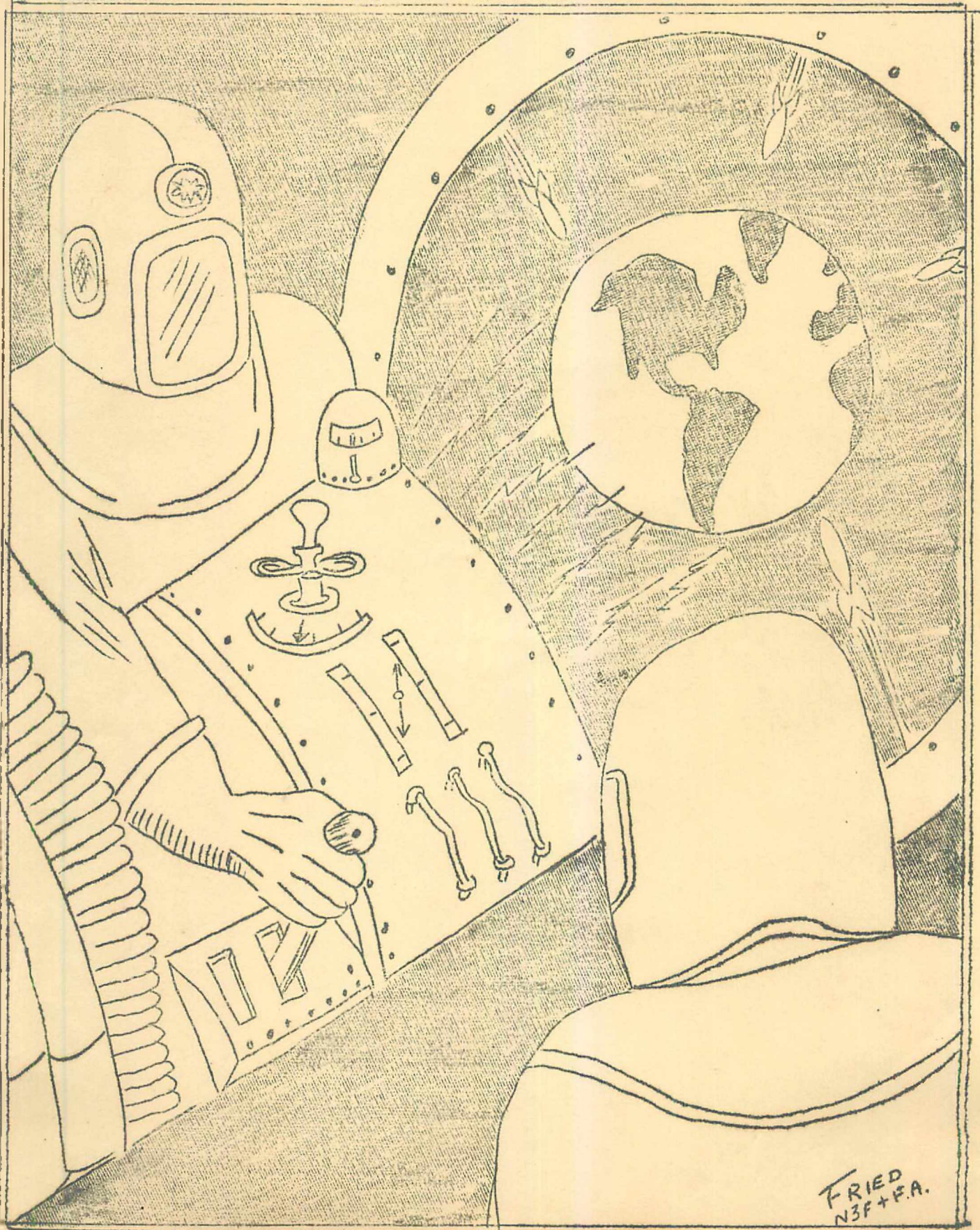


fandom's top Monthly SPACEWARP

VOLUME FOUR

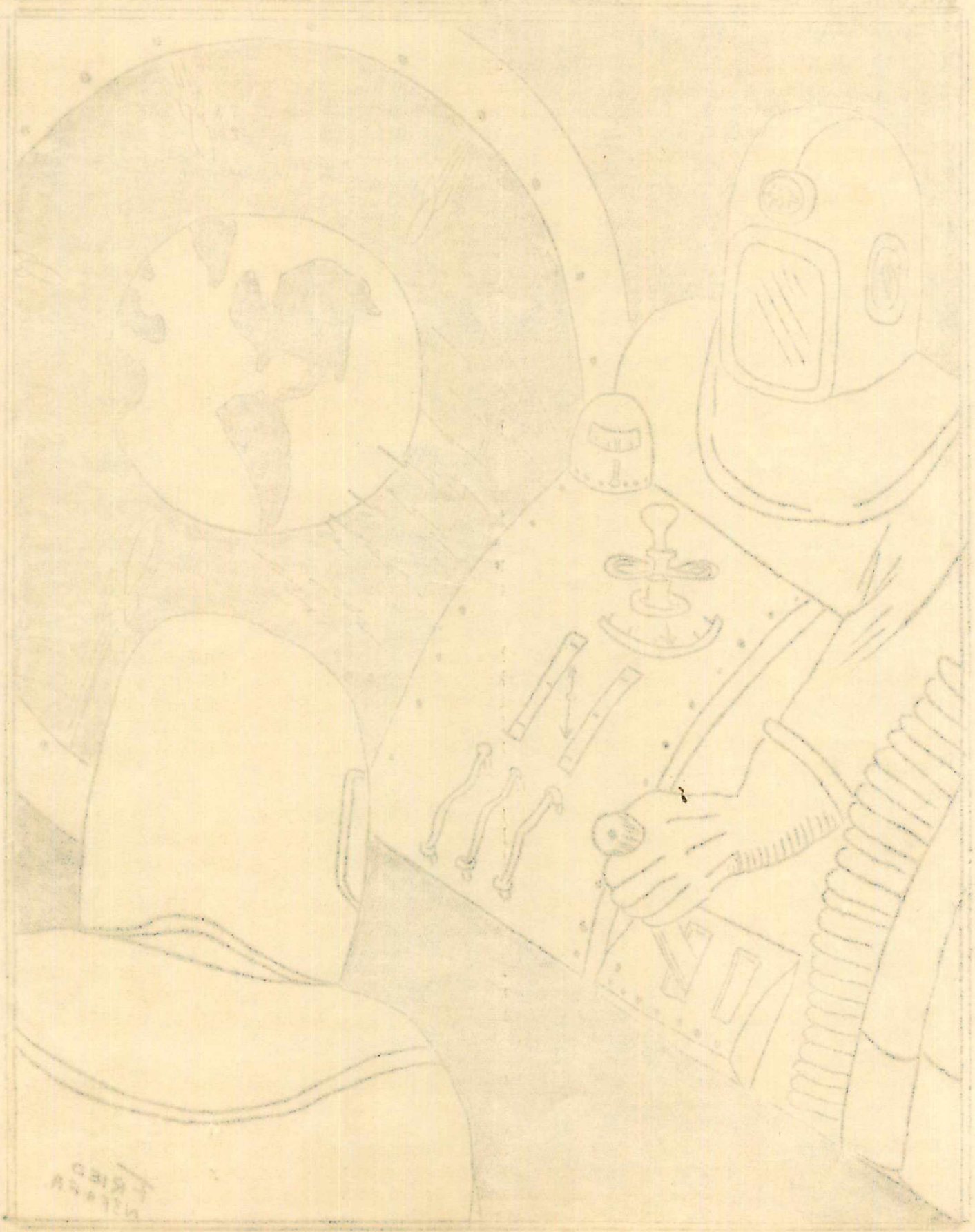
DECEMBER 1948

NUMBER 3



FRIED
N3F+FA.

SPACELWARR
Fandom's Top Monthly



TRIP
1944

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* A AAA H *
* AAA H *
* (Staccatos from the editorial typer) *
* * * * *

T I M B E R I

WELL-SEASONED greetings to each and every of y'all. As you've perhaps already noticed, this month's WARP breaks all records for size -- and, I might add, rates high on the quality ledger, too -- as a glance at the names on the contents page will show you.

Incidentally, I was fully occupied throughout November in producing this mammoth -- hence, I find the unanswered-mail mountain overwhelmingly high. In fact, I don't believe I've even thanked all the kind offerers of assistance on the duplication problem. Thanks, I really appreciated your concern for WARP's fate.

Speaking of WARP's fate, the crystal ball glows brightly for 1949. Effective with the January issue, SPACEWARP merges with Radell Nelson's new, but already outstanding, UNIVERSE. Both Ray and myself find that school work interferes with a solo publishing schedule -- but as co-editors we are confident that SP-UV will bring you the best of fanwriting and fanart each month.

Those of you who have not seen UNIVERSE have probably seen Ray's work in THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN, read his stories in THE MUTANT, or seen his artwork and recent Psycho Lab in SPACEWARP. His address (and subscriptions should be sent to him): 433 E. Chapin St., Cadillac, Michigan.

Cadillac is a community I must see for myself some day. I passed through it at 3:00 a.m. one day in a Model A during a rainstorm, so my impressions are vague. However, it seems to be the only city in the world where stiff outnumber the unenlightened. But of course, there are more fen per square head of citizenry in Michigan than anywhere else, as witness the exponential curve of MSFS membership.

Continue to send copy for the WARP to me -- the endless stencils still have to roll thru this rickety Underwood. By the way, I managed to rejuvenate this 1917-vintage typer quite a bit simply by polishing it with a cloth saturated with #2 fuel oil. Marvelous fluid, that. It is even better than machine oil for rejuvenating typewriter ribbons, too, I find.

AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT from its lack of coherence, I'm typing this directly on the stencil, and although I had quite a long mental list of topics to include, I've forgotten most of 'em by now. Oh, well...

ON PAGE 13 is an announcement of importance to all Midwest Fen. By golly, you missed a good time by not attending the BEERCON; will you not profit by your mistake and be sure to show up at the DeCON? Sudden thought: If any of the Michifens should happen to bag a buck during this fall's hunting season, we could have a fannish venison banquet and call the gathering the DEERCON. Oh, well, that's something I should have thought of a month ago.

JUST RECEIVED the TORCON REPORT, a beautiful publication indeed. I don't know if Ned McKeown has any more left, but you might write him at 1398 Mt. Pleasant Rd., Toronto (12) Ontario, Canada, and see. It's certainly worth 50¢ to have the full text of all the TORCON speeches, as well as comment on the proceedings by several prominent fans, authors, and publishers. Not to mention some artwork of the type every fan (the male ones, anyhow) will cherish.

BECAUSE OF THE new editorial setup, SPACEWARP-UNIVERSE will no longer exchange with other fanzines. If you're on the WARP exchange list and publish a quarterly, I'd like to continue getting your mag, for which I will send you TIMEWARP and occasionally WANIGAS, which are normally SAPSazines and unavailable to outsiders. If this is not O.K., or if you publish oftener than quarterly, mark the next mag you send to show that it's the last I'll get, and I'll send you a sub. And I hope you like the WARP well enuf to subscribe, also, nicht wahr?

Idle query: Suppose you have a cylinder 1" in diameter and bore a 1" dia. hole through it perpendicular to the longitudinal axis. What is the shape of the section which you have removed? And don't ask me... I think I know, but I've never tried it.

Department of Utter Snafu: SFI now apparently has two sets of officers and two Constitutional Committees. Someday I'm going to sit me down and figure out just how this incredibly-complex situation came about. In the meantime, if you want a liberal education in parliamentary procedure, join SCIENCE-FICTION INTERNATIONAL. In spite of its difficulties, it's an up-and-coming club. Write Jim Harmon, 427 E. 8th St., Mt. Carmel, Illinois.

Speaking of joining fanclubs, applications for MSFS membership have come from most parts of the U.S. and Canada. In most cases, these bids are not accepted unless (a) the applicant is a resident of Michigan or vicinity (such as servicemen now stationed elsewhere); (b) there is no active organization closer to the fan's home than Michigan; or (c) some special circumstance warrants an exception to the above rules. But it certainly seems that the field is wide open for other regional fanclubs to be organized, so that every fan has an opportunity to participate in activities in person, rather than the usual correspondence fanning.

The Central New York SFS, to name one, is a recently-organized club which covers a statewide area rather than one city. Fans in Virginia have tried several times to start a club in that area, as has Florida. The only way to get one going is for one or a few fans to take it upon themselves to organize, hold meetings, contact other fans in the area, and generally make a nuisance of themselves until they've got the less-ambitious characters stirred into action.

Notice the similarity between "The Hammer On The Moon" in the January FA, and "240,000 Miles Straight Up" in the December TWS? Looks like we're in for a cycle of Lunar-Communist tales to rival the atom-geddon deluge of a few months back. By the way.....a gloomy observation, but in accord with Boggs' recent File 13 remarks.....try reading some 1940-41 stftales in which the Nazis appear, and compare with recent accounts of Russia in pulp fiction. This is one time I hope history doesn't repeat itself. Russia is too vast a country for me to enjoy the prospect of walking across it with a pack and rifle.

By the way.....what were the flying discs?

Here's hoping you have a very merry Christmas, every one.

And now ol' Nostradamus r-tRapp peers ahead into 1949 and predicts the course of history. At this time next year, don't say you weren't warned:

MCMXL

Two coins, a grating, red and blue
Shall rock the mighty through and through;
When pyramids hold two great fen,
A revelation from a pen.

ahr
r-tRapp

oooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo
TASTES AND PHOBIAS
oooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

by NORMAN ASHFIELD
At the Sign of the Black Cat
27 Woodland Road
Thornton Heath
Surrey, England.

It's queer how fans can be so dogmatic and uncharitable to those who don't think as they do. Let's make a slight investigation into the problem.

Firstly we must consider the types of fantasy (ignoring the fact that all fiction is fantasy in the true sense of the word -- I am using it as 'fans' understand it). To start with, there's the 'Weird' type-- featured largely by Weird Tales and occasionally in the Ziff-Davis pair. Then we have the 'pure fantasy' type, -- featured of old in Unknown, but now appearing in a rather more hackneyed form in F.A. and Amazing. The third type, as everyone knows, is probably the most popular -- 'science fiction.'



Lovers of the 'weird' are those who like a real spine-chilling story, and probably believe that there are hosts of evil influences in life, which can to a large degree be personified. They tend to degenerate into sadists, who like horror for horror's sake: Their 'weird' stories usually have an unhappy ending, and they don't seem perturbed a bit!

The 'pure fantasy' lovers are a queer breed --they're often either faint-hearted 'weird' readers, or else SF readers who aren't full-blooded in their love for SF, or who want a little relaxation from the frequently 'heavy' science thrust upon them in SF. Pure-blooded 'weird' and 'SF' lovers jeer at the 'fantasy' type of story. I myself do not remember meeting anyone who likes 'fantasy' pure and simple by itself, without having any 'weird' or 'SF' leanings; there are no doubt some, but they can't be very numerous. Most of the readers of the former Unknown were SF fans largely attracted by the fact that Campbell was its editor. And after all, many of the stories had an SF slant, witness 'Sinister Barrier,' 'The Mislaid Charm' was probably the most important pure fantasy yarn featured in Unknown. The only difference between the majority of the stories that appeared in that magazine and those now seeing the light in the Ziff-Davis issues, is that the former featured better-written stories on the whole.

Then we come to the largest group -- 'Science Fiction' as featured in ASF, the TWS-SS pair, and so on. Science Fiction has many divisions -- from the ASF type, where future civilizations are assumed, through TWS-SS, which are often in the tradition of the early 30's, to the more juvenile 'Space-opera' stuff appearing in Planet, and sometimes Amazing. The majority of 'SF' readers hate 'weird' tales, and react very strongly to anything approaching 'fantasy' (unless it be blessed with J.W. Campbell's approval). To recommend a 'weird' story to them almost throws them into 'fits,' and even the mention of a good Ziff-Davis yarn causes uplift of the eyebrows, and the person addressed usually turns to his neighbour and continues the conversation as though you didn't exist!

Why all this dislike of the other fan's preference? If the SF lovers had their way, there'd probably be two or three ASF a month, with an occasional TWR or SS. If the 'weird' lover got what he wanted, we'd probably get a weekly 'Weird Tales' and nothing else. All these fans can co-operate in furthering 'fandom,' but as soon as preferences in fiction are mentioned, off go all the coats, shirt sleeves are rolled up, and the battle is on!

Is the trouble purely a taste in fiction or is it something deeper? Can it be that the 'weird' lover is one who at some time suffered some serious wrong, and is subconsciously getting his own back? -- or perhaps he may have a streak of sadism? The pure-fantasy addicts may be those who like 'fairy tales,' having something of the child still left in them. (Shaver's stuff is, after all, largely of the fantasy type, and can best be described as grown-up fairy tales -- or modernistic folklore). The SF readers may be one who wants to escape from this earth, having had a rough time of it here, or he may be one of those 'idealistic' types, who look forward to new scientific discoveries. Or they may all be just 'escapists'! (Quien Sabe? -- as your letter section is headed).

There are of course folk who can enjoy any type of story -- I happen to be one myself and that may be why I'm so disturbed by these eternal feud-like arguments. I leave the reader to decide why he likes what he does, and he might like to work out why I like 'em all!

- SEP -

THE VIGIL

by KEN PITCHEFORD
709 Fifteenth St., North
Moorhead, Minnesota

Breathlessly I trace the pattern
On the curious circle-door:
"Two times right, thrde times left,
Once around the floor."

Strangely hollow scrape my heels
On the gray and aged stone.
Ancient rituals of yore
I solemnly intone.

Emral green, the colored pattern;
Bloody red, the mottled veins
(Darkest black, the whispered tales
Told by country swains.)

Noisily the door creaks open,
Hinged with priceless gold;
Hopefully, I start to tremble --
Filled with icy cold.

Haltingly I straggle forward
Into mold and gloom.
Will the Master still remember?
Is he in his room?

"Master, I have come," I shout,
"Master, I am here."
Only silence, cold and deathly
Like a funeral bier.

But my Master -- He is waiting
'Til the time is right:
Then his tomb will once more open
Letting out his fearful might.

Breathlessly I'll trace the pattern
On the curious circle-door:
"Two times right, three times left,
Once around the floor."

N.F.F.F.
Manuscript Bureau

"The supernatural is in part the region of the natural that has not yet been understood, in part an invention of human fantasy, in part the unknowable. Body and soul are not separate entities, but two aspects of one organization, and Man is that portion of the universal world-stuff that has evolved until it is capable of rational and purposeful values.

--Julian Huxley, Man In The Modern World

OUTPOST

by MARION ZIMMER
111 Lancaster St.
Albany, New York

Foreword: When SIEF -- Solar Interstellar Exploration Force -- landed their first ship since the Sol-Capella war on Deneb Six, they expected to find a world bare of humanity. SIEF had never before entered the star-cluster where Deneb's fifteen planets circled. But the planet, although incredibly desolate, bare of all remnants of civilized man, had not always been so. Men had been there. Solarians.

This was never made public. The Terran government, happy in its communalism, thought it would be detrimental to Terran morale should they know the fate of the Domesman -- that brave little band, exiled years ago from the Solar system, under the leadership of one of the greatest men the system has ever known, John Barss. The little band which Barss controlled had rebelled against the rigidly-organized Venus Autarchy, and vanished -- completely. And the one trace of men which SIEF found on Deneb Six was a small fortress, deep in the forests, set within an enclosed space. The surrounding terrain bore traces of fire, but this fortress had been spared or had survived, and within it the men of SIEF found traces of the expedition -- as well as the diary of that great leader.

The document was suppressed by Terran authorities; for the Venus Autarchy had been smashed less than a year after Barss' exile, and Venus had been taken over by the Communists. Yet the diary of Barss is one of the greatest vindications ever written, of the autarchy.

This diary passed into my hands, as a descendant of that Barss, and as I read, I wondered. You, too, pause to wonder, Terrans.

THE DIARY

June 13-2917

We came here last night. I think perhaps that we may be able to find a haven here on this lonely planet of Deneb. There is good water, breathable air, plant life with a chlorophyll base, and here, perhaps, we can settle with our women and children and build for ourselves the life that we could never win within the System. Tonight, we called a mass meeting and I proposed to destroy the ship that brought us here. Arn and Conner ask why we should tie ourselves down to one planet when there is an entire sun-system to conquer, but I am afraid that, with the ship, there might be too much temptation to return to Sol.

The matter rested unsolved. A party was sent out to scout. I think it best that we should stay together for a time; we have seen no unfriendly natives as yet, but there is no way to tell, of course --

Krens and Alys the daughter of Maran were married tonight by the quaint old Terran ceremony --

June 30

Mass meeting tonight. Thirty voted to destroy the ship, twenty-six to keep. Conner, who led the opposition, suggested that the votes of the women be discounted, for all the women were with me in this. Naturally I vetoed such a step.

They refuse to yield, even to our majority, and Arn says that they will never allow us to destroy the ship. I reminded him that the majority must rule and that if we should ever return to Sol, as our children might do if we kept the ship, we were lost, and forever. Our only refuge lies in cutting all ties with the Solarians completely. Things stalled again. A child was born to one of the Martian women tonight. Twenty-five men, all but three married; twenty-two wives, and poor Garrik's widow; seven unmarried girls. Five old men, seven old women and forty-three children, nineteen of whom are still in arms.

July 23.

The ship was destroyed tonight. Conner has won over a majority, and when I refused it, threatened to kill me. Secretly, seven young men and some boys, too young to vote, destroyed the ship. The fools, can't he realize we can't risk any crazed and homesick person giving away our hiding place? The Solarians never meant us to find a home. If we're found within the Solarian limits, we'll be rayed out of the sky.

August first.

Novenus (our new town) progressing. Twelve houses.

There are humanoids here, little grey men with a complete lack of pigmentation. Hope they are friendly.

October 14.

Cornerstone of the Main Hall laid today.

October 17.

Manazu, the leader of the Natives, came to me today and asked if I would send the company doctor to their village to treat illnesses there. They have made no trouble so far; in fact, they seem to enjoy our company. There is only one colony of people here, the rest died out in a plague years ago, and this was a dying race.

Arn disappeared a week ago, and I thought he had been killed, but he turned up in the village this morning.

November 12.

Fire destroyed two of the houses in the square --

November 13.

I knew there would be trouble. We elected a council to rule and already there is trouble. They want a communalist state like the one on Terra. Can't they see that with so few, and on a strange world, we need some control?

People are adjusting the sleep cycle pretty well to the 29-hour day. I still find it hard. I'm not as young as I used to be.

December 10th

Connor made a teleradio. Has communicated with Terra. I ordered him put in confinement and Arn and a few others marched on the prison and set him free. Heaven grant the mad fool doesn't try to contact Venus.

December 18th

The council has been dissolved. Have they forgotten they promised to let me guide them? It was I led them away. They have no knowledge. Arn has promised me safety if I stay clear. But what chaos will his rule bring?

December 23.

Manazu came to me secretly last night. He asked if it was with my consent that the village had spread to the native cave town. I told him no, that I had no more power.

January 9, 2018

A new year back on Solar planets. Here, nothing. I appealed to them to let the natives alone. They voted to take over the cave town. I pleaded and then forbade. As a result I am imprisoned here and owe my life to a single vote.

I do not blame the people. The system never taught them wisdom in ruling, and they want to be free all at once rather than be gradually educated to it. They resented even my restraint, which was not much. What will become of us? There is only chaos here, and we had such high hopes --

February 12th.

The natives struck back. They have us in siege here. I am in my old command, but is it too late?

February 18th.

We can't hold out any longer.

I tried to surrender. Manazu promised that if we left their city in peace and turned Connor and Arn over to them, we could go free. Heaven knows those two should pay the price, but I can't agree to that --

February 25th.

Connor and his doubly-damned radio signals have given us away and Venus Fleet-ships are on their way here.

Arn insisted on a last stand against the natives, rather than placating them. We lost all but four men. Natives now twenty to our one. They'll have us soon.

March 2nd.

Tela showed Fleetships only three days away. If we could make peace with the natives they would shelter us in the Cave town. Arn was killed today.

March 4th.

Fleet ships will come tomorrow. Have made a last appeal. Opinion hopelessly divided. No use.

March 5th.

This is the end. We might have found a refuge, but it would take a stronger leader than I, and a group of people willing to submit. It was not that I wished to rule. Arn and Connor had nothing to offer in place of my leadership except a nominal freedom. Freedom takes preparation and that, they did not have. We should have worked slowly toward that.

Freedom is the most dangerous of gifts. It is my fault, for I promised them freedom, where all I could really give them was a change of leaders and a little chance to work toward the slow coming of freedom. But to the minds of those born to slavery, the word freedom means only license -- a lack of responsibility. I think they are com--

/The manuscript ends here abruptly, and lying beside it we found a pen, still uncapped. We can only guess at the rest./

analyzing:

JIM HARMON

"Jimmie, don't! By all that you hold holy, put it down! Turn to whiskey, opium, wild, wild women, anything -- but not that!" So spoke my mother when I was seven. "Jimmie, not more of it! Give it up!" So spoke my mother when I was nine. "Give it up before it's too late, Jimmie!" So she spoke when I was twelve. "All right, I see it's no use, Jim!" She said that this year when I was (am) fifteen.

Yes, at seven I read "Seven Footprints to Satan." Of course, this was not enough for my budding sadistic desires. I picked up a copy of Weird Tales. Soon I was reading other prozines, and by the age of nine I was reading them all.



At the age of twelve I bought a hectograph to print a fanzine. This did not work out, since the friends I had to help me did not think science-fiction the most interesting subject in the known universe. They seemed to think the most interesting thing was that which they referred to as "girl" or "woman." I later found out that they meant "Female Homo Sapiens." (This I attribute to psychological stimulus rather than sexual stimuli.)

Last year, a very lucky thing happened to me. I was a victim of assault and battery. I walked, or rather limped, home in a heavy concentration of perspiration, I caught pneumonia, and suffered what was nearly a fatal heart attack, which confined me to my bed for a year. I was nearly as lucky as the fellow who took out a \$50,000 insurance policy and dropped dead the next day.

While in bed I wrote several fans of science-fiction and formed Science-Fiction International, a club which, while not famous, is rather infamous for its many feuds, which I blissfully ignore.

My writing for fanzines has been rather limited. SPACEWARP, MUTANT, and ALIEN CULTURE, a new zine, are the only ones I recall submitting material to. I am lousy (some place a period here) with plots and I would be glad to write a story for any editor who requested it, if any would be so foolish.

I also am a fan artist and poetry flows from my pen also, but cutting art stencils is expensive when you give them away and when an editor sees my "art" (?) he gives up the idea of tracing it on the stencil rather hurriedly. The poetry is so lousy I'm ashamed to let anyone see it. ((First time we've ever run across THAT much modesty in a fan!))

Oh yes, I publish a thing. I call it ASYNEROID X, otherwise known as "Fandom's Unique Magazine." One issue has come forth and a second will soon rear its ugly head. The third will come out with a full-size format, a feature that the first two lack. A good thing, I imagine, since a larger quantity of A-X would have been too much for the human mind to bear. It might even affect a fan mind. The second issue will be much better than the first, I imagine, since I've been informed that the only direction A-X can go is up. ((These words have a familiar ring. Haven't we seen them somewhere, Groover?)) All I know is that Ack didn't even request further issues for the "Foundation." But then, who thought further issues would happen? I think I should call it, "The Fanmag with the Persecution Complex."

Personally, I'm modest and unassuming. Physically, I'm a devilishly handsome genius. I tower to the height of 5 feet, 10 inches and weight a trim 180 pounds. I have brown hair that falls in gentle waves down into my big blue eyes. I'm a Christian but of no particular faith; a Democrat who had no particular hope; and a male with no particular desire.

And so, friends, we have traveled over the enormous and nauseating reaches of Harmon's body and traveled through the vast and empty reaches of Harmon's mind. Now as we leave this place with fervent hope we shall never have to return, we see this stupid native place his finger to his lips and bid us, "Bibble-babbal-bibble-babbal...."

We now must return happily to the company of sane human beings and gladly bid farewell to Jim Harmon.

- END -

CONNER'S FANQUIZ

by WILKIE CONNER
1618 McFarland Ave.
Gastonia, North Carolina

What did you learn during 1948? Are you a genius? Answers you should give to these ten questions, yet.....

1. Who wrote "Universe"? ((The story, not the fanmag))
2. What fan is a poor speller. ((Not Conner)) ((It says here))
3. Who edits TWS and SS?
4. Who is the world's most over-rated fantasy writer? ((According to Conner))
5. Who wrote the Hogben series in one of Merwin's books?
6. What well-known fan is also a literary agent?
7. What is the most profitable fanzine. ((Not SPACEWARP -- ahr))
8. What fan is a detective story novelist?
9. Who is Mrs. Edmond Hamilton?
10. What famous science fiction author formerly wrote confessions?

The answers to the above can be found in the letter department of various prozines of the last ten years, in writer's magazines, or even in SPACEWARP. If you don't know, look below, then score yourself 10 points for every correct answer.

100-90	-- You're a Slan!
90-70	-- You gotta keep your mind off Finlay's dames on on what you read.
70-0	-- Who'n hell said you was a fan? Back to Buck and Barney and Dr. Huer wit'cha!

10.	Robert Heinlein
9.	Alex Sherry
8.	Sam Merwin, Jr.
7.	H.P. Lovecraft
6.	Henry Kuttner
5.	Forrest J. Ackerman
4.	Fantasy Advertiser
3.	Wilson (Bob) Tucker
2.	Lt. B. Brett
1.	A.E. van Vogt

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to fandom
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- ???

.....if you do, make plans NOW to be in Detroit Michigan, on the 28th and 29th of December 1948

In retaliation for Stein's famous BEERCON, the Michigan Science-Fantasy Society is sponsoring the Second Semi-Annual Postwar MidwestCon -- the DeCon.....and you're invited!

There will be little in the way of a formal program -- except that a stupendous array of mags, books, and original illos will be auctioned to (we hope) defray expenses.....the rest of the time will be devoted to bullsessions and whatever else might turn up -- and that's likely to be ANYTHING!

There is NO registration fee for the DeCon.....just be there! If you can afford it, plan to stay at a flophouse, hotel, Y(M/W)CA, or other exotic establishment. But if your budget won't stand that, write us and we'll try to find a place for you to sleep -- except that you won't have time for much sleep, if the DeCon follows the usual fancon pattern.

If you publish a fanzine with a pre-Christmas issue, give the DeCon a plug, hey?

For complete details, inquiries, directions on how to get thoroughly lost in the Lovecraftian maze of Detroit streets, and other vital info, rush a letter to the MSFS WelCom Chairman:

P.S. We'll be seeing you in
Detroit, Christmas week!
...the MSFS

ED KUSS
7502 Grixdale
Detroit, (12) Michigan

))
{ DARK WISDOM {
())

by WILLIAM JAMES
Big Bay, Mich.

I, John Herbert Weldon, write these words as a warning -- to Man, who in his egotistical pride imagines himself master of the Earth and aspires to the stars. I write without hope -- hope that these words will ever be read; or, being read, that they will be believed. When I am finished, I shall seal this manuscript in a hollow metal cylinder and drop it into the mighty river that thunders through the gorge below.

I have been, all my life, a seeker after knowledge. I have sought truths behind ancient legends and myths, searching, studying, always with an open mind. I have sought for truth in the worm-eaten pages of old books, in the sand-drifted ruins of ancient cities. Spending the fortune left me by my father with care, I have learned a great deal; but always the Great Truth I sought, the meaning to existence, has eluded me.

I found the book in a little book shop in New York. I cannot, now, remember its exact location. It was a tiny shop, musty and dim; but my heart bounded at sight of some of the volumes stacked on shelves to the ceiling.



"Where," I asked the dusty, wrinkled little old man who was seated at a desk near the door, "did you get these?" I waved a hand at shelf on shelf of esoteric volumes, books in Latin, Greek, German and a dozen other languages.

He shook his head slowly. "Those? I bought them at an auction three months ago, sight unseen. I am afraid I made a bad bargain. Who would be interested in such books?"

I walked over to the shelves and looked them over carefully. A slow shudder coursed down my spine. There were forbidden works here, works of such dark knowledge as were fearfully mentioned in certain ancient volumes I possessed.

And then I saw the book.

It was a thick volume, bound in black leather, standing between two other black-bound books with Latin titles. At first I did not even see the other two books; the center volume, similar though it was, drew my eyes. It seemed to radiate a miasma of horror that both fascinated and repelled. Little lizard feet of arid terror ran up my spine -- and yet, it was the one volume among the many of which I had no previous knowledge!

I stepped closer, drawn in spite of myself. The title was printed in a grayish lettering I could not read. I stared at it in puzzlement. I have knowledge of many languages, and have, at one time or another, seen virtually every script known to man. The hieroglyphs of ancient Egypt, the cuneiform gravings of Babylon and Assyria, Mayan, Aztec -- although I cannot decipher them all, I have seen them and know them on sight. Yet on the binding of this book was writing I had never seen before!

I knew then that I must have that book.

I reached up to draw it from the shelf. My fingers touched it and I shivered. The binding was cold, seeming to partake of the ultimate cold of the void between the stars. I was aware of a feeling of repellent horror about the work; and yet something deep within myself, some other part of me, was drawn, fascinated by the volume.

"How much?" I asked, turning to the proprietor.

Something in my manner apparently frightened him, for he backed away from me, making a peculiar sign with his right hand -- pointing at me with two fingers extended. The meaning of this gesture did not come to me until hours later, but when it did, it made me shudder.

The Horns of Asmodeous -- he was warding off the evil eye!

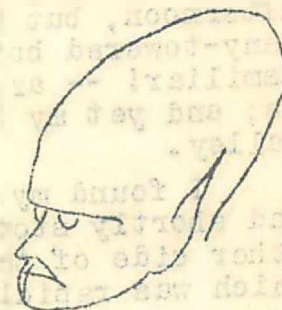
I was about to speak again, when he quavered in a voice taut with fright:

"Get out! Take the book -- and get out!"

I fled. I was badly frightened. Was I losing my mind? What had the man seen in my face to frighten him half out of his wits?

Something deep within me seemed to chuckle with evil glee.

For months after that I worked, striving to translate the volume. I lost sleep and grew thin. The book repelled me, but wove a web of sorcery about me I could not break. Deep within myself I felt the stirrings of another, growing stronger day by day.



For a year I worked, desperately. I could sense the presence within me, driving me with a horrible persistence. It was like an alien evil presence within the depths of my mind, like a demon taking possession of me. I feared it and loathed it, as I feared and loathed the monstrous volume that had been the key to its awakening -- and yet I knew it was not an alien presence, but a definite part of myself!

It was part of me -- as truly myself as the self which had controlled my body for thirty-five years. It was a part of my heredity, older than the race of Man. I knew this instinctively, before I had succeeded in translating the book.

I tried -- ah, how I tried -- to regain control of my body. I tried, twice, to destroy that monstrous book -- and both times I failed. I even tried suicide, but something stayed my hand.

And then I found the key to the translation, and read the awful knowledge contained in that accursed volume.

My mind reeled as I read the horrible history never meant for the eyes of mortal man. It is impossible to describe the anguish I suffered as the knowledge of my heredity was brought home to me. And that other evil presence, that was myself, exulted!

I was, I realized, descended from Them, the great race that ruled Earth before Man had come down out of the trees; the evil elder beings

who had least control, been destroyed, but who had first mated with Man to pass the germ of their evil down through the ages -- until eventually through the laws of chance, their hereditary factors should dominate in certain individuals. I was one of those individuals, one of perhaps ten thousand others; some who knew and banded together to carry on the dark work, and some who did not.

I read of the Dark Elder One who would arise in time to lead the hybrid evil against the world. And of the dark worship carried on in hidden places about the Earth to placate the Great Ones who live beyond the stars and and watch over the destinies of the Universe.

It was then I made my journey into the wilds of South America.

* * * * *

I went deep into the Andes. How I found my way, I do not know; for my Indian guides deserted me, claiming I was leading them into "Devil Country." Seemingly my other self possessed an unerring sense of direction; and for days I wandered deeper into the range, completely lost -- and yet with a strange sense of familiarity. As if I were returning, after a long absence, to a place I had once known as home.



Eventually I reached a pass high up between two great peaks, and on the other side looked down upon a valley almost completely surrounded by mountains. It lay half in shadow, for the time was late afternoon, but across the valley I could glimpse a many-towered building of utterly strange -- and yet familiar! -- architecture. Suddenly an unreasoning terror took hold of me; and yet my feet guided themselves to the path leading down into the valley.

I found my way unerringly through what seemed impenetrable woods, and shortly stood before the fantastic structure I had seen from the other side of the valley. Exultation filled me, for to my other self, which was rapidly gaining the ascendancy, this was -- home.

A heavy door opened in the base of the huge building and a robed figure appeared. It spoke to me, and to my astonishment I understood, although the words were the spoken form of the language in that forbidden book.

"Welcome, Brother."

The priest -- for such I knew him instinctively to be -- bowed low, then took me by the arm and led me inside. I followed the figure down a long, high-ceiled corridor. The walls were covered with bas-reliefs of weird, draconian figures shown in company with man-like creatures that were not men. Chills ran up my back at the sight, but to my other self the carvings seemed perfectly familiar.

I was led into a chamber that resembled a temple. Men in robes moved back and forth silently. At one side of the room stood an altar, behind which loomed a dimly seen statue. It seemed to be the figure of a man. Somehow I knew before I was told, that this was an image of the Dark Elder One, who was to lead the cult against Mankind.

Bowing low before me, the priests led me before the altar. There they knelt before the statue and began to mumble a chant or prayer. Standing back, I looked up at the image. And then a scream of horror

rose in my throat, instantly muffled as that other part of me gained control.

I sit now alone in this tower that rises above the river gorge. For the last hour I have been in complete control of my body, long enough to finish this message. I know now that I shall not be in control much longer; that soon this part of myself will die and that other part of me take over mind as well as body.

For the statue of the Dark Elder One behind the altar in the temple was an image of -- myself!

- END -

FANMAG FOR SERVICE-FEN

Edited by Pvt Ben Singer of the U.S. AAF, a new kind of fanzine is to appear about the first of the year. Titled UNIFEN, it will be written entirely for, by, and about the stfen now in service, and the fan-doings of interest to them. Subscriptions will not be sold to civilians.

UNIFEN will be sent without charge to any fan on active duty in the Army, Navy, Marines, or Coast Guard. That is one way you can get a copy. There is another way: Advertising space will be sold in UNIFEN at one dollar per page, minimum space 1/4 page. If this meets production costs fine. If it exceeds them, more pages will be added to subsequent issues.

Fans in service who have material to contribute should send all copy to Pvt Ben Singer, AF 16292873, Sq. Tng. Grp. 3764, Flight 73, Sheppard AFB, Wichita Falls, Texas.

Advertising copy should be sent to UNIFEN, % r-tRapp, 2120 Bay St., Baginaw, Michigan. Also send r-tRapp the addresses of any servifen you know.

Civilian contributions to UNIFEN will be by request only. That, incidently, applies to r-tRapp himself, who is merely the mimeocranker on this deal.

UNIFEN will be approximately bi-monthly, depending on the situation and the terrain.

- END -

RAPP'S BAC-108 EXCHANGE

Swap only; no cash sales; no cash purchases. Mags are in good to excellent condition unless otherwise specified.

WHO'LL GIVE ME THESE?

Astounding: Jan Sep 44; May Sep 45;
Jan 46; most '42 and earlier.
Planet: Sum 44; most '42 & back.
Amazing: Dec 44; Jun 45; Oct 46;
Practically all '42 and back.
Startling: Fall 44, Win 45, most
'42 and earlier.
TWS: Apr, Jun, Oct 42; Fall 44;
most '41 and earlier.
Weird Tales: Mar May 44; Jul Nov
45; All but Jul for 46; '43 and
earlier.
Fantastic Adv.: Feb 44; Apr 43 and
earlier. Most other pre-43 mags

I OFFER THESE:

Astounding: Mar Jun Oct 47
Argosy: 15 May 37
Planet: Wint 47
Amazing: Apr 41
Avenger: Mar 40
Startling: Win 46; Spr 46; Jul 47
TWS: Wint 45; Sum 46
Weird Tales: Jan 44 (beat up);
Mar 48 (25th Ann. Ish.)
Pocket Editions:
"Bar The Doors" - Hitchcock
"1st Men In The Moon"-HG Wells
"Rocket to the Morgue" - H.H.
Holmes (stf-world mysterytale)

THE ROMANCE OF ALCHEMY

PART ONE
of
TWO PARTS

by
ARTHUR OOK
(anyone know
his address?)

Manuscript
Bureau
NEFF

WITH THE DISCOVERY of electric batteries antedating the birth of Christ new speculations have risen regarding the extent of scientific knowledge of ancient times. These batteries were discovered by Dr. Wilhelm Koenig of the Iraq Museum in Bagdad who unearthed the first one on the museum expedition of 1934 at Khirjut Rabir'a, not far to the southeast of Bagdad.

The batteries consisted of vases made of clay about 14 cm high and 8 cm wide. Inside the jar was a cylinder of surprisingly pure copper, the bottom of which had a covering of sheet copper. The inner surface of the round copper sheet was covered with about 3 mm of asphalt. A heavy asphalt plug, with an iron core, was forced into the mouth of the cylinder. An apparatus of this kind can obviously be nothing but a weak battery.

The first one was found among remains of the Parthian Kingdom, which existed from 250 BC to 224 AD. Other batteries were found at Tel Omar or Seleukia. Others, still, were found in the ruins of a somewhat younger period (the Sassanide Dynasty, 224 AD to 651 AD) by Prof. Dr. E. Kuhnelt of the Staatliche Museum in Berlin, at Ktesiphon, near Bagdad.

It is believed that these batteries were used by the silversmiths of Bagdad in the electroplating of their wares. Galvanic batteries of this type could generate ample current for the electroplating of small objects. Since they were trade secrets of the silversmiths and/or alchemists their existence was unknown to ancient writers.

The March 1939 issue of ASTOUNDING from which the above was taken also reports the belief in the existence of much older, but cruder, batteries which were used for the same purpose. It is the existence of these batteries which started the legend of the Philosopher's Stone for which alchemists searched so feverishly for three long centuries.

IT IS NOT, however, from ancient apparatus that we have learned the extent of their science but by the writings of the above-mentioned authors and philosophers. Their true scientific knowledge was, for the most part, buried under a mass of theological, metaphysical, magical and symbolic concepts, as we shall see later.

In order to preserve their secrets and knowledge and yet keep it safe from the prying eyes of the uninitiated, they were forced to hide their secrets under symbolic, but in themselves meaningless, phrases.

THE FOLLOWING, translated by Berthelot from the manuscript of St. Marks (10th Century) is an example:

"While saying these things I fell asleep and I saw standing before me at an altar shaped like a dome, a priest sacrificing. There were 15 steps to mount this altar. The priest stood there and I heard a voice from above saying -- 'I have accomplished the act of ascending the 15

steps walking toward the darkness and the act of mounting the steps toward the light. It is the sacrifice that renews me eliminating the dense nature of the body. Thus by necessity consecrated, I became a spirit." Having heard the voice of him who stood at the altar, I asked him who he was. In a shrill voice he answered in these words, "I am ION, priest of the sanctuaries, and I undergo intolerable violence. Some one has come hastily in the morning and has done violence upon me, cleaving me asunder with a sword and dismembering me according to the rules of combination. He has removed the skin from my head with the sword which he held; he has mixed my bones with my flesh and has burned them with the fire of the treatment. It is thus I have learned of the transportation of the body to become a spirit. Such is intolerable violence."

"While he yet conversed with me, and I forced him to speak, his eyes became like blood and he vomited all his flesh and I saw him (change to) a little imitation man, rend himself with his teeth and sink down.

"Filled with fear, I awoke and reflected -- 'Is not this the composition of the waters?' I was persuaded that I had rightly understood and I fell asleep again. I saw the same dome-shaped altar and at the upper part a water boiling and many people bubbling continuously. And there was no one outside of the altar whom I could question. I then moved toward the altar to see this spectacle, and I perceived a little man, a barber, whitened in years, who asked me, 'What dost thou look upon?' I answered that I was surprised to see the agitation of the water and of the man burned yet living. He answered in these words: 'This spectacle that thou seest is the entrance, the departure and the imitation.' I asked him, 'What imitation?' and he replied, 'This is the place of the operation called maceration, for the men who wish to obtain virtue enter here and become spirits after having escaped from the body.' Then said I, 'Art thou a spirit?' and he answered, 'Yes, a spirit and a guardian of spirits.'

"DURING our conversation, the boiling continuing to increase and the people uttering cries of lamentation, I saw a man of copper holding in his hand a tablet of lead. Looking at the tablet, he spoke the following words, "I command all those who have submitted to the punishment to be calm, to take each one a tablet of lead, to write with their own hands, to keep their eyes lifted, and their mouths open until their vintage is developed."

"The act followed the word, and the master of the house said to me, "Thou hast contemplated, thou hast stretched thy neck upward and seen what has been done." I replied that I had seen, and he explained to me, "He whom thou seest is the man of copper, he is the master of the sacrifices and is the sacrificer. It is he who vomits his own flesh. Authority has been given him over this water and over the people here punished."

"AFTER this vision, I awoke again and said, "What is the meaning of this vision? Is not this water, white, yellow and boiling, the water divine?' And I found that I had well comprehended... In the dome shaped altar all things are blended, all are dissociated, all things unite, all things combine, all things are mixed and all things are separated, all things are moistened and all things are dried, all things flourish and all things wither. Indeed for each it is by method, by measure, by the exact weight of the four elements that the mixing and the separation of all things takes place...



"IN SHORT, my friend, build a monolith temple as of white lead, as of alabaster, having neither commencement nor end in its construction: Let it have in its interior a spring of pure water, sparkling like the sun. Observe carefully on which side is the entrance to the temple, and taking in your hand a sword, seek then the entrance for the place is narrow where the opening is to be found. A serpent is lying at the entrance guarding the temple. Seize him, immolate him, flay him, and taking his flesh and his bones, separate his members. Then joining the members with the bones, make of them a step to the entrance of the temple, mount upon it, and enter. Thou wilt find what thou seekest. The priest, this man of copper, whom thou seest seated in the spring gathering to himself the color -- do not consider him as a man of copper, for he has changed the color of his nature and has become a man of silver. If thou wishest, thou wilt soon have a man of gold."

EVEN IN THIS obscure description certain things are clear. The general theme is the transmutation of the baser metals into the noble ones of gold and silver. The "temple" represents the secret and sacred laboratory of the alchemist, who is the "priest." The "dome-shaped" altar is the apparatus with which the experiments are performed, furnace, crucibles and the balloon-shaped condenser of substance driven off by heating. The "men" represent different metals. The changing of "bodies" into "spirits" means the changing of solids into gasses or volatile matter.

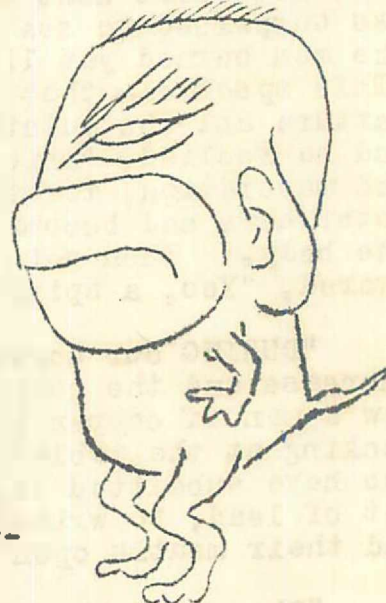
Due to all this symbolism and mummery, the "science" of alchemy appeared very mysterious, indeed. Not only mysterious but it seemed to "partake slightly of the devil and of unholy things" to the ignorant and superstitious rabble. Therefore all experiments had to be conducted in close secrecy.

With this in mind the manuscript of St. Marks states: "--Relying upon the clearness of these concepts of intelligence, transform the nature and consider manifold matter as being one. Never reveal clearly to any one any such property, but be sufficient unto thyself for fear that in speaking thou bringest destruction on thyself."

The "concepts of intelligence" of which he speaks is the foregoing "formula" for the transmutation into gold.

ANOTHER "FORMULA" is found in Berthelot's Collection des Alchimistes Grecs, II, p.167. It is a passage by the Syrian, Zosimos, and it is supposed to represent the creation of "bile of the dragon" (tin).

"We will now speak of this subject. In a place in the far west, there is a spring which rises from the earth and gives rise to it (tin) like water. When the inhabitants of this region see that it is about to spread beyond its source, they select a young girl remarkable for her beauty and place her entirely nude below it, in a hollow of the ground, in order that it should be enamored of the beauty of the young girl. It springs at her with a bound seeking to seize her; but she escapes by running rapidly while the young people stay near her holding axes in their hands. As soon as they see it approach the young girl, they strike and cut it, and it comes of itself into the hollow and of itself solid-



ifies and hardens. They cut it into bars and use it. This is why they call it "water of the river" the mercury drawn from tin; they call it thus, because it runs like water which throws itself into lakes and which has the appearance of a dragon furious and venomous."

THESE ALCHEMISTS were nine-tenths philosophers and one-tenth chemist. They had the bad tendency to look to the past, to the writings of the great philosophers and priests, to Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates.

The concept of the "Philosopher's Stone" which appears so often in their writings was the belief in a substance which could act as a 'magical catalyst' on base metals changing them into large quantities of silver and gold.

"An idea of this character is of very early character," says Stillman, "but any definite ideas as to the nature of the substance is lacking--" Indeed it is of very early nature if what we believe about the early batteries is true.

Another form of the "Philosopher's Stone" is the "egg of the philosophers." The Egg was the symbol of the round universe of eternity to the alchemists.

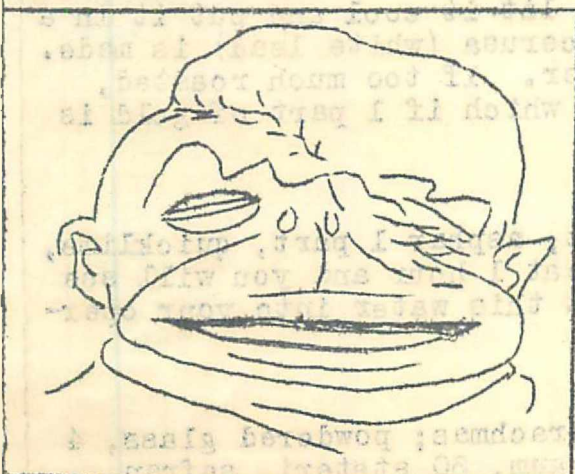
The Greek alchemists wrote several treatises on the eggs. The following is from Barthelot's Collection des Alchimistes Grecs, I, p.21, and written in the tenth or eleventh century:

"Nomenclature of the Egg. This is the mystery of the art.

"1. It has been said that the egg is composed of four elements, because it is the image of the world and contains in itself the four elements. It is called also the 'stone which causes the moon to turn,' 'stone which is not a stone,' 'stone of the eagle,' and 'brain of alabaster.'

"2. The shell of an egg is an element like earth, cold and dry; it has been called copper, iron, tin, lead. The white of an egg is the water divine. The yellow of an egg is cuperose, the oily portion is fire.

"3. The egg has been called a seed and its shell the skin; its white and its yellow the flesh, its oily part, the soul; its aqueous, the breath of air."



ANOTHER symbol which appears much in alchemical treatises is the dragon Ouroboros in the attitude of biting its tail--symbol of the eternal cycle of world changes:

"A serpent is stretched guarding his temple, and he who has subdued it commences by sacrificing it, then roasts it, and after removing its flesh up to the bones, makes of it a step to the entrance to the temple. Mount upon it and thou shalt find the object sought. For the priest, at first a man of copper, has changed color and nature and has become a man of silver; a few days later if thou wishest, thou wilt find him changed to a man of gold."

Sounds familiar, doesn't it? It is one of those typical descriptions found throughout alchemical literature.

PROBABLY the most interesting part of the study of alchemy is the formulas one often finds for the manufacture of silver, gold, emeralds and pearls. The following formulas are typical examples:

To manufacture a pearl:

Mordant or roughen crystal (quartz) in the urine of a young boy and powdered alum, then dip it in quicksilver and women's milk.

To make an emerald:

Take white lead one part, and of any glass you choose two parts, fuse together in a crucible, then pour the mixture. To this crystal add the urine of an ass and after forty days you will find emeralds.

Another "formula" for synthetic emeralds: Take a stone called a tabosis and soak it in liquid alum. Then place it in a solution of verdigris and vinegar, and gently heat for six hours.

Manufacture of silver:

Tin, 12 drachmas; quicksilver, 4 drachmas; earth of chios (clay); 2 drachmas. To the melted tin add the powdered earth, then add the mercury. Stir with iron and put into use.

Another one: Carefully purify lead with pitch and bitumen, or tin as well, mix cadmia with litharge in equal parts with the lead. Stir till the mixture becomes solid. It can be used like natural silver.

How to transmute silver into gold:

Almagra (brass), acimar (copper oxide), Atrameistum ustum, roasted vitriol, roasted brass, rock salt, almisadir, saffron root -- equal parts. All these are mixed with urine and dried in the sun. With this powder mix filings of very thin flakes of silver leaf and heat in the manner of gold, that is, in a crucible well covered. Then heat again with filings or flakes. Do this seven times and it will be what you have wished.

To make best gold:

Of bronze 3 parts, of silver 1 part, melt together and add orpriment not roasted, 3 parts. When strongly heated let it cool and put it in a pan and cover it with clay and roast until cerusa (white lead) is made. Take it out and melt and you will find silver. If too much roasted, eleogrum (Egyptian silver) will be made, to which if 1 part of gold is added it will make the best gold.

To make gold- color water:

Kibrit (sulphur) 1 part, sulfur pigment, asphar 1 part, quicklime, 1 part. Place in a pot with ox urine and heat 1 hour and you will see a golden color. Put in a glazed jar and put this water into your operations.

To write in letters of gold:

Bile of the tortoise, very bitter, 20 drachmas; powdered glass, 4 stateri; or white of eggs, 2 stateri; white gum, 30 stateri, safran... After writing, let it dry and polish with an animal's tooth.

It would be well to remember to recite this (or some similar) magical formula, or invocation (according to Lagercrantz):

"Sun, Berbeloch, Chohotho, Misch, Sandum, Elohain, Zaguel, accept me who come before thee. Trust thyself (to the God), ancient thyself and thou shalt see him with thine eyes."

-- END OF PART ONE --

((This ran a bit longer than we anticipated. The second half of Cox's article will appear in the big January-1949 issue of SPACEWARP.))

* * * * *
* QUIEN SABE ? *
* * * * *

Dear Art:

Abruptly I'm starting right off by saying that THE EYES OF ROGER AKNER was the best story you have printed to date. And do you know why? Well, I'll tell you. It's because it was such a welcome change from all the light, humorous stuff you have been printing lately.

Hooray for Harmon! THE GREAT STP BROADCAST turned out beautifully. He's a man after my own heart. Yes, if I had the traditional three wishes I'd wish for about 50 million years of life, too.

FILE THIRTEEN: NUTS! And in case that wasn't emphatic enough, NUTS again! Cruising Through Crud was O.K., I liked it, but there was one crack Boggs made that really burned me up. It was that one about juveniles and egoboo. Damn it all, just because a guy was born a few years before* he was doesn't make him a self-glorified egomaniac who has to force his personality onto everyone he can, either in person or through the mails. As a matter of fact, in that very remark Redd reveals himself as one of these persons against the younger generation. He has a mind susceptible to rumor and prejudice, he has an intellect which doesn't recognize that the first rule of life is self, and by Ghu, some day I'm going to dish out some stuff of my own select vocabulary and tell him where he's wrong!

The BeerCon sounded like the wildest of a fan's ecstatic dreams. Imagine the unholy joy of receiving a packet of original illo's from the very hands of Ray Palmer! Ah, that all fandom might know and experience that pleasure!

I'd like to ask of you a small act of benevolence. I've been looking all over Norfolk to try and find someone to play chess with but so far all my honest efforts have met with failure. Now you must know some people who play the game. Could you please contact a few and get them to write me re some correspondence contests between us? Howzabout it, huh?

'WARP's most enthusiastic fan,

WARREN BALDWIN
118 Park Avenue
Norfolk, Nebraska

* after. that is.

'Ere the atombombs start falling, 'ere the hour of doom has struck,
Buy yourself a sub to SPACEWARP: nine full months for
just one buck!

Arthur Tonby Janes
(Bob Farnham)

This is a last message and a Full Apology to all Fandom.

In September SPACEWARP there was an Open Letter by me in defense of Richard S. Shaver. In it I went all-out in what I sincerely believed then - was defense of one who was, in his own words persecuted by "a few jealous Fan who only want to see me cut off the payroll. A lot of them say my stories are dirty, but they're not."

It has been my practice all my life to accept any person at face-value, untill that person abuses my friendship. I took Shaver at his word, and became his friend. In the sincere tenet that I was sponsoring the cause of one who was being unjustly misrepresented, and having suffered thru-out my life from discrimination, thereby becoming an enemy of such a practice, I took up the battle for Shaver in the sincere belief that I was on the side of Right and was fighting unjust Discrimination.

Having been, in the course of the struggle, called a few harsh names, I, in a temper, retaliated, even including some who had not called me any names nor even written to or about me. The reader is asked to bear in mind that I conducted my campaign entirely on the information provided me by the same party I was defending.

I want to say here that I was sincere in my convictions and honest in my beliefs. Being as I have said, an enemy of discrimination, I fought for those convictions and beliefs with everything I had.

Then, on the 29th of August, 1948, I received absolute proof of how I had been duped and my friendship traded upon, and how I had been lied to to win my friendship to a cause that is nothing less than Evil Incarnate. By a misplaced friendship, and mistaken faith in one whom I had believed to be a decent person I have only succeeded in just about ostracizing myself from every decent Fan in Fandom.

I received on the 29th, an excerpt from a story by Shaver and it is the most sexually obscene thing that I have ever seen. To think that I have been soft-headed enough to believe in anyone who would write such filth arouses thought of utmost violence.

The Fan who sent me the excerpt has not as yet given me the necessary permission to quote him, but I can say he is well known and well liked. His word is indisputable.

I herewith offer Publicity Retraction of the aforesaid Janes Letter. I offer full Public Apology to Forest J. ACKERMAN, Rick Sneary and James Russel Leary. I again ask that the reader bear in mind that I was sincere, and believed my campaign to be a Just one.

I want to ask all of Fandom this one question:
Will you give me a clean slate to continue as a member of Fandom and grant me a Pardon for having been misled, lied to and betrayed in to a crusade for Evil under the disguise of Friendship.

Upon the answer to this questions depends the fate of one who has made more than one gravious, albeit, honest, mistake.

I await, and will accept without rancor, the judgement of
Fiction Fandom.

((This page is presented exactly as stencilled by BOB FARNHAM, 1139 E. 44th St., Chicago 15, Illinois. SPACEWARP has remained as neutral as possible in the current feud, and intends to continue that way. Perhaps this statement of Bob's will end the bickering.))

FILE THIRTEEN

by ERNO BOGOS
2215 Benjamin St., NE
Minneapolis 16, Minnesota

IS STIF GETTING ANYWHERE? Science fiction is no more popular today than it was ten years ago. Toss that statement into a bunch of stfans and they'll buzz like a disturbed hornet's nest, but I am convinced of its essential truth. Consider this: With the revival of Super Science Stories, fandom now has 11 stf and fantasy magazines to regale it in this country and unless the project to make a zombie of New Worlds succeeds, England has exactly no indigenous stf-pro. Eleven science fiction mags in all the world! It is not very many, is it? And remember this, too: With the exception of Avon Fantasy Reader, every one of the present pros was known before the war, and all but Super Science and Fantastic Novels continued more or less regularly since their inceptions, despite war shortages and the pulp slump of early '42. This fact alone shows that, allowing for slight increases or decreases in circulation which could be borne by the mag in question without causing it to enjoy a boom on one hand or suspend publication on the other, the science fiction field is almost exactly the same size today as it was in 1938 or 1941.

Here is an additional fact: During the years immediately prior to America's entry into WW II, there were 9 or 10 other pros in addition to the ones still extant. You remember them: Captain Future, Planet, Marvel, Science Fiction, Future Fiction, Cosmic, Science Fiction, Archon, Archon -- and of course Unknown and, across the pond, Wings of Wonder. Not all of them were circulating at the same time of course, but the total number of mags in existence at any given time between 1938 and late 1942 was substantially greater than the 11 we have today. Ephemeral those mags were, but some of them flourished for years and were killed off only by the thrice-cursed paper shortage.

Most fans, when faced with these facts, will agree that those pre-war years were boom times for stf, but in rebuttal they will point a proud finger to the present boom in hard-cover fantasy, which they feel signifies that science fiction is now Big Business. Any literary field that can support Fantasy Press, Arkham House, Blasts Publishers, Prime Press, Hadley, EPIC, and the other semi-pro publishing firms, they tell you with popping chests and dewy eyes, must be a mushrooming affair. After all, they'll point out (if you are so stupid as to give them an opening), the fans of ten years ago were unable to convince any publisher that fandom could support a hard-cover version of The Skylark of Space or The Time Stream -- but now, in 1946, fandom has made it possible, not only to issue both those legendary titles firmly, if not neatly, ensconced between birds, but many other titles as well.

This argument does not convince your humble file-clerk. I will agree, of course, that book collecting has become an important facet of fan-activity in recent years, but in dismissing the silly contention that such collecting proves stf more popular than ever, I need only toss this asbestos fact on the fire: The total number of copies sold of these "limited editions" is no more than 2000 or 3000 copies each, which after all is a damned few. Perhaps 500 of these copies go to fantasy "adionados" and collectors known to fandom -- at least, to fandom's dealers -- and the residue, a mere 1500 or so copies, goes to readers and collectors little known to fandom and to casual buyers who discover them in the bookstores or respond to the ads in ASF and Weird Tales.

Fifteen hundred or so fantasy enthusiasts outside actifandom. That is scarcely any indication of popularity for science fiction. By dint of strictly spare-time effort I believe I could sell 1500 copies of al-

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Above: good or excellent.

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most any type book from the Kinsey Report to the Complete Works of Willie Collins -- if I tried long enough. Of course! -- you will say -- but look at the number of fantasy titles being issued every year; there must be a dozen or more titles out since 1 January 1948. Surely -- you will add -- all these books didn't go to the same buyers. No, I wouldn't claim such a thing, but I believe a considerable percentage of them did. Outside of the casual buyers mentioned above, most buyers were regular collectors and readers in the field.

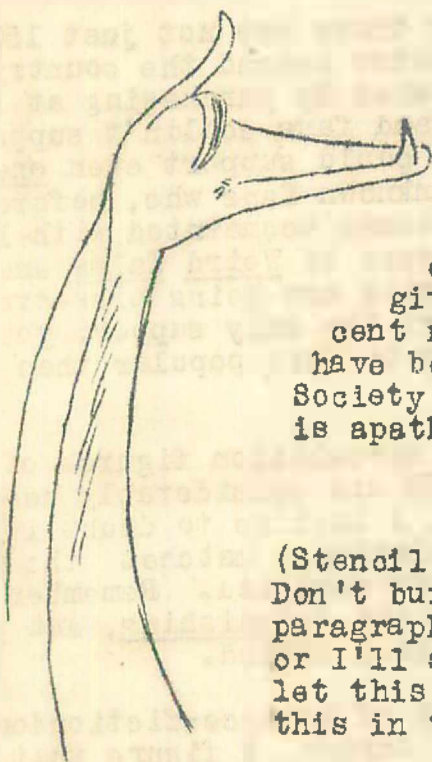
Just for the sake of argument, say that there are not just 1500 or 2000 fantasites, but 5000 or 10,000 aficionados around the country who actively support Derleth and Eschbach and Korshak by purchasing at least some of their publications. Fah! Ten thousand fans couldn't support a dozen pulp magazines. It's doubtful if they could support even one. I doubt if 10,000 is much above the number of unknown fans who, before the advent of Arkham House and Fantasy Press, became acquainted with Lovecraft and Skylark Smith by purchasing back issues of Weird Tales and Amz to read in their original form the very stories now being preserved in hard covers. If these 10,000 book buyers are the only support you can offer to buttress your contention that fantasy is more popular than ever -- well, fout upon thee!

Of course, it is quite probable that the circulation figures of aSF and Amz, and perhaps of the Merwinzines and FFM are considerably healthier than they were in 1941. So what? Verily, I incline to count it the increase -- if there is one -- in their circulations matches the total circulation of all the prozine war casualties combined. Remember that the newsstand sales of Unknown, Captain Future and Astonishing, and perhaps some of the others, were reportedly very good indeed.

All in all, I feel that the whole aspect of science-fictiondom is no rosier now in 1948 than it was in 1938. Anyhow, I figure that the abundance of hard-cover stuff being sold doesn't mean a damn thing in regards science fiction's rise in this heathen world.

SHORT SHOTS BY A BIG SHOT. If anyone happens to be curious as to what Kenneth Gray, author of "Smaller Than You Think" and several forthcoming aSF yarns, looks like, he need only look at Orban's heading for Gray's story in the July aSF. The man sitting at the control board of that spaceship bears a remarkable resemblance to Kenny. The MFS wonders if Orban happens to be psychic. # Earmark Wilmar H. Shiras' "In Hiding" (Nov aSF) for the next stf anthology. This, I believe, is one of the best yarns of 1948, and furthermore, one to be extravagantly praised by fans. Like "Slan," the yarn portrays a submerged genius in unsympathetic surroundings, which is an obvious parallel in the fanish mind to the stfan who must live in this world that is so stupidly unconverted to stfnal concepts. # Marion E. Zimmer has dropped the name of "Astra". Good for her! Now all that's gotta happen is for ye editor to drop "r-tRapp" and this file-clerk to drop "Redd", eh kids? # Walter and Dorothy Coslet have brought forth something new, an offspring named the Christian Amateur Press Association, which operates similar to FAPA but -- as the name indicates -- is concerned with Biblical and religious subjects. Anyone who is sincerely interested in these things can probably get full info and perhaps a sample mailing from Coswal. His address, Ben, is Box 6, Helena, Montana. # I've at hand the latest book list from the Coronet Book Shop of New Orleans. I won't quarrel with most of the prices therein, for I'm not a book collector, but I do raise an angry eyebrow at page 19, which lists some paperback stuff for sale. This dealer has the gall, not to say the avarice, to list copies of all seven Avon Fantasy Readers at 50¢ apiece! If back-issues of at least some of these issues aren't still available from the publishers, the Avon Book Co., at 35¢ each, plus 5¢ postage, I'll stake my own copies of AFR to whoever can prove me wrong, at 35¢ each, net.

This dealer also lists Peabody's Mermaid, the pocketbook edition, at 50¢ which is interesting, since it's still on the stands at 25¢ a copy. In fact, you should be able to find a second-hand copy at 15¢, like I did. On the other hand, there is one undoubted bargain in this price list: He lists Griffiths' Strange News From Heaven, fine in dust-wrapper, at \$1. This is a terrific fantasy, which I advise you to grab pronto! And I am definitely not kidding.



The GARDEN SPOT OF GALAXY I. The paragraph title refers to Minnesota, the home of this illustrious columnist, not to that nameless place that is the stamping grounds of the breed known, fittingly enough, as Misfits. (And no snide remarks between double parentheses at this point, either, Mr. Editor!) Minnesota, as I started to say, owes George C. Smith a rousing vote of thanks for giving this state some overdue publicity in his recent novelette, "Climate--Incorporated" (TWS, Aug). I have been trying futilely to get the Minneapolis Fantasy Society to convey the vote of thanks, but since the club is apathetic, I'll use the next line for the purpose:

THANK YOU, GEORGE!

(Stencil this as I've typed it, Art. This is an order. Don't bury that "Thank you, George" in the middle of a paragraph for purposes of conserving space or something-- or I'll sic Wombat onto your mag collection!) ((Why do I let this northwoods barbarian get away with things like this in the WARP's sacred pages?))

Skeptics are informed that Minnesota, far from being publicity-starved as far as science fiction goes, has been prominently mentioned in several earlier stf tales. If you'll look up Isaac Asimov's first aSF yarn, "Trends", you'll find that a Minnesota farm was the scene of the building of the first moon-rocket. Balmer and Wylie's novel, When Worlds Collide, reserves for Minnesota the honor of giving mankind one of the great treasures of all time: the miraculous substance (was it a metal or a fuel? I can't remember) which enabled the survivors of the catastrophe to fly through space to another planet. According to the book, the deposit was discovered near the ruins of the Twin Cities.

Poul Anderson, a Minnesotan himself, also speaks of the "ruins of the Twin Cities" in his aSF story, "Tomorrow's Children" -- and there is a mutie village in that same yarn that is in Minnesota. Clifford D. Simak, another Minnesotan, is responsible for Minnesota's most painful appearance in all stf: In his "Rule 18", Simak has Wisconsin's football team, using some futuristic football formations, defeat the "mighty Gophers" of Minnesota 45-0, if I remember aright. This apparent apostasy -- which would be almost unforgivable otherwise -- is explainable by the fact that Simak was born, not in Minnesota, but in Wisconsin!

OPEN LETTER TO THE MISFITS. Dear curs: On the evening of 23 October 48 I sought my bed, bottle of Old Panther in hand, feeling bereft and alone as I pondered reasons why the Gophers' pet gremlins had failed to work their special powers against the Michigan football team, thus enabling the Minnesotans to regain the Little Brown Jug which is so clearly theirs by right. As I fell asleep (with bottle still clutched in my grimy fist) the telephone started to jangle downstairs. I groped my way to the insistant instrument, lifted the re-

ceiver and heard a pleasant voice (this was the only nice thing about the whole sordid affair) say she had a message for me from Western Union. Hoping my Rich Uncle had died, I foolishly asked her to gimme. She read: "So Minnesota is still in the Big Nine, huh? 27-14. (signed) Misfits." Sobbing, I tore the phone from the wall, tossed it through the window, and started back upstairs. Unfortunately, I stumbled over a hassock and did a not-ungraceful swan dive under the piano. Here in a peculiar position which can be described only as supine on my face, I attempted to drown myself in Old Panther, only to discover the bottle was empty.

Cursing, I shambled back to my room, lit my corpse-fat candles, drew a pentagon on the linoleum, and in my vengeful way, summoned up out of hell just about the fiercest demon you ever heard of. Luckily, this quaint character didn't care for my soul -- he'd settle for nothing less (he told me) than the Unknowns containing "Fear", "Sinister Barrier" and "Flame Winds" -- but eventually a bargain was struck, and on his part, he laid a most powerful, kingsize curse on the Michigan team. The curse will become effective on a certain autumn Saturday in 1949 when those poor poops meet the gallant football heroes of Minnesota.

The gaping holes in my Unk files attest that this was no dream, and with even more faith in my prediction than George and Elmo had in theirs on 1 November, I hereby predict that Minnesota will beat the everlasting stuffings out of Michigan in 1949.

If somebody passes a natural law against curses before then, and Michigan squeezes out a win, I will do this: I will buy steak dinners for no more than three Michifens who are present at the 1950 fan convention, wherever it may be. If my demon comes through (as he will), the Michiganders must promise to buy me a steak dinner, and, in addition--since unfortunately there's only one of me--buy me a front-row seat at the best burlesque show in town. You Misfits better start saving pennies now, because my demon claims he used to work for Harry, and when he says Minnesota will slaughter Michigan, I figure he knows what he's talking about. P.S. I like my steaks well-done. (signed) Redd.

THE ANNUAL MESSAGE: Merry Christmas and a big fat New Year!

- 30 -

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