform in search of Arthur Thomson among the milling hordes of the mundane thronging the station. Finding him was easy; being a member of the Goon Detective Agency, his false beard, slouch hat and tightly buttoned trench coat with turned up collar made him easily identifiable on that hot, sunny day. My accurate description was adequately confirmed by the large poster, 'ARTHUR THOMSON', which he held high above his head. We exchanged passwords and fannish amenities before Arthur gave me his hand. I put my case in it. Apparently, in one case the GDA man wasn't going to take -- he handed it to me, setting off at a high rate of knots to the tube station. I followed him, struggling along behind him, leaving a trail of battered shoes and broken apples.

The escalator presented no great problem as I was able to let my case go sliding down the steps. Luckily Arthur stopped it at the bottom or it might have hurt someone. I lifted it off him and we got on the next train to arrive. The only hiccup being an old lady who chided me for not letting my grandfather sit down (Arthur was still wearing his false beard). Reaching our destination, Atom shot off the train, out of the station, across the road and on to a waiting bus. With a cry of, "All cases must be taken upstairs", he vanished up the steps. I must digress a moment to point out that my 'case' was actually in training to be a cabin trunk, as it held inside it, my fully packed travelling case ready for a trip to Belgium .. it also held all my saleable junk ready for Worldcon '57 .. it was HUGE). Somehow, I got it up to the top deck and onto a vacant seat. Barely had my heart slowed down to a milder 100 beats a minute, than Arthur cried, "Here's where we get off!" and raced off down the stairs. I followed at top speed, not wanting to miss him. I didn't, the case slipped from my grasp and shot down after him. The anguished yell from the platform told me of a unique event. Instead of the GDA man being on a case, here was a case actually on a GDA man.

The conductor lifted the load off Atom's mind, I helped untangle the false beard from his ticket machine and with a few gentle words of farewell, we were ushered from the bus. From here it was less than a two mile walk to the towering edifice of Brockham House. Arthur nonchalantly thumbed the lift button -- naturally, nothing happened, so we set off up the stairs. Three floors later, I collapsed with the traditional sickening thud on the Thomson's doorstep. The click-click of high heels revived my interest in life, I opened one eye to behold a slim, silk-clad ankle. It was Mrs. Atom, hovering like a ministering

angel. Accustomed as she was to bodies, she merely stirred me with her toe and murmured, "But you can't leave it here, Arthur. It looks too untidy." Atom solved the problem by waving a double whisky under my nose. Holding it just out of reach, he kured me into his den - then drank the darned thing himself. However, Mrs Atom (Olive) did her ministering bit by bringing tea and sandwiches until I had recovered.

Tempus fugited merfilly along and it was soon time to go back to the station to collect Eric Bentcliffe. Without the burden of the sixty pound case, this was a much easier journey. We arrived early so entered the buffet to sample some BRale (You touch it first to see if it is drinkable). Eric was duly collected, ferried back to base and ~~Wastillies~~ festivities began. We found the flat rather full, with Mike Moorcock (and his guitar) doing most of the filling. The empty corners were taken up by Lars Helander. The piffle group was soon silenced by Atom handing out tankards of his home-brew, whilst Olive took Eric into the kitchen to discuss duplicating procedures and problems. Being a very good drawer, Atom took the chance to draw me aside - I think it was a left one. Motioning me to silence, he looked under the carpet, into the chandelier and behind the bookcase. Satisfied we were alone, he donned his false beard before whispering in my ear, "I am going to make you a trainee Goon Operative. Pin this badge to your trousers and wear it all all times, even in the bath. Your first assignment is to watch Eric Bentcliffe. We suspect him to be in the pay of the Anti-Goons. He may try to contact their headquarters whilst you are noth in Belgium. Before you go, we must arrange some form of identification, have you a five-pound note? Silently, I handed him one. Tearing it in half, he put one piece in his wallet. Holding up the other bit, he said, "This is your identification. To keep it from falling into the wrong hands, I will look after it for you. He thrust the second piece into his wallet. I could see that being a GDA man was a



complicated matter .. and also could be financially rewarding. Before I could think of any more sytable arrangement, he had rescued Olive from the kitchen, silenced the guitar and hostled Eric and I off to bed. Silence descended (apart from Eric's snores) on Brockham House.

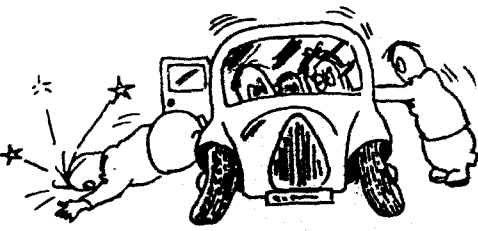
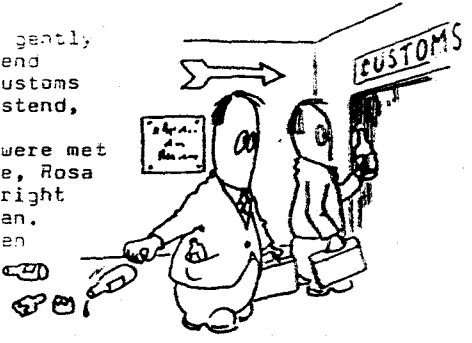


Next morning, we waved goodbye to Olive - Atom was busily sticking two familiar-looking pieces of blue paper together with Sellotape. Off we toddled to Ashford Airport. Having checked in our bags, we followed the air hostess to the plane -- a lovely sleek creation with smooth lines and gently rounded curves. The plane wasn't so enticing; though it DID have TWO Beanies - mounted horizontally, one on each side. Eric who knows about such things, said

they were really called 'aircrews'. Funny, I thought they were the bods who flew the aeroplane. We climbed in and out again. It didn't have a pilot! The hostess explained that as he was rather sky, he had a little room, all to himself, up at the front end. Reassured, we climbed back in. To make sure we stayed there this time, the kind lady fastened

us in with straps. I noticed she also took great care to fasten Eric's hands as well. Having made sure we stayed put, she craftily nipped out of the aeroplane to be replaced by a male-type man. There was a thundering of engines, the plane rolled out onto the runway and before Eric could bite off more than three finger nails we were away. The sneaky, male-type wasted no time in coming round to sell us duty-free bottles of hooch.

To the accompaniment of gently jingling bottles, we emerged at Ostend airport and weaved our way to the Customs shed. They have queer customs in Ostend, but we had no trouble in getting certified. Out in the carpark, we were met by Fan Jan Jansen, his charming wife, Rosa and their daughter Sonya. A very bright child, she could speak fluent Belgian. We all struggled into his 2hp Citroen and after one or two minor snags on how to get five people into one car, plus bags and then shut the doors, we were ready to roll.



The airport staff gave us a rousing send-off - but all the bottles missed and off we tottled on the wrong side of the road! This was not as dangerous as it might have been, as all the other drivers were doing the same. Jan got us safely into Antwerp where he delivered us to the Cecil Hotel - a combined beer garden, hotel and cafe. We went inside to register and Eric's scarlet beanie got

some strange glances. Having signed in and received our keys, we set off in search of room 79. Three flights of stairs up, we established our base camp (later termed the 'South Col') and prepared our oxygen equipment for an assault on the summit. On finally struggling up and into Room 79, we planted our flag and claimed it officially on behalf of the World Science Fiction Society even if Dave Kyle would never sit there. Having recovered our breath, we began to investigate.

The cold tap was tried and pronounced COLD, the hot tap was tried and pronounced EMPTY -- apart from a queer gurgling noise. Two small bedside cupboards were examined and pronounced 'Pottery storage'. Finally, the smallest room was examined and pronounced, small, dark, and very noisy in operation. Having cased the joint, we went down to the bar and order -- in fluent English, two Pils (the local beer, not some naughty wordage). The discovery of a pin ball machine started a week-long running battle to see who could get the highest score. When Jan came to collect us, I copied down the cryptic symbols Eric had left on the machine's dial in case it was a secret Anti-Comm message. Later, when I got it translated, it turned out to be 'TIL'.

After wandering around the streets of Antwerp for a while, we spent some time in an exhibition of magic and attended a showing of the film, 'Vampyras'. To complicate matters, this was spoken in Danish and had sub-titles in Flemish. Jan translated these into English, but

even so, we never did find out what it was all about. The hero (?) went fishing in his best suit and became a ghost. A young woman turned into a vampire, shadows walked all over the place and some other twit managed to get buried beneath corn in a flour-grinding mill. All rather confusing - maybe it was scripted by J.G.Ballard.

Next morning, Jan collected us bright and early to drive us straight to the police station. He had been stopped for driving with faulty lights and now had to show that he had had them repaired. After waking the policeman from his early morning siesta, Jan demonstrated that if he pressed the light switch, the lights would now work -- they didn't. The copper, narked at losing his beauty sleep, made a date to see Jan again -- in court, then waved us on our way.

After about an hour's driving, I was startled to see a road sign informing us we were passing a place called 'POLYGOON' Obviously the fiendish AntiGoon was now recruiting parrots! Hardly had a recorded this startling fact in my GDA notebook (the one with the secret pencil), than we pulled up at a roadside barrier manned by armed guards. Before they got to the car, I had ripped my Goon Detective Agency Badge from my trousers from my trousers and swallowed it. No way must I allow these men to know I was from the GDA. Bravely, I faced the nearest guard. With a gentle smile, he asked to see our passports, took them, made a cursory inspection, then handed them back before waving us across the border into Holland. The loss of my Goon badge pained me considerably, but I knew it would pass.

The Dutch countryside looked just the same as the Belgian. No canals, windmills or pantaloon-clad people in stove-pipe hats stamping around in clogs. Obviously my Geography teacher was wrong about the place. Reaching Amsterdam without seeing even a Dutch cheese, we drove out to Schipol airport where we were due to meet Dave Kyle, his wife Ruth and a plane load of Americans. Jan had booked them a hotel, and were to escort them there. We got to the airport around 9pm. when they were due to arrive - by 10-30 we had seen people come in from Blackpool, Timbuktu, Germany and all points of the compass except from the US of A. Our coat labels were frayed to bits by our constant flashing of World Convention badges at any passenger, who might prove to be Dave Kyle and company.

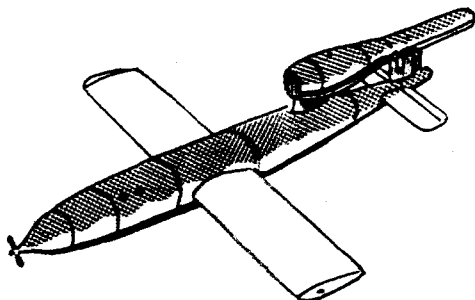
Eventually, Jan descended on the arrivals desk. After some hectic spraying of Flemish he discovered that they were holding a message for a Mr. 'Fun Junsen'. It turned out that our quarry had arrived on an earlier flight and were waiting for us at the KLM offices in Amsterdam centre... about a hundred yards from where we had spent most of the early evening. We raced back there and finally located a bunch of weary Americans busily chewing hunks out of the carpet. Explanations were made, gear was loaded into taxis and a giant fleet of vehicles swung off in impressive array, headed by Jan's tiny Citroen. We gave a royal, Churchillian salute to the KLM staff, took a wrong turning, narrowly avoided driving into a canal, and finally deposited Kyle and company at their hotel. After sampling a piece of their wedding cake, it was time to set off back to Antwerp. We reached there about 4am, but even that drive was not without incident. Pausing for refreshment at what we thought was a roadside tavern, we were surprised to see a man run away as we walked to the door. Inside, erotic statues, soft lights and a well-cleavaged lady at the bar caused the penny to drop -- we had halted at the local house-of-joy. For once, we passed up drinks and got out of there fast.

Ahead lay Antwerp -- and then the 1957 Worldcon.

V-1

AND

THINGS



On June 13th. 1944, shortly after the D day landings, people were beginning to feel that air raids and falling bombs were a vanishing problem. Then a strange chugging sound was heard in the sky, it stopped and a few moments later a loud explosion heralded the arrival of the first 'flying bomb' to arrive in England.

Not that a flying bomb was a new idea. As far back as 1916, Professor A.M.Low had worked on one for the R.F.C. The Sopwith Company made one whilst Farnborough demonstrated a 22ft span design in 1917. Later, in 1927, five models of their 'Larynx' were made for tests. In the U.S.A., Curtiss flew their version with a 300lb bomb, for 50 miles in 1916. The Kettering 'aerial torpedo' carried 180lbs nearly as far.

None of these designs was followed up until WW.2 when the Nazis investigated a whole range of 'vengeance weapons'. The Fieseler Fi.103 bore the code name, 'Flak Ziel Gerat' (anti-aircraft apparatus) for what was to become the V-1 or 'doodlebug'.

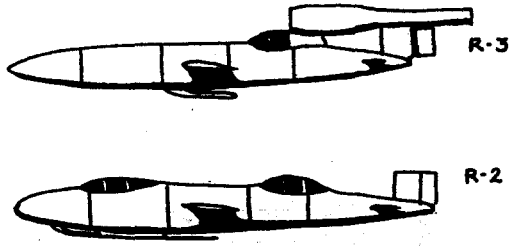
The V-1 was basically a mid-wing monoplane of 17ft span, carrying an 1800lb warhead. Powered by a petrol-burning pulse jet, it was capable of 390mph.

It was launched from a long ramp which supported a long tube with a slit along its top into which a plug was inserted. The V-1 was hooked to this and accelerated along the ramp by steam pressure. Petrol was atomised into the combustion chamber and ignited by a spark plug. The explosion closed vanes at the front of the chamber and gave the device a thrust. Air pressure then opened the vanes, flowed in, mixed with more petrol and was ignited by residual flame to repeat the process some forty times a second to propel the missile on its way.

Guidance was by compass and gyroscope linked to servo controls powered by compressed air. A small propeller turned by air pressure counted off a specific number of turns, whereupon a trigger severed the controls and the V-1 went into a dive. Around 7,000 of the doodlebugs were fired at England before the last one in March 1945.

During development, piloted models were tested by Hanna Reitsch. Further developments included models air-launched from He-111 bombers. As Britain's air defences improved, the Germans began work on more advanced designs with the 'Reichenberg' series.

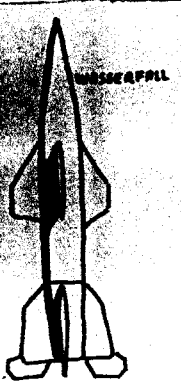
The ultimate aim of these was to have piloted versions of the V-1 transported nearer to long-distance targets. After release, the pilot would guide the craft into a final dive, then parachute out -- if he could do it in time and avoid the pulse jet just above his head!



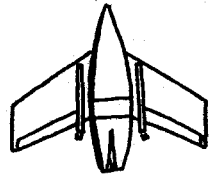
For this scheme, the R-1 was a training vehicle without the pulsejet. The R-2 was an unpowered two-seater, the R-3 was a powered, single-seat trainer and the R-4 was to be the final version with warhead. Luckily, though nearly 200 were built, they were never put into operation.

A smaller flying bomb was the Henschel Hs-293. These had a 9'6" span and in 1943/44 were used against Allied convoys after being air-launched from various German bombers.

Other assorted pieces of nastiness which never got used were on the 'Reprisal Weapon' list. There was the 'Rheinbote', four-stage solid fuel rocket designed to be aimed like a gun and having a range of 140 miles. The 'Taifun' was a smaller anti-aircraft rocket. 'Wasserfall' was half the size of a V-2 and was a winged rocket designed to attack bombers.



SCHMETTERLING



ENZIAN

'Rheintochter' was a multi-finned, radar-guided anti-aircraft missile. 'Schmetterling' and 'Enzian' were both small winged anti-aircraft rockets.

TJ 1970

REFERENCES:
ROCKETS, MISSILES & SPACE TRAVEL. W.Ley
THE FLYING BOMB, Peter Cooksley
FLYING REVIEW October.1967

ART IN SF.6

PAUL ORBAN

(?,?)



If any SF artist deserved the title of 'Mystery Man', it must be Orban despite his prolific output in virtually every science-fiction magazine of the forties.

Hunting through a stack of references, the only two concrete facts to emerge are that he trained at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, and for a time worked on the *Chicago Tribune*. Birth and death dates always appear as (?,?) and I can offer no such help.



How Elmore, self-appointed Protector of Helpless Animals, bocked up with a shriek. "What—what is it?" she demanded shabbily.

Aldiss' ART IN SF simply dubs Orban as 'an incurable romantic' — (whatever that is) — and adds that he drew many scantily-clad females. This sweeping and erroneous generalisation is repeated in the Nicholls' 'Encyclopedia' with the addition of a few magazine titles. The Gunn, 'New Encyclopedia' virtually paraphrases the Nicholls. The Pan 'Visual Encyclopedia' and both Dave Kyle's books have only a few reproductions and no accompanying facts. Holdstock's book merely refers to Orban in passing and Ash's 'Who's Who' only gives him four lines, but at least these have the Chicago information.

So what can I add?

The illustrations I have chosen show that Urban was a master of composition, figure work and the tonal balancing of black and white so important in 'pulp' illustrations. His favourite technique was a carefully graded series of lines and dots with the occasional addition of cross-hatching or a touch of conte crayon.

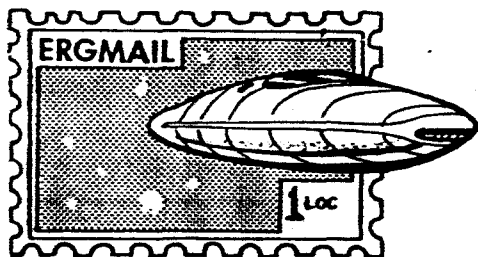
The disintegrating starship illustrated Van Vogt's 'THE STORM' in the October 1943 ASF and does a remarkable job in capturing this difficult, but key incident. In complete contrast are the convincing expressions and figure work for Eddin Clark's 'DOUBLE! DOUBLE!' (Sept.38) where a do-gooder is confronted by a synthetic animal. The Robot sculptor for 'RUST' by Joseph E Kelleam (Oct.39) does a perfect job of capturing the essence of the story. Finally, how many modern 'face only' artists could so ably depict the sheer



terror as a returning rocket ploughs into a crowd of people? This was for Asimov's first story, 'TRENDS' in July 1939.

Labelling him as an artist of 'the 40s' is inaccurate as he drew regularly in Astounding from 1933 right up to 1954. Similarly, 'scantily-clad' women formed probably less than 1% of his output. I fancy that lacking concrete facts, some chroniclers dreamed up vague generalisations which others then copied.

Mystery man or not, Paul Urban was an asset to every magazine which employed him. Old-timers will long remember him.



Sevens

MIKE ASHLEY, 4 Thistlebank,
Walderslade, Chatham, KENT

You're right that not much is said about Howard Brown, but there is a bit more than you list in your article. Brown did a number of covers for Gernsback's *Science & Invention* from 1919 on though none of these were SF covers - they were all mostly technical. He also

a lot for *Radio News*. Earlier than that, Brown had worked for a number of the popular magazines in New York, such as *Hampton's* and though he was technically gifted, he doesn't seem to have shown the sense of wonder that came through in his later work for *Astounding*. It's odd that even though Gernsback was using both Brown and Schoenburg in his early scientific magazines that he never used any of them on his SF mags. I don't know when Brown died but seeing that all of his cover work stopped about 1940 when he was 62, he may well have either died then or become unable to continue. I agree with you that Brown captured the essence of wonder far better than modern day artists, and I also think better than Wesso or Paul. To me, Brown was the quintessential SF pulp artist.

KEB LAKE, 115 MARCHOUSE AVE., LONDON E17 8NY

What not only worries but actively annoys me is that when, on occasions, I have taken the trouble to write back to fan and point out the true functions of the apostrophe, the correct spelling of simple words, the use of cases, and so on - nothing esoteric, simply "good English" - I get either a mouthful of abuse (which is bad enough) or, far worse, the bland statement that 'it doesn't matter anyway'.

You are, you say, a professional writer @> No I don't, and I'm not. I'm an amateur writer who sometimes sells professionally. <@ I take it that you endeavour, as I do in my professional writing (some 150 articles a year, a while back, now down to 120) to ensure that, typos apart, your typescript is perfect. Given that this is so and that in ERG you are no less "on show to the world" as someone who feels he has something worthwhile to say, and who cares enough about it to use all your skills of presentation to make your words look attractive, readable and interesting. @> Surely each of those last two 'your's should be a 'his'? <@ I am truly shocked that you should believe that somehow mere fannish readers don't matter, that you do not owe them the courtesy and attention that you give to commercial editors. == Like you, I find that much of fandom has given me a label - 'fascist' - because that means they then do not have to listen to a word I say. This may well turn me into Overkill Reaction Inc. but by Ghu I ain't going to lie back and let the forces of reaction, anarchy and stupidity crawl all over fandom without having a damn good shot myself at stemming the tide. @> Well, I TRY, to catch all my errors, both fan and pro. Being human, I'm not always successful. I do my humble best to avoid clangers by careful re-reading, but I don't catch 'em all. As for the lunatic fringe, they're too bigoted to argue with, so I try to ignore 'em. <@

E.C.TUBB, 67 HOUSTON RD., FOREST HILL, LONDON SE23 2RL

In ERG 110. Wesso alone is worth the mag - those old artists had something and I always remember his Clayton covers. The editorial, as always, is worth a passing mention. Good, literal English is dying and the demise is helped too much by the media and those who should know better. Some of the most ignorant bastards around are those who had the most expensive education. By 'ignorant' I mean not just that that do not know or are not aware, but fail to recognise they do not know or are not aware. Such ignorance was responsible for the construction of tower blocks and the estates which are now 'no go' areas. I could also add the stupidity of teaching children to spell one way and then, when they have mastered that technique, tell them to forget it and do it a different way. And we wonder why so many are illiterate. @> My own peeve includes children's TV presenters who can't speak English properly .. "Get yer pencils", "I guess you was all wondering..." and so on. <@

P.SMITH, 17 ABBOTS PARK, LONDON RD., ST. ALBANS, HERTS AL1 1TH

Roger Waddington accuses English of 'outright theft' of words from other languages .. what's 'outright theft'? There's no law against borrowing words from another language. English has been doing it since Year Dot, as have all the other tongues of men. 'Theft' seems to give the idea of noble savages only able to communicate in grunts because the perfidious English have 'stolen' their language. @> 'Theft' isn't the right word, how about 'Izitated' .. as in the sincerest form of flattery? <@ "Identity cards and suchlike. Technology will make checking identity cards feasible - say comparing fingerprints against a central database. I'm not sure I would like such a world, but it's going to be technically feasible in a few years. @> Feasible, yes. Accepted by all the do-gooders, freedom howlers etc, NO! In any case, why penalise (financially and socially) the law-abiding. Punish the actual offenders as and when they are caught, say I. <@

VINCE CLARK, 16 WICKOVER WAY, WELLING, KENT DA16 2BN

I've just investigated the 'rip-off' you refer to in the subscription note. £1.50 they charge these days for changing dollars to sterling; which means that out of a \$5.00 cheque anyone sent me, I'd lose \$2.70. I sent the thing back with a polite note. @> Now you see why I always said 'dollar bills, NOT cheques' <@ I agree entirely with the Ergitorial (for a change). As far as I know, the listening experiment lasted less than 200 hours. Carry on Jeeves picks up interest for me now that you're in territory I know - fandom. I see you're still relying on your memory -- "I seem to recal that it was at Supermancon that Brian Burgess brought ...", when Rob Hansen's recent THEN.2 puts the matter beyond doubt. @> But I ^{was} copying froe that, I was relying on memory. <@ On the whole, pleasant memories. I think the bias towards London in the early Con days was partly because most of the professionals lived in the vicinity, and we relied on them to attract people. As soon as British fandom started to pay less respect to authors (and editors) then the field became wide open. @> Could be, but that doesn't explain why several Londoners complained that Manchester was too far North to travel. Moreover many of us came to meet other fans rather than writers and editors <@

ETHEL LINDSAY, 69 BARRY RD., CARNoustie, ANGUS DD7 7QQ, SCOTLAND

The clever cover of ERG 111 was duly admired, your computer-helper does make a very neat issue. Looks like aliens won't come in our lifetime, Terry. Reading your estimates of the possibility makes it seem even more remote than I thought - which leads me to recommend 'A SHORT HISTORY OF TIME'. It is certainly a lot more open to the lay reader than any other I have seen. +> I'd recommend Asimov's 'THE COLLAPSING UNIVERSE', and Page's, 'THE COSMIC CODE'. <@ Of course your fan memories make good reading for me as that was the era in which I entered. I remember good advice you gave me ... wait until just before the Con to write all your letters, than when you come back, everyone will owe you. That is advice I have followed faithfully to this day. I do like your book reviews for you like and dislike much the same as I do - but when will this fashion for fantasy and emphasis on magic wear away. <@ I suspect never. Any good writer can churn out reams of Dark Lords v the Princess, type stuff, but it takes one with a strong scientific background (and an ever increasing one) to create convincing science fiction.

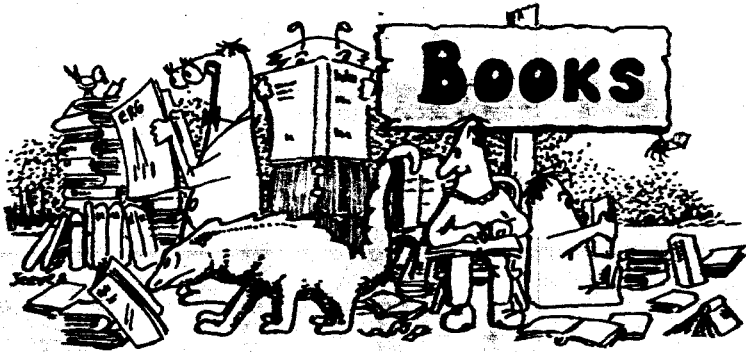
MIKE GLICKSON, 508 WINDERMERE AVE, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA M6S

3L6

Congratulations on reaching your 32nd Year of Publication, an awesome achievement that only someone who has published a fanzine for a shorter period can properly appreciate. I sit in awe of your dedication. For obvious reasons I was fascinated by your description of your early experiences as a teacher. It's amazing how much things have changed (I'd complain if I had a class of 35 and if I strapped a kid, I'd probably end up in jail facing a lawsuit) and how little things have changed - we still have to 'use or lose' our supply budget. They still spend vast amounts on building cosmetics when we really need new textbooks and the board still overpays on some items by refusing to shop in the open market. All in all though, I think I'm very glad I started my teaching career almost a quarter century after you began yours! The fact that I started in a different -- and seemingly more humane country, probably had a lot to do with it was well. I guess school discipline is a matter of individual jurisdiction, but while students at my school do tend to swear among themselves, they don't usually aim such language at the staff. If they do, they generally get suspended for a day as a result. @> I'm afraid in my teaching days, it was unheard of for a child to be suspended. No head teacher wanted to admit to such a need in his school - and if he did, it took months to get an OK from the Education Committee - by which time the original offence had been buried beneath dozens more. <@

PHILIP WILTSHIRE, 2 CHILTERN VIEW RD., UXBRIDGE, ,ODDY UB8 2PA

Saw your cartoon in the July/August Video Maker @> that has me wondering, as they went bankrupt in May, still owing me £100 <@ Recent Reading, as usual, I found it very useful. I liked the art of Howard Brown. The comment at the end about today's covers being trendy-friendly. I find them confusing as a lot of covers seem to look the same, so as you say, let's go for sheer sense of wonder. @> Latest Analog interiors are virtually all dull, sloppily drawn 'heads, faces and a few figures' .. so sensawunda <@ Enjoyed your article, Back To School, I think it would be better for them to go back to the blackboards - perhaps the children would at least learn to sit still for more than a few minutes at a time.



HALLOWEEN HELL Neville Steed Headline £12.95

Hallowes is a small Devon town where the nursery-school patronises a pornographic chat-line and lusts after Annabel Craven, who is having a torrid affair with lawyer Fanshaw. Porno-film maker Tully is manipulating 15-year old Bettina Blair and the town is due for a visit by hot-gossipier Billy Quick. Stores and electrical disturbances begin when the town's new telephone system starts to re-play incriminating calls wherever they will cause the most damage. Strange deaths occur with the trail narrowing down to wartime days, and a local meadow. Mr. Steed deftly handles his many characters as a gripping, escalating menace develops. It will keep you hooked to the end.

PHASES OF GRAVITY Dan Simmons Headline £14.95

EX-LIBER astronaut Richard Baedeker is rootless and searching for he knows not what. In India, visiting his estranged son, he meets Maggie Brown who believes in 'places of Power'. She keeps turning up as Baedeker continues his wanderings, visiting old places and friends and remembering past events. The story leaps (rather abruptly at times) up and down his time track, before Baedeker finally finds what he is seeking. Good characters, a well-written yarn, but made difficult by the interwoven flashbacks.

THE MAGEFIRE Alexander Balliol Headline £14.95

FIRST in a new series, 'The Dark Anulet Cycle'. Leighor, a healer with forged credentials is called on to attend the Archbaron, only to find himself hunted for murder. He and a small group of unusual allies soon find themselves pitched against the would-be king who seeks to take the kingdom into the grasp of evil powers. Sword and sorcery in a strange, medieval world.

LOOK INTO THE SUN James Patrick Kelly Mandarin £3.99

Architect PHILIP Ming has designed the Glass Cloud, a giant, floating sculpture financially aided by the alien 'messengers'. They manipulate his life and marriage to drive him into travelling to the distant world of the Chani to design a tomb for their dying god. But the trip will take a lifetime; can Ming solve his dilemma to find peace and happiness?

THE LAST COIN James P Blaylock Grafton £3.99

Pennyman is seeking to collect all the legendary 30 pieces of silver to gain the immortality they promise. He gains 25 by ruthlessly slaying their 'Care-takers'. He comes to the home of the grasshopper-minded Andrew Vanbergen and his wife as they struggle to open a cafe. Weird events ensue, the Wandering Jew takes a hand, and the final coins make their appearance. A lovely fantasy with both humour and terror. Andrew in particular asking a really different 'hero'.

THE QUIET PLACE Richard Maynard Grafton £3.50

Seven astronauts set off on an interstellar journey planned to last 12 years. They return to find a much greater period has passed, civilisation has collapsed and reverted to barbarism. This plot device allows the author to put seven modern men in a Stone Age setting where they are faced with warring tribes, torture and brutality. To survive, they must acquire some of the skills - and other traits of the natives.

WYVERN A.A. Attanasio Grafton £4.99

Half-breed Jaki Beyvon is outcast as a child. He is raised as the protégé of 'soul-catcher' Jabalwan who teaches him strange skills. Falling in with pirates, he faces many and varied experiences on his way to adulthood. His travels eventually bring him to adulthood and a wife in a continuing blend of mysticism with high adventure on land and sea. It runs to no less than 640pp!

SOMA Charles Platt Grafton £3.50 Set in the world of Chthon, created by Piers Anthony. Aton is a half-human mutant designed for violence and sexual cruelty. His woman, Malice, telepathically reverses emotions so enjoys being taken by force. Neighbour Alix is also available. Betrayed and marooned on Chthon, he meets horrible parasites before capture by sadistic women barbarians. Sex and sadism follow along with violence, mayhem and cruelty in large doses -- read it at your peril.

UNICORN MOUNTAIN Michael Bishop Grafton £3.99 Libby is divorced, but she takes in her ex-husband's cousin Bo who is dying of AIDs. Her hired man, Sam is an Ute Indian, who since his divorce has never seen his daughter Paisley, now approaching 18. Libby and Sam have seen live unicorns on their ranch and Bo receives word from another dimension that the unicorns have a fatal disease. Somehow, the mixed group of characters must save them -- and themselves.

TALES OF PIRX THE PILOT and RETURN FROM THE STARS both by Stanislaw Lem and re-issued by Mandarin at \$4.99 each. Pirx is a day-dreaming, trouble-prone cadet. We follow his first flight, and on to adventures .. three dead Lunar astronauts, missing spacemen, and a robot which records a disaster. Pirx is an engaging character faced by rather mechanistic problem/solution events. 'RETURN' sees the return of astronaut Hal Breck after 127 years in space, to a changed society. The differences are brought out in some excellent word-play before Breck falls in love and things get tricky in a society devoted to peace in all forms.

THE ORBIT SCIENCE FICTION YEARBOOK.3 Ed. D.S. Garnett Orbit \$4.99 Opening with an introduction by Iain M. Banks, then come 13 stories (with author notes) from a 'Who's Who' of writers - Silverberg, Aldiss, Clute, Brin, Sheffield and others. For my taste, too many of them seem to favour the 'unsecured ending' type of yarn which leaves you wondering what happened. John Clute reviews the SF novels of the year, whilst David Garnett gives comment on recent fiction. Finally, there's an Appendix on the various SF Awards, Hugo, Nebula, Campbell, Dick etc. All this is crammed into a large-size but reasonably low-priced paperback. Excellent value if you like this style.

CHILDREN OF THE THUNDER John Brunner Orbit £3.99 In the near future, pollution and disaster are rampant, 13-year-old David Shay is a genius who can bend people to his desires. Around the world, others like him, all of dubious paternity have similar powers - In a Convent, Dymphna deals in pornography, Roger organises a school paederast sex ring, and so on. David starts collecting them together, but Journalist Peter Levin and scientist Claudia Morris are investigating. Brunner at his best as he deftly escalates the menace without going over the top as do Koontz and King. A gripping yarn .. Recommended

THE GOLD COAST Kim Stanley Robinson Orbit £3.99 21st Century California is an easy-living, drug-taking, free-loving maze of freeways. 37-year-old teacher Jim McPherson loves the past, drifts into delinquency, then terrorism. His father is a military research engineer engaged on a secret project. Their paths gradually converge without getting very far. I found the style of "Jim does this," "Smith does that" distanced me from botj characters and story.

THE BOAT OF A THOUSAND YEARS Poul Anderson Orbit £3.99 Throughout the ages, isolated individuals have discovered they are immortal. Anderson tells a short tale about each striving for freedom and survival in different eras. The secret must be concealed if a violent death is to be avoided. Gradually, the individuals meet, research into the difference in their genes -- but even then, they are not wanted by humanity, so seek the eternal challenge of the stars.

STARFIRE Paul Preuss Orbit £3.50 To avoid a solar flare, astronaut Travis Hill risks a hazardous re-entry which leads to his being cold-shouldered by NASA. He pulls strings to be aboard the fusion-powered 'Starfire' for an asteroid rendezvous and research mission .. but then a glitch develops in control software and the flight becomes even more dangerous. Taut, hardcore novel of a near-future space mission. Excellent reading.

HIDDEN PLACE Robert Charles Wilson Orbit \$5.50 19-year-old Travis comes to live with his aunt Liza and husband Creath - who regularly beds their beautiful but strange lodger, Anna. Aided by waitress Nancy, Travis sets out to aid Anna who claims to be an alien about to 'change', but needs the presence of another of her species. This turns out to be the slow-witted tramp, Bone who is mixed up with a pair of murderous hoboes and trapped by vigilantes. Gradually the threads converge as Anne and Bone meet.

MEMORY WIRE Robert Charles Wilson Orbit \$3.50 Keller is a 'Recording Angel', industrial spy with implants which allow him to record what he sees. With former Angel, Byron and ex-drug-addict Teresa he goes to Brazil to check mines where alien stones are found. On their trail is the sadistic Oberg who will stop at nothing to get what he wants - the secret of the vision crystals.

ZENITH 2 Ed. D.S.Garnett Orbit \$3.99 Twelve tales culled from the pages magazine. There's an enhanced athlete, time travel, a Victorian space hi-jack, an up-dated Merlin legend, addiction and others. Most are well-written, but in the plotless, indeterminate-ending style which leaves one wondering what all the fuss was about. If you like this modern trend, here it is.

CHASE THE MORNING Michael Scott Rohan Orbit \$4.99 Steve wanders into dockland and saves 'Jyp The Pilot' in a mysterious brawl. Repeated meetings see him pitched into an alternate world of pirates, magis and weird creatures. They follow him back to the real world, kidnap his secretary, then sail away - into the sky! Steve calls on Jyp and a swordswoman for aid and you're off on a swashbuckling fantasy reminiscent of Hubbard's 'Slaves Of Sleep'.

ANGEL FIRE Andrew M Greeley Legend \$3.99 Professor Sean Seames Desmond acquires a Guardian Angel (one of an alien group trying to protect humanity from itself). Her first deed is to save Sean from two hit men. By minor miracles, she guards him against other perils stemming from his Nobel prize on evolution. His body is also overhauled, but the reasons for his dangers are a bit obscure. An entertaining send-up of the superman stories.

TOTAL RECALL Piers Anthony Legend \$3.99 Doug Quaid has regular dreams of being on Mars with a beautiful girl. To learn more of Mars, he takes a 'Rekall' mind trip which releases his tru personality, previously buried beneath a false one. 'The Agency' sends hit men after him and as he strives to evade the killers, he discovers the truth behind his conditioning. The adventure SF story of the Columbia/Tristar film.

OUT ON BLUE SIX Ian McDonald Bantam \$4.99 In a computer-ruled, 'You Will Be Happy' future, cartoonist Courtney Hall's satirical cartoons are rejected so she illegally inserts them into the newsmedia. The resultant uproar has her fleeing the Love Police and taking refuge in the sewer underworld where, along with 'The Mad King Of Nebraska', she meets Kilimanjaro West - an incarnation of the machine-god Yak, who is checking up to see if humanity os ready to be freed from the computers. Hectic, frenetic, satiric, anything-goes, much akin to Dick's drug fantasies, but with never a dull moment.

SWEETHEART, SWEETHEART Bernard Taylor Grafton \$3.99 Colin's wife, Helen dies in peculiar circumstances, followed a few days later, by Colin. Brother David returns from America, inherits the cottage, finds several others have died there, but nobody will talk about them. He falls in love with the cottage and tries to unravel the mystery .. but when his girl friend joins him, things start to go awry as the house takes action.

SEVEN OF SWORDS Carole Nelson Douglas Gorgi \$3.99 Torloc seeress Irissa and warrior-mage Kendric have ruled Rengarth for 18 years, guarding it against the evil wizard Geronfry. Then Kendric is poisoned and can only be saved by the magic of the lost Frost-forge sword. 3rd in the 'Sword & Circlet' trilogy.

HIGH DERYNI Katherine Kurtz Legend \$3.99 Volume 3 of the Chronicles Of The Deryni sees the evil sorcerer Toreth challenge Nelson, Boy-king of Gwynedd to a four-way duel. High fantasy in a medieval setting.

INTO MARSINDAL Roger Taylor Headline \$4.99 "The evil Lord Dan-Tor has at last been driven out of Fyorlund and retreated to Marsindal, the realm of his dread master Sumeral. But Hawklan and his allies have won no more than a breathing space, for Dan-Tor is gathering his forces for a massive onslaught on all free lands."

FOUR Dean R. Koontz titles from HEADLINE, the jackets call him 'The No.1 Master of Menace' - I'd also add, 'and of blood, violence and over explicit sex.' These tales embody all the above in large measure and various permutations, so bear that in mind when deciding if any of them will appeal to you ...

NIGHT CHILLS (£3.99) Research worker Ogden Salisbury perfects a method for making people obey his orders. With the financial aid of banker Dawson, he picks the small town of Black River for a test run. His victims will suicide, kill, or submit to rape -- and only a small group of immunes can stand against him and the police force which he controls.

WHISPERS (£4.50) Writer Hilary Thomas fends off a rape attempt by psychotic Bruno Frye. He tries again and is killed - yet seemingly returns from the grave for further attempts. Only Policeman Clemenza will believe Hilary, but their investigations reveal an incredible story of cruelty and perversion as the truth about Bruno is finally revealed.

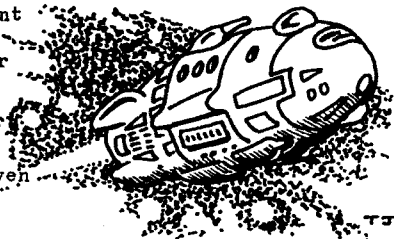
TWILIGHT EYES (£4.50) 'Slim' MacKenzie has 'twilight eyes' which enable him to see goblins masquerading in human form. He kills one of them, his uncle, and is on the run and joins a travelling circus. Working for, and loving, the beautiful Rya, he discovers that the next town on their tour is run by the creatures and they plan a horrible disaster whilst the fair is there. Slightly reminiscent of 'Sinister Barrier' with more sex, violence and horror.

THE VISION (£3.99) Clairvoyant Mary Bergen guides police to prevent a crime, but the criminal dies calling her name. Her brother Alan is continually trying to separate her from solicitous and gentle husband, Max. Then she begins to have visions of further violent slayings and sexual violence - but poltergeist phenomena prevent her 'seeing' the criminal. Tension mounts as she becomes the focus for his next attack.

THE NEXUS by Mike McQuay, Headline £4.50, is in the same vein as the above. Demoted TV man Denny Stiller investigates a faith-healer and finds that the 13^{1/2}-year-old, autistic Amy can do much more. TV Mogul, Gayler, the U.S. President and others all seek to kill or enslave Amy. Denny, striving to protect her, becomes a slave to her powers as they escalate to affect the whole world.

CREED James Herbert Hodder & Stoughton £12.95 Creed is a sleazy photo-journalist who snaps a long-dead actor abusing himself over the grave of a newly-buried film star - but the negative refuses to print! Then his files are ransacked, the beautiful Gally arrives with an offer of help and he begins to have horrible visions. Then follows a ghastly series of events as nightmare creatures strive to make him surrender the photos. A kidnapping increases the pressure as events move to a most unlikely climax. An excellent yarn which holds you throughout, but which deserves a more powerful ending.

HYPERION Dan Simmons Headline £13.95 The Ouster barbarians are moving to attack the Hegemony world of Hyperion just before the Time Tombs are due to open. Consul and six pilgrims travel to Hyperion to meet the god-machine 'The Shrike' which will grant one pilgrim's wish and kill the others. On the way, each traveller tells his reason for the journey. Their themes include - a girl living backwards, parasitic immortality, AI cybrids and other reasons for confronting the Shrike in a series of fascinating interwoven plots. Compulsive reading and even better than the author's previous 'Carrion Comfort'. There are some unresolved sub-plots, so maybe a sequel is in the planning.



RATS AND GARGOYLES Mary Gentle Bantam £12.99 The gods of the Decan dominate the labyrinthine city in which giant intelligent rats rule the humans. Bat-priest Periez joins with dwellers in the sewers to use necromancy against the living gods and their demonic acolytes. Humans plan to overthrow the rats whilst the workers who are forced to build the giant 'Fane', start a strike. Intricate, many-faceted plots gradually develop in a totally different and gripping fantasy. Definitely not your average S&S drek, but a tale which has you really interested in the characters and their actions -- Recommended.

THE BUREAU OF LOST SOULS Christopher Fowler Arrow £3.99 Twelve modern tales of horror - a haunting, a deadly parasite, a womaniser gets his come-uppance, an office murder, big-game hunting in London. Child play, kidnapping, an unusual fry-up, keep-fit, a sex maniac, and more. All well plotted and highly readable tales with twist endings. No 'what-was-that-about?' yarns here, and not a bad one in the bunch. It was a good buy in hardcover, it's a gift in paperback.

A CHILD ACROSS THE SKY Jonathon Carroll Legend £3.99 When Weber Gregston's best friend and maker of horror films, commits suicide, he sends three videotapes and a short story to Weber. Each develops further material on a second playing or reading. Weber sets out to find why his friend died. He meets incredible people including the fairy Pinsleepe who reveals future events. Gradually Weber is drawn into an involved sequence of dreamlike events.

TIME AND AGAIN Jack Finney Arrow £7.99 Si Morley is approached by a secret Government agent and offered a part in a time-travel experiment. Using a form of self-hypnosis, he returns to the New York of 1882, to uncover the story behind a cryptic letter mailed to an ancestor of his current girl friend Kate. He uncovers a blackmail scheme but evidence shows that actions in the past may change the present. Cramped with old drawings and photos, I suspect much of this large, 400pp yarn was written around these as it is really a nostalgic look at early New York.

FAHRENHEIT 451 Ray Bradbury Grafton £2.99 Re-issue of this 1951 Galaxy tale. In a future where TV/radio addicts, Montag is a fireman whose task is to burn books as well as owners and their houses. Then he is tempted to take books home. In return, is hunted by the firemen and their Hounds. Query, if all books have been burned for as long as memory serves, how do people learn to read? Gubbies aside, it's still a good tale of ignorance in the rising east.

SECOND VAMPIRE P. Schuyler Miller £5.99 27 tales and close to five hundred pages. Experiments, warfare, aliens, robots, time-travel, invading Martians and changing reality are all here in a scintillating variety. Exams are not cerebral, message-laden wingings, but fast-paced and entertaining. Often lightweight, they gloss over the 'but what about...' as they roam in all directions examining the 'what if..' An excellent assortment from the days when Dick wrote real stories instead of ramblings.

***and TWO Block-Busters from Robinson in their MAMMOTH series ***

FANTASY - ALL TIME GREATS Eds. R.Silverberg and M.Greenberg. £4.99

Re-issue of this 1968, 430pp volume holding 22 tales from masters of the genre. 'Gonna Roll The Bones', 'Saulbug', 'The Golem', 'The Words Of Buru', 'A Gnome There Was', and many other classics. Pohl, Bierce, Lovecraft, Kuttner, Bradbury, Sturgeon to name but a few. Classic fantasy at a price anyone can afford. A gift in '88, it's a steal now. Don't miss it this time.

VINTAGE SCIENCE FICTION Ed. I.Asimov £4.99 Ten short novels from the magazines of the fifties. One-way time travel, civic disobedience, aliens. Asimov's 'Martian Way', Tenn's 'Fire Water', Sturgeon's 'Baby Is Three', Russell's 'And Then There Were None' -- all well-plotted, absorbing yarns from an era when SF was becoming respectable and hadn't discovered causes, messages and real-world problems. All give good, honest entertainment of the stuff which made SF great.

SALVAGE RITES Ian Watson Grafton £3.50 A 15 story collection of fantasy SF and horror:- The ultimate salvage dump, incredible carvings, trapped in a computergame, a legend, a 4-D zoo, a werewolf, killer moles and others. An extremely well-varied mixture with each yarn just long enough to make its point without tedious padding. Watson grabs his reader and holds him (or her) spellbound throughout. Good value for money.

RUSALKA C.J.Cherryh Mandarin £6.99 When rapsallion Pyetr is wounded by a jealous husband, then hunted for witchcraft, young stableboy Sasha helps him escape. They take refuge with the wizard, Uulamets - who sets his own price for healing Pyetr. This involves his dead daughter's spirit who takes a liking to Pyetr. To save them, Sasha must learn from the wizard - but then things change. Avoiding cat-clones, characters who shower every other page and complicated names, Cherryh has produced a lovely fable of old Russia and avoided the usual run-of-the-mill fantasy. A good 'un.

NEMESIS Isaac Asimov Bantam £3.99 Teenager Marlene has an unusual ability and lives in the space Settlement Rotor orbiting, Erythro, moon of the planet Megas, all round red star Nemesis - which will eventually destroy Earth. The colonists left Earth secretly, but now Earth's rulers have located them. Meanwhile Marlene and her mother descend to Erythro and face a new life form. Good characters, highly readable and well worked out -- only the various motives are a bit creaky .. surely, space colonies can't lack space room?

THE WAZIR AND THE WITCH Hugh Cook Corgi £3.99 A light-hearted fantasy set on the island of Untunchilamon where political strife disturbs the peaceful existence of the giant, Hermit Crab, wielder of mighty powers - so he commands the Empress Justina and Varazchavardan to reach agreement -- or else!

BEST NEW SF 4 Ed. Gardner Dozois Robinson £6.99. Another of Robinson's giant collections (598pp), holding no less than 25 stories from the 1989 magazines - since Dozois edits IASFM, it might be indicative that 9 are from that magazine and none from Analog. There's an opening summation of the SF year and a closing list of 'near misses'. If you're an old fuddy-duddy like me, you may find the yarns lean heavily towards the 'Well what was that about?' but if you like this modern trend, this volume will suit you fine.

EGYPT GREEN Christopher Hyde Headline £4.50 Earth's population growth is out of control, so international agencies decide to reduce it. They also construct underground refuges and kidnap hordes of intelligent children to supply a new master race. Toby Hagen is one and as he works to escape, his girl friend Devon, joins with a journalist to find out where he has gone. A taut, fast-paced novel of individuals against the might of various secret Governmental agencies - an excellent read.

GHOST STORIES Ed. Richard Dalby Robinson £4.99 Writers familiar and less so bring the reader traditional ghosts, spirits, hauntings a-plenty, along with the macabre, possession, the undead and just about every facet of the supernatural you can name. Scarborean, Dalby has crammed no less than fifty tales into this hefty volume. That works out at less than 10p a story. At that price, how can you go wrong? An ideal bedside companion - if you dare use it that way.

HAMMER OF MARS M.S. Murdock Penguin £3.99 Second Buck Rogers' tale in the 'Martian Wars Trilogy'. The Russo-American Mercantile (RAM) has been forced to relinquish Earth and lurking in its main computer is the Masterlink virus, inimical to Rogers. To avoid anarchy, the new Earth Organisation is thinking of alliance with the genetically altered (and cruel) Terrines. Venus may also help, but then RAM attacks. Slam-bang, fast moving space opera with both live villains and computer generated ones.

RESURRECTION DREAMS Richard Laymon Headline £3.99

Vicki and her parents are horrified when, at her final College Science Project Day, oddball classmate Melvin unveils a corpse and tries to revive it. Years later, now a qualified doctor, Vicki returns to her home town. Melvin, has been released from an asylum and seemingly cured is running the local gas station. However, he is behind many disappearances as he continues his experiments - with Vicki as his next target. Sex, blood and horror in king-size doses.

THE ROOM Michael Grey Corgi £2.99

Bob Briar, along with daughters Harvest and Bounty shares the inheritance of Maple House with Becky Halifax and her two sons, Roo and Jamie. The house has a maze built in the ballroom and a strange compulsion leads them to discover a hidden, lead-lined room holding a cocoon. Then it emerges to complete its grisly control. The best horror tales are never specific, and this one escalates superbly without tipping its hand. One of the most powerful horror tales I've read in ages, but not for the squeamish

HIDDEN TURNINGS Ed. Diana Wynne Jones Mandarin £2.99

12 tales of fantasy for younger readers. Various writers tell of the undead, a visiting goddess, a killing, a 'dogfaerie', love, strange dreams and others. Plenty of variety in the themes, but too many 'unresolved endings' often left me wondering, 'what was that all about?'

FIRE AND HEMLOCK Diana Wynne Jones Mandarin £2.99

Paperback version of the 1985 title sees ten-year-old Polly (who talks as if she were 19), gatecrash a funeral and meet the cellist, Tom Lynn who gives her an unusual picture. Despite their age difference they meet regularly to invent a fantasy world which begins to assume reality. As Polly grows older, she is followed by the mysterious Leroy, and has memories erased. I'm afraid the ending had me puzzled, but maybe its juvenile readers will sort things out.

THE HOMEWARD BOUNDERS Diana Wynne Jones Mandarin £2.99

Another one for youngsters. 13-year-old Jamie wanders the back streets where he finds a hidden fort. He creeps in to them playing a complicated game. To prevent further disturbance, they cast him to the Boundaries - junctions of alternate universes. He has various adventures in these as he struggles to find his way home - and meets such characters as 'The Flying Dutchman'

RING AROUND THE SUN Clifford D Simak Mandarin £3.50

Everlasting razor blades, light bulbs and cars are flooding the market, throwing thousands out of work. Cheap solar-powered houses follow as part of a campaign to overthrow Governments. Jay Vickers is drawn into an investigation which takes him to an alternate world, (one of an infinite number circling the sun). He meets the standard Simak robot, finds a grand scheme to save humanity, but must first defeat the real enemy at home. Rather slow-paced by modern standards, but this former 3-part Galaxy serial (1952/3) still reads well.

THE MARIANNE TRILOGY Sheri S Tepper Corgi £4.99

Marianne's inheritance is controlled by half-brother, Harvey. She meets Makr Avehl, wielder of unusual powers, who aids her against the magic of Harvey's evil partner, Madame Delubvosoka. The pair seek to destroy Marianne so that Harvey can gain the fortune. From here on, it's a battle between good and evil with Marianne in the middle. The massive 300pp volume holds 'The Magus and the Manticore', 'The Madame, and the Momentary Gods' and 'The Matchbox, and the Malachite House'.

OUT OF PHAZE Piers Anthony N.E.L. £3.50

Proton is a technical world. Phaze, its alternate is one of magic and monsters. Magician Bane changes bodies with robot Mach and reaching Proton, is aided by an alien. Meanwhile on Phaze, Mach (in Bane's body) teases with shape-changing Feta. Opposed by both worlds, the two misplaced beings strive to regain their own bodies, whilst finding advantages and drawbacks in their host ones. If you missed Anthony's inventive yarn in the hardcover, here it is in paperback.

TALES FROM THE PLANET EARTH Arthur C Clarke

Legend £3.99
A collection of sixteen yarns covering as wide a spectrum as you could wish - a decadent race, death of an astronaut, the saving of another, whale herding, gold from the sea, atomic doom, anti gravity and others. Each has a brief explanatory note from the author whose output has been so well aimed, it is hard to find un-anthologised tales. This book makes a good try. ACC has a tendency to distance himself from the action but they are still good tales.



CHUNG KUO Book.1 'The Middle Kingdom' David Wingrove N.E.L. £3.99

By the 22nd Century, Chinese Overlords rule all Earth and proscribe any change or research. The Dispersionists seek to overthrow their Edict by assassination and subversion. The main action is in multi-level city Earth where caste and face is all. A superb blend of strong characters, intricate plots, an exotic but convincing Eastern background and a touch of cruelty and sex. A farned good read, now re-issued at half its previous price - it's an even better buy.

INTERZONE 4th Anthology Eds. J.Clute, D.Pringle & S.Ounsley N.E.L.£3.50

Fifteen tales from the magazine. The introduction says of them:- "Weds cognition and metaphor .. conveys a perspectival vertigo ..on the cusp of radical disfiguring .. the claustrophobic obsessiveness of its protagonist .. the traumatised closet-Psyche .. psychic fugue .. the frontal caltrap".. and more of the ilk. You can't argue with words like that. Need I say more?

CAPSULE COMMENTS

THE DRIVE IN.2 Joe R. Lansdale N.E.L. £3.50 Sub-titled 'Not Just One Of Them Sequels', the grammatical quality is maintained in a sleazy, first person account of further adventures of the motley group of drive-in cinema attendees which got shifted to another dimension and a prehistoric world. Weird, meant to be funny events occur when they get back home.

THE OWL.2 Bob Forward N.E.L. £3.50 Another sequel, this time featuring Alexander L'Hiboux, a sort of Lone Ranger of L.A.'s streets. This time, the man who never sleeps foils a kidnapping and ends up with the sixteen-year old target on his hands. Slam bang, Spillane type violence as he seeks her coke-dealing boy friend. Street violence in high gear and full speed.

THE EARTHSTONE Diana Paxson N.E.L. £3.99 Book 3 of the Chronicles of Westria and again the traitor threatens Westria. The Jewels of Power which could save Westria are lost, the only hope is Julian, lost son of King Jehan. He must journey with Wanderer, Silverhair, gain the support of the 'Guardians' and locate the first Jewel of Power. Ho hum, you know the sort of stuff.

ARMAGEDDON OFF VESTA M.S.Murdock Penguin £3.99 Book 3 of the Buck Rogers', Martian Wars series. Once again, the all-pwerful RAM forces are moving in on Buck and the New Earth Organisation, Venus is coming to their aid, but there is treachery elsewhere. Space opera in the Star Wars tradition.

PHANTOMS Dean R Koontz Headline £13.95 Dr. Jenny Paige and her sister come home to the small town of Snowfield to find the people vanished or killed in various gruesome ways - whatever did it, still lurks around. Sheriff Bryce Hammond starts to investigate, one of his men is snatched from the midst of a group and so the escalating horror gets under way.

THE CONAN CHRONICLES.2 Rober E Howard, L Sprague de Camp & Lin Carter. Orbit £4.50 This hefty package holds CONAN THE ADVENTURER, (4 stories), CONAN THE WANDERER (4 Stories and the long Novel, CONAN THE BUCCANEER. For lovers of this mighty barbarian hero, a feast of sword, sorcery and nubile maidens in distress, along with black-hearted villains and weird monsters.

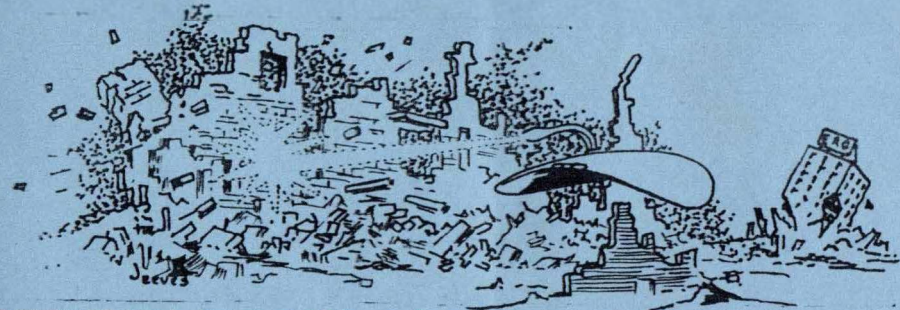
BAD VOLTAGE Jonathan Littel, Orbit £3.99 A cyber punk tale of bodily enhanced layabouts and druggies in a sleazy, riot-torn Paris. Told in 'hep' jargon, this is one of those tales you either love or hate.

ICE DRAGON Richard & Knaak Orbit £3.50 Second in the 'Dragon Realm' series. Novice warrior, Cave Bedlam fights the shape-changing Dragon Kings. Then the Ice Dragon attacks with the Final Winter. Bedlam must travel to the frozen North to confront the evil.

CRADLE Arthur C Clarke & Gentry Lee Orbit £3.99 Carol Dawson investigates curious whale behaviour and secret Navy activity and locates a golden artifact, a missile and an alien spacecraft which seeds planets to make zoos. With a lot of padding, plenty of sex and four-letter words. Not the Clarke I knew, but still an entertaining yarn blending aliens and underwater activity.

PUBLISHERS PLEASE NOTE *** This is the last issue of ERG, so please drop us from your mailing lists. Many thanks for your support, but at having reached the age of 63, this editor feels like a rest.

- DARK FANTASIES Ed. Chris Morgan Legend \$3.99 An introduction explains that this collection is NOT based on gore, violence and bone-crunching, but on tales where you imagine the horror for yourself - always the best method in my estimation ... 15 stories give you plenty of variety.
- THE COMING OF WISDOM Dave Duncan Legend \$3.99 Wallie Smith dies and is resurrected in another world as Swordsman Spensu. The Goddess who revived him, supplies a sword and with six companions, he must carry out her mission against evil Sorcerers. First in a series.
- IVORI Mike Resnick Legend \$3.99 The last tusks of the Kilimanjaro elephant are missing and now, 6,000 years later Mandaka wants them traced for some strange power they are reputed to possess - but it is a long trail with many pitfalls before Mandaka achieves his desires.
- GREENBRIAR QUEEN Sheila Gilluly Headline \$4.50 The Greenbriar King is dead, The Dark Lord is moving in and the king's half-brother Dendron seizes power. The sorcerer Fallen needs the blood of Princess Ariadne to release the Dark Lord and her only protection is the group of Loyal Watchmen.
- THE WYVERN'S SPUR Kate Novak & Jeff Grubb Penguin \$3.99 Sequel to the Novel 'Azure Bonds' The Wyvernspur Family's heirloom has been stolen and Family fool, Giogi is set to find it, aided by the mage, 'Cat' but betrayal and treachery beset his path, so he must invoke the Spur's magic.
- RIVERWIND THE PLAINSMAN Paul Thompson & Tonya Carter Penguin \$3.99 Dragon Lance Preludes.2, Vol.1 To win his beloved Goldmoon, Riverwind must perform an impossible quest set by the tribe's Elders. Along with soothsayer Catchflea and an elf-girl they seek the blue crystal staff of Mishakal. Stalked by fate and prophecy, one will go mad, one die and one win glory.
- REVENGE OF THE FLUFFY BUNNIES C.S.Gardner Headline \$3.50 This time, Roger Gordon must lead the forces of good to rid the Cinematic Worlds of Dr. Dread's evil. Movies are intertwining, an evil hastened by Dread and his henchpeople, Big Bertha, Menge the Merciless and Mother Antoinette.
- PHANTOMS \$4.50 Headline A small town has an ancient force steal most of its inhabitants and leave the rest dead and disfigured.
- VOICE OF THE NIGHT Headline \$3.99 Teenagers Roy and Colin are friends, but Roy love inflicting pain on creatures...and a voice from the night can change childhood fantasies into frightening reality.
- SCATTERED Headline \$3.99 Young Colin sets off with brother-in-law to drive to Los Angeles where Alex's wife is waiting .. but a strange car follows, driven by a psychopath. Their trip becomes a nightmare with a ghastly end.



THE GATES OF EDEN Brian Stableford N.E.L. \$3.50 Xenobiologist, Lee Caretta has blackouts which he conceals from his superiors and is drafted to check out the newly discovered world, Ariadne - a perfect Earth world, except that the explorers begin to die. Problem-space opera and highly readable.

EMERYO Keith Barnard Souvenir £14.95 While Dr. Simon Robinson is doing an ultra scan on patient Gemma, to check before an abortion, the foetus turns and smiles at him! Then during the operation, a violent shock lays him out and the girl is badly injured. Robinson is suspended from duty, the operation report vanishes and series of violent killings begins. Simon's wife becomes pregnant - with the baby starting to take control. Rather heavy on the medical side, but a nicely escalated tale of illicit genetic experiments.

ROBOCOP.2 Ed Naha Penguin £3.99 The COP gang have manipulated a financial take-over of Detroit, planning to flood the city with their new drug WUKK. Fearing the opposition of Robocop, the cybernetically enhanced policeman, they create their own Robocop.2 monster using the brain of a drug addict. Utterly violent, fast-paced gang-busting novel at a juvenil level, the story of the film due for release in October.

ASH DCK Christopher Hinz Mandarin £3.99 (I keep reading that title as 'A shock') Earth is a post-nuclear ruin with humanity living in orbital colonies. This sequel to the excellent 'LIEGE KILLER' sees the return of the deadly Paratwa killers, one mind controlling two bodies. A deadly computer virus enters the colonies' database and the killers return. As good as the last one, so read and enjoy.

VOYAGERS III 'Star Brothers' Ben Bova Methuen £14.99 Keith Stoner was revived from cryogenic suspension in space by the mechanisms of an alien star-ship - which gave him superhuman powers. He is using these to bring world peace, but powerful financial interests threaten all he has achieved and are moving in on Stoner and his wife. Linked in ar drug dealers and a sinister plague. Once past the purple prose prologue and its horde of adjectives and you have a rattling good yarn which will hold you throughout.

