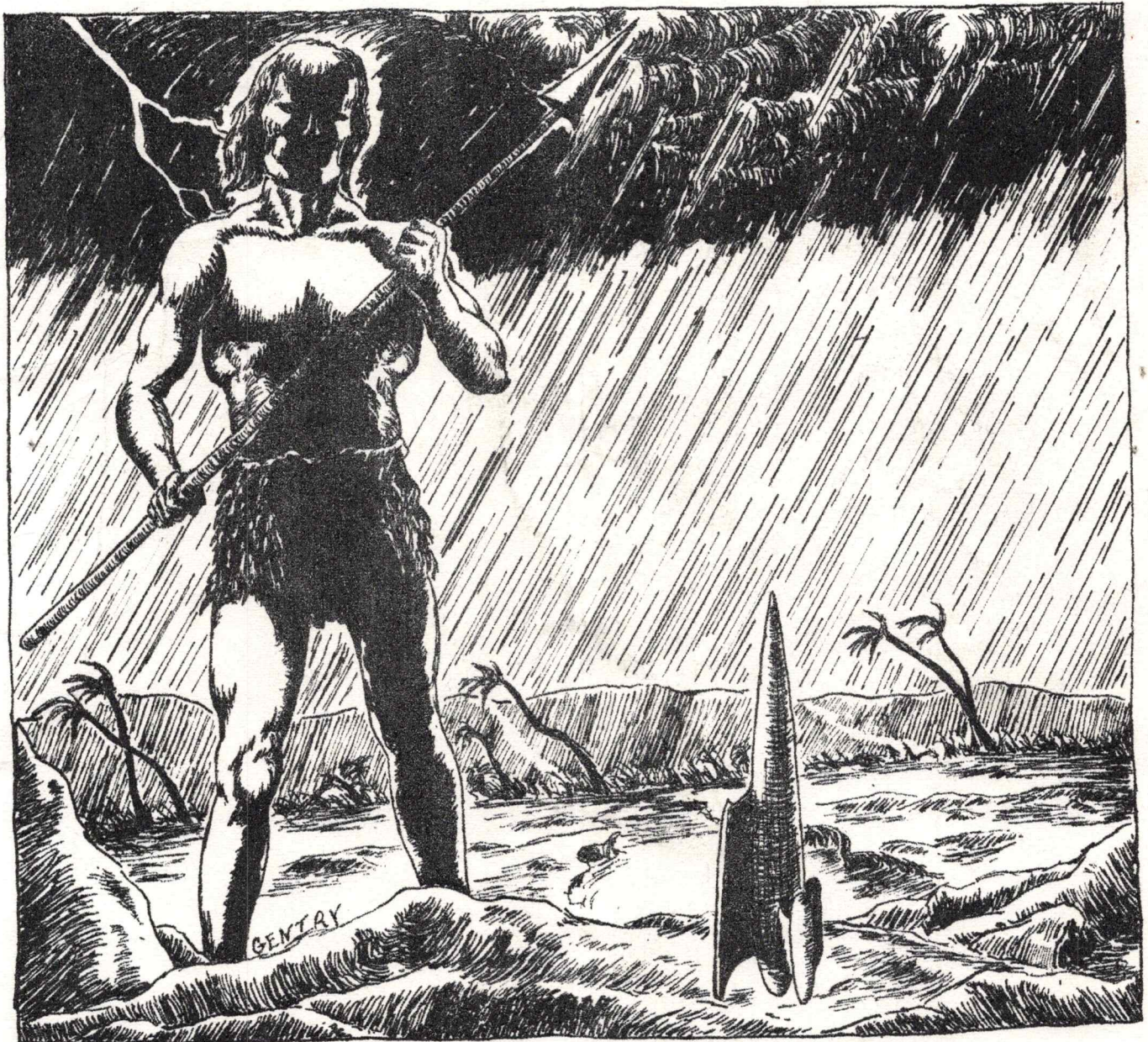
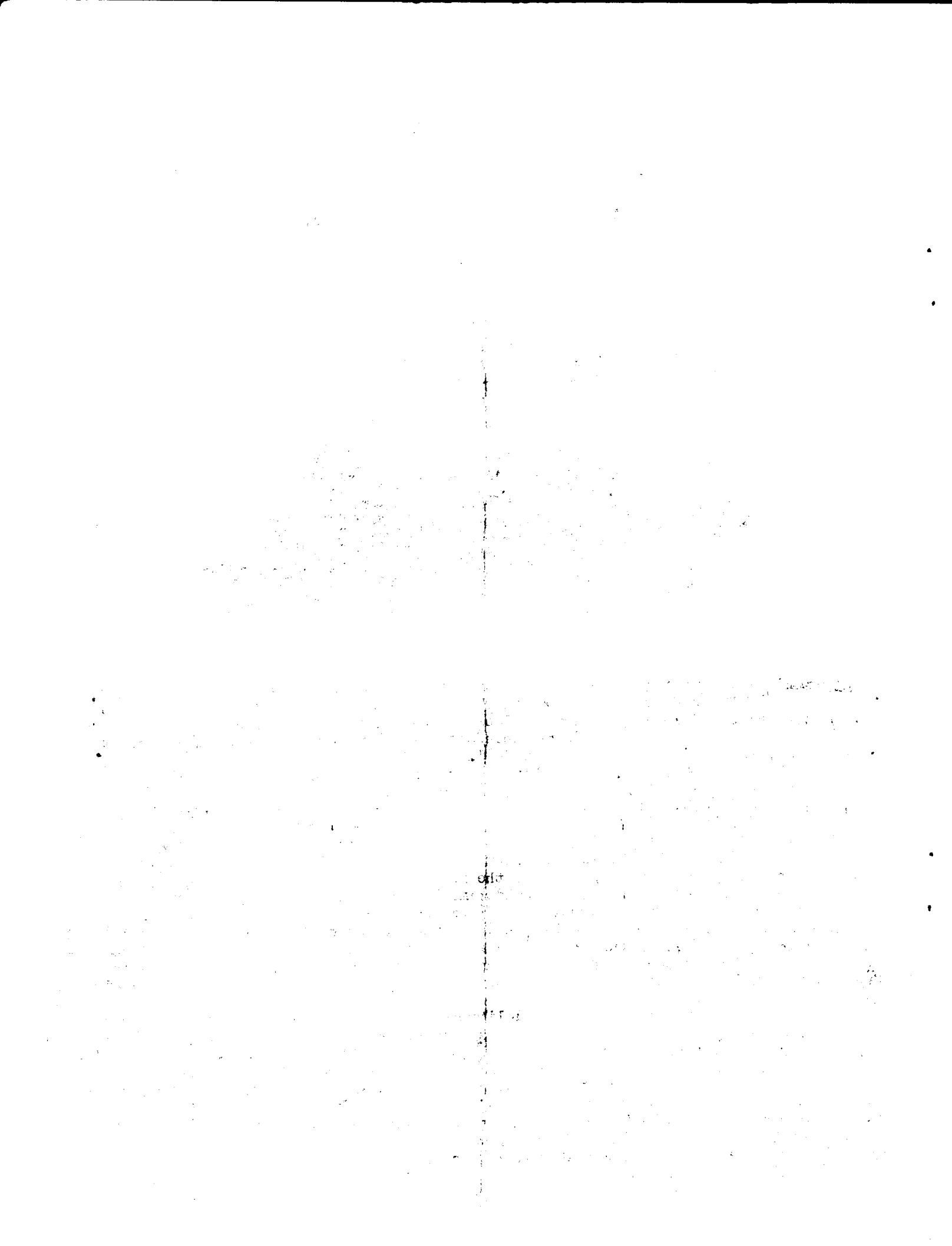


The MONDAY EVENING GHOST

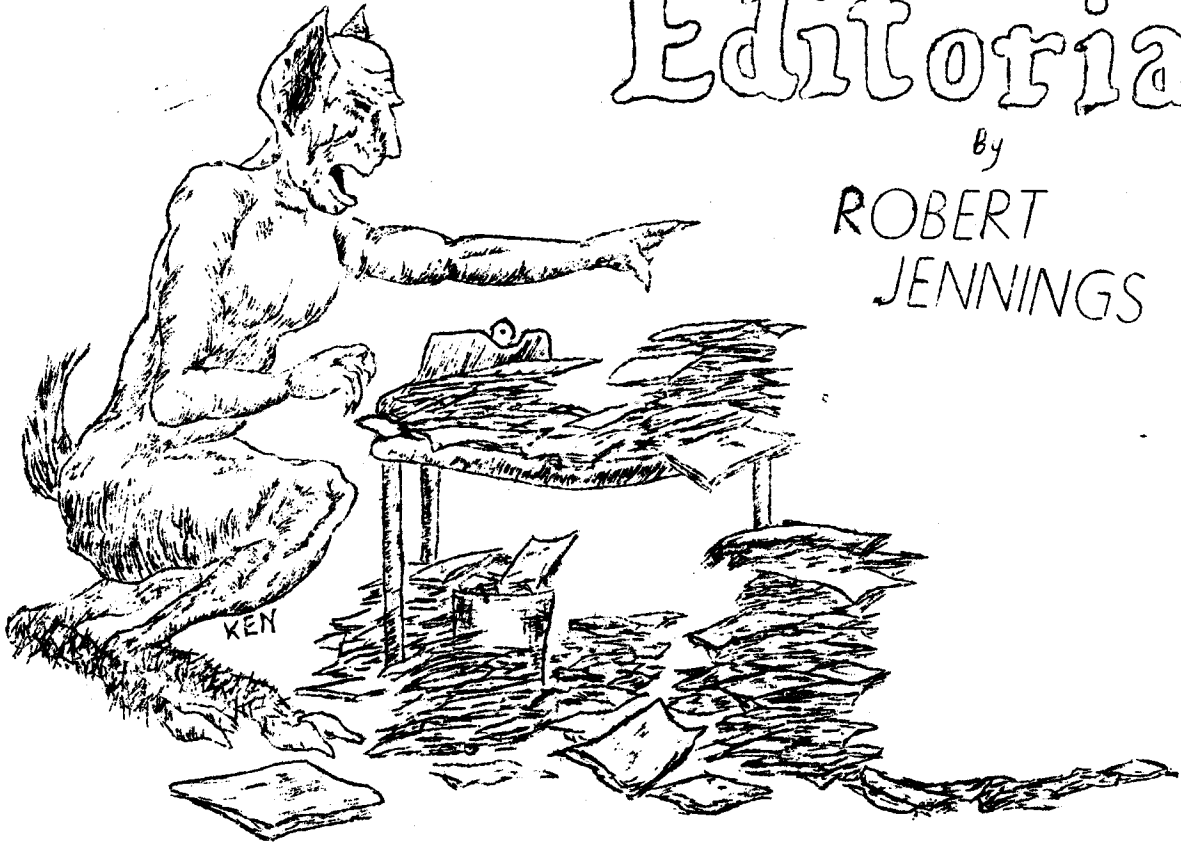




Editorial

By

ROBERT
JENNINGS



KEN'S ILLO up there shows ye editor with part of the Table Mess. I say part because KEN caught me when I was cleaning away part of the Mess. I have succeeded in conquering the Table Mess. No doubt, those of you are a bit more acquainted with my Table Mess will not believe this. However, it's true, the Table Mess is all but dead.

It all started about two weeks or so ago. I was catching up on some correspondence, or was about to, and paused a moment to view the Table and the Table Mess. It looked normal, the Table was sagging a little in the middle, legs buckling a trifle with each new addition of paper and junk, the Mess itself three or four feet on top of the table and three feet approximated all around and under the Table. The room was covered about a foot deep, with higher points at strategic points across the floor with paper and junk, normal. And then I happened to think. I could remember back when the Table Mess was once confined to the Table alone. Yes. Once way back when, the Table Mess had been content to remain on the Table, and grow there. Every three months or so it would reach eye level, or bury the typer and radio completely, and I'd drive into battle to chop it back down to a reasonable size. This was long ago. I could hardly remember the last time I had chopped the Table Mess back. Then the awful truth dawned on me.

The Table Mess had deliberately kept the height on the Table proper at a respectable level, while dissipating outward across the room. My plan was to take over the room totally, perhaps the whole house. Horrible visions clouded my sight. The Table Mess spread four feet deep over the room, me walking casually in one day, hopping from the few bear spots to the bed, then, the Mess itself rising up, engulfing me... Then there would be nothing left to prevent the Mess from spreading over the entire house, the yard, the neighborhood, perhaps even the whole town. I saw a vision of the entire continent and then the world engulfed with the growing horror of the Table Mess. It was all crystal clear to me. And I was the only one in a position to prevent this

"Damn," I said to myself, loudly. Obviously the only thing to do was to devise some daring and clever plan and kill off the Table Mess before it reached the critical stage. I decided to attack it first by cleaning out the Mess under the Table. I reasoned that the evil intelligence which was the Table Mess must still reside in the Table Mess proper, probably it was not yet strong enough to dare venturing out onto the floor. I reasoned that the large heap under the Table was a nerve center of some sort, most possibly the evil intelligence shed piles of junk and paper, and directed the attack. The nerve center under the Table relayed the commands along the tenicles across the room to local nerve cells. The Mess was carried daily along these lines of communication to the far flung corners of the Mess's growing empire. I was not sure of the stage the Mess had progressed so far, but if I were to clean out the central nerve center, it would seriously damage the Table Mess's campaign. The lines of communication would be broken, and I could wipe out the Floor Mess and the local direction centers at my leisure. It all hinged on cleaning out that center from directly under the Table. Once I felt it I could clear out the floor, and by cutting it out, seriously damage the Table Mess, leading eventually to victory for me.

I was quick to realize tho that it wasn't going to be an easy task. So the next afternoon, loaded down with equipment. Two flashlights, a pair of combat boots, knives, matches, a blowtorch, helmet, monster waste basket and food to last me a day and a half. I tried to reassure myself, if I didn't clean out the nerve center the Table Mess would forever be a menace to me. I dared not attack the Table Mess proper, if it felt it was in mortal danger it could call forth almost unlimited resources, to bury me alive. If I attacked one of the tenicles or local nerve centers it would just retreat and regroup and spread again once I grew lax. No, it had to be the nerve center.

With a rush I leaped across the battlefield and right to the nerve center. I struck like lightning, not giving the Mess a chance to form a defensive barrier. I sorted Mess three different ways, junk straight into the waste basket, useful junk to one side, books and magazines and fanzines to the other, dust in handfuls were tossed into the waste basket. I worked like a man damned, I knew I couldn't afford to waste even a second. Clouds of dust rose in omnibus layers around me, piles rose and fell, the waste basket filled and was emptied, and refilled again, almost as quickly as I returned. Piles of long forgotten reading material, comics, books, all rose in stacks around me. I built a barricade against my back of hardbacks with comics and ppbacks to fill the chinks, and I could feel the battering might as waves of paper pounded against it. Letters formed a monster pile, and thru the battle I wondered vaguely how many people had written me that I had never answered since the Mess begin to grow. There was no way of telling. The waste basket was full once more, with a dash I was out of the room, and shook clouds of dust off me. I emptied the basket, and hauled out my secret weapon, a vacume cleaner hose was pulled into the room. With a roar it begin pulling in tons of dust, papers, small bits of metal and glass. A rain a B-B's from God only knows where bearly missed me. A pile of hardbacks, one of my barriers, fell, nearly braining me, and a flood of paper poured thru the break. I felt myself going under, fighting bitterly. I kicked and slid, vacume in one hand, flashlight in the other. I squirmed and fought my way to a sideline, and begin to regroup my forces. The vacum hummed loudly, coughed once, and was dead! I realized it must have been taxed to the limits of its capacity. Taking advantage of a few seconds of lull as the Mess begin to call up more forces, I made a rush for the door. I tripped, slid across the floor, but made it anyway. I emptied the cleaner bag and the waste basket and in a rush I was back.

A fort I built there to protect me, hardbacks were the walls, with comics as mortar, ppbacks pined the floor and roof, letters were the contents as I fought onwards. I threw material about wildly, piles grew and fell, and grew again, and always with each encounter I carried away huge amounts of the Mess, bearly classified, destroying that which I didn't need. I battled like a maniac, papers were everywhere, and then the break, and I knew I had won

this round. Thru ever rising clouds of dust and confusion I could see great masses of paper and junk rising in a steadystream to the Table Mess proper. I often wonder at the angrish the thing must have felt to leave behind the floor mess and its dreams of a house wide empire. It made one last symbolic front, as two bottles of glue and a small bottle of black polirized waterproof India ink smashed on the floor at my feet. But I overturned a waste basket, and its contents soaked up the mess before it could reach the magazines and books.

It left me in peace as I cleaned out the room. Almost all of the floor was cleared away, the waste basket and vacume took an awful toll. Here and there remained scattered pockets of resistance, but to all practical purposes I ruled the floor once more. I took a look at the recovered loot, and was truely astounded. Books like I've not seen before, I must have added twenty titles to my collection on the shelves, items I had bought and the Tabæ Mess had swept away. Magazines galore, eight copies of the June '60 F&SF, three copies of IF for Apr anda hord of single titles, all in good, but dusty, condition. Comics, stacks and stacks of old comics, mostly junk I had thought to toss out or sell or something, and hadnever gotten around to doing. I weeded out fifty heroic comics at least, including three old FLASHs, and two copies of MYSTERY IN SPACE I thought were safely tucked away in the files. Six duplicates of PLAYBOY (at sixty cents a copy I wondered how the hell I could have bought that many duplicates), and tons of other material. There was no doubt this haul had hurt the Mess. It took me the rest of the day to classify the material and sort it out.

The time was right, I realized, to hunt down and kill off the Table Mess proper. The next day I loaded up again, with extra rations. I had considered using a mechatte , but decided that in close fighting the long knife would be of little use.

I approached the pile carefully. The extra resources had brought the Table Mess to an astounding size, it was a miricle the Table could bear the weight. With a rush I was on it, I shoved the Table, a pile of Mess Hell, and in a flash I was on it, sorting, and moving away from the vicinity of the Table. If I could snipe away at the Table thus I could eat it down slowly but surely. There was no unlimited supply fo the Table now, and when its size was deminished, it weakened,



Confidently I reached for another pile of Table Mess...and was overwhelmed. Down I went in a torrent of paper and junk, a Niagara of Mess fell over me. I saw to my horror that the beast was trying to bury me, to smother me in a cocoon of paper and dust! I dived under the Table to escape the awful fall of objects and paper, and realized that I had made an awful mistake. Round about me, all four sides of the Table begin to rain down paper, heavy falls of paper and Mess, piling up around the Table. I would be entombed alive... The fall looked deadly, I knew I couldn't hope to dive thru that hell not without sustaining injuries that would probably lead to my capture and entanglement in an even worse situation. I huddled under the Table and watched, piles were forming and were growing steadily. I had to do something. The Mess didn't have unlimited resources, the rain could only continue until a major portion of the Mess proper was around me, and I realized that that would be enough to efficiently lock me in my self housed prison. With a shove of my hob nailed boots I shoved a pile of papers that had formed on one side out into the floor, where it would remain untouched and unheeded. I hoped that if I could push enough of the Mess out into that open floor its resources would be exhausted and I would be safe. But the Table Mess was cunning, it redoubled its efforts, and piles begin to rise rapidly. Desperately I kicked sides out, sending trails and globs of mess into the floor, but it was all replaced in seconds. I shoved out another pile, and the typer nearly crushed my foot. Staples, inaccurately aimed flashed past me. Apparently my escape attempts were cutting into the reservoir the Mess had left. Something bruised my foot, my arm fell numb. A radio splintered with the force of a bomb, and gagged piece of metal and glass slashed around me. Painfully I had to get out before the Mess was successful in eliminating me.

I kicked another wall down, and just as quickly it reformed. It can't be eternal, I told myself, kicking out another wall. I saw the light of day dimly thru the dust and rain. It's weakening, I tried to tell myself, only half believing. The battle was becoming even more bitter, it was a case of it or me, and we both realized it. My legs were pretty well bruised by then, and with a thought of terror, wondered if perhaps the Table Mess might not try to reclaim some of that mess out on the floor! Sure enough, as I watched closely, I noticed one side of the Table rain was thinning out. The Mess had to send out tentacles to gather it in. With a desperate lunge I kicked out the wall on the thinnest side and rolled out. Objects battered me, but I was safe out on the open floor, bruised and battered but alive. I gathered in my emergency equipment, and loaded a special weapon.

A flare blazed at the junction between tentacle and Table Mess. The Mess drew apart, and the flare fell harmlessly, but I was able to reclaim and hold the tentacle and most of the mess I'd kicked onto the floor. This haul would weaken the Table Mess still further. I hastily classified it and sorted it out, making a clean sweep of it. I kicked out a few pockets of resistance on the Floor too, then paused to eat a bit.

After eating I was back at the battle lines. I reached and grabbed a pile of Table Mess, painfully picking out staples and rubbing additional bruises acquired in the process. I wondered vaguely if I could hope to starve the monster out. I hated to battle it this way, I might get hurt, perhaps even killed. But there were four feet of paper left on the Mess, enough to last it for years. I realized too that Monday would bring an additional reserve of mail. I could not hope to starve it out. But there must surely be something better than this method of grab and stab.

However, at that time I wasn't too optimistic. I decided to risk a mad dash. With a leap I kicked the sides of the Table, sending a flood of paper onto the floor. Like a madman I tossed it out into the floor, heaving piles of the Mess out into my territory. It was an awful fight. I was close to being brained several times, and I barely saved this typer from complete destruction. (Have you ever been hit in the head by a typer carriage?). I finally ducked and ran. I had a ridiculously small pile of junk to show for my feats, most of it went straight into the waste basket.

I noted that almost all the paper on the floor I had claimed the last attack had been worthless trash. Obviously the Table Mess was holding back material, primarily letters I realized, as a last hope. It might be that if I were in danger of killing off the Mess it would destroy those letters in revenge. Letters were important to me, practically all of my correspondence had collected on the Table over the past weeks, I had done very little letter answering. In any event, it seemed logical to assume that the letters would be the last items the Mess would give up.

I went to bed feeling pretty cocky. Here I had chopped my enemy back to the Table proper, and had eliminated a few feet from it's size. Little did I know the gastly & awful plans being laid for me. (A slight pause will now follow during which the

venders will distribute popcorn and drinks while the combo will begin building background tempo suitable for dramatic action). In the night I heard a slight sound, a barely noticable movement, then, disaster! A flood of paper descended on me, over my head, pinning me to the covers. I struggled desperately and squirmed under the covers, paper tenicles following. Good Ghu (or words to that effect) I thought, shoving my date out of bed and hastily following her, the Mess must be desperate. Night time was formally a truce zone, apparently the Mess had decided to make another attempt at ending my life. It had tryed the hld hold and strangle method, with little success. I shoved the girl out the door, made quick appologies and another date for a more oportune time, and prepared to do battle. I wondered if the attempt might not have been sucessful had the Mess been stronger.

In mere seconds I returned with the vacume cleaner. I had little taste for getting out up by reaching into that pile again. With an artful toss (I'm good at this sort of thing) I tossed the nozzle into a pile of papers. The machine whinned, I jerked, and brought forth a small pile of papers attached by the suction to the nozzle. With a smirk I tossed the nozzle back again, and returned with still more Mess. I would eat it away little by little. And stay safe in the process. The Table Mess shook slightly. The hose drew tart, as the Mess tryed to jerk the hose from my hand. A ripple of horror went thru me. If the Mess were to claim this, my most valuable piece of equipment, it could make itself mobile! It could kill me with heavy pieces of metal, hide, attack at will. I wrapped myself around a bedpost and pulled hard. The Table Mess pulled. The Bed moved. I steaded it



REG


with a foot. The Table moved. Gad, what a plan, little by little the Mess was drawing toward me and my prize machine. I did some quick estimating. Causiously I unwrapped myself from the bed post, and the Mess took the opportunity to move two feet closer to me. I made a dash to the machine. Somewhere on the base of the thing was a button, to be used only in case of dire emergency for clogging. I figured this was a case of dire emergency. The Mess begin to move along the tart hose, into the middle of the floor. With a flourish I pressed the button, and paper exploded, scattering everywhere. Dust coughed as the reverse poured half a bag of dust directly at the Table Mess, I dragged out the hose with a jerk, and shut off the machine. The episode had cost the Mess another larger pile of paper.

A good night's sleep changes a lot of things. I was out early the next morning, clearing away bits of the Mess. By that afternoon I was confident enough to clean it off manually again. The Mess looked sick, and I do mean sick. Of the magnificent four feet it had had the days before, a bare five inches in two stacks remained. Confidently I answered letters, at the Table all the rest of the day.

So it looks like the Table Mess is finished. I cleared away all but two inches, and begin scraping the slime off the bottom. This has just covered the major battles of course, minor skirmishes were ranging in great numbers. There is only one thing that bothers me... As I was scraping off the mold and slime from the Table top (which I hadn't seen in three years), a big red spot of slime oozed to the leg and darted off to the corner. Remember me mentioning that there were a few pockets of resistance left on the Floor Well, I cleaned most of them out, except for a small nerve center in the corner. That's where that piece of slime headed, and it's over there, somewhere. Funny thing, the Corner Mess seems to be growing...

A FEW ANNOUNCEMENTS of sorts will fill up the remainder of the page. As you may have guessed from reading this, a new policy has been established as regards the editorial. In the future the Editorial will be devoted to something in a rambling type vain, and announcements. As always ye editor's serious side will be exposed via the cynic's column and the letter column. You wanted longer editorials, you've got 'em. With this issue the sub rates will go up. This is because Bob Jennings is eternally grasping and greedy person, and denoted how the readership has been passing on his kindness. In the future the subs will be, fifteen cents single copies, and \$1.50 for ten issues only. To soften the blow I've decided to present a huge introductory offer. To the first six hundred new subbers I will send absolutely FREE, a piece of the Corner Mess. Yes, it can be yours all for subbing (or just for asking even), a clipping from the Phabulous Corner Mess. Cuttings grow rapidly to maturity with little trouble. Have the time of your life, you too can live the life of adventure, etc. get your cutting from the Corner Mess today, if not sooner. Seriously though the annish brought in some new subs, for which I'm glad. This is the last widely distributed issue, next issue, as per editorial last ish, the Diotoritrial Methods for weeding out excess readership will go into effect. If any of you happen to be comics readers (and I feel sure there are some out there caught in the comics craze that is sweeping all of fandom), kindly buy and write a long letter on the latest issue of MYSTERY IN SPACE. This is the comic that features the Adam Strange adventures, the nearest thing to decent Buck Rogers adventures I've seen yet. The editor promises that with sufficient flow of mail he will feature a letter col. You kindly readers responded nicely with letters of comment to the previous issue of this fanzine, however I am still dissatisfied, a large portion of you receiving the last issue sent no comment of any kind. Your editor feels abused. Do you realize that some of your subscribers have not sent me a word since the day you subscribed?! Please clear up this situation, I like your comments. And this issue gives you a damn good excuse to write. You will note several follow up articles to Mike Deckinger's column this time round. I would like for you readers to also comment on it. If you never write me another letter as long as I live, please comment on this subject. I would like to see this idea developed beyond the discussion stage, which means a need^{for} something in the way of suggestions and ideas from all. Write.

THE CREAMY CHAIR



By Mike Deckinger

I have what I consider to be a sizable, tho not too expansive collection of science fiction, centered around several bookcases of stf mags, paperbacks and pulps. I'm aware that there are a great many other fans who collect science fiction also, and many of them have amassed impressive collections. I collect, not because I'm engaged in competition with anyone else, or because I want to have an adequate supply pf fuel on hand for a chilly day, but simply because I like to. It is an urge, almost an instinct for me to do so, and thus I do. I imagine most other collectors feel the same as I do about the subject; they collect out of sheer enjoyment for the material, perhaps unconsciously hoping to preserve it in some way.

Now I do not expect to be around on this Earth forever, despite all the immortality stories I've read. I do not expect this Earth to be here forever either, but I think it's likely it will be in existence longer than I will or any other collectors will.

This means that when I'm gone from this Earth to whatever might come next in a transition stage, my collection will be unattended. I'm the only stf fan in my family, and unless I marry a girl who has some interest in science fiction, it will mean that little is likely to be done by way of preserving or caring for my collection. I certainly hope it won't be discarded or transferred to the uncaring authority of some junkman who scatters it across a rubbish littered heap. I think a science fiction collection deserves better than that.

Equally so, I don't want to see the mags given to some non stf fan with the outer hope that perhaps this might induce him into the fold, and the inner delight that at last we've discarded this collection. Neither of these two possibilities; the garbage man or the inquisitive non-fan appeal to me to any noticeable degree. In fact, I think I would fight to keep my collection out of the hands of these two.

I'm not the only one either; what about the other collectors, the ones older than I am, the ones who have amassed larger collections, and are wondering what they will do with them after they're gone.

Just what will they do with them?

I'm sure the other collectors look with equal distaste upon leaving their books and mags to someone who has no interest in the subject, but

simply expresses a curiosity in seeing what it's all about. Recruitment can be accomplished in many ways, but this is certainly one of the extremes. I would never feel safe if my collection was in the hands of someone who would not appreciate it or care for it the way I do. And I'm sure the other collectors feel the same way about the subject.

Therefore I believe serious discussion should be given to the idea of formulating some sort of stf foundation or society, which would perpetually be maintained by fans and would have charge of the stf collections of late fans.

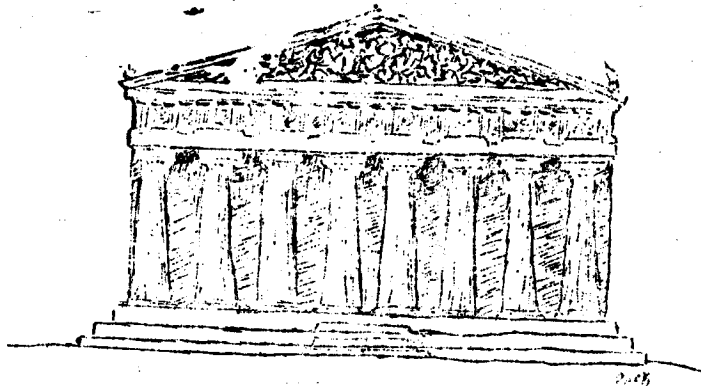
I understand some fans have already willed their collections to libraries and colleges, but despite the philanthropic wish behind this, it seems to me that the books and mags would do little more than collect dust in some rarely visited section of the shelves. This is another reason why some sort of foundation is badly needed today.

The plans for starting it would be simple. First of all some definite location would be needed, a location that would remain permanent. Perhaps someone would donate an old building, a large garage, a section of a house, etc., etc. This location would have to be adequate in order to handle the vast amount of periodicals and books that would be stored there. It would have to be run by fans who are collectors themselves, and thus would be capable of caring properly for all donations. But again, the "caretakers" of this foundation will grow older, so it will be necessary to recruit new persons every few years. A minimum working staff of four or five persons should be adequate, with new members decided on by a staff-wide vote.

Now say some long time collector of stf who is well in his years suffers a fatal heart attack. In his home, he has a library of rare first editions of fantasy and stf books. This is where the proposed foundation steps in. Before his death, they secure rights to his collection, (and I can't imagine anyone turning down this offer who cares about his books), and after the death, they have the collection shipped to this central point where the foundation is located. The books are carefully handled, and special gummed stickers with the former owner's name are pasted on them. Then they are relegated to a special section of the library and classified by one of the science fiction indexing systems now in existence. Files of the books, etc, etc, are taken so that visitors to the foundation will know at all times what they have on hand.

When a stf fan wants to read a certain book or mag which he'd been unable to obtain elsewhere, he writes the foundation and requests it. If it is in stock, the desired item is sent to him for postage and a small service charge. I do not intend this proposed organization to be a profit making group but they do need some income to subsist and maintain the library. This is taken in thru the moderate fees on items lent out.

I am not an optimist as to believe that this proposed foundation will be established in any short time. There is much that has to be done preparatory to even advance it beyond the talking stage. Fandom should first decide who will be in charge of it, where it will be, how it'll be handled, and other like details. I'd like to see what others think about this idea. How do you feel about



commentary

Editor's note---the following is one of several commentaries written by various fans on Mike's idea. Most of them are collectors, none of them has had the benefit of seeing each other's work, so some repetition of ideas is expected.

#1 By

CLAY HAMLIN

I think this idea of Mike's may work. I HOPE it will work; its something that has been needed for many years. But there will be problems, and I wonder is anyone realizes just how many and how complex these problems would be.

PROBLEM: The legal aspects. Just from an elementary knowledge of business law it is apparent that these collections will have to be legally willed to whatever organization is set up. Any it doesn't take too much legal insight to realize how complicated this process might eventually become. Like, the estate of the fan might be only too glad to get rid of those old books and magazines, they being almost completely useless to a mundane type person, but consider the postage costs that would be needed to send even a small collection to the foundation's central point. It wouldn't be low, that's for sure. It is no easy problem to get any sort of money from an estate until the will, if there is one, is probated. And money willed might be contested, bringing on a score of legal entanglements that might hamper or close the foundation. Also along this line, postage costs would really be enormous in the case of west coast fans if the storage facilities are on the east coast, and vice versa. It might be well then to establish regional libraries to ease the postage strain all round,

PROBLEM: one that I have run into constantly in lending out books and magazines from my own personal collection. The articles are not always returned in the same condition as they were when mailed out. Magazines in particular do not stand up well after that many years and hands have touched them, and the most uncaredful way the post office sometimes handles them does not help matters greatly either. Does the person who borrowed the books and magazines have to assume cost for damages? Accidents are bound to happen even when the most careful attention is given the articles. Then there is a percentage of readers who will NOT return the borrowed items. This is a very small, but still valid percentage, and they must also be considered. Gafia is a disease which no fan is exempt from, and when the fan decides to gafia while holding some of the foundation's books or magazines, the chances of ever having these articles returned is close to nil.

On a whole tho, those two problems mentioned above may actually be the only really major difficulties the project will encounter. For one thing, this idea is not really new. I have been given to understand that the idea of a lending library for books was tried once, sponsored by the NFFF. It was, of course, on a very limited scale, and its contents were composed of gifts of du-

plicater, and those given made a collection far from complete. From what little I have managed to learn of this library, no one knows where those books are today. It apparently tho was never an enormously popular idea to begin with, due mainly to the lack of titles, and a decided deterioration in the condition of those books that were returned. Yet despite this and probably other earlier failers, the idea may still work. Maybe it could be sponsored by such a club or group also. I know from lending out my collection that there is an awe inspiring amount of paper work involved in keeping track of all the items borrowed and sent. However it would probably be no great problem to set up a standardized procedure to handle the detail work without inposing unnecessary restrictions or overburning the good will of persons handling the foundation with extra and unnecessary work.

If it can be done, (and at this point I wish to make it known that should such an organization come into existence I am willing to put my own small collection at the disposal of the group), it will certainly fill a void vacent too long. There would be other problems on a more localized scale. The matter of indexing for instance. It does little good to operate such a library if no one knows what the library contains. Should regular catalogues be issued to those persons interested? What about the cost of producing these catalogues? How should the indexing be brought about? Magazines for instance can be indexed by full length novel method, by issues, by the stories it contains or by whole number. If a fan asks for a certain short story contained in a magazine and the magazines are indexed by issues, how is the fan to obtain that article? Future legal troubles are bound to become pressing problems. I would suggest that someone better acquainted with the laws of the states draw up standardized forms releasing the collection and a sufficient amount of money to transport the collection to the foundation. Perhaps it might be that the foundation can foreward funds for shipping and packing, which would certainly eliminate one touchy detail, but would place added strain on the foundation itself.

As for administration of the collection, this may not become too difficult a problem. A standardized procedure should be enforced to the letter. Say, if a borrower fails to return books within a specific time, they will be charged a penalty, as with any library, (I'm sure that the library will obtain duplicates from other collections, so it is doubtful that any one title will be out of circulation long). A yearly dues rate set to entitle the member to a specific number of books might be another idea. The dues might cover the cost of titles should they be returned in condition such as would render them useless from a mailing standpoint. Of course postage fees could be deduced from the dues, and any amount left over could be returned, or applied to the next year, or perhaps the dues rate could be set on a quarterly basis.

But these are just first thoughts on the matter. The idea has considerable merit, if the problems and details can be ironed out, and I hope that many solutions to these and other problems will present themselves as the idea takes more definite shape. This is a vote of heartfelt approval for the idea if it can be done. And the only way to find if it can or cannot be done is to try it. In any event my own collection is available if such can be accomplished.

Now let's hear some more comments. Fandom may yet have an opportunity here to justify its existence.

COMMENTARY #2

By
Bpb Jennings

Mike's idea impresses me considerably, if some slight additions could be made to the stated purpose. In its present form this foundation would simply be a lending library composed of books and magazines and such from collections of departed fans.

A few months back there was an interesting article by Harry Warner in DAFOE, which was followed by some comments by John and Hyrb. Digging back thru the letter files I discovered my letter of comment, in which I devoted a lot of time to this article and the comments. Briefly, Harry recounted on a volume of the Best of Fandom, stated some entries he would make, and remarked that it was a shame that fanzines, no matter how fine, only enjoyed a fleeting fame. A couple of weeks popularity to an issue, and it's soon forgotten. Hyrb made a slight mention of a library of fandom. It seems to me now that Mike's idea can be enlarged to cover more ground.

In addition to being a library for science fiction books and magazines, why couldn't this proposed foundation also be a sort of Museum of Fandom? Suppose the foundation were set up. The foundation would have a working agreement with every fan editor, understood; not specifically stated in legal form, that they the fan editors would send, say, two copies of their fanzine to the library. The library would bind up these fanzines at appropriate yearly or half-yearly intervals, keeping permanent records of all that is produced in fandom. Fans could be asked to help fill up the holes that are bound to develop, and to fill in the past years not covered since the library's foundation. The library would be given charge of producing several annuals as way of payment to the fan editors whose their zines in. Every year a certain number of Best of Fandom volumes might be issued. These Best of Fandom volumes would be subdivided various ways. Say, volumes for the Best Sercon Articles of 19--, the Best Satire and Parody from Fandom for 19--, the Best Material about Fandom of 19-- (like TAFF articles, Why I Became a Fan, Why I quit being a Fan, What the Hell is Fandom, etc), the Best Fiction from Fandom 19-- and so on as many classifications as are needed. These volumes would be issued on a yearly basis, they would take the finest examples of writing and illustrating available from all the fanzines received and would place them into collected volumes. The volumes might be sent free to the various fan editors, or a slight charge (and I mean slight, thirty five cents sounds ample) could be asked for each volume. A number of records of the history of fandom written by people who handle the job, Warner, Rapp, for instance, with sub histories of each of the clubs and their activities and misactivities, along with a history of the year in science fiction written by people who could handle the job, Metcalf or Wood for example, would also be kept.

The money needed to provide for this massive undertaking could be provided in various ways. First, rentals on lending out books or zines, or the dues system might prove effective, tho I rather doubt it. Somehow I can't see fans putting out money for a rental library on the dues system. Donations from individuals and clubs would help matters. A big asset would be a percentage from regional and national conventions. Presently con money is given to various groups and causes, I don't see why a certain amount could not be appropriated each year to support a fannish museum and library.

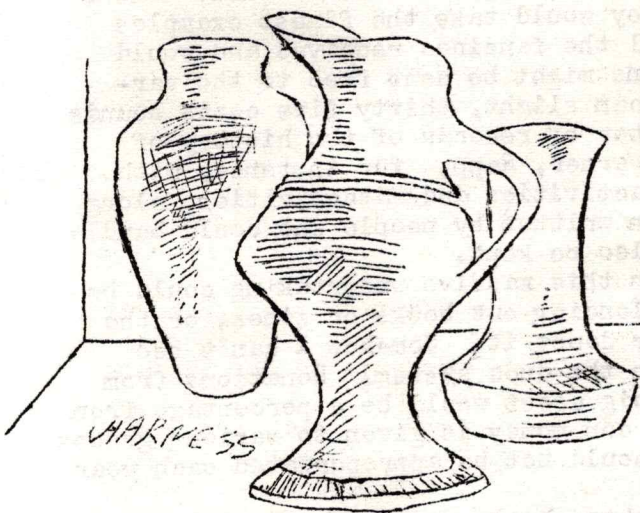
Another major problem will be those books and magazines lost in the mails or simply never returned. Some sort of uniform system might be established to pester the persons holding overdue books into returning the articles. I seriously doubt that the loss of books or magazines or fanzines would be felt except in cases of first editions or rarities, since each collection reaching the foundation will hold a certain number of items in duplication of material already held.

Another big problem will be deciding who will handle the organization should it be established. The selection of persons who will work on a part time basis (I rather doubt that anyone can work full time with such an affair) will be a touchy problem, and for the most part it will have to be decided by the location of the foundation. It should be obvious that the west coast is the most suited place for this, since the west coast has a good population of fans who can be called upon to man the library. A good fannish population also insures some interest locally anyway, also some active hands to put the work on its feet until minor details can be ironed out.

Another little problem is how the foundation will be organized should enough interest be generated to warrant carrying this beyond the talking stage. An off hand suggest would be to contact the present or a future world convention committee and request permission to distribute information and ballots with the Hugo nomination ballots and the con booklets and progress reports. These ballots would contain spaces for the place, should some kind hearted fan or fan group put up the location in competition with another offer, and persons best suited to man it. Areas would have to be considered, I don't think the truest of trufen is going to move halfway across country, leaving a good home and job to offer his services to this organization. The ballot could also have spaces for voting on the organization of the library, that is, whether it is to be exclusively a science fiction lending library, or museum, fannish and science fiction lending library or what, also terms for loaning items, whether yearly dues or small service charge should be set and other like details.

Finally this whole affair will require lots of co-operation all round. I would suggest that groups or representatives of clubs and groups receiving this copy of GHOST write and state to what extent the clubs or groups might be able to help put over this idea. The whole matter rests with you. If you good people are not interested in this idea then there is little use in making plans for it. Since there are not too many collectors around these days on the verge of dying, some donated material will be needed, this also must come from you. I am willing to donate almost all of my hardback and paperback collection to the library if it is founded. (I will hold my magazine collection until I die; I'm afraid I'm ridiculously greedy with them).

So, this minute, now, after reading the rest of the commentaries, put down this issue of GHOST and write a lengthy letter. All comments with any degree of sensibility (or insensibility even) will be printed next issue in the letter column. This idea cannot succeed without your support. I expect some sort of answer from every one of you, so get down and put this idea into action.



Because of the commentaries and longer than expected letter column this issue, my column will be eliminated this issue of GHOST. However you'll get the full treatment next round. Also if parts of this issue appear a trifle spotty, its because a majority of the issue will not be slip-sheeted. It is nearly impossible to do so with the short receiving pan my new machine has. Showthru will be bad at points also, so next issue you may expect the issue to be printed on granite paper, if I can find a place in Nashville that sells it. ---ye editor

COMMENTARY

#3 By

Seth Johnson

I had the privilege of reading an advance copy of Mike's column on creating a foundation for science fiction and fantasy collections. This is not an especially new idea by any means; Sam Moskowitz was talking about something in the same line way back with the second Philadelphia worldcon.

Forry Ackerman has already made provisions in his will to leave his entire collection and home to some such foundation with the idea of starting not only a stf library but a stf museum as well. And in addition to a house full of books and magazines and rarities to make a collector's mouth water, he owns a two car garage jammed to the ceiling with duplicates of material he has in the house. As of this date there has been no provision for participation by any other fans, but he insures his life for 100,000 dollars each time he takes a plane ride or such with the proceeds in the event of his death to form a firm financial backbone for the foundation and museum of his present home.

I know in England and other countries there are such things as postal libraries available to the science fiction fan; some commercial and others run by an organization or a fan for the benefit of all who like to read stf. In the past some of these have been successful to limited degrees, but most have folded simply because so many people forgot to return the books. I suppose this problem could be overcome, partially at least by a thumping big registration fee, and heavy fines for not returning the books. But this would automatically restrict the use of such a library to fans who could afford thumping big fees, and such fans would no doubt prefer to purchase the books outright and be done with it.

Another problem other than non-return of books and mags would be getting responsible people to run the deal. Of course there would be any number of neo-fans able and willing to work free of charge to run something of the sort, and no doubt they would do a good job of it for awhile. But neofen, and many elder fen as well, are highly susceptible to the dread disease of fandom, gafia. When this strikes, then library, activity, and collection go down the drain. And this is a very real danger unless you have a person of the very highest enthusiasm and responsibility. Persons likely to live up to these specifications are likely to be BNFs such as Sam Moskowitz and Forry Ackerman, and these people are already loaded up with enough fanac to occupy every waking moment of their lives not actively spent earning a living.

Possibly the only way a deal like this could be established with a real chance of success and permanency would be for someone like Forry to set it up, or be in charge of it, and recruit a dozen or more people to do the promotion and paperwork he might not be able to handle himself. An ideal situation would be for Forry Ackerman to accept responsibility for the project, and the LASFS gang to recruit or furnish the labor. For instance, one member of LASFS, Bruce Pelz, has a degree in library filing, or some such, and could be extremely useful in managing and indexing and arranging. An advantage of this would be that there is little danger of gafia on Ackerman's part. Individuals in the LASFS might gafia, but newcomers usually replace gafiates, especially in an outfit as active and with as many branches of activity as LASFS.

Ideally this would be the nucleus for such a deal. The problems wouldn't be solved yet, however. You'd still need a good deal of money. This might mean some sort of a nationwide dues paying organization whose function would be mainly to promote funds and recruit new people to replace gaffiat- es as they went along.

Once such an organization were set up part of the paper work would be solved. You can solicit funds and bequests from any place that has a post office.

Then there might be a third organization set up around these first two. These would be a group as a whole who want to borrow and read the books. The first group postulated would set up the initiation fees and lending fees for these people. If there is no initiation fee, then some sort of deposit seems necessary. An initiation fee could be spent immediately on replacement of books and expenses, while deposits must be held, either by the organization or the depositor.

The main question seems to be how to get such an organization started. As a first step I would suggest this copy of THE MONDAY EVENING GHOST be sent to Forry Ackerman and see if he would be willing to work out something along similar lines. He has been considering the idea and related ideas a good deal longer than we have and thus would probably have ideas that are a good deal better.

Second step might be to query the LASFS crew and ascertain if they would be interested in participating in such a deal on the generalized terms mentioned, to be worked out in detail in the coming months. SHAGGY and access to other fanzines is a good publicity advantage also here.

The third step would be up to you, the readers of GHOST. For the moment it would suffice to have you write in with your own ideas on the subject, and possibly round robins or quads could be launched for discussion of problems and settling the basic foundations of the organization. Also reprinting Mike's article, and if possible these commentaries as well, in other fanzines would be a big help. Even a mere mention and a few addresses of persons interested would be of help.

And one more problem that needs to be decided is the specific function of such a foundation. Some would be more interested in forming a lending library and museum with perhaps even a paid custodian to live there and be responsible for the museum and library. It all depends on what the most people want and are willing to work for, and believe it will take work to get this idea moving and off the ground.

I will state here that I am willing to add codicil to my will leaving my 200 odd hardbacks and any mags laying around the house to such a foundation if it is set up before my death. Otherwise they will go to Elinor Portland who will hold them until such organization is set up. I think that she is a responsible and gaffia proof person. Incidentally, it might not be a bad idea to get some lawyer to draw up a form for that purpose for distribution to fan collectors, it might save a lot of legal trouble later on.

Finally, just what would you be willing to do to get something like this started? Would you be willing to contribute money? How about books and magazines? If you joined, and assuming the organization were set up on a dues basis, how much do you consider reasonable? How much help can you offer the foundation? Are you willing to will or donate your collection to this organization? Will you patronize and support it?

This is a sampling of the things that need to be acted on. No doubt there will be other things cropping up things go along, and these will have to be taken care of. All this, the basic idea and similar benefits are up to you. How about sitting down right now and writing Bob Jennings a letter on what you personally think of this. I have said my piece, the rest is up to you. How about it?

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

By

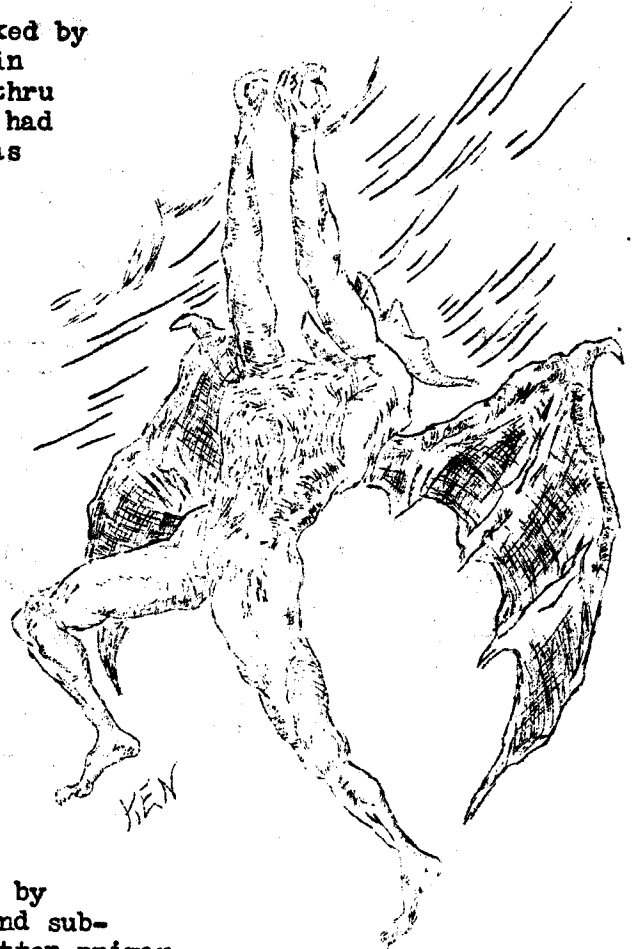
GENE TIPTON

Algernon Blackwood, who must certainly be included among the foremost supernatural authors of the twentieth century, was born in Kent, England, in 1869. His parents were very devout Christians, and Blackwood was brought up in a strict evangelical atmosphere. At the age of twenty he came to Canada, and his next ten years were spent alternately in Canada and the U.S., during which time he took up a number of occupations. He tried his hand at hotel-keeping and dairy farming, but went bankrupt in both ventures. He worked in an insurance office, taught shorthand, gave violin lessons at twenty-five cents an hour, and also worked on the reporting staff of THE NEW YORK EVENING SUN and later the TIMES. Posing as an artist's model, acting, and giving French and German lessons were among his other means of livelihood.

These years were earmarked by poverty and hardship. Blackwood lived in cheap, vermin-infested flats, and went thru periods of semi-starvation (at times he had nothing to eat but dried apples). He was exposed to crime and vice -- the seamy side of life. Blackwood's faith in human nature was shattered when a roommate swindled money and clothing from him, and deserted him while sick. During these years his one refuge was in nature. He was happy only on those occasions when he could escape to the great out-of-doors. He found that forests, rivers, and mountains provided him with a sense of solace and comfort that could not be derived from any other source.

At last the pattern of adversity began to change. Thru kindness shown by a friend of his father's, Blackwood became private secretary to a millionaire banker. This proved a more congenial and remunerative position, one which he held until returning to England at the age of thirty.

Blackwood did not turn to literature until the age of thirty-six. His first book was published quite by accident. Without his knowledge, a friend submitted several stories Blackwood had written primarily for his own entertainment to a publisher. The stories



were published by Eveleigh Nash under the title of THE EMPTY HOUSE AND OTHER GHOST STORIES (1906). This was the beginning of a prolific writing career.

When not writing, Blackwood traveled extensively and led a generally adventurous life. He visited mysterious Tibet. He explored the temples of Egypt. He was no stranger to the Alps of Switzerland or the Black Forest of Germany. He traveled on the Danube River in a canoe, and this experience was later to aid in the writing of that magnificent tale, THE WILLOWS.

Blackwood was strongly influenced by the writings and philosophies of the East. In fact, he was at one time a follower of Buddhism. But nature, for which he had an all-consuming passion, exerted an even greater influence. The force of nature plays a dominant role in many of the writer's best stories, and are prominent in creating the vivid atmospheric quality which readers instantly note about his work. He was unexcelled at conveying a sense of loneliness and isolation, and sometimes awe, which one can feel when separate from humanity and confronted by the great elemental powers of nature.

THE WILLOWS is generally regarded as this author's finest story, followed closely by THE WENDIGO. H. P. Lovecraft once referred to THE WILLOWS as being "probably the greatest weird tale ever published". This is believed to have been Lovecraft's favorite piece of fantasy, altho the matter stirred up a heated controversy some years back in the pages of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES. THE WILLOWS has been reprinted more often than any other of Blackwood's works, (at least fourteen times since its original appearance in THE LISTENER AND OTHER STORIES in 1907). As has been stated, Blackwood was closely familiar with the region which forms the setting for this classic tale. He even camped on one of the countless, lonely willow-infested islands below Pressburg, such as are described in his story. A year or two after journeying on the Danube in a canoe, he made the same trip in a barge. While passing thru this desolate region a second time, he and his companion found a dead body caught by a root, dangling against the sandy shore of one of the small islands. This experience he later incorporated into his famous story.

During his lifetime Blackwood produced 14 novels, 2 plays, 7 children's books, an autobiography, and approximately 170 short stories and novelettes. Probably his rarest book is a collection titled THE WILLOWS AND OTHER QUEER TALES, published in England in the early thirties. Another exceedingly scarce work is FULL CIRCLE, a novelette which was published in a very limited edition in 1929.

Many of Blackwood's shorter tales originally appeared in British periodicals. Also, a number have been published, in some cases for the first time, in North American magazines. Among these is THE MAN EATER, a scarce and little-known tale which found publication in the March 1937 issue of THRILLING MYSTERY magazine. THE MAN EATER is among a dozen or so of Blackwood's stories which have not yet appeared in hard-cover form. Several of his more famous stories, including THE WENDIGO, RUNNING WOLF, and THE VALLEY OF BEASTS were reprinted in this country in GOLDEN BOOK magazine during the period from 1925 to 1933. Both THE WILLOWS and THE WENDIGO were published in FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES. Two titles found their way into WEIRD TALES. Blackwood was represented twice in AVON FANTASY READER, and one story of his was reprinted in GHOST STORIES magazine. Blackwood's fiction has also appeared in other North American periodicals, including ALL-STORY WEEKLY, ROMANCE MAGAZINE, NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, HARPER'S BAZAAR, McCALL'S and CANADIAN MONTHLY.

Near the end of his life, Blackwood won fame as a narrator of ghost stories on British TV. He died in 1951 at the age of 82.

----END----

FORGOTTEN CLASSICS

by
CLAY HAMLIN

It is strange and unfortunate that the masterpieces of horror created by Algernon Blackwood are virtually forgotten these days. The name of Howard Phillips Lovecraft is well known and widely acclaimed in the literature of terror, yet speak of one whom Lovecraft himself admitted was instrumental in the development of his mythos, and much too frequently you are met by incomprehending stares. Blackwood's tales deserve a better remembering than this. His influence extended not merely to Lovecraft, but to a great many other authors as the weird and fanciful, including Abraham Merritt. His stories are among the very few that induce in the reader the feeling of unearthly fear and horror, and yet do it in such a quiet and complete manner that the reader is unable to escape from the gradually building suspense that engulfs him.

Probably the best tale from the pen of this author is titled THE WILLOWS. It is a strange and awe inspiring story, showing the vast empathy the writer felt for the inanimate forces of nature. It has a certain tone of development that has seldom, if ever, been equalled, combined with a gift of description that induces emotions of startling intensity. Yet with these fine combinations, other stories featuring them to lesser degree often emit into the unbelievable, while this story of the adventure two men encounter, features a disturbing realism about it. Motivated first by curiosity, this feeling soon turns to vague uneasiness, then with the master touch, to a feeling of something strangely different, out of place, and finally a brilliant blending of awe and terror as the full understanding of the situation becomes better known, and the reader is swept along to the horrifying climax. Characterization plays a strong part in the tale. The types of people are developed well; the phlegmatic Swede, with his deeply underlying superstition, and the hardheaded narrator who always had a ready explanation till he is forced from sheer fear to admit that here is a force before which men are as nothing. This remarkable development of character is one of the many elements that make this story such a memorable one.

Blackwood had a magic touch with nature that seems to have been forgotten in today's writing. From the earliest moments when he describes and shows in detail the feelings about the great river where the action takes place, you get the impression that Blackwood was a man who knew and loved this inanimate thing. One might say that the river itself, the Danube, is the real hero of the story, with all its blustering but good humored moods, its almost humanness, the little tricks it played on the two voyagers, and finally, the realm of magic and something more eternal than men into which they drift without realizing to what it will lead. It is a strange picture; of a river with a personality all its own, something beside which men seems of little or no importance. What writer in these times would dare to attempt such a characterization as this? And if

it were attempted today I sincerely doubt that it would succeed even partially as well as this story does.

All the elements of this tale are artfully blended to extract the utmost in emotional reaction from the reader. Another interesting quality, and one that is slightly disturbing to a reader of modern day stuff, is that there is no real action in the story, it depends almost completely on suggestion and artful word craft to achieve the feelings it induces. Today descriptive passages in writing are seldom highly popular with the readers; they prefer that something happen, something simple and understandable, as well as being completely explained in explicit prose. You will find little of this in *THE WILLOWS*. Slight explanations may become obvious towards the ending, but the exact nature of the beings that are avidly searching for the two human characters is never explained or revealed, and I feel the story is the better for it. It would be close to impossible to describe creatures that considered men as less than animals, perhaps almost as much notice as we might take of a rock we happened to stumble over on a road. Some things should be left to the imagination, and it is the suggestion of the godlike beings and not any explicit descriptions that prevades the story.

Thru all the story, the willows, the wind and the flood of the river run in a recurrent theme, manifesting in themselves the reality of the supernatural forces surrounding the men. This perhaps is mark of genius Blackwood employed most successfully; the ability to induce the range of emotional reactions thru the use of familiar objects. Notwithstanding the archaic style of the old days, in which description takes the place that dialogue holds today, the story is still one with more impact on those who read it than any story of the past ten years.

If you don't care to be frightened, pass this one by, tho you will surely be missing a memorable experience. But if horror as it once was, but is no more in these days, if what you are seeking, then this is perhaps one of the first stories you should read. This is the horror story that makes Blackwood's numerous imitators seem just that, mere imitators. Certainly *THE WILLOWS* is a true classic.



STF QUIZ

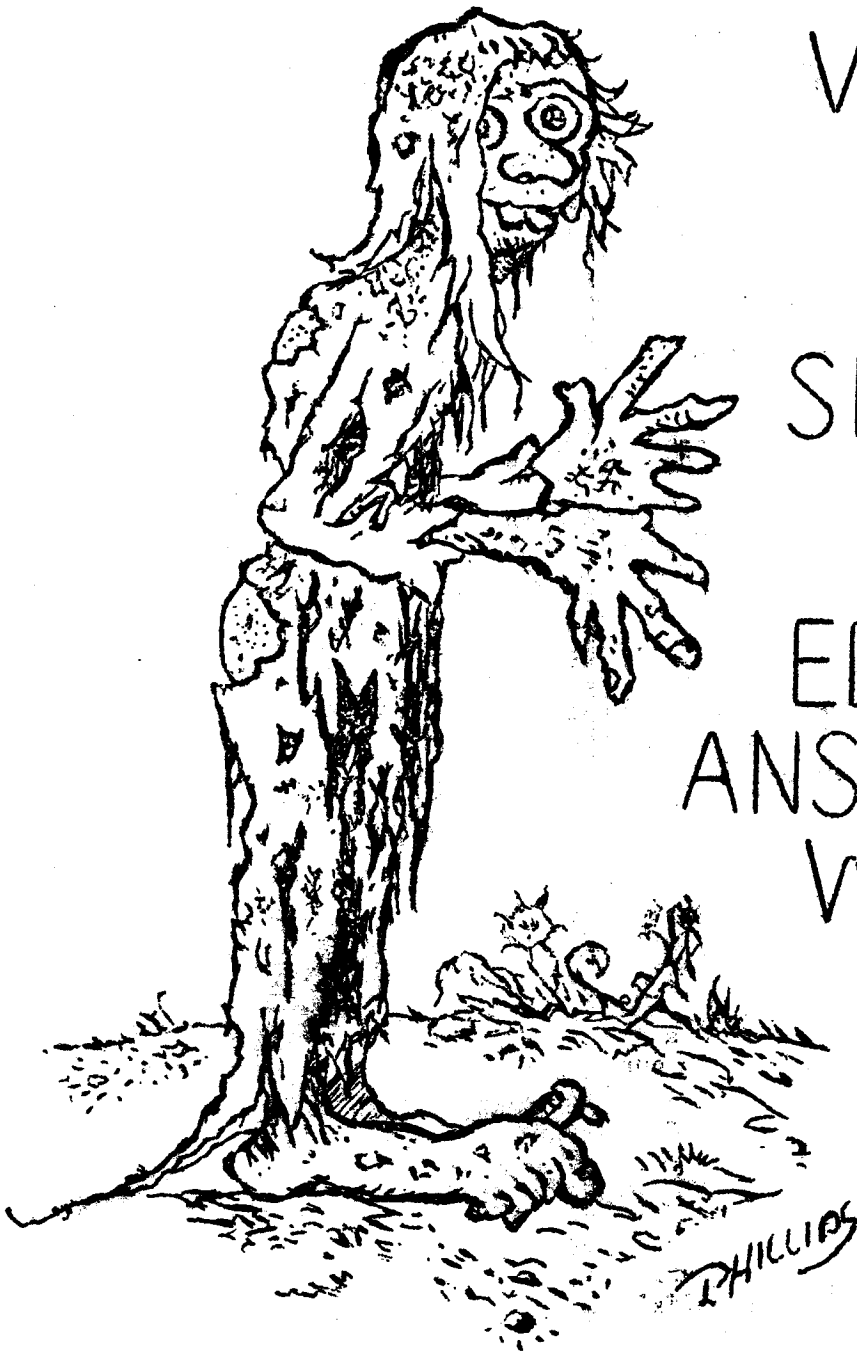
by
Rich Armstrong

Name the story in which the character appeared, and also name the author of the story. Scoring--- 2 points for correctly naming the story and two more for the right author. Total of 100 possible points.

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Vincent Brega | 13. Brother Jarles | |
| 2. Commander Garry | 14. Ketan | 100-90 stf Fan |
| 3. Giles Habibula | 15. Hari Seldon | 89 -80 stf reader |
| 4. Coeurl | 16. Richard Seaton | 79-70 newcomer |
| 5. Dr. Pinero | 17. HogeY Parker | 69-50 neo |
| 6. The Lieutenant | 18. Phoebe Bancroft | 49-30 reads only |
| 7. Brek Veronar | 19. Alvin | the pbks |
| 8. Johnny Cross | 20. Lanny Martin | 29-0 missed an |
| 9. Joe-Jim | 21. Allister Park | awfully lot |
| 10. Jay Score | 22. Archie Brock | of good |
| 11. Aton | 23. Hodgins Backma. | reading |
| 12. Bob Wilson | 24. Gulliver Foyle | |
| 25. Robert Fairlie | | |

-----answers-----

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. 3000 YEARS | 25. THE HAUNTED STARS |
| 2. WHO GOES THERE | 24. THE STARS MY DESTINATION |
| 3. THE LEGION OF SPACE | 23. BRING THE JUBILEE |
| 4. BLACK DESTROYER | 22. BRAIN WAVE |
| 5. LIFE LINE | 21. THE WHEELS OF IF |
| 6. FINAL BLACKOUT | 20. THE BIG BALL OF WAX |
| 7. HINDSIGHT | 19. THE CITY AND THE STARS |
| 8. STANI | 18. THE COSMIC EXPENSE ACCOUNT |
| 9. UNIVERSE | 17. THE HOOFER |
| 10. JAY SCORE | 16. THE SKYLARK OF SPACE |
| 11. NIGHTFALL | 15. FOUNDATION |
| 12. BY HIS BOOTSTRAPS | 14. RENAISSANCE |
| 13. GATHER, DARKNESS! | 13. GATHER, DARKNESS! |
| 14. RENAISSANCE | 12. BY HIS BOOTSTRAPS |
| 15. FOUNDATION | 11. NIGHTFALL |
| 16. THE SKYLARK OF SPACE | 10. JAY SCORE |
| 17. THE HOOFER | 9. UNIVERSE |
| 18. THE COSMIC EXPENSE ACCOUNT | 8. STANI |
| 19. THE CITY AND THE STARS | 7. HINDSIGHT |
| 20. THE BIG BALL OF WAX | 6. FINAL BLACKOUT |
| 21. THE WHEELS OF IF | 5. LIFE LINE |
| 22. BRAIN WAVE | 4. BLACK DESTROYER |
| 23. BRING THE JUBILEE | 3. THE LEGION OF SPACE |
| 24. THE STARS MY DESTINATION | 2. WHO GOES THERE |
| 25. THE HAUNTED STARS | 1. 3000 YEARS |



VOICE
OF
THE
SPIRITS
OR
THE
EDITOR
ANSWERS
WITH A
FIFTH

Billy Joe Plott, P.O. Box 654, Opelika, Alabama

An extensive letter of comment on GHOST is certainly due you, but on sitting down to hack one out I find that I hardly know where to begin.

Your satire on television was aptly put and well deserved by the industry. I still maintain that television is 90% trash -- I'm a liberalist. I average about two hours a week before the shimmering orb. I watch TWILIGHT ZONE and ARMSTRONG CIRCLE THEATER, and occasionally US STEEL HOUR when they have such drawing cards as "The Two Worlds of Charlie Gordon", which was based on Danile Keyes Hugo winning story, "Flowers for Algernon".

I choose not to agree with Mike Deckinger about whether there is or there is not a God. We have discussed this question before without changing either's views one iota. But I wouldlike to clear up a few inconsistencies which he expressed in his article of, uh, "common, clear headed, logical, human sense."

First, the phrase "under God" is in the Pledge of Allegiance for a specific purpose; to keep in the minds of Americans that this nation was founded by people seeking freedom of religious conviction, and it just happened that the particular people in question worshipped a diety who is the Christian God. Now I realize that worship of God is bunk to Mike, but various illogical statements thruout the entire piece are not very complimentary to his intelligence and do little to booster his case.

Even as the phrase "under God" is symbolic to our nation's heritage, so is the monetary reference "In God We Trust". No one believes, surely, that a person must believe in God to receive the full benefits of the currency. Such itmes as these phrases go back again to the American idealism, religious freedom and such. Since they are historical significant they are generally accepted as part of the American standard, the motto is merely a sort of reminder of this standard.

I will say tho that I am in complete agreement with Mike concerning Christianity's "purification" during the Inquisition and the Witch Trials. However let's not forget that Hitler persecuted the Jews in the name of Nazism, a strong plank of which was Atheism with a capital A. The Caesers fed their lions with the lives of Christians, and the natives of the Solomon Islands appease their gods by devouring the flesh of other human beings, such things in the name of religion or athiesm are not common to Christianity alone.

Several years from now some neo is going to wander into Uncle Billy Joe's study and pick up a copy of the GHOST amish, carelessly flip thru its worn pages and come across Bob Farnham's Advice to a Neofan. There will be, indubitably, a revolution in fandom when this occurs. An interesting, humorous piece by Bob.

I enjoyed the amish as a whole. The files will be most useful. Have more issues and more amishes.

///My television watching is a bit more varried. I watch about four to five hours a week. TWILIGHT ZONE naturally, CIRCLE THEATER, THE GARRY MOORE SHOW, which seems to be about the best of the remaining variety shows, TWENTIETH CENTURY, and US STEEL HOUR. Whnenever I can get around to it I like to watch THRILLER and various specials that are occasionally presented.

As for your religious arguments, if that phrase is in the Pleague of Alieagence to remind us the original English settlers here were for religious freedom, why then does our government, which is susposed to be based on ideals with that plank being a principal support, insist on forcing religious ideals onto the people of this country? The people have a right to choose whether or not they wish to believe in any God, Christian or otherwise or not at all, that injection of the phrase is a mark against the American ideal of freedom of religion, also indivigual rights. It is deliberately injected propaganda placed in a pleague that will be spoken by 99% of our children. The effect is to brand the idea that to be American you have to believe in God and support the Christian idealism, on the minds of suseptive young children. All this of course is in the interests of the Great American Idealism.///



Where can that post man be?

Gene Tipton, 425 Vine Ave. SW, Knoxville, Tennessee

The giant-sized GHOST arrived several days ago. There is one article in this issue, the one by Deckinger, which rubbed this reader the wrong way. Deckinger's attacks on religion, and on Christianity in particular, strike me as being in poor taste. I think this piece should have been omitted altogether. I think there are readers who will find some of his remarks offensive, I



know I did. If Deckinger doubts the divinity of Jesus Christ, that is a position he is at liberty to take. But he should state his belief as representing his personal opinion only, instead of having the gall to state it as if it were an indisputable fact. Judging from the contempt which Deckinger apparently has for religion in general, he must be an agnostic or out-and-out atheist, or at least a hardened materialist. My personal thinking is quite contrary to his; I believe some sort of religious faith is essential if there is to be any meaning or stability to a person's life. Too, I'm convinced that this turbulent world will never become any better until mankind begins to practice the teachings of Christ. Maybe I'm sounding off unduly here, but I find it hard to tolerate scoffers and "free thinkers" like Deckinger who would seek to undermine those basic values upon which millions of decent people have based their lives.

///Since Christianity and a couple of other religions make it a regular, one might even say an avid, practice of recruiting memberships to their cause by relentless propaganda (whether this propaganda is in good or bad taste or is true or false is up to question), I see no reason why Mike hasn't got the right to crusade for his particular beliefs too. It's a strange thing, but the person who in-

sists on spreading the Christian idealism across the world with a fanatical zest to people perfectly happy with their own beliefs, is viewed as a good man, a saintly godly person spreading Good across the face of the world. The one who dares to question the beliefs is damned and by social pressure is denied to a large extent his free rights, and his right to speak for what he believes. Good sound Christian principals. You object to Mike stating his ideas as if they were unquestionable fact. Today there are thousands of people stating a highly questionable doctrine daily, hourly, as unshakable fact, and there is less proof to back up their statements that Mike presented in his article. I do not believe that a religion is necessary to provide stability and meaning to one's life, religion is a crutch, an assembled and accepted philosophy of life. When one thinks out his own beliefs and moral responsibilities and arrives at a few conclusions he no longer needs religion. Religion has only one decent thing to offer, and this is a set of moral codes. They are badly twisted and mixed up with false securities and false modesty of times since dead, but a few points stand out as the logical course for human beings to guide their lives by. If more people were able to separate these codes out in logical order I feel certain that religion will have outlived its usefulness.

Mike Deckinger, 31 Carr Place, Fords, N.J. (new address good as of Apr 15)

I got the GHOST annish the same day as your letter, comments on annish follow. The cover was the best thing I've seen done by KEN. When he stops drawing those poorly proportioned cartoon figures and concentrates on other artistic aspects.

he can do a commendable job. The cover indicates he's been influenced by pro-
ser to some degree, not in style so much as in subject matter. KEN's interior
artwork was much improved also, and stands out above his previous art greatly.

I think Art Rapp is presuming to much by blithely implying that stf has
been practically abandoned by the fanzines. It seems to me that fanzines will
never be able to completely break away from stf. In the most fannish zines
there's always some science fictional item. As for example, CRY, which won the
Hugo and is generally acknowledged as one of the most fannish zines, featured
Busby's excellent prozine reviews for the longest time, SHAGGY has book and film
reviews, as does YANDRO, and PSI-PHI has Ebert's "Reverberations". Even faan-
fiction usually has some science fictional allusions to it, so any feeling of
stf being expelled from fanzines seems a bit premature to me. Perhaps there are
fewer articles specifically discussing it, but there is always mention of it.
It's like accusing the BAKER STREET JOURNAL of not printing enough stuff about
Sherlock Holmes.

THE CREATION OF ROGER LEE is a marvelous epic, fully enhanced by Steve
Stiles illos. As a matter of fact, it's the type of thing one sets to music and
sings loudly and boisterously at some fan gathering. It was well written and
works out beautifully. I thought the rhythem was out of kilter in a few spots
but it did little to spoil the poem for me.

///Thanks for them there kind words on the poem. I fairly blushed cherry red as
I tapped the words onto stencil here. Surprising to me it turned out to be one
of the most popular items in the issue. So maybe one of these days I'll try
writing another one.

As for your comment on Rapp's article. I am rather happy about the turn
of fannish interest over the past half year, much more stf slanted information
has poured forth in the fanzines. But I can still remember a little too clear-
ly the time when NEW FRONTIERS, SPEC REVIEW and GHOST were the only zines who
claimed to be stf slanted, or who ever devoted much space to stf material. I
hope the new trend towards more stf discussion continues.

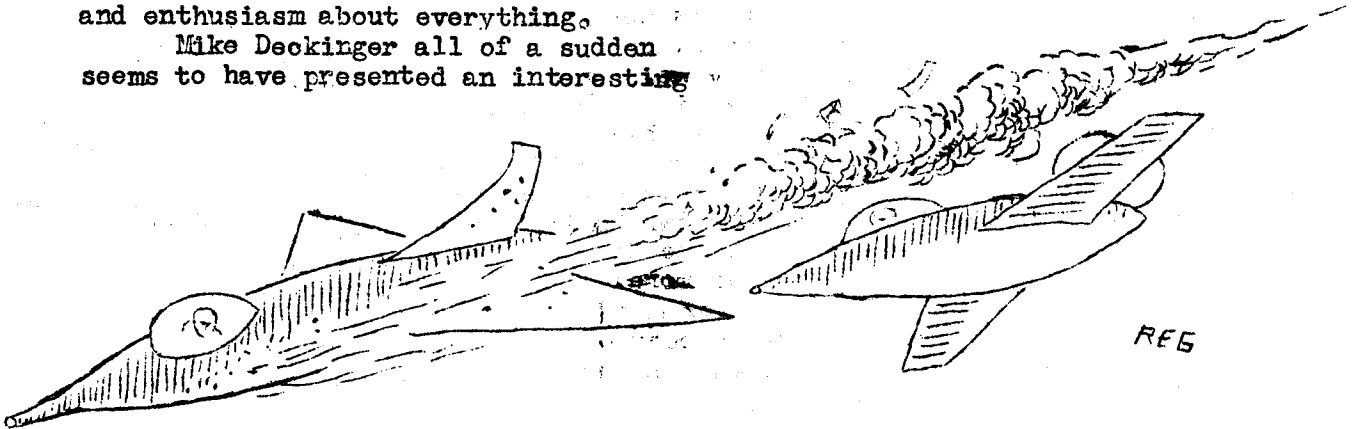
Your kind words have pleased KEN I'm certain. I think he has given up car-
tooning these days.///

Seth Johnson, 339 Stiles Street, Vaux Hall, N.J.

Congratulations on the GHOST anniversary. You did a good job on it. Some spec-
ific comments...

Farnham did his usual puckish humorous article. I really enjoyed this
one. Sounded like the old Bobeff I first knew. Wonder if he wrote it recently
or its one of those he wrote when he had his health
and enthusiasm about everything.

Mike Deckinger all of a sudden
seems to have presented an interesting



the cynical type article. It gave me a laugh when he said Judaism was the most intelligent religion. If only he knew that the average Jew is tied up in knots with dietary laws and the like. They cannot eat certain meats and dairy foods at the same meal, or use the same plates for serving. They can't even use cream with their coffee while enjoying a good steak, and have to pay outrageous prices to have their meat, since it must be inspected according to pre-set laws and regulations.

And where he got the idea that an anthropomorphic diety was the best and most intelligent I can't imagine; unless it's simply that he has studied nothing other than Jewish teachings. Certainly he must have skipped over the Eastern or occult faiths, or the Faithists of OAHNSPE, or the spiritualistic beliefs not to mention all the ones in that OCCULT GAZETTE you lampooned. But if you think that one was weird, I'll have to get busy and send you something really off-beat. Like Sartre's EXISTENTIALISM, or perhaps you might be interested in what the Baha faith would send you.

In reference to your letter column comments. What do you consider fandom is then? First of course the national clubs, like NSF with a little over 200 members, the world con with something like 1,000, the half dozen or so ajay groups with from 40 to 70 members apiece, and waiting lists of maybe half that each. Round it up to 150 times six. That would be 900 ajays (or is this doubling waiting list?), 200 neffers, 1,000con fen, and then you have to count in that a lot of these members overlap, several are members of con, NSF and all ajay units and such as that. That brings fandom out, if you divide the whole number in half to account for this duplication, to about 1,100, with 20% in NSF. You might have a couple of hundred fen meeting with local groups also like ESFA, CIRCLE, THE NAMELESS ONES, LASFS and the like.

///My point with the fans around is that there is more than what you mention to fandom. Account for the two hundred to four hundred fans floating around that correspond exclusively, belonging to no ajay unit, no national or regional club and hardly join a con. Incidentally, you might do well to knock off a third of that con membership, about that many are fringe fans or plain readers or visitors attracted thru various methods. Off hand I would round off the total population of fandom at about 800, maybe 900. Anyone out there got definite information on this?

I thought I had seen most everything the occult people had to throw me, but I was startled to open a bulging envelope and discover that some group out in California is building a university of spiritual learning... No joke, it's to be... "A bridge between the materialistic and the spiritual worlds". They have raised some cash, someone donated \$5,000 and they scraped up another \$5,000 to match it, someone else donated the land, an architect donated complete plans, and they need more money. I wonder what the finished product will look like...

I'm not up on Jewish religion too much. It impresses me tho that the Jewish people these days have more freedom with their foods than they once had, I can't say much one way or another on your comments. Mike?///

D. Bruce Berry, Burmeister Studios, 205 W. Wacker Drive, Chicago 6, Illinois

I got my copy of THE MONDAY EVENING GHOST. Very Good.

In case you don't know (and you probably don't), I'm a free lance commercial artist. I'm sort of a jack-of-all-trades. I am a photo-retoucher, lettering artist, merchandise artist, cartoonist, figure artist, and I used to be an illustrator. I am flattered to note that you remembered the last item in your column. Very few people remember me as a science fiction illustrator, and many of those who do remember think I was a lousy artist. This is definitely ego deflating, but, alas, it is something I must live with.

Frankly, I enjoyed illustrating science fiction more than anything else I have ever done. From my point of view, the artist is primarily an entertainer, and illustrating gave me the opportunity to at least try to bring pleasure to a receptive audience. I hope I succeeded with a few of the readers. I think

I was just beginning to get my technique to a point that satisfied me when Hamlin's mags folded. The only science fiction story I illustrated after that was a Heinlein that appeared in ROGUE. Unfortunately, I don't get along very well with Ellison. When he became Hamlin's staff writer, I was out. I just don't like the stuff Ellison writes and would never illustrate it. Another editor tried to get me to illustrate an Ellison story for his mag, but I refused. That cut me out of that magazine.

However, I have no worry. I make better money at advertising. I have to grudgingly give Ellison credit for one thing; he is certainly one of the most prolific writers I've seen. He must have a crank on his typewriter.

About the two color illustrations your column mentioned. I frankly do not recommend them as good for interiors of sf magazines. The problem involved does not lie in the artwork, but in the mechanics of printing the darn things. With the possible exception of ANALOG, these magazines are turned out on high speed presses. The problem in printing two colors is that the paper web has a tendency to vibrate like hell as it passes under the plates. The result is that the registration is usually $\frac{1}{4}$ to one eighth of an inch off. It's a major miracle if the plates register only $\frac{1}{16}$ " off. Another unpredictability in the affair is that you never can tell where it will go off register; on the top, bottom, or sides. I think the difficulties of doing a two color inside illustration for science fiction magazines with these problems is obvious. I usually solved the problem by placing the color where an off-register would not matter. By doing this, however, I couldn't really use color as part of my basic composition; it was just an added attraction.

///from another letter---///

The reason I do not illustrate science fiction magazines since IMAGINATION folded, is mainly because all the remaining ones are in New York. The editors of these magazines will not buy anything from outside the city. At least, so I was told when I inquired about doing some work for them. Several editors showed interest in my material when Alma Hill contacted them, but as I have no desire to move to such a crowded city, it looks as tho I'm finished in the field. This dissappoints me more than I can say, because I love doing the stuff.

Strictly as a personal opinion, I think that the black and white illustrations are the weakest point in science fiction art today. The artists don't seem to be interested in what they're doing; and I suspect most of them knock off the stuff just to turn a quick buck. Naturally there are deadlines to meet, and this doesn't help matters any. I've had to meet some myself, and turned out some material that did not satisfy me, but whenever possible in such a situation I asked for extra time to produce what I considered a better job. There isn't more money in doing a better job for pulp magazines, but I get a personal satisfaction from knowing I have done my best.

///in case the rest of you wonder, my column last issue was discussing science fiction art. This is one reader who was always impressed considerably by your artwork, and comparing your art to the stuff being produced today I wish there was some way your work could appear again. An agent for instance, or perhaps there are cheerful New York fans who might be able to suggest some sort of solution to the problem?

This about closes out the issue. Things have been sort of jumbled by the commentaries, more stability next issue. PLEASE comment on Mike's idea, almost all comments received pro and con on this idea will find their way into the letcol.



THE MONDAY EVENING GHOST

is a science fiction slanted fanzine that appears on the scene (much in the manner of the Abominable Snowman) once every six weeks. It can be obtained for fifteen cents per single issue, or \$1.50 for ten issues. Trades of reasonable size and quality are generally accepted also, and persons who have letters in the letter col are also entitled to a free issue. This is sent to you (lucky, lucky you), by---Bob Jennings, 3819 Chambers Drive, Nashville 11, Tennessee

THIS IS THE TENTH ISSUE

THE MONDAY EVENING GHOST Vol.---2 no-2 Apr 1961

A listing of the existing staff---

Robert Jennings-----editor/publisher
 Mike Deckinger-----columnist
 Clay Hamlin-----columnist & frequent contributor
 Rich Brown-----columnist on occasion

ART STAFF

and

ART CREDITS

KEN Gentry---cover, 2,16,19, 26,23 Jerry Brassfield----4
 Robert E. Gilbert----6, 24
 Lynn Manley-----lettering pp8,10, 12, 14
 Harness-----13
 Judy Pack-----9
 Ralph Rayburn Phillips--21
 Steve Stiles-----22

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NEXT ISSUE

will be different from this issue in several ways. This issue is composed mainly of two page articles, next issue will feature an abundance of longer material. The material in the issue will depend largely on the size of the lettercol, and I hope it will run to croggling proportions. However, as space permits, the regular columns will be here, and my cynic column will return For Sure to conclude the series on the personality of a magazine. Perhaps a lengthy article by Emile Greenleaf, or indexes and magazine write up by Gene Tipton, or yet again, perhaps something else entirely, probably it won't be definite until all of the letter col is on stencil. I fully expect next issue to run along about fourty pages, and if you good people will write, a good portion of that will be devoted to letters on the foundation/library idea.

We haven't thought of a New Cry of the Year, but we're working on it, Hard, suggestions anyone?



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