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EDITORIAL

First of all--for the benefit of those completist-collectors who did not receive a copy of the first issue of this publication--you will find in this, the second issue, everything that appeared in the first issue, plus additional material.

The first issue was a dittographed sheet listing all of the John D. MacDonald novels as of March, 1965. The titles were listed in chronological order, according to publication dates. That list of titles is reprinted in this issue--in alphabetical order. Following each title is the publisher's name, and the date of publication.

I have not attempted to classify each and every title as to content, save for the three science-fiction titles that I know about, and the six Travis McGee titles.

sf = science fiction
tm = Travis McGee

The number following each tm (1, 2, 3, etc.) indicates its position in the McGee chronology.

You will note that this issue of THE JDM BIBLIOPHILE has been placed under the master heading of THE BIBLIO-FILE, as the second in a series of publications that will present checklists and other information covering the various mystery writers. Consequently, the first issue of THE JDM BIBLIOPHILE would be the first in the series of BIBLIO-FILES.

Rick Sneary is preparing the first issue of a publication devoted to the works of John Dickson Carr, and it will be the third in the BIBLIO-FILE series. Bruce Pelz (who suggested the BIBLIO-FILE idea) plans to join the BIBLIO-FILE series eventually with a publication on the works of Leslie Charteris.

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Other fan publishers are welcome to join the BIBLIO-FILE series by issuing checklists, etc., on their favorite mystery or detective story writers. To avoid duplication, and to obtain a master number for each of your issues, please contact me. Of course, anyone may publish a checklist or a magazine devoted to the works of a mystery writer without making his publication a part of the BIBLIO-FILE series. However, there is no reason not to help in this attempt to build up a file of bibliographical material in this particular field, and more than one reason for helping to build such a master file. The individual publishers would control their own publications, including the reproduction, distribution, etc. If one wanted help in some way or another--distribution, for instance--I'm sure he would get it from any of us.

I'm not a librarian, nor a completist collector, but I can see how this master numbering system would be of help to librarians and to collectors.

In all of my years in fandom, I have never been a completist collector, though I have accumulated a goodly number of books and magazines. With the exception of Tucker's Charlie Horne novels I have never gone out of my way to collect any one author--and I really didn't have to go out of my way to "collect" them. Perhaps it is a sign of middle age, but nowadays I do find myself delving into dusty corners of bookstores--seeking titles by JDM. I have read MacDonald over the years, but up until now never bothered to hang on to the paperback once I had read it. Travis McGee had something to do with it, of course, as did "The Girl, The Gold Watch and Everything"--but I have these titles--why collect the others?

Well, of course, I want to read the ones I have missed--but why repurchase and keep the ones I have read? To re-read? Possibly, in some instances, but certainly not in every instance. Let's just call it Pride of Possession, and let it go at that. I own 31 of the titles, as of this writing, and it is nice to have them--to show off to friends, and to loan out to friends who can be trusted to return them.

Thus far I have concentrated on collecting the paperback titles only. I do have the hardcover, 1958 first edition of "The Executioners", and only recently managed to find the Crest Books reprint edition in paperback, retitled "Cape Fear". The latter edition doesn't give a printing date, but I bought it brand new off a new paperback rack, and assume it was recently reprinted or perhaps re-reprinted... The only reference to date in the Crest reprint is the 1957-58 copyright date taken from the Simon & Schuster hardcover edition.

I doubt that I'll ever try to collect all of the JDM titles in hard cover, and I'm sure that I'm not going to try to collect all of the JDM short stories that have appeared in various magazines over the years. I'll leave that sort of effort to the real completists. There is at least one hardcover I'll have to get, in order to have all of the novel titles, and that is "Ballroom of the Skies", which I had at one time, but which apparently got lost or given away in the days when I wasn't being even a semi-completist collector.

Aside from obtaining the 20 titles I'm missing, I'm more interested in the stories to come from Mr. MacDonald...the rest of the McGee series...and more science fiction...and, well, just MORE! And you?

-ljm

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STOP PRESS NOTICE FROM ED COX RE HIS ARTICLE IN THIS ISSUE:

While this article purports to cover the known works of John D. MacDonald in the two magazines for the period of time stated, there remains a lot of material to be covered. Among the names in the shorter stories in the magazines were "John Wade Farrell" and "Peter Reed", the latter an especially prolific writer. It was so mentioned in what amounted to an editorial, in those days. These were, of course, pen-names of John D. MacDonald, and not necessarily the only ones that he used. No novel-length stories were so bylined, apparently. At least, in DOC SAVAGE and THE SHADOW. If there is any response to this sort of article, these will get similar treatment in an early issue.

--Ed Cox

EARLY J. D.

by Ed Cox

The greater part of fandom probably became acquainted with the writing of John D. MacDonald with the appearance of The Girl, the Gold Watch and Everything. Somewhat older fans might have remembered a number of MacDonald science-fiction stories appearing in ASTOUNDING, the Thrilling Magazines, even in WEIRD TALES°. But it was the appearance of the first-named novel that fired the enthusiasm of current fandom, and the advent of the Travis McGee stories that caused fans to go after the older and many paperback novels with his byline, usually a guarantee of good reading. As a result, probably a lot of fans know him only by his paperback (and those who can afford the hard-cover) novels.

I remember the early J. D., the few that I have of, if I remember reading correctly, several hundred short stories he sold before The Brass Cupcake heralded his ascendancy to the paperback throne.

Here we will take a look at his stories in a limited selection. Only those I happen to have in DOC SAVAGE and SHADOW Magazines. It appears that he started selling (to Street & Smith, at least) in mid-1946, his first printed story in this market appearing in the August 1946 DOC SAVAGE Magazine. If these two are a weathervane to his output in all the other myriad mystery and detective magazines still extant in those years, it would appear that it was about here that he started selling any stories of any type. This remains to be verified by those with runs of other pulp-magazines in the field.

But these stories do show glimpses, a continuing improvement, that finally became a polished, alive style of writing now to be found in any of his novels. It was possibly the fall of the pulp-field that caused the original paperback field to flower into the major fiction business it is today, and with it, the number of novels that could be published that the hard-cover publishers couldn't fit into their output. It was our gain.

Let's get to the stories.

"The Dry Mouth of Danger", novelette, DOC SAVAGE, August 1946. This first, of this group, sets the pattern for most of them. Usually they were first person, an unattached young man, a veteran of the recent World War II, almost always out of some branch of military intelligence (OSS a lot!), and an overseas setting in the Far East. This one takes place in Ceylon, and the hero is dissatisfied with his job, unadjusted to the world and looking for excitement and danger. He finds it by becoming mixed up in a smuggling game...and murder! He gets tabbed for it, and we have a pursuit of the quarry business with him finally solving it and getting off to more excitement, we presume.

"The Dead Dream", short story, THE SHADOW, September 1946. Same pattern, only shorter. Hero is bored with post-war office job after OSS excitement during the war. Finds lovely girl, gets mixed with her personal problems and murder. And, like our previous hero, gets tabbed as a "fall guy". He gets out of this one via the old gimmick method. But a trace of the nostalgia for Something that appears, blended so smoothly, in his current novels makes its appearance.

"Justice in the Sun", short story, DOC SAVAGE, October 1946. Back to the mid-east, India (wherever it is) this time. Our hero gets into a little trouble with some local snobbery and winds up getting framed for murder. A little gimmickry and he gets out of the local bastille and kidnaps his suspect, forcing a confession from him out in the desert. Local police give him a break for his methods, and that is the end of this frothy bit, exhibiting a bit of humor, off-hand.

"The Little People", novelette, DOC SAVAGE, November 1946. Here we have some of the MacDonald that was to come in bigger, better, novel-size chunks, a fine story that exhibits his ability to quickly sketch in a character, his background, hopes, aspirations, some quality of him as a human being...whatever kind. This is the story of a scrimy piece of humanity name of Turin, who plotted an elaborate plot to take over a small upstate New York town, clean it out and make a clean getaway, using trucks and a plane, machine guns and brutality. It takes us from the beginning, where it is a big, shiny, air-tight plan, to the end where, bit by bit from the start, the little people smash off a chunk here and there, going down fighting, until Turin and what remains of his company wind up in a big ball of tin.

"The Whispering Knives", short story, THE SHADOW, November 1946. Another character piece. A cold little story set in a small Pennsylvania coal-type town, featuring a fearsome rat with a knife, named Santoni, and a big, hard guy who came back, and got Santoni. Rather simple, unrounded story like "Justice in the Sun", but the two characters stand out. Working, working...

"A Bat in the Hall", short story, THE SHADOW, December 1946. Another short, hard bit, rough and incomplete-seeming, it centers on a private-guard type who got into a bit of trouble and compounded it to where he couldn't get out of it. It was called murder.

Unfortunately, that's the end of the SHADOWS that I have, but he kept appearing as long as they lasted. The new Shadow Mystery starting in January 1947 contained "You've Got To Be Cold". It also contained Anthony Boucher. Anybody have these? From here on, MacDonald is almost the co-feature with the routine DOC SAVAGE novels in that magazine. I doubt if Dent wrote many of them, and a strong co-feature probably helped sell that magazine.

"Private War", novelette, DOC SAVAGE, December 1946. This wasn't one of the good, big co-features! It is probably one of the least smooth MacDonalds of this era in these two magazines. It was also tabbed as the start of a series and was specifically written for the magazine, mentioning Doc Savage in the story. Benton Walters, our hero, is yet another guy bored with his office job after being in the recent war (Engineers this time). So he chucks the job and gets somehow into a civilian cloak-and-dagger type business directly concerned with the cold war. It has its moments, sometimes rather humorous, but it is crude and the action and continuity expect a lot of help from the reader. It was another in a light, offhand manner, breezy hero, etc. Not exactly the MacDonald that was to come, or even of "The Little People".

Whether or not there were more Benton Walters stories, I don't know, missing the bulk of the 1947 issues, but the next story finds MacDonald a cover-name with

"Or the World Will Die", novel, DOC SAVAGE Science Detective Mag., Nov-Dec 1947. This was a science-fiction story inasmuch as it was laid two years in the future, but other than that it was quite a bit more of a cloak-and-dagger story than any mentioned above. Cartier illustration, by the way. Here is full-grown MacDonald, featuring all the instant and in-the-round characterization at which he has become a master. Again the hero was an OSS type in the War, but has gone to writing very successful novels (MacDonald predicting...?). A government agent wants him to come back for a desperate job needed to be done. Somebody, and I mean Somebody, is kiboshing our efforts to complete a radiation-detecting device that would end forever the sneak-building of atomic weapons. The things have been outlawed, but who can trust anybody? Hero declines, but is chilled into cold anger and takes the assignment, on his own hook and expense, when he finds that the man has been killed.

He recruits two old buddies still working for the government, but tied down to non-exciting desk jobs. One is a lovely girl-type whom he once had eyes for, but who is hopelessly in love with the other, a old buddy. So this threesome checks out clue after clue, and ends up down in Texas near the site of the installation working on this device. Lots of shooting and killing wind up this tale of suspense and sneaky spy-like stuff. It's comparable with some of his later novels.

"The Cold Trail of Death", novel, DOC SAVAGE etc., May-June 1948. This one could come out in paperback and nobody'd worry about it being a pulp reprint. It is more like one of the Dell or Gold Medal novels than anything heretofore mentioned so far. The hero comes back from the war, bitter, disillusioned and rather works himself hollow-cheeked, trying to forget the woman who divorced him while overseas.

But after two-and-a-half years of working nonstop, it didn't work and the boss says take a vacation. So he goes to a wonder-laden spot that they had gone to on their honeymoon, maybe to purge the old ghost. And finds murder. HER! It is a chilling scene, written with the MacDonald touch that is now standard excellence. And he goes on the track, on his own, to find out what happened, who did it, to wreak his own vengeance. Here you can settle down to enjoy another good MacDonald, that same attitude I have when I start any MacDonald paperback. I'm surprised this hasn't been issued in paperback. It's worth it. Excellent J. D.

"Deep Death", novel, DOC SAVAGE, Sept-Oct 1948. Everything I said about the above novel can be said about this one as to its excellence and handling. This time another ex-OSS type, now in the private-eye biz in New York, goes upstate at the request of his old C. O. to help him out with a Problem. One settles down to enjoy, enjoy, and is immediately rewarded. All the hallmarks of the John D. MacDonald novel are here, the quick and/or in-depth characters, plot, description, and more and sexier women than before, plus an added ingredient: humor. Remember Please Write For Details? A preview of the hilarity to come in that novel is amply blended into this one, which has its grim moments. By now, The Brass Cupcake had made its Gold Medal debut, and I'll bet that if the paperback field was as large then as it is now, this one and probably "The Cold Trail of Death" would've seen paperback publication. I think they could stand publication now in that form. For the MacDonald buffs, it wouldn't hurt to get ahold of these last three items, they're worth it if you can find them.

A final note. In these same DOC SAVAGE magazines, other authors whose bylines are probably familiar to the hard-boiled school of detective story readers were very much in evidence. Edward Ronns, Thorne Lee, Bruno Fischer, etc., but after all these years and early Gold Medal publication, MacDonald is the only one who seems to have made it Big. But then, that could be because I don't follow the field that closely and do follow MacDonald very closely. You sort of have to run to keep up...!

—Ed Cox

NOVELS OF
JOHN D.
MAC DONALD

- A BULLET FOR CINDERELLA
Dell First Edition - 1955
(Reissued as ON THE MAKE)
- A DEADLY SHADE OF GOLD (tm-5)
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1965
- A FLASH OF GREEN
Simon and Schuster - 1962
- A KEY TO THE SUITE
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1962
- ALL THESE CONDEMNED
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1954
- A MAN OF AFFAIRS
Dell First Edition - 1957
- APRIL EVIL
Dell First Edition - 1956
- A PURPLE PLACE FOR DYING (tm-3)
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1964
- AREA OF SUSPICION
Dell First Edition - 1954
(Revised Edition pub by Fawcett - 1961)
- BALLROOM OF THE SKIES (sf)
Greenberg - 1952
- BORDER TOWN GIRL
Popular Library - 1956
- BRIGHT ORANGE FOR THE SHROUD (tm-6)
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1965
- CANCEL ALL OUR VOWS
Appleton-Century-Croft - 1953
(Reprint by NAL Signet)
- CAPE FEAR
Crest (Reprint of THE EXECUTIONERS)
- CLEMMIE
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1958
- CONTRARY PLEASURE
Appleton-Century-Croft - 1954
- CRY HARD, CRY FAST
Popular Library - 1955
- DEAD LOW TIDE
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1953
- DEADLY WELCOME
Dell First Edition - 1959
- DEATH TRAP
Dell First Edition - 1957
- I COULD GO ON SINGING
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1963
- JUDGE ME NOT
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1951

MURDER FOR THE BRIDE
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1951

MURDER IN THE WIND
Dell First Edition - 1956

NIGHTMARE IN PINK (tm-2)
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1964

ONE MONDAY WE KILLED THEM ALL
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1961

ON THE MAKE
(Reissue of A BULLET FOR CINDERELLA)

ON THE RUN
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1963

PLANET OF THE DREAMERS (sf)
PocketBook reprint of
WINE OF THE DREAMERS

PLEASE WRITE FOR DETAILS
Simon and Schuster - 1959
(Reprint by Crest Books)

SIAM THE BIG DOOR
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1960

THE BEACH GIRLS
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1959

THE BLOOD GAME
Doubleday - 1965

THE BRASS CUPCAKE
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1950

THE CROSS ROADS
Simon and Schuster - 1959

THE DAMNED
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1952

THE DECEIVERS
Dell First Edition - 1958

THE DEEP BLUE GOOD-BY (tm-1)
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1964

THE DROWNER
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1963

THE EMPTY TRAP
Popular Library - 1957

THE END OF THE NIGHT
Simon and Schuster - 1960
(Reprint by Crest Books)

THE EXECUTIONERS
Simon and Schuster - 1958
(Reprinted by Crest Books as CAPE FEAR)

THE GIRL, THE GOLD WATCH & EVERYTHING (sf)
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1963

THE HOUSE GUESTS
Doubleday - 1965

THE LETHAL SEX (MWA Anthology)
Dell First Edition - 1959

THE NEON JUNGLE
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1953

THE ONLY GIRL IN THE GAME
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1960

THE PRICE OF MURDER
Dell First Edition - 1957

THE QUICK RED FOX (tm-4)
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1964

THE SOFT TOUCH
Dell First Edition - 1958

WEEP FOR ME
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1951

WHERE IS JANICE GANTRY
Fawcett Gold Medal - 1961

WINE OF THE DREAMERS (sf)
Greenberg - 1951
(PocketBook reprint - PLANET OF THE
DREAMERS)

YOU KILL ME
(Reissue of YOU LIVE ONCE)

YOU LIVE ONCE
Popular Library - 1955
(Reissued as YOU KILL ME)

Legend: tm = Travis McGee
sf = science fiction

Is It True...

What They Say

about

TRAVIS?

When you want to write a shorticle that could simply be entitled "A Few Notes About Travis McGee" but don't want to use such a dull title in connection with such a colorful character, you come up with something like the titles used above....well, maybe you wouldn't--but I did.

I have heard--from more than one source--that Mr. MacDonald has written at least one dozen McGee novels, at the express request of his publishers. The first six were written to a formula, which is fairly obvious to anyone who has read them. As an old pulp magazine buff I don't object to formula writing--when it is done by a craftsman such as MacDonald.

However, I understand that the next six in the series will destroy the formula. As Ted White said in his Apa L publication, "If I'd been faunching before, I'm faunching even more, now." But perhaps we shouldn't anticipate a really drastic or sudden change in the McGee series. It could be a gradual and subtle change--for very commercial reasons. And this is not a criticism of Mr. MacDonald or his publishers.

If we want to keep on getting McGee stories, and other stories, from MacDonald--the stories have to sell. Not just to the handful of fans who like to talk about the stuff they read, and collect it, and publish fanzines about it--but to the thousands of paperback mystery readers whose "fan activity" is limited to reading a book and, perhaps, recommending it to their friends. These are the people who really keep Gold Medal and MacDonald in business, and if the sales of the McGee books have been good, it is more their doing than ours, despite the fact that we like McGee and MacDonald just as much as--if not more than they do.

And I am reasonably sure that Mr. MacDonald is too practical a man to completely ignore the bulk of his readers. He has done an excellent job thus far of entertaining them, along with getting across to them the way he apparently feels about our current society and civilization in general. The fact that his books sell well indicates that he has been able to do this without offending them--without rubbing their faces in it, so to speak.

But let's assume, for the sake of discussion, that he does something really "wild" with McGee in the seventh novel. And that the bulk of his readers cry "Now wait a minute here! This isn't the McGee we have all learned to love and respect!" Let's assume he destroys the formula so completely that it antagonizes all of his readers--save for we loyal followers. Sales would drop, and we would all suffer a loss. McGee would become a martyr. Sure, fans could point with pride to MacDonald and say "That's our boy--he wrote what he damned well pleased....the public be damned....he's living in a garret now because he refuses to write what his publishers want...but he has our loyalty and respect, and some of us even worship him a little..."

Well, we know it isn't going to be like that. MacDonald is not a fanatic. He is aware of the wrong things in this world, of its hypocrisies and damned-foolishness--and he speaks out against them in his own way, but he's not foolish enough to destroy the outlet he has for making his comments. He may depart from the formula gradually (taking all of his readers along with him--luring them rather than baiting them), but don't expect it to be a really sudden blast off in an unexpected direction.

Ted White (again in Apa L) notes a beginning of this change in the sixth McGee novel:

"...I read BRIGHT ORANGE FOR THE SHROUD and it left me with mixed feelings. On the one hand, I felt that McGee overdid his commentary on society and civilization a bit--I kept reading it as an editor and thinking 'that could be cut without loss' and 'this would speed up a good bit if that were cut'--too many of McGee's ruminations interfered with the flow of dialogue and action. Likewise, the plot and action seemed a bit rudimentary; a thin plot weighed down with thick observations. On the other hand, MacDonald is beginning to approach Chandler's power of The Long Goodbye here, in that he is as much writing a novel as a mystery. Many of his observations--especially those regarding eavesdropping on a couple having sex--were particularly valid and insightful. It is significant, I think, that McGee does not get a girl at any point in this book, and even rejects a couple of overtures. Perhaps this book, rather than the next, marks the turning point in the series; the turning away from the opening formula."

I was particularly interested in Ted's comment that "too many of McGee's ruminations interfered with the flow of dialogue and action". Of course, Ted is an editor, as well as a writer, by profession, and perhaps more of a critical reader than most of us. It would be interesting to have an "average reader's" opinion. I suppose there isn't any such animal--I couldn't qualify, as I read too many different types of fiction and non-fiction and tend to have at least one critical eye open no matter what I'm reading. (It is amazing what one can learn about editing by reading the backs of cereal boxes.)

I doubt that Bill Rotsler could be considered an average reader either, but I think it was Bill who commented on how smoothly MacDonald worked in his comments on society, etc., without disturbing the flow of the story. I'm not really trying to set up a debate between Ted and Bill, but further comment from both, and from anybody else who is interested, would be interesting...

--ljm

