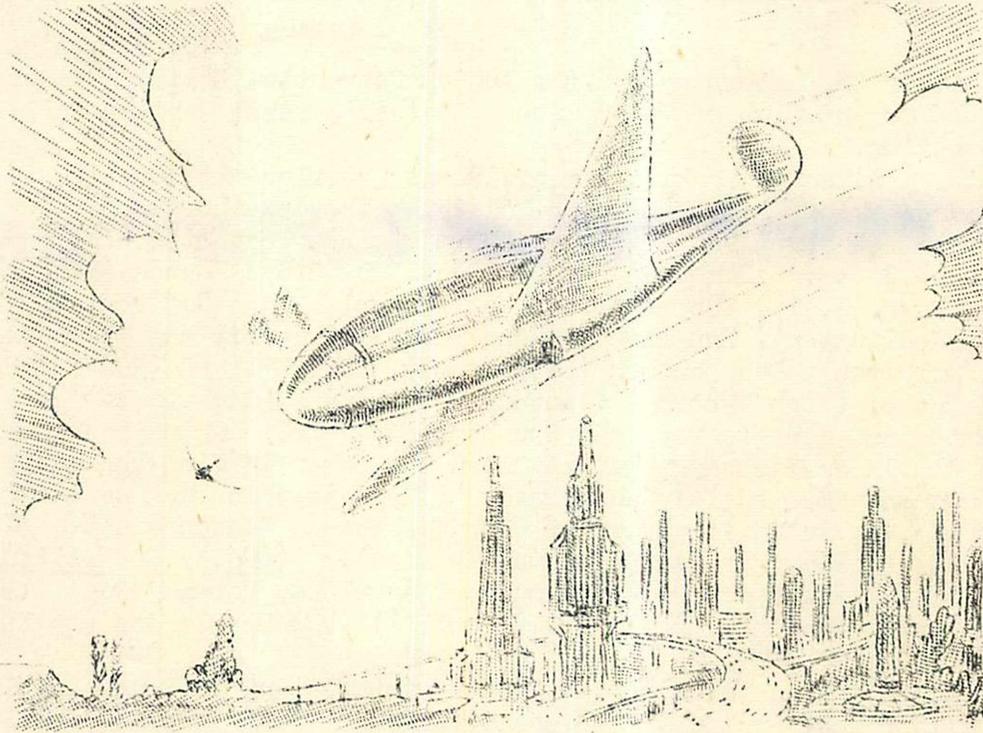


Vol. III No. 5 JUNE 1944

FUTURIAN DIGEST



THE PLANE OF TOMORROW.

A. F. WILLIAMS

OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN SCENE.

American fandom, as viewed by an outsider, appears to have reached an interesting, but somewhat hectic state, in fact matters now seem to be in the melting pot. By now the draft has succeeded in moving or removing quite a proportion of the leading figures of the Imagination - Ackerman is at Fort MacArthur as every fan on the globe ought to know, Bob Tucker is due for call-up as I write, Widner is in IA and waiting, Jack Speer goes overseas, Milty Rothman has been in the army a while and so on --- About the only top fans left in harness are Harry Warner and Al Ashley, both of whom were medically rejected, but E Everett Evans has just returned from a years absence without trace.

The organizational front is in a state of complete flux; subsiding ripples of the Depler-Cosmic Circle debacle still agitate the surface of Amerifandom and nearly all of the old local clubs are moribund or peetered out. Even the best of them, the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society is riven in twain by a controversy anent the extent to which an stf fans life ought to be dominated by his hobby. However, steady as a rock stands the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, with more activity and interest than ever. (Please look inside, continued about page nine or so)

!!!!!!!!!!!! A catch-as-catch-can publication issued bimonthly with the object of interesting & keeping in touch science & weird-fantasy enthusiasts in Britain, & their like-minded cousins overseas. Mainly responsible is J. Michael Rosenblum, 4 Grange Terrace, Leeds 7, England, with the help of sundry abettors [better?], notably Douglas Webster of Aberrrrdeen. Price is 3d. or issue can be remitted in publications from USA, or lemons from the Mediterranean.

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EASTERCON
DINARY

... by ... Dr. John H. Aiken

..... of the happenings at the London Convention Easter 1944 organised by the Cosmos Club of Teddington: Britain's first wartime full-scale Convention.

Saturday: 2 p.m. Aiken & Frank Parker arrive at Waterloo without tickets and are detained by officials. In the distance they see hordes of conventioners, who avoid their gaze. Eventually they are permitted to leave the platform.

2.5 - 3.0 p.m. Gathering of the fans: by 3 Syd Bounds (Kingston), Hal Chibbett (Doves Park, H.11), George Ellis (Manchester), Bruce Guffron, Fred Scodier, Gordon Holbrow (Teddington), Ron Lane (Manchester), Arthur Willman (Newport, Mon.), Pat & Hardins (Sunblton), Don Houston (Letchworth), John Willard (ROAF, Jackson, Mich.), Dennis Tucker (High Wycombe) & Arthur F. Williams (Canterwell) have assembled. Attempts are made to read the Con booklet, which Lawlins has spent the whole previous day in duplicating, but although the cover is fine the paper inside is so bad the attempts are swiftly abandoned. (The quiz which was particularly illegible is to be reprinted.) Everyone worries because Gus does not appear (it is later learnt that all leave is cancelled in his area). ((Ed. -- No British fan gathering is complete these days without our pet Angelino, Norman (Gus) Willmorth - in American uniform, a friendly smile & ... well!)) [We know - don't tell us - a batch of 4c's nudes? --DVI]

3 - 4.30. Perambulations. Nothing interesting is found in Charing Cross Road. [This cannot be true. We positively know that Harold Chibbett buys books from the pornography shops. He boasts about it, the low fellow. --DVI]

4.30. Coventry St. Corner House. Pandemonium. The Oaseleys (Stoke-on-Trent) [? - JRR's copperplate stenographer must have slipped off his knee just there - the name is impossible --DVI], Michael F. Lord (looking magnificent enough to be his namesake of the Admiralty) & Bullett turn up, and, like the rest, are pushed through the mangle which is called the cafeteria. Manchester expresses surprise that London can keep alive on such fare & retires to recuperate in the park.

5.30 - 7. Disney programme at news theatre taken in. Things are looking up.

7 - 7.30. Consumption curve for Scotch Ale in the London area begins to rise.

7.30. The Convention President (Walter H. Gillings) and Mrs. Gillings and W.A. Deveroux arrive. The Shanghai Restaurant is invaded. Some participants perform prodigies of eating, despite the theory that the soup is nothing but an aquarium warmed up bodily. They become completely surrounded by piles of empty dishes. Others hang back delicately, valuing their stomachs. Scotch Ale is brought in an enormous Jug, and is imbibed. Professor Low, unable to be present under military exigencies, sends the gathering his love. Names are signed in wax (stencil). Deveroux, Gillings & Aiken decide that everyone must take everything much more seriously.

9.30 - 10. Scotch Ale curve reaches peak for the year.

10.00 onwards. Many meet their Waterloo.

Sunday: 10 11 a.m. Prodigious fetching & carrying by one & all. Shirley's (Teddington cafe housing Sunday's sessions) disappears beneath a wave of auction items and electrical apparatus. This latter turns out to be useless, doing nothing but emit loud indelicate noises, and keeping a mobile fuse-mending squad con-

stantly in action. Gascoigne, Gatland, Gomborg and Sandfield (wearing a tic of a totally new primary colour) are newcomers. Swing discussions rage. Hawkins appears with duplicated dinner-signatures. Ellis reads CAPTAIN FUTURE, undisturbed.

12 noon. Museum. Original Turners, an original 'lore', IS of THE SMILE OF THE SPHINX ("It's the cat's whiskers," says Hawkins) & other To" contributions, first issues, old books, and the complete files of BEYOND and COSMIC CUTS are on view.

12.30. Brains Trust. Gillings, Alkon, Hawkins & the questioners maintain high intellectual level except for typographical trouble leading to moonstuck fans, & ribaldry about Millard's socks. ((Q.--- A peculiarity of American servicemen is their rolled-down gents natty half-hose - can someone tell us the reason?)) As clank of cutlery comes from below, the last question is answered in monosyllabic unison.

1.00. Lunch. "Proper Food" asks someone anxiously. (It is.)

1.45 - 1.15. Presidential Address. Gillings performs the prodigious feat of keeping large numbers of fans silent & attentive for half an hour while he discusses the possible future & functions of fandom & fan writings, emphasising the need for an attitude at once more serious & more broadminded. He outlines the kind of professional magazine he hopes will appear in Britain after the war, and suggests the BEYONDS as training-grounds for its authors. It is up to fans, he says, to show that stf is worth while and can really foster achievement. (The high-spot of the Con.)

2.30 - 3.30. Talk.

3.50 - 5.00. Monologue by Parker: i.e. first session of the auction. Quiet opening: later terrific bidding for FEM's in particular. Surprising lack of enthusiasm for original drawings & manuscripts as against magazines.

5 - 5.30. Tea, & relaxation for auctioneer's throat.

5.30 - 6.30. More auction - top price (10/-) paid for complete file of S&CPS; the FEM of 10/6 fame does well again (3/6). Only a half-dozen items turned in. Ellis gets his CAPTAIN FUTURES. Curiously no British Reprint Editions are left. A spare BEYOND does well.

6.30 - 8. Films. The Cosmos Club film, now patched & scratched almost beyond belief, plays all its tricks: it breaks, the reel falls off, the sprockets go haywire & finally the projector lamp blows. But Millard is a match for it, there is a spare lamp & after he has whisked it through in well under bogey the remaining films are almost hitch-free. The shorts (PIONEER NICETY, the puppet film, & the Popeye) are tops, MONSTER OF THE LOCK being a little cryptic & dated. Departures begin, Tucker & Lord leading.

8.00 onwards. The King's Arms. Relaxation. Toasts are drunk to the Cranberry Bogs of Cape Cod and the Governor of the Greater Antilles. Trains are missed. By special arrangement the full moon rises to light the walkers-home.

In conclusion, the Committee would like to thank the participants (and in particular the President, for his generous sacrifice of a placid weekend) and the donors of auction items, for all they did to make the Con. a success. They announce that they propose to issue a souvenir booklet of higher quality than the illegible Programme: as to the proceeds (not so large as they would have been if that lamp hadn't blown!), a proportion will go to a Future Convention Fund. One further announcement: the Debate ("Man is not a free-agent") postponed for lack of time, will have been held at Shirley's on May 13.

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BOOK REVIEW

--- by --- Fred Brown.

"News from Heaven", by Jeffrey Dell. (Published by Jonathan Cape, 30 Bedford Square, London. Price 7/6.)

"In Heaven," says the author, "everything within reason was done to make people feel at home; but except for small dispensations, such as those enabling the French to have their ambrosia baked in long rolls and the English to keep dogs, nationalism was firmly discouraged." Then the smoke of the World War reaches them and "plays the dance with discipline."

With everyone clamouring for news, Marco Polo and his secretary Rusticiano descend surreptitiously to earth with a wireless transmitter ingeniously adapted by Leonardo da

Vinci. A slip in Euclid's arithmetic lands them in England, where Marco is quickly involved with the Right People, spends weekends at Elvade, the stately home of Anothema, Lady Longacre, and with that distinguished military family, the Waite-Waites ('she's artillery on the mother's side). Tommaso Rusticiano joins the Left Book Club and broadcasts to Heaven with disastrous results. During their hilarious program the reputations of a choice selection of social snobs and political humbugs are ruthlessly exploded, and, accompanied part of the way by a London barrage, the travellers return to Heaven as confirmed Anglophobes and Democrats, only to find fascism has got there first.

The story ends with Marco acting as Question-master to a session of the Celestial Brains Trust (Residents:- Solon, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Confucius; Guests: Xenophon and Pliny the Elder) in which are advanced some startling views on democracy, snobbism, Dr. Joad and the future of Britain.

Delvings into the Weird and Imaginative-----II.

— Jack Banks

"UNKNOW" or "WEIRD"

In a recent fan-chain, comparisons were drawn between the relative merits of the weird fiction published in WEIRD TALES and UNKNOW. Not having seen any copies of the former since 1959 [lucky man! ---DW], except one reprint issue, I can only base my remarks upon the stories in issues prior to the middle of that year.

I think there is a very definite and obvious difference between the two magazines. WEIRD, the elder publication, set out, in the twenties, to present to that section of the public likely to be interested; a selection of stories of a type hitherto only to be found scattered lightly throughout the pages of popular magazines, or in the writings of such authors as Blackwood and M.R.James. I cannot write with authority of those earlier issues, but from what one can gather from fan-magazines it is possible to get a broad idea of the stories printed. Writers of the calibre of A.Nevitt or H.P.Lovecraft presented tales of such distinctive style and plot, that would appear to have put a permanent seal of quality upon WE. Not that the conscious or unconscious imitation by other writers in any way led to the publication falling into that rut of "sameness" that has engulfed many of its contemporaries. In fact, it might be safe to state that WEIRD TALES has maintained a higher average of well-written and original stories than most magazines.

Rarely have I felt when reading an issue that this or that story was not worth reading and could be safely skipped. Very different from the impression made by some science-fiction publications of today! (It must be remembered that I am speaking of earlier issues of WE. Some deterioration seems to be apparent recently.)

To turn to UNKNOW. There seems to be no doubt that this magazine commenced its existence with a different policy to that of WEIRD TALES. A policy that seems rather difficult to define when we think of the earlier issues. SUMISTER BARRELL, THE ULTIMATE ADVENTURE, FLAME WINDS and RETURNED FROM HELL present some variations in type, that is obvious. As the multifarious serials, novelettes and short stories that have appeared within its pages have shown innumerable facets of fantasy writing, ranging from the 'straight' ghost story to medieval episodes of adventure. But has any story such as those written by H.P.Lovecraft appeared within its pages? I cannot think of any that approach either the style or plot of Lovecraft's writings. Incidentally I have often found that the short stories in UNKNOW were superior to the novels and novelettes. I have more than once been bored by the feature novel.

The "fairy tale" element has predominated largely in UNKNOW, but this has often given a welcome relief from the heavier stories. Perhaps the term "heavier" should be used in a relative sense, for I have the impression that the depth of the stories in UNKNOW does not approach that of those in WEIRD TALES. This is a point to be debated, perhaps.

Fans are discriminating. Several years ago, some readers of WEIRD STORIES even complained about "pornographic" advertisements appearing in that magazine's pages. So it is not to be wondered at that readers of SF and weird publications should keep a vigilant watch for the onset of "lewd" symptoms in the pages of their favourites. There are the so-called "Turitans" in fandom, and there are the others. Let us hope there won't ever arise a serious breach of opinion between the two sections, as sometimes seems likely.

As to the general question you may agree with Favolock Ellis when he says, "..... it is not desire but a sacred awe which introduces, inspires, an intoxication of the spirit rather than of the senses," Or you may dismiss him as a nasty old man.

Weird fiction, to some authors and publishers, seems to lend itself particularly to pornography in varying degrees. Witness several publications that have appeared in recent years, usually in America, devoted to fiction of a very poor type, in which the author's main purpose appears to be to contrive the utmost possible number of situations wherein the heroine is observed in differing stages of undress by the hero. The "classic" weird magazines have been refreshingly free from literature of this kind. I have only read one story in WEIRD TALES that falls within this sphere. That was ISLE OF THE UNDEAD, by L.A.Eshbach, in 1936. There have been stories that might just "cross the border". I am thinking of some by Henry Kuttner. But looking at them again, one could term them "exotic" rather than employ more condemnatory words. As to several efforts by Kuttner under other names, the less said the better.

There are some types of weird fiction that can be handled in differing ways by various authors. Compare Merritt's treatment of the "beautiful girl for sacrifice", (a classic example) with that of lesser authors. Then there is the vexing question of illustrations of weird fiction. The covers of WEIRD have been the subject of controversy for, literally, years. The merits of Grundage and Finlay have been discussed and the question as to the permissible amount of clothing on the young women has been endlessly debated, until within recent months the "naked ladies" appear to have fallen into disrepute. (On this point I am open to correction.)

Inside illustrations do not appear to have been the subject of such heated contention, except that some readers believe that weird fiction loses much of its appeal without Finlay's illustrations, while others think that imaginative literature needs no pictorial representation. Most of the pre-magazine weird stories were published in book form without illustrations. That the effect of those classics has not been diminished thereby might appear to be an argument for the latter school of thought.

BELL AGAIN

In a recent article I referred to some quotations by Leigh Hunt, from 16th. Century works on witchcraft. One fan was good enough to remark approvingly and I make that my excuse for resurrecting Hunt again. In an essay entitled "Of Deceased Statesmen who have Written Verses" he quotes several stanzas of a poem by Sackville, Lord Dorset, of Elizabethan days, who in his Induction to the "Mirror of Magistrates" speaks of a journey to the nether regions. There are some excellent imaginative passages in this work; Hunt calls it "masterly of its kind", and from the lines given by him I reproduce the following. (The poet is guided in his visit by Sorrow.)

But lo! while thus amidst the desert dark
We passed on, with steps and pace unmeet,
A rumbling roar, confused with howl and bark
Of dogs, shook all the ground under our feet,
And struck the din within our ears so deep,
As, half distraught, unto the ground I fell,
Besought return, and not to visit hell.
But she, forthwith, uplifting me apace,
Removed my dread, and with a steadfast mind,

On her (Famine) while we thus firmly fixed our eyes,
That bled for ruth of such a dreary sight,
Lo! suddenly she shrieked in so huge a voice,
As made hell gates to shiver with the might.
Henceforth when scarce I could mine eyes withdraw
That filled with tears as doth the springing well,
We passed on so far till we saw
Rude Acheron, a loathsome lake to tell,
That boils and bubbles up such as black as hell.

Thence came we to the horror and the hell,
Of large great kingdom, and the dreadful reign
Of Pluto in his throne where he did dwell,
The wide waste places, and the huge plain,
The walling, shrieks, and sundry sorts of pain,
The sighs, the sobs, the deep and deadly groan,
Earth, air and all, resounding plaint and moan.

PARADE

Bob Warner's allegorical fantasy THE ANTHRODROME is in Penguins. Book on Witchcraft by Montague Summers [WITCHORAPT AND BLACK MAGIC ---DT] is promised in Pelicans.

BOB GIBSON DEPT. (Apologies to Tucker) RCA Gunner William Robert Gibson writes at length from the Eighth Army Front in Italy, in two airmail letters - one proper letter written on (a) US notepaper, (b) a sheet from "Ospeedale Militare Marittimo di Anzio", (c) Canadian Legion War Services paper, & (d) a book review on the blank side of a sheet of Le Zombic. Bob has had quite a stay in hospital - with jaundice - but now appears to be well & hearty again. He says that the March period mail to the UK was lost, including a number of letters of his to people here. But his main news is a problem, viz:-

"Until recently this hospital had a practising science fiction author on the medical staff. (It would be 'until recently'!) His real name was Capt. Theodore Stephanides. And now the vagueness of people's memories becomes serious. He was an amateur astronomer and had discovered 'some planet or something' - presumably an asteroid or a nova. He was of Grasso-English descent, and had worked many years in Greece and conducted a malaria survey of the Balkans. He was an entomologist. He collected Balkan folk music and had the collection blown up in Crete. He wore, by extra-special permission, a beard. He was absent-minded. He wrote science-fiction and sent it to a man in New York, and at times received cheques in return. No one could recall the pen-name he used, but the man he sent them to had 'Simon' in his name. Something was printed in POPULAR SCIENCE FICTION (a reasonable confusion of names). No one could recall a story title. One plot was said to be - 'A man fell through a hole in the floor - a two-dimensional ... three-dimensional (I suggested four and my informant counted up) - yes, a four dimensional hole into all sorts of trouble in another world.' "That is all I could get. I know of lots of stories where people fell, climbed, jumped, were pulled, pushed or extruded, vibrated or whatnot into other dimensions, planes and energy levels. But I do not recall one that had the hole specifically in the floor. Do you?"

"Later inquiries yield a little more. He was in charge of the radiological department, he read science-fiction with enthusiasm, and he believed that it was less impossible than it seemed to my informants. He was interested in rocketry.

"I'd like to know what he wrote."

STENCILLER'S OAR The noble fellow who stencils this stuff for no more reward than an occasional nip of whiskey or opportunity to read the Rosenblum stuff magazines (DWebster, Edgewild, Fountainhall Road, Aberdeen, Scotland) is desperately anxious to find some intellectual American who can swap, or exchange or procure on any suitable terms non-fantasy books & other items of interest. Is USA so barren that it holds no such saviour? He also apologises for horrifying misprints last issue, due to

INTRODUCING

Flying Officer Allan H. Miles, R.A.F.V.R.

A few statistics to begin with --- Down (yes) on July 23rd. 1922 in the city of Bristol. Lived in Cardiff for 10 years & now residing in Bristol. Was employed as a civil servant in Bristol when I found my first S.F. mag. My interest had been stimulated in this science by the unfortunate SCOOPS and the films THE TUNNEL and THINGS TO COME, although I had been an admirer of HG Wells since school days. The idle picking up of a TWS started me on the downward path, into which I helped drag BEdwards of Westbury, another member. Was not aware of British fandom, even though buying books from Ted Connell's S.F. Service. Looking through a copy of TWS I found a review of NEW WORLDS & contacted Ted Connell who advised me to get in touch with Michael Rosenblum. This was in '42 something. Soon after I was posted overseas to Canada for training in the RAF. Altogether I managed to wangle 5 weeks in USA on leave & wasted little time in sending a subscription to ASTOUNDING.

For many & varied reasons (chiefly an amorous one) I was unable to visit fans over there, most of my time being spent in the state of Montana. Being then only recently introduced to fandom I was not in any way capable of being termed a representative of English fandom. It was good being able to buy current mags off the stands though, & I made the most of it. I became engaged to a Montana girl before leaving & am returning at the first opportunity. I received a commission & returned to England where I am now serving on operations in Bomber Command as a Bomb Aimer. I have made several trips into the Third Reich & hope to make many more. My hobbies include collecting classical recordings, oil colouring photographs, general photography & motor cycling. I have met Edwin McDonald at his home & am a frequent visitor to the Rosenblum household of which I have enjoyed the hospitality many times. I am in fact writing this autobiography there now. Good reading, fans.....AHM

APRIL
AVAILANCHE

..... News of the month. More transatlantic guests turn up --- Sapper Al Godfrey of the Royal Canadian Engineers reported present to your editor early in the month & hopes to make the acquaintance of British fandom, & British fantasy books, in the near future. And an oldtime American fan pops up, none other than Claire P. Beck, onetime editor of the SCIENCE FICTION CRITIC, of Lakeport, California, & now a lieutenant in the US Troop Transport Units. From FANEWSOARD comes the information that Gordon M. Kull, former secretary of Golden Gate Futurians, is in England. Jack Speer, one of the most prominent American fans, has obtained a position with the Lease-Lend authorities, in their French section, & should by now have left USA for parts unknown, probably Algiers or some such spot.

And now for our home products. William F. Temple writes:

"Have been playing around in the Allied beach-head in Italy (a sticky business) for some time now. By the time you get this there may be plenty of "Allied beach-heads", but just now this is the one & only original - refuse all substitutes. You may remember I lost all the MSS I'd written since leaving England, in action in Tunisia. And here I've just lost in similar chaotic circumstances all the MSS I'd written & re-written since. This brings me full circle to the zero mark. And don't say it was good practice anyway, you Job's comforter! I feel like a spider trying to climb out of a glass tumbler, & slipping back to the bottom with a bang every time he had scrambled up so high. And don't say "Remember Bruce!" 'cos that spider was plain dumb. He couldn't learn from experience. He should have moved his pitch & built his web elsewhere, away from interfering Scottish fingers. But I'm kinda stuck here. However, things can't remain static for ever, can they? But they're having a damned good try! ***** Someone's just sent me the Dec.'45 issue of the Leftish review OUR TIME (never heard of it!) & the first thing I see is a long letter of criticism in the correspondence columns by Osmond Robb. Is this a fan going serious? Are we to have something new - WORKERS' SCIENCEFICTION? One sees titles: SPACEBOARDS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE, THE SOCIALIST SIXTH OF THE COSMOS, THE INFER-RED FLAG, THE HUMAN PARASITES, THE OIL POOL....

Another lost sheep, also in the CME, is Signm. CSYoud, who sends his regards to all & sundry, particularly thanking the Worcon participants for their airgraph to him. Co

gratulations to Eric Frank Russell on the broadcast of his SINISTER BARRIER as a serial from Ciaro - wish I could have heard it, & why Cairo of all places? Eric has been wandering around of late - leaving Northern Ireland, he had a brief stay in Hertfordshire, South Wales, & then on to Chigwell, Essex.

Americano --- Capt. S.P. Meek of old, is now Lt.-Col. Meek; & Dr. David H. Keller is also Lt. Col. Keller (W.Gillings); Fred Shroyer is now with the 15th. Fighter Squadron of Fort Myers, Florida, & Henry Futtner is in the US Medical Corps (E.F.Russell). Milton Rothman finished a university course in electrical engineering which the US Army has put him through, in April, & emerges with a degree.

Call-up:- Peter Hopkins of Sudbury, Surrey, is the latest victim. He reports at Formby, Lancs. on May 10th. Peter is a comparative newcomer to fan ranks, but had rapidly created a place for himself. He held the post of Liaison Officer between the Cosmos Club and the BPS & took an especial interest in Prozine authors & their pseudonyms. He was a bank clerk in ordinary life.

SPEAKING PERSONALLY Your editor has a couple of items to get off his chest, viz. --- Firstly the matter of my own mail, correspondence & all the assorted items coming this way from the USA. Really & truly everything is deeply appreciated & I would like to answer everything. However, I hope all neglected correspondents will appreciate that my opportunities simply won't run to it these days - I simply can't get everything attended to. Moreover Fido itself should serve as my part of the personal link. I hesitate to name examples but perhaps most sinned against are Terry Overton, Peter Hawkins, Edwin Macdonald, Walter Morcott & John Pennington. Then about all the assorted extra copies of fanzines which trickle in to Grange Terrace. To distribute them fairly & regularly would necessitate quite a system; so will all concerned 'make do' with my passing them on as circumstances permit, to visitors here, servicemen I'm writing to, & so forth; with the BPS chains and Library coming high on the list. Or would British fans like them collected into an envelope & second copies sent around people interested? --- just an idea that cropped up. Stuff from Forry keeps coming over, duly marked with recipient & all are sent on except Kenneth Chapman's --- Forry was told this but GIC's material still comes over. And now a 'Nancy Featherstone' [shades of Jabberwocky! ---DW] appears on some copies, & I don't know the lady. Enlightenment welcome. At the moment I'm holding a batch of material from Claude Degler destined for the Eastercon, which arrived too late, & will be passed on to next meeting instead.

After that, there is the matter of contributions to Fido. It is an old cliché to say that a magazine is what its readers make it [it is also untrue: a magazine is what its editor & his financial backer make it ---DW], but the statement is even more true when applied to Fido. By all means send in your information, viewpoints & arguments, the only criterion being that the matter be connected with fantasy & not offend legal regulations. Book reviews & author critiques are always welcome & only recently reviews of current prozines were particularly requested. One or two "basic" articles on what is fantasy, its value & development, the history of fandom in general, & here in England; possible & preferable future developments would be particularly suitable at the moment. And for prolific scribes - several of the American fanzine crop would welcome contributions from this side of the Atlantic.

TRENDS --- the publication issued by Arthur F Williams, 11 Kenbury St., Canterbury, SS5, recently mutated from a one-copy chain-circulated magazine to a circulation duplicated fan magazine. The first of the new series is dated May 1944, costs 6d. except to Servicemen overseas who can have it for the asking, has 20 half-foolscap pages, features considerably good class artwork, & a policy of reprinting good fan articles from past fanzines. Especially noticed in this issue is COSMIC CASE #1 - "The Right of a Race to Live" by DRSmith, reprinted from NOVAE TERRAE.

SWAP ECBrown, Diabeth Police Station, Diabeth, Birmingham is desirous of swapping fantasy books. Send lists of wants & disposals.

Observations on the Contemporary American Scene (continued)

The membership limit of the FAPA was raised from 50 to 65 only recently, but not only was this slack immediately taken up but the March mailing has a waiting list of no less than 14. And this is entirely limited to active fans. But the question of general reorganisation has been raised and an attempt is being made to revive and resuscitate the National Fantasy Fan Federation on not so ambitious a scale as that which apparently overawed the general mass of US fans. Failing the success of this, Art Sehnert has plans for another form of organisation, though he is willing to cooperate in the rebirth of the NFFF. And behind that still, lies the idea of a central guiding nucleus of leading fans to act as centre for all the various projects a united fandom could achieve. Out of such a welter of ideas surely something worthwhile is likely to appear.

Meanwhile a flock of new fans is putting in an appearance. They crop up all over the place exuding unrestrained enthusiasm; some are old readers but the majority are youngsters just cutting their fan teeth. And of course the fanzine field reacts immediately to these phenomena. The old and tried 'vines are disappearing: Voice of the Imagi-Nation plods on wearily amid beivies of nudes, Le Zombis concluded in a blaze of glory with a magnificent fifth anniversary issue, Nova's third issue has at last appeared, Fanfare has gone for the duration. In the other hand, however we have Microcosmos (Claude Field), Fan Slants (Mel Brown), Toward Tomorrow (James Kepner) Arcana (Harry Honig) Disaberie (Bill Watson), and a whole sheaf of Vulcan publications from a group of the younger end who have got together for publishing purposes, including Cluster (Ray Karden) Opello (Joe Hensley) Thoth (William James) Mars (Van Splawn) and maybe others.

Although on a larger scale altogether, it seems to your editor that events across the sea are paralleling British experiences; and after being well shaken up by events on the larger horizon, fandom in the States is just about ready to settle down under present conditions, get in "o trim, and become something really worth while. At least that's what I hope to see in the near future.

Fantast? Stefan? Futurian? Stefnist? Fantaisist? Slan? Cosman? Steffist? ?

In twin publications from the two groups in Los Angeles comes an announcement of the death of PAUL FREEMANER, long known as an active fan in that district. Paul was a non-feudist and was well-beloved by all sections of fandom, he was interested in literature generally as well as the fantasy section, was noted for the publication of "Polaris" with a high standard of literary content and an impeccable format, held a job in the research laboratory of a large corporation, was extremely interested in astronautics & hoped to see the first space-flight take place within his lifetime, had a large and varied library and was always up to the eyebrows in assorted jobs and favours for the various people and causes he was associated with. His early demise was due to heart disease of long standing, and although he was doomed, he never allowed this to cause a bitter attitude towards life.

Laurence O'Donnell, Lewis Padgett, Paul Edmonds, Keith Hammond, R.O. Kenyon,

An Airgraph from Edwin MacDonald, the onetime hermit of Inverness, places that gentleman at MFC 304, RCAT, Ottawa, Canada. He arrived there towards the end of April and a week later mentions that the only stf he has seen is the Wolheim Pocket book of Sciencefiction. Anent that work, DAW will be interested to learn that in one week I had tributes to it from the Anzac beachhead, and two young lady neophytes to fantasy in Leeds and Los Angeles.

Another overseas fan just heard by E. in Liverpoolian David
McIlwain, with the RAF in North Africa still. Dave is obdely
glad to keep in touch with things, and he still rates Esperanto even
higher than sci so far as his own personal interest goes. Has found local
esperantists but no one in the locality seems to be the fantasy type...
However he can now get into touch with Mr John Bristol Spear, Civil Affairs
Section, NAJEM, Algiers; for a most interesting contact. In fact I almost
envy him. .. Comparatively newly departed from these islands is Sidney L.
Archby and he has landed up in East Africa. We suggest he contacts John
Miller who precede him there and is at Kilindini. .. Latest status of Ameri-
cain fans: Bert Castellani in NEW GUINEA. Bill Vancy operating a search
light near Brisbane. Bruce Sawyer in the great western deserts somewhere.
Civilians are still Eric Russell, the only one of the old crowd still re-
taining interest in fandom and sci and Vol Molesworth, still a junior
reporter in Sydney. (Nebula). .. As to Canada, latest letter from Gar. Bob
Ibsen still in Italy Includes the astonishing news that he is now in
the same unit as Sgt Norman Lamb one-time of Toronto so Bob needs another
Canadian Fan. The week previous Norm and Ted White manage to meet up in
fact they are thinking of an all Canadian "Italycon". .. To regret to have
to announce sad news for two fans overseas, late in April Bill Temple's second
child and only son, Peter Douglas died of pneumonia deep condolences to
a Joan and Bill. Ken Hulmers father passed on, on the 18th of May so to
him to we sent our sympathy. .. Jack Banks 23 Annington Rd. Eastbourne
as for sale Science Fiction, March, June, Aug. Oct. Dec. '39. (Oct. Dec. B.P.E.)
Janis S.S. Feb. April '39. Marvel S.S. Aug. '39. Startling Jan 41. At 1/- post
free for all except BRF (9d.) each but would prefer to sell the lot to-
gether, rather than single copies. Jack is still at home and awaiting
medical advice concerning future activities. .. Fred Brown has been on
two weeks leave at his home in London. We predict a few more books
added to limited to 200 Brown collection, which numbered just over 300 at
the last count. .. And here your editor goes into seasons of cheers. For
his collection of fantasy sf book form has now topped the one thousand at
long last. Short interval for gloating. .. Whitsuntide 1944 was spent at
Avalon", Higherford near Nelson by Ron Hohee and Kate James of Liverpool,
on Lane, George Ellis and Ron Bradbury of Manchester and J. Rosenblum of
Ambuctoo. Fans make good housekeepers - well some fans shall we say? Any-
way an enjoyable time was had by all I think. This was the second annual affair
and it can't have been too bad last year. .. Two of the latest American fans
to be drafted are Tom Daniel, the gentleman who was going to put out an
extra-special "Album" one fine day, and Bernard Saufert of Rochester, NY,
known as a helper and colleague of Larry Tarsaci. Bob Tucker still loose
at latest hearing but the army gets him at any moment now. .. Harry Warner
is to put out a special all-Degler issue of his FAPA magazine "Horizons"
to memorise the six months or so in which DeGler-Rogers turned American
and on topsy-turvy. DeGler is still at Newcastle, Indiana and his "Comic
Price" continues to emit one sheet publications, but DeGler has officially
resigned his leading position in the organisation, and the papers appear
to be edited by some of the bevy of females Claude has collected. .. Inter-
minations on the other side of this sheet consist of alternative titles
in place of that horrible phrase "science fiction fans". (Bob Gibson wants
to know if Sax Rohmers "Si-Fan Mysteries" have any connection) and a sel-
ection of the pseudonyms of one Henry Kutiner. Remember James Parkhill
although? He's still living and even though not active in fan circles, is
finding plenty of occupation as an actimember of the Communist Party. At
present he is organising a Unity Theatre in Worcester, even to writing
near first play. Coming Attractions include a production of R.U.R.