

Type; Sociological.
Class.
Code

Author; BELL : NEIL,
(Pseud) ?

Title "ONE CAME BACK : A Novel by : "

London, Collins, 1938, 8/6, pp 416, 13.5 x 20.5 cm.

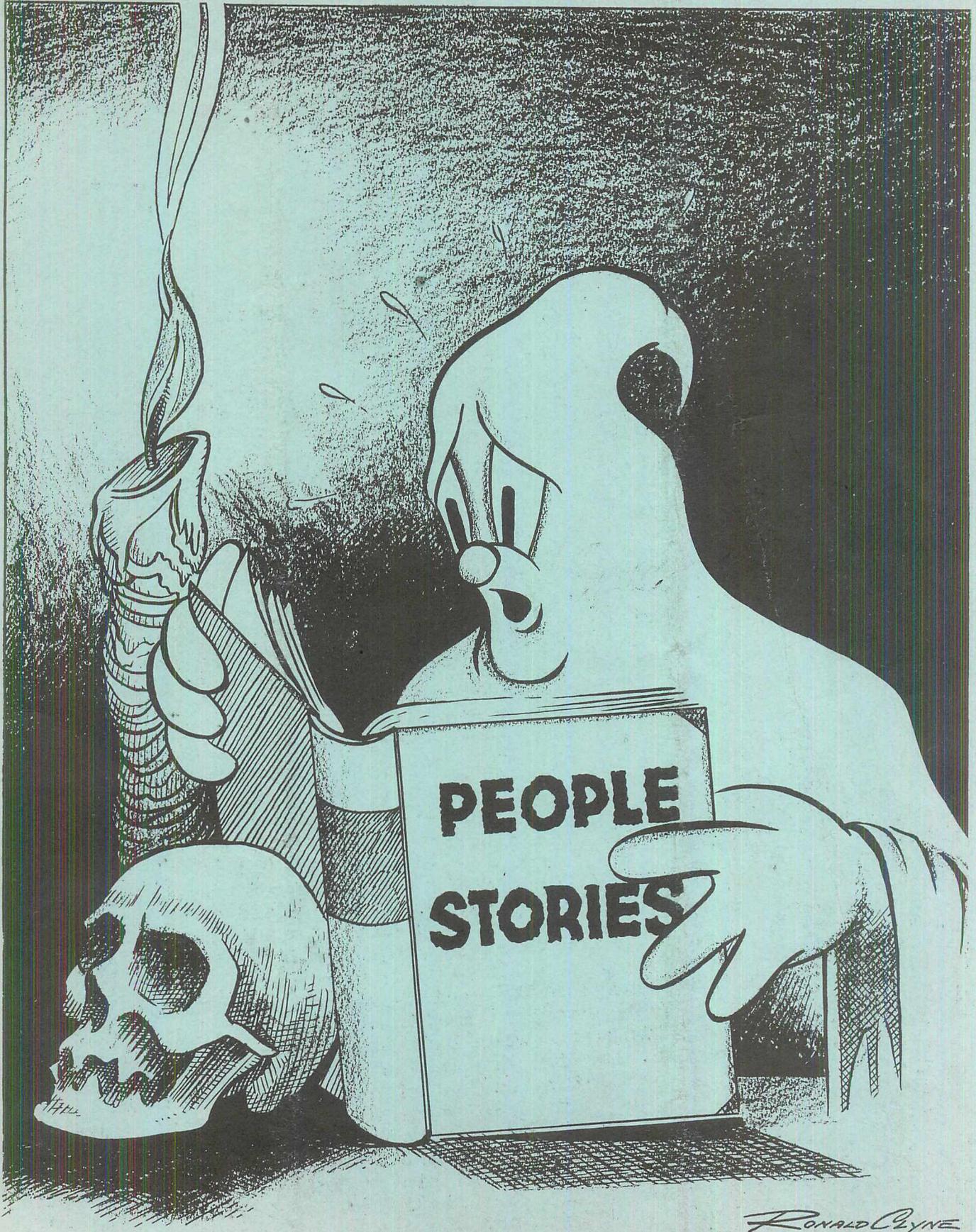
Further Information; Real name of Neil Bell unknown to date. He has also written under the pseudonyms of "Hiles", Stephen Southwold, and Paul Martens, including several other fantasies.

Synopsis of plot; Return from death by miracle.

Review; by Frederick Brown and Arthur Busby.

This is only just a fantasy and for nearly 300 pages one wonders where the title fits in. These pages are spent in depicting the lives of several people in a Midland mining town. The chief character portrayed is that of Adrian Kester, blind-born son of the millionaire colliery owner. He eventually succeeds, on his father's death, to the control of the mine and proceeds to try and put into practice some of the Communistic ideas he has; but is not too successful. One thing he is determined to do and that is not to let his handicap of being blind interfere with his life in any way. He even learns to fly. Eventually he is persuaded to make a visit to the famous shrine at Lourdes to see if it is possible that a miracle will occur for his benefit and cure his blindness. A miracle does occur but not the expected one. While flying over Lourdes the plane misbehaves and Adrian and his fellow passenger are both killed. They are laid in state in the local chapel to await their interment when on the fourth day one of the nuns who is doing vigil at the side of the bodies is staggered to see the body of Adrian come to life again. The miracle has occurred and Adrian has risen from the dead. There is no doubt that he was dead as four eminent doctors had previously examined the bodies and found all the recognised symptoms of death. The usual thing happens; after a short period of doubting the miracle is accepted and Lourdes becomes the Mecca of all civilisation. Adrian makes a few speeches stressing the fact that his time is strictly limited, he can present no clear picture of the afterlife but talks chiefly about light. The main message which he says he has for mankind is that there is nothing greater than brotherhood and he beseeches the world to accept the idea of the brotherhood of all mankind. As he had predicted he soon "dies" again but not before the world is swept by a terrific religious revival. Nations which before his first death were on the verge of war take up friendly relationships and a society known as the Egalitarians arise who swear to the brotherhood of mankind. A fly appears in the cement however. The upbringing of Adrian had been entrusted to Hesling, now editor of a newspaper. He dies and leaves behind a diary containing some important facts about Adrian. H. had discovered that his mind and Adrians were curiously sympathetic and at times he could exert a slight form of hypnotic control over his pupil. He then reveals that Adrian's picture of heaven was merely a rehash of the ideas that H. himself had given to Adrian whilst tutoring him, and his doctrine of the brotherhood of man merely an extension of his Communistic tendencies. The world is informed of the contents of this diary and the pendulum swings back again. A few Egalitarians struggle on but the rest of the world falls back into its old habits and the threat of war soon appears again.

Appearing in Futurian War Digest, December 1944, (J.M.Rosenblum)



**PEOPLE
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RONALD CLYNE