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(Urps from the editorial esophagus)

Correction pliz: The drawing on page 16 last month was by Lester Fried, not by Harry Strunk as the contents page stated.

Crack-Of-Doom Note: As you may know, this mag spews from a mimeo generously lent us by Ben Singer. But now that he's in uniform, Ben is apparently anxious to sell the machine. The situation is incredibly confused at this writing, but if I can't buy it from him, there may be a WARPless interval until I can finance another. If that is not immediately possible, publication will be suspended until at least next spring, in which case, of course, the balance of your subscriptions will be refunded. Keep your fingers crossed.

Credit Line: Besides the other material marked as such, the poem by Russell Watkins came to us through the Manuscript Bureau of NFFF.

Tempest in Teapot: Small in scale but virulent in intensity, a battle-royal has raged in Science-Fiction International the past few weeks, culminating in the resignation of several members. Since the club had no constitution, there was no agreed-upon procedure for settling the dispute, and both sides took to flooding the mail with "open letters," often two or three a day. While I hate to dash cold water upon the joyous enthusiasm with which fan leap into battles of this sort, it seems to me that more could have been accomplished by (1) putting through a club constitution first, and then, with rules to govern the action, proceed with the feud; or (2) getting an impartial fan to act as arbiter, or at least to straighten out the flatly contradictory claims. Oh, well, who ever heard of a fanfeud settling anything, anyhow? But it might profit any other fanorganization which is drifting without a constitution, to study the chaos which resulted in SFI, and take preventive measures before the same thing happens to them.

Opportunity Knocketh: From the Fall 48 SPECTATOR, official organ of SAPS: "The SAPS want list is at the moment two long; two people waiting, I mean.....So how about giving SAPS some publicity in any fanmags you may publish?? Lets get a waiting list at least 5 names long." The guy to contact is Lloyd Alpaugh, Jr., RFD #4, Somerville, New Jersey. Need I say more?

NFFF Members: Note special offer on contents page.

Incidentals: Gad, mimeo ink (Heyer) is up to \$2 a pound! Murder! That must be what they mean by "black gold." ## Intended five pages of Q-S thisWARP, but could only dig up three pages of letters that would be of interest to all WARPreaders. ## Have you read Nelson Bond's excellent stfyarn "The Last Outpost" in the October Blue Book? The skill of plot development which this story shows is one excellent reason why Bond gets his checks from the slicks instead of the pulps these days. ## Redd, what was that prediction you made a few months back regarding the Michigan-Minnesota game? ## Picked up an excellent-condition copy of HGWells' "The Croquet Player" for 50¢ the other day whilst browsing in the local magshop. And for the first time in history, I found that a "classic" lived up to its reputation. The book is, if anything, more timely than ever right now, ten years after Wells set forth the stark horror which is creeping over our world. Try to find yourself a copy, if you're not already familiar with it. adieu...r-tRapp

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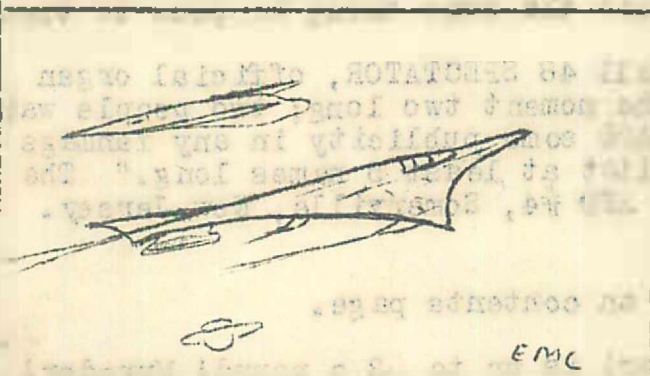
by T.E. WATKINS  
1605 Wood Ave.  
Kansas City 2, Kansas

The train is coming down the track, TOOT, TOOT, TOOT! The station agent and Clark Kent look down at a broken rail. We sit back in our movie seats with a smug sense of satisfaction. There is no danger, that train will not jump the track because we know who Clark Kent is. He is not a bird, he is not a plane, HE IS SUPERMAN! All he has to do is to reach down and twist that rail back in place with his little finger. Shucks, he could blow it back in place.

The station agent does not know that the man beside him is SUPERMAN. The train is coming down the track, TOOT, TOOT, TOOT!! The agent rushes up the track to warn the train. We wonder why Clark Kent delays. Twist that rail, boy, that agent can't stop that train. Kent looks around, spies haystack, runs behind haystack, trumpets sound, train whistle toots, agent waves madly, and tATA, tATA, out from behind haystack comes (oh my achin' eyes) SUPERMAN in full regalia -- long underwear and cape.

O.k., o.k., so he can't twist rail without special underwear. Let's go, SM, the train is coming fast, TOOT, TOOT, TOOT! Whizzes past agent. This is a job for SUPERMAN! Off he goes. Gets in front of train. Mighty muscles bulge as he pushes on engine and stops train cold. People get out and gather round. Eyes pop. And THEN, with many a grunt and groan, SUPERMAN twists rail back in shape. Oh, well, I suppose SUPERMAN has to have his egoboo and he doesn't twist rails unless someone is looking. But not for our 45¢. We've

seen the feature anyway and this is the serial. On our way out we notice that the kids have their eyes glued to the screen. Don't sneer at the little darlings -- they are future stf fans. They are getting their ABCs. They will start out on SUPERMAN and Buck Rogers and perhaps continue to enjoy van Vogt, Williamson and Russell.



The thing that disappoints us is the lack of good science fiction on the screen. There have been quite a number of fantasy pictures and some I would call semi-science fiction, but very few real science fiction pictures.

Four pictures produced since the silent era I would call science fiction of a sort. "Just Imagine" was a stf humor picture produced by Paramount in the middle thirties. It had something of the flavor of Edgar Rice Burroughs and his Martian stories. The city-of-the-future scenes and rocket scenes were done in miniature and were just as phoney as a lead dime. The movie patrons laughed at the picture instead of with it. Paramount never made another.

"Frankenstein" was a success, but Universal loused it up with frequent and corney sequels. "The Shape of Things To Come" was an

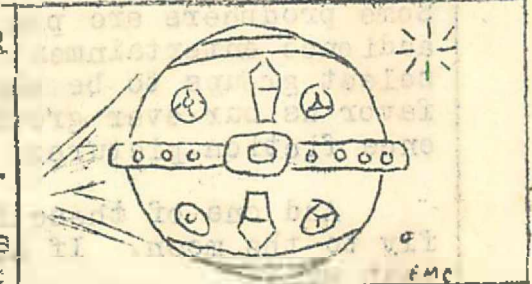
English film from an H.G. Wells story and was a prediction of the second World War. It was a good picture, but not much of a financial success.

"The Lost World" was the most successful science fiction picture both from a financial and production point of view. The prehistoric animals looked quite real and the whole production was tip top. This movie was a good example of what the movies can do in presenting the imagination of science fiction authors.

There have been a number of pictures produced that might be called semi-science fiction such as "The Invisible Man," filmed from an H.G. Wells story; the famous classic, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," and a number of others.

At the present time no studios are contemplating filming science fiction. It would seem that the time is ripe for this type of picture. The movie patrons laughed at "Just Imagine" because it was too unusual. Now after the atomic bomb and the V-2 rocket and with better story and production would they laugh? Science fiction is a treasure trove of untouched material that could provide the motion pictures with many exciting films. The producers are retrenching on costs and it would seem that the science fiction stories could be bought for a fraction of the cost of best selling novels and stage plays. And yet the listing of future films in "Variety" gives no science fiction stories filmed or about to be filmed. What gives?

The answer to that question lies in the economic muddle which most motion picture producers now find themselves. During the war the motion picture companies made the biggest profits ever made by any type of entertainment. Employment and wages were high, prices fixed and commodities scarce. The over-excited public spent their money on entertainment. A large share of the swag went to the movies. Today employment and wages are still high, but commodities are not so scarce and prices are not fixed and are sky high. The share of the swag to the motion pictures is way down. Of course, Hollywood is still taking bigger grosses per picture than they did before the war, but the cost of production is much higher than prewar and still rising. As the line between gross receipts and costs continues to narrow the producers sweat.



Several other factors have entered the picture. Before the war a picture producer figured on making his production cost on domestic sale and his profit on foreign sales. Now foreign countries have a tendency to tax American pictures for all they are worth to save their dollar exchange. The British tax 'em 75% no less. The French may do the same. Many countries under Russian domination won't admit American pictures at all. In the future the American picture may do well to meet distribution costs on the foreign market.

The movies are meeting more competition than ever before from big time sports, liquor and that fast-growing baby, television. Just how much business they will lose to television is the biggest headache to the motion picture producer right now.

The movies are meeting more censorship than ever before. Every organization that ever had a beef at the movies are hitting them now. The old practice of Hollywood of giving in on the slightest complaint

of some well organized minority is drying up their story material. They cannot film sex, race, or political problems with any degree of honesty.

The impact on Hollywood is terrific. As the profits dwindle the actors, producers and production men scurry around like ants in a stepped-on ant hill. People get fired over night, contracts change hands, pictures half completed are dropped because of costs. The result has been that since the war, Hollywood has produced the poorest run of pictures in its history. Little experimentation is going on now. The documentary film such as "Boomerang" and "The Street With No Name" is the only new thing that Hollywood has tried. Race prejudice pictures such as "Crossfire" and "Gentlemen's Agreement" have had a small success, but no new ones are on the way.

In such a set-up it is not difficult to see why the science fiction film, which has had no outstanding success in the past, is not being produced today. The new cycles are Westerns such as "Red River" and "Silver River" and musicals such as "Easter Parade" and "The Lady in Ermine," both tried and true formulas aimed at a large mass audience.

There are factors, however, which might cause a new cycle of science fiction films when Hollywood catches its economic breath. A larger audience is in the making--read paragraph 1. The kids today are reading SUPERMAN and Captain Marvel and are better prepared for science fiction films than were the kids of yesterday who read western stories and dime novels. The atomic bomb has stirred the imagination of the average man like no other event in history and he is better geared to accept the science fiction premise than he was ten years ago. Science fiction writers are writing better stories--some of them are getting into the slick magazines, almost unheard-of in the thirties. Some producers are predicting that television will take over the mass audience entertainment and that the movies will produce pictures for select groups to be shown in small theaters. This would work in our favor as our ever growing numbers could put out a strong bid for science fiction pictures.

And one of these days some happy-go-lucky Irishman is going to fly to the moon. If nothing else will jolt the Hollywood producer, that will!

How would you guys like a couple of seats for "The World of A," by van Vogt, in technicolor and three dimensions? On the aisle, you say? Right this way, boys!

- END -

## THE GHOST

The ghost walked the streets of old  
Saw how it had changed today;  
He had lived there long ago  
He knew not how far away.

His old friends he could see--  
But talk with them, oh no!  
Nor did his friends know that he  
Was so near to them, oh woe!

Sad he returned to his haunts,  
To go on his way alone;  
No one could know his wants.  
He looked back once -- then  
was gone.

by RUSSELL WATKINS  
203 Wampum  
Louisville 9, Kentucky







THE ARMCHAIR FORTEAN DISCUSSES:

ARSON

!!!!!!!

by r-trapp

In the September SPACEWARP I wrote the following:

"At this writing, they're still having quite a time over that fire-plagued farmhouse down in Meecomb, Illinois. However, I'll venture a prediction: By the time you read this, it will be all explained, probably on a chemical basis. If so, I'll comment further in the next WARP. Analysing the situation according to Fort's theories, what I would most like to know are the ages, names, and other particulars about the two children of the household. Particularly, whether one or both are adopted children. Guess I'll have to wait until FATE gets around to considering the case."

For the record, the incident began on the 7th of August, when brown spots appeared on the wallpaper of Charles Willey's home. The spots spread, burst into flame, and after two hundred had been put out, managed to burn the farmhouse to the ground. In the next few days two barns suffered the same fate, and fires broke out in a milkhouse which the family was using as a makeshift dining room.

Willey, his wife and his two children moved to another farm, where more fires broke out.

Meanwhile, the local fire chief, an insurance investigator, the State Fire Marshal and his assistants were vainly seeking the cause. In a United Press dispatch (18 Aug) the local fire chief termed the fires "so fantastic you hate to talk about it."

At first some chemical in the wallpaper was blamed, everyone conveniently forgetting the fires in the barns. This is in the best non-Fortean tradition. But the UP reports (19 Aug) "Willey thought the wallpaper to blame and ripped it off the walls. Then lath and wood-work burned."

On 23 August, one John Burgard, Deputy State Fire Marshal, was ordered to devote his entire time to solving the mystery, and at that time his boss said: "There wasn't no fires yesterday, and I don't think there will be as long as people are around, if you know what I mean. There haven't been many cases of arson in these parts, but you never know. I think we'll find out it's a plain old match." Nothing like a completely open viewpoint in an investigation like this, is there?

On 30 August, Burgard described how fires "shot out of walls like lighted gas out of a blow torch."

For a week, Burgard's presumably diligent investigation produced nothing. The fires continued to occur. He was said to be hampered by the crowds of curiosity-seekers on the farm. (UP dispatch, 23 Aug). In other words, while hundreds of people are watching a building, it's easier for an arsonist to do his dirty work than if only one person is on guard. Yes.

It is noteworthy that no mention is made of any matches, burned or unburned, being found in the vicinity of any of these hundreds of fires.

By the 31st of August, we can easily conjecture that Burgard is fed up with his job. Here he has to remain away from the pleasant city of Springfield, tramping around in a lot of ashes on a farm, in the worst heatwave of the year. Besides, he still can't explain the fires. Maybe his boss is getting a mite peeved, too. After all, it's an election year.....

Furthermore, national attention is focussed on the Willey farm. Perhaps the Fire Marshal is beginning to wonder how his appropriation will fare in the next legislature if his office fumbles the year's most important case.

On the surface, however, all is quiet. The authorities give out a vague but reassuring statement now and then. They are making progress, and, in Burgard's words, are all ready to "put the finger on" the arsonist.

Now we come to a UP dispatch of 31 August 1948, which I quote in its entirety as it appeared in the Detroit Free Press:

MACOMB, ILL. --(UP)-- The 13-year-old niece of Charley Willey confessed today she touched off the "mystery" fires that burned down his house and barns and chased him from farm to farm, authorities reported.

The confession blasted notions that everything from radio waves to atomic energy or "ghosts" had caused the little fires that kept breaking out on Willey's property.

Wonet McNeil, red-haired niece who was once blind, admitted touching off the fires with matches because she didn't like where she was living, States Attorney Keith Scott said. The fires--hundreds of them--broke out on Willey's wallpaper until his 70-year-old, five-room farmhouse burned down. Then two barns went up in smoke.

Investigators had been baffled until recently when they began to suspect arson.

Deputy State Fire Marshal John Burgard said he set a trap by arranging a box of matches in a certain position at the new Willey home.

Burgard said that Saturday when he smelled smoke he peered through a window and saw Wonet inside. He said he put out the fires and then examined the matches, which had been disturbed,

Scott said the girl confessed after an hour's questioning by himself and Burgard.

The girl said she was unhappy because her parents were separated.

Wonet said she touched matches to the walls of the farmhouse when no one was looking. She said she fired the barns by setting fire to hay in the haymows.

Wonet is a sixth-grade pupil. The girl was blind several years ago for about a year and as a result was behind in school, Scott said. He did not know the cause of her blindness.

Scott said he saw no reason for prosecution "at the moment." The girl was released to the custody of an aunt and Scott said she would be given an examination at Chicago. ((End of news item))

Well, so the case is closed. We can now all sigh in relief, with perhaps a slight wonder at the extraordinary ability of a 13-year-old who could baffle her family, the neighbors, and highly-trained professional investigators for three weeks before being caught.

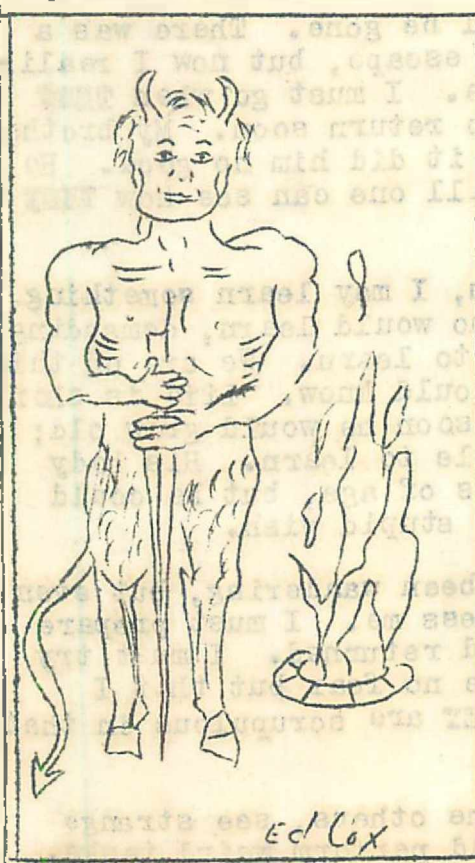
After all, she confessed, didn't she? It only took two men an hour to get the confession from her. Charles Fort had a quaint attitude toward this type of thing: "The statement that somebody, operated upon by the police, or by a coroner, confessed, has the meaning that has a statement that under pressure an apple produces cider." (917)

The girl says she started these fires (remember Burgard's previous description: "Blowtorch-like") by "touching matches to the walls of the farmhouse when no one was looking." Of a remarkably similar case, Fort writes: "Possibly a dozen male susceptibles could have looked right at this pretty, young girl, and not have seen her strike a match and flip it into furniture; but no flip of a match could set wallpaper afire." (922) ".....But the chief difficulty was to explain the fire on the ceiling and the fire on the walls. I'll not experiment, but I assume that I could flip matches all day at a wall, and not set wallpaper afire." (924)

Then there is an interesting paragraph in a UP dispatch of 29 Aug: ".....The first fire in their new home broke out about 1 p.m. Friday. 'It started in a kitchen cupboard while I was canning tomatoes,' Mrs. Willey said."

Has Wonet, one wonders, also mastered the power of invisibility?

Several cases cited by Fort parallel the Willey fires in practically every particular. In most of them, the blame is finally fixed (or shoved) upon a servant-girl, an adopted child, anyone who is in the household but not of the family itself. Fort has some remarks about this, also: "'Adoption' is a good deal of a disguise for getting little girls to work for not much more than nothing. It is not so much that so many poltergeist girls have been housemaids and 'adopted daughters' as that so many of them have been not in their own homes; lost and helpless youngsters, under hard taskmasters, in strange surroundings." (950)



Notice, also, that Wonet was NOT seen setting the fires. She was in the same room with a fire (not an unlikely occurrence when "hundreds" of them have occurred in a month), and a matchbox is found to be "disturbed" after the excitement of extinguishing the blaze has died down. Now, one thing lacking in this case, but present in several cited by Fort, is additional "supernatural" occurrences. Furniture moving about the rooms, spirit raps, etc., usually accompany the plague of fire-spots. Since the investigators at the Willey farm were likely not Fortesans, they perhaps never thought to look for such things at all.

There is something else -- mentioned, but not connected with the fires -- and that is Wonet's blindness. Offhand, I can think of no common disease which would produce temporary blindness except the type (whose name I cannot recall) which is equivalent to shell-shock. In other words, Wonet is highly sen-

\*References are to page numbers in the one-volume edition of "The Books of Charles Fort", Holt & Co., 1941.

sitive. This could be either a cause or a result of a telekinetic ability which might be responsible for the fires.

Fort explains this type of fire (which is usually associated with and often blamed on) an adolescent girl) as the vestigial manifestation of an ability which all humans once possessed. Alternatively, he conjectures that the fire-making power operates through mankind, but is actually caused by the natural world itself -- a means of preserving the human race for its function in the Universe -- a means which was more often used in the past, but of which occasional traces remain to the present day.

But, despite the inadequacy which 20-years-dead Fort shows in the authorities' explanation of the Willey fires, everyone is now thoroughly satisfied that all is explained. The snug little universe of conventional science spins merrily on.

I submit for your consideration this: The essence of science is predictability. If Charles Fort, in 1932, could write the words which enabled me, in 1948, to make the prediction which heads this article, isn't Forteanism worth the investigation of scoffers, skeptics, and scientists? Yet, that complacent trio are all too likely to continue serene in their belief that they know all the answers.

The last lingering question lurks here, unheeded, until put into the form of a fanzine article by that not-easily-satisfied individual:

#### The Armchair Fortean

Address unknown.  
Rct., U.S.A.A.F.

by HAL SHAPIRO

NFFF  
Mss. Bureau

The hour is soon at hand and then I shall be gone. There was a time when I would have protested and grieved to escape, but now I realize that that would be a hopeless course to pursue. I must go when ~~THEY~~ call, and if I cooperate, ~~THEY~~ may allow me to return soon. My brother attempted to flee when in their clutches, but it did him no good. He has been back now, for over two years, but still one can see how ~~THEY~~ have changed him.

Perhaps if I do not struggle against them, I may learn something of value. It is said that ~~THEY~~ teach those who would learn, demanding only utter obedience in return. And I desire to learn. We are on this earth too short a time to learn all that we should know. Life is short. But he who would live forever is a fool. For soon he would grow old; much too old. His brain would become too feeble to learn. His body would wither and be consumed with the illnesses of age, but he could not die. Endless suffering would be his for a stupid wish.

But my mind is wandering. It has always been wandering, but even more so since I have learned ~~THEY~~ seek to possess me. I must prepare myself. I must contact those who have gone and returned. I must try to contact those who have not returned. I have no fear but that I shall eventually return, alive or dead (for ~~THEY~~ are scrupulous in that respect); yet I dread the thought of leaving.

The hour draws near. Soon I shall join the others, see strange sights, participate in mysterious ceremonies and perform weird tasks. But perhaps it will not be too bad... in fact, I may eventually learn to like the United States Army.

IT'S A LIE!



SAYS PAUL D. COX!

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PAUL D. COX  
3401 Sixth Avenue  
Columbus, Georgia

# OTHER WORLDS — KAY-MAR TRADER

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A regular WARP feature.....

FILE 13

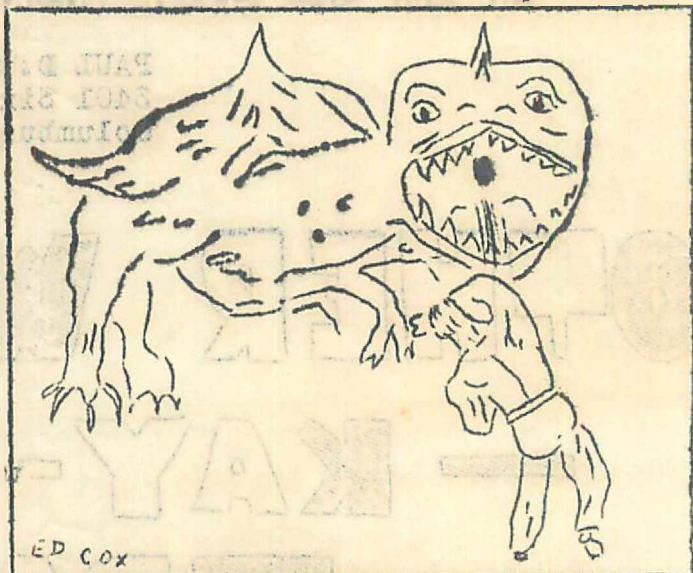
by REDD BOGGS  
2215 Benjamin St. N.E.,  
Minneapolis 18, Minn.

**OUT OF THE PAST.** What's your favorite scene in all science fiction? That's a pretty tremendous question to ponder on an empty brain, but order a pine float and let's consider it. Just let your mind drift back and pick out some likely candidates from among those tattered magazine files you've got. Think of the scenes that hauled you out of your britches and huzzled you across the galaxy till you wondered if you'd get back to Earth in time to make the first class tomorrow. The scenes that nudged your chuckle-bone till you rolled on the linoleum. The scenes that made your eyes a bit warm at the corners, silly slob that you are! (There are a few of these scenes even in this field where human interest is scarce).

When my good old mind gropes back in time, it hauls out such all-time thrills as that taut scene in "Legion of Time" where the boy (what was his name?) either reaches for the magneto half-buried in the sand or a pebble beside it -- and by his choice settles the fate of two mighty future worlds. It grasps the conclusion of Arthur C. Clarke's "Rescue Party," where Earth's huge armada pours across interstellar space at a steady clip. It drags out that super-wedding of Kim and Chris at the end of "Second Stage Lensmen" (I'm a sentimental, silly myself, bien entendu!) It dusts off the great scene where Hugh Hoyland (I remember his name!) gets his first intense view of the stars. It relives that amazing scene in Harry Bates' "A Matter of Speed" where the skyscraper seems to spend minutes or hours falling into ruin after the bomb explodes within it.

But as my mind turns up these nostalgic scenes and a myriad of others, the one that tickles me most is one I remember actually bringing me leaping from my chair first time I read it. It is in Ted Sturgeon's "Two Percent Inspiration."

The story concerns a very nasty school superintendant, a very clumsy kid, and a very human millionaire-inventor. The millionaire owns the school, and after several pages of nastiness on the super's part he enters the scene in time to see the clumsy kid being bullied. A shrewd duck, the old boy sees the kid's possibilities and tells off the super. The kid sees the drift of things, calmly measures the distance between his fist and the super's jaw -- and wham! It doesn't sound very dramatic, maybe, but I



I recommend you read the story yourself. I think you'll agree that the kid's one-two on the superintendant's glass jaw is the perfect climax to the indignities recorded on earlier pages. One derives a lovely feeling of satisfaction from it, and no mistake.

How are you coming with your own favorite scene? Not so good, perhaps. Better shove that pine float aside and I'll order you a bear. Let's see now, maybe you liked that scene in Hubbard's "Kilkenny Cats"

where Steve and Vicki were surrounded by wolves.....

\* \* \* \* \*

PURELY INFORMATIONAL. The "new" author, Benj. Miller, whose Orig Prem yarns are appearing in TWS, is really a pseudonym for one of the authors appearing in the October issue. All right, lardhead, guess! ... Lewis Padgett's The Day He Died, a mystery yarn which shot stf's fair-haired boy to "top rank among suspense writers" is out in paperback form. ... Ray Bradbury's favorite month is October. ... Redlance Press will publish a booklet this winter titled The Revolt of the Pedestrians, by David H. Keller, M.D. A permitted reprint from the Feb., 1928 Amazing, it brings the Doc's first-published yarn back into print after 20 years. 20¢ from Redd Boggs, address at the head of this column. (So it is a plug, Art! But didn't Tympani give Warp a free plug or two?)

\* \* \* \* \*

WHILE WE LIVE, LET US LIVE. Like thoughtful men everywhere, stf fans are soberly concerned about the next war -- Atomigeddon. It speaks well for them that they have the old guts to consider the possibility. Though fans habitually look toward the future, it has always been toward hope, toward utopia. The necessity of staring into bleakness now, after all these years, is enough to strip a mental gear, but fans are doing it quite honestly in bull-session and fanzine. How will war start? Can we prevent it? What are chances of personal survival?

Your humble file-clerk has sat in on many intellectual discussions wherein these vital questions were brilliantly dealt with, but the probability of atomic war has often seemed no more terrifying than, say, the solution of the three-body problem. Recently, though, I have deliberately subjected myself to a heavy dose of current-eventitis -- Winchell, Drew Pearson and all the editorial-page scribblers. My gizzard is frosted, if not actually congealed. War may not be inevitable, but let's not kid ourselves, people, it is coming and nobody sees anything on the horizon that can stop it.

What shall we do? What shall we do? We can use some common-sense and cease to work against the almost-inevitable. We can toss out our piddling little efforts to turn the tide of disaster. If the VIPs who ride the planes to conferences in Paris and Berlin and Moscow can't -- or won't -- steer us into safer channels, we can't do a damn thing. We can say our farewells to this civilization, not without nostalgia, but with a sure feeling that if it cannot save itself, it does not deserve saving. Perhaps the next rulers of the Earth will do a better job.

From here on, let the motto be Dum vivimus, vivamus. Personally, I'll be at the local tavern, if you're looking for me. Later, I'll see you when we march into the shambles where Moscow used to be. Or I'll see you in hell.

- - - - -

after the rough draft is set forth with a brittle crack and a rumble  
and gives place to the footnotes of whimpers whose punctuation is a sudden scream in the distance  
with the spasmodic thump of a dying child's leg  
bloodily scraping again and again at a fallen timber  
the pen of an editor marking copy  
then i'll watch the topheavy cloud ascend with eyes already beginning to liquify  
and comprehend that the final chapter is finished  
...don't miss our next issue, ART in our next issue.

AHR

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2 THE 4 TH STORY 2  
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by Pvt. Andrew Gregg RA 16 286 877  
Company Z, STR  
Fort Monmouth, New Jersey

A SMALL GROUP of old women had gathered outside the small Wisconsin church, and the usual discussion drifted on weird subjects. Although those conversing would not have understood the meaning of the word, the subject centered itself further on heredity.

"I remember when my daughter was borned," said one of the oldest. "For two weeks before she came I et nothin' but fish. When she was a leetle girl I tried to get her to eat fish, but she wouldn't do it. She never would eat fish. See, she was borned not likin' fish, because I didn't like it before she was borned!"

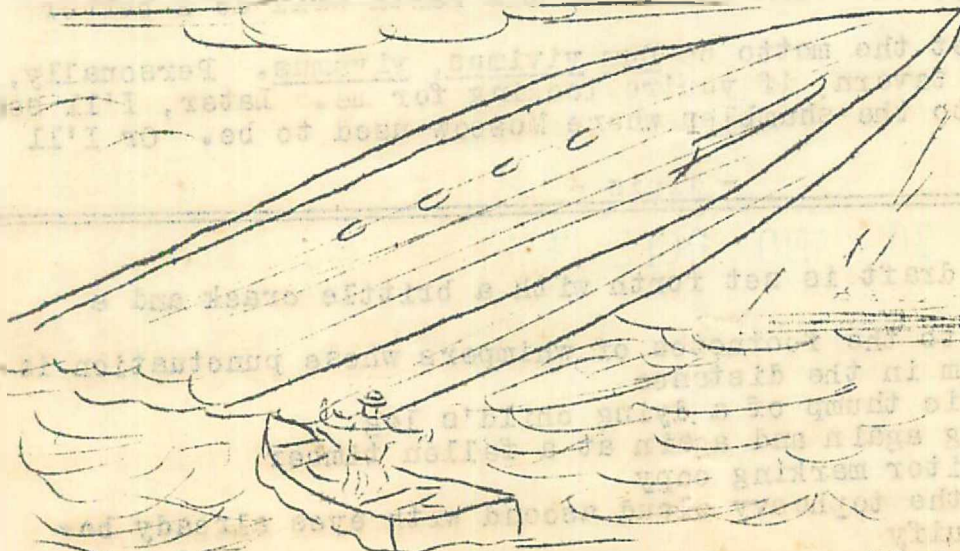
"My son doesn't like cats, either," continued another matriarch. "Whenever John sees a cat in the road he'll go out of his way to run over it with the car. And just before he was born that big black cat we had twenty year ago jumped on my bed and started scratching me. Just went crazy, I guess, and John never did like cats."

"Do you remember John Swenson's wife?" Another old one was talking now. "She died about forty years ago, so you might not remember her. Anyway, she lived on a little farm near Castle Rock. She hadn't never been to anyplace larger than that, I guess. The night before she had her seventh young'n, somebody told her about a town in France where everybody has six fingers. All that night she thought about how bad it would be if her baby would be born with six fingers. I delivered the baby myself the next morning. It was born dead, and it did have six fingers. That's the only thing that was wrong with it. It had five regular fingers and one extra little one. We buried it right away and didn't tell anybody, not even Swenson's wife. That's why you never heard of it!"

The oldest crossed her wrinkled hands and said, "I remember back in '88 when I was just a little girl. We were living a few miles out of old Richland City on a farm, and I remember what happened to old

lady Kowanski's baby. Here's the way it was. Just a couple of weeks before it was born she was chased by a wolf, and..."

- END -



OUT OF THE SEA

ED Cox



hearkens to the wailings of

...AND FALLING HAIR.

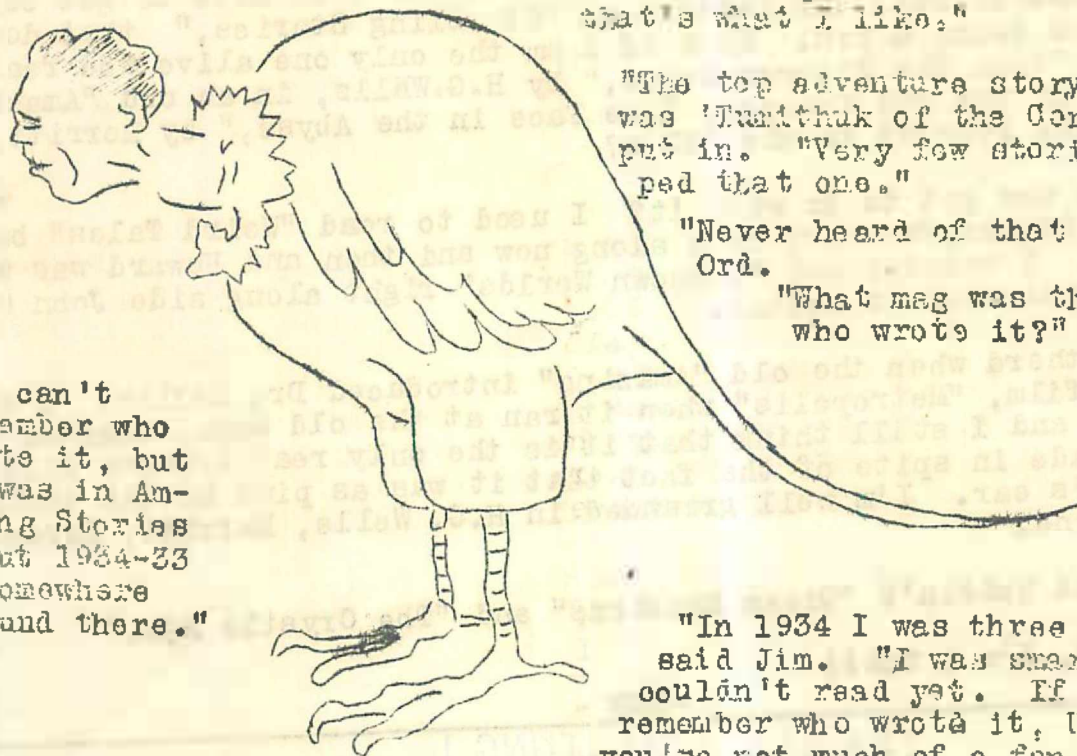
T. E. WATKINS

Jim Phillips, my nephew, came up from Paola, Kansas, last week to look in the book shops and second hand magazine stores for a few collector's items. He planned to visit some of his StJ fan correspondents with an idea of luring them into one or more of his fan organizations. One of his friends by the name of Ford or Ord or Cord or something, came over Sunday afternoon and I eagerly joined in the conversation. I'm a fan too, you know.

They were talking about Henry Kuttner. "He's the best, you know, since Merritt," said Jim.

"I like H.G. Wells, myself," I cut in. "Have you guys ever read 'When the Sleeper Wakes'?"

There was a moment of silence. Then Cord, or was it Ford, said, "That serial in Astounding by Russell was sure swell -- lots of adventure and that's what I like."



"The top adventure story of all time was 'Thuthuk of the Corridors'," I put in. "Very few stories have topped that one."

"Never heard of that one," said Ord.

"What mag was that in end who wrote it?" asks Jim.

"I can't remember who wrote it, but it was in Amazing Stories about 1934-33 -- somewhere around there."

RUTLER

"In 1934 I was three years old," said Jim. "I was smart, but I couldn't read yet. If you can't remember who wrote it, Uncle Tom, you're not much of a fan."

"I am too a fan -- you don't have to remember who wrote everything. "Did you save the magazine; I'd like to read it."

"No, I didn't save the magazine. We didn't save magazines in those days. It was just around for a while and then it just wasn't around. How did I know guys would collect 'em some day? Nobody was collecting them then."

"If you didn't save magazines, you're not a fan. Fans, REAL fans, have always saved magazines! What fan organizations were going in those days?"

"None, as far as I know," I was beginning to wish I hadn't resurrected Thuthuk.

"There's been fan organizations for years," yelled Jim. "Didn't you read any of the letter columns?"

"No."

"Did you write any fan letters?"

"No."

"Do you belong to FAPA?" "No." "NAPA?" "No." "AAPA?" "NO."  
"Weird Tales Club?" "No." "Science-Fictioneers?" "No." "Science  
Fiction League?" "No." "SAPS?" "No." "YOU'RE NOT A FAN !!!"

"I CAN JOIN, CAN'T I? I SENT IN MY APPLICATION TO NFFF. I SENT  
IN MY DOLLAR. I'M A FAN."

"THEY'LL SEND YOUR DOLLAR BACK. YOU'RE TOO OLD TO BE A FAN. WHO  
EVER HEARD OF A BALD HEADED FAN!"

Then the telephone rang and the lady next door said that we would  
have to be a little more quiet as the baby was asleep. Jim and his  
friend went off to a magazine shop without inviting me.

Too old to be a fan -- who ever heard of anything like that? So  
I didn't save any magazines, so what? What if I do have to get out my  
reading glass to read the letters in "Startling Stories," that doesn't  
stop me from being a fan. What if I am the only one alive who read the  
reprint of "When the Sleeper Wakes," by H.G. Wells, in an old "Amazing"  
quarterly; or who can remember "The Face in the Abyss," by Merritt, an-  
other Amazing reprint in the '30's?

What's age got to do with it? I used to read "Weird Tales" back  
when a NEW Lovecraft story came along now and then and Howard was writ-  
ing for it. I sweated out "Unknown Worlds" right along side John Camp-  
bell. I cried when it folded.

I was there when the old "Amazing" introduced Dr. Keller. I saw  
the silent film, "Metropolis" when it ran at the old Royal Theater in  
Kansas City and I still think that it is the only real Science Fiction  
film ever made in spite of the fact that it was as pink as the inside  
of a rabbit's ear. I'm well grounded in H.G. Wells, Merritt, Lovecraft,  
and even Verne.

I've read Hudson's "Green Mansions" and "The Crystle Age."

By Golly, I'm a fan!!

-END -

## TRADERS - ACHTUNG!

### I GOT 'EM; U NEED 'EM?

AMAZING Apr 41  
ASTOUNDING Mar 47, Jun 47, Oct 47  
FANTASY READER #1  
STARTLING Wint 46, Spr 46, Jul 47  
TWS Win 45, Sum 46  
WEIRD TALES Jan 44 (poor), Mar 48  
PLANET Wint 47  
ARGOSY May 15, 1937  
AVENGER Mar 40  
POCKETBOOK: "Rocket To The Morgue"  
by H.H. Holmes -- murder strikes  
among stf authors and fans!

### I WANT THESE MAGS

ASTOUNDING Jan Sep 44; May Sep 45;  
Jan 46; Apr May 47  
EPM: Jun 46  
PLANET: Sum 44; Sum 46  
STARTLING: Fall 44; Win 45  
TWS: Fall 44

And a great majority of all  
pre-1943 issues. Send me a  
list of your extras.

This is a trade offer only; no  
sales; no buying. Let us swap!!

r-t-Rapp -- 2120 Bay Street -- Saginaw, Michigan

\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*

QUIEN SABE ?

\* \* \* \* \*

\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*

((Con Pederson tells us the title of this column should have an umlaut or a colophon or some exotic crosshatch on it. Personally, wir nicht verstehen das Spanische Sprache, so we're in no position to argue. But we're also in no position to print accent marks with our title-stamps. So let's just ignore the whole matter, shall we?))

Dear Art:

My new station is here for a while. I may not go up to Astoria for photography school at all, but I sure hope so!

I wrote The 4th Story a week or so before I came in the Army, and left it home. I wrote it again on the train between Knox and Monmouth, and just revived it again.

I went to Newark twice to find Sam Moskowitz. The first time I had 15¢, and found two S.Moskowitzs and two Sams in the phone directory and had no money to see him with, so went back. The second time I tried to get to Newark with 50¢ and ended up on Flatbush Ave. in Brooklyn, and slept in Penn Station. I got back to Newark broke the next day and tried to find the Avaton Pub. Co. It wasn't in the phone book, I couldn't remember Will Sykora's name, I couldn't find a copy of TWS that had the review of "Life Everlasting" in it, and no one could tell me anything about it, so I came back. So help me, though, I'll try again when I have money. I'll visit Lovecraft's "Arkham" country some time and write a WARP article on what it's really like. And I might visit Astra Zimmer, she lives near Albany. I'm pretty sure I can if I'm stationed at Astoria.

Since I've been in the Army I've had my strangest meal (two swigs of grape pop and a pack of dried cereal from a C-ration can while waiting in a haircut line) and my strangest night's sleep (on the Company Commander's desk waiting for 200 new men to fill up the Company.)

Right now I'm acting Company Clerk. Which means I take head count, sit at the cadre table, eatchow when I want to and take what I want to, don't pull KP or guard, use my own typewriter until its broken from overuse, and lay around for the first 7 hours every day, then work until 8 at night. I've already given my portable a medical discharge. I'll reactivate it as soon as I get settled again, though, for my own personal use, and the Orderly Room be damned.

I got the idea for The Fourth Story when I heard the first story in a bus, riding through LaCrosse, Wis.

Ret. ANDREW GREGG RA 16286877  
Company 2, STR  
Fort Monmouth, New Jersey

P.S.: I'm a recruit, not a private. All the EM were busted a rank without a salary loss, thank god, and they made the privates recruits.

MEMO TO GEORGE YOUNG:

Where the hell are those Michifen Meet stencils? I've been waiting two weeks now for 'em, so I can run off the last two pages of the September MUTANT! Impatiently, r-thapp

Dear r-t Trapp:

Yes, I've been wondering, too. In the magazines I have been receiving, there is less mention of the Torcon than there would be mention of who caused that odor in the elevator. I am hoping the next FAPA Mailing will contain some stuff. I think LIGHT has done pretty well. With the stuff in the issue I am now preparing, it will make 3 consecutive issues of LIGHT being influenced by the Torcon.

I've had that same thing happen to me -- using the wrong figures in a formula then wondering why the devil it wasn't working out. Right now I'm taking a course to prepare for examinations sometime next year to see about a government job -- and some of it is tough stuff. Fortunately I have always been able to study by myself from books -- better than from a teacher, in fact. But this damned grammar analysis is tougher to me than mathematics ever was. Just what are you going through for? ((I think a teacher who has teaching ability can do wonders for a student -- but such teachers are rare, unfortunately.//I'm taking a course designed to produce a stfwriter -- or something, perhaps a BEM. Technically, I'm majoring in journalism, but I'm also getting all the science and math I can cram into my schedule.))

We once had a fracas in the FAPA along the lines of the Cox-Storer-Sneary affair -- one Searles threatened censorship, and so on and the membership made things so hot he got out. I am against race prejudice -- religious prejudice -- sexual prejudice -- and censorship of free speech. If anything like this gets into the FAPA again I'll be in there hammer and tongs -- and I won't be the only Canadian member.

Ben Singer probably didn't worry God anyway. Singer is pretty small potatoes as a menace to the human race right now when you consider certain other gentlemen in the international scene. The AAF will quiet Ben down. Now he'll find out what it is like to live in a tarpaper barracks for two weeks, as Alger kept saying, with a grin. No doubt this is the best thing for Ben. Ben had a lot of excess energy and he will now learn -- or should -- to direct it to constructive purposes.

Enjoyed the current issue of SPACEWARP -- or should I nickname it "Spacerat" -- which reminds me, wonder why no fan has used that name for a magazine yet? But anyway -- though there is nothing on which I will comment just now, I liked reading the mag. Oh yes, was wondering why you don't use more illustrations. Get a local fan, or even one not so local if need be, who'll do the work directly on the stencil. And don't try to say it's too much work if he isn't local -- Bob Gibson, who is always active in LIGHT, lives in Calgary, Alberta. If you know your geography you'll know where that is -- North of Wyoming! And distance isn't any drawback with us. ((I dunno.....it's very seldom that I see a fullpage mimeo drawing which I feel would be worth sacrificing a page of text to include. I cheerfully admit, however, that my artistic judgment is something to make brave men shudder and all artists to commit suicide, so I could be wrong. However, with the exception of pro- and con- hectoart, I can't recall that the subject of WARP illos has ever come up before. Reader opinion invited.))

Guess this'll b3 all.

LES CROUTCH  
Box 121  
Parry Sound, Ontario, Can.

Dear Arturo:

Noticed among other things in ye September WARP, a rasping hunk of propaganda for the Catholic Church by Dan Mulcahy. Perhaps it is better to include this stuff in "Quien Sabe?"

Great Ghu! What's this? WARP up a nickelf?

I liked Ed Cox's professional style in his story "Dark Night." "Wizard of the Weird," don't care for anything that smacks of Auggie. But this was a damned interesting article, I must say. # We now find that Radell Nelson is a humorist. And a good one. I must send him that bible, some day, autographed. Damn it! Everything, well, almost everything was good in this ish. I have hardly anything to complain about. Don't agree with him, but admire Art James for stating his views so fearlessly. Wilkie Collins...whoops...Conner's piece of fanfiction was digested quiet well...which brings me to say, MORE FANFICTION in WARP. I place myself against the old fen who scorn fanfiction .....it helps develop your style as a writer.

Now to Mulcahy:

If it hadn't been for the freedom loving people, the freethinkers, we'd still be in the midst of the Inquisition, a lovely piece of Christian doing. I can assure you that you are ridiculous when you assert that the Europeans defended themselves against the "Mongol hordes" only because they loved their god. They did it only to protect themselves, and nothing more.

Was Columbus a Catholic? Funny but the history books...non-Catholic ones that is...profess not to know his religion. Some even say he might have been a Jew. Besides I heard it was Jews, moneylenders, who supplied the money to Columbus.

Why bring the religion of the settlers of this country into it? They didn't do it for religion; they did it for themselves. And I happen to recall that the Pilgrims came here because they were persecuted by the Catholic Church.

I ask you, Dan, to be a little bit more careful about YOUR statements.

I believe the story of the converted commies. Men gullible enuf to believe in the ranting hypocrisy of communism should certainly be fool enuf to believe in Catholicism. They were converted to Catholicism, weren't they?

In closing, allow me to point out a fact you forgot to mention about prominent Catholics: Adolph Hitler and Benito Mussolini were Catholics.

BEN SINGER

(Present address unknown --  
now in the U.S. Army Air Force)

((For the benefit of newcomers in the audience, Ben isn't feuding with the Catholics. He is just as much against Protestants, Jews, Buddists, Shaverites, or any other religion you can name. If basic training is as rugged nowadays as it was a few years ago, he is probably also now feuding with the Army, the Navy, the Coast Guard, militarists, pacifists, the First Sergeant, and the cats that prowl around the mess hall. Fun, ain't it?))

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SPACEWARP

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SPACEWARP is published theoretic-  
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