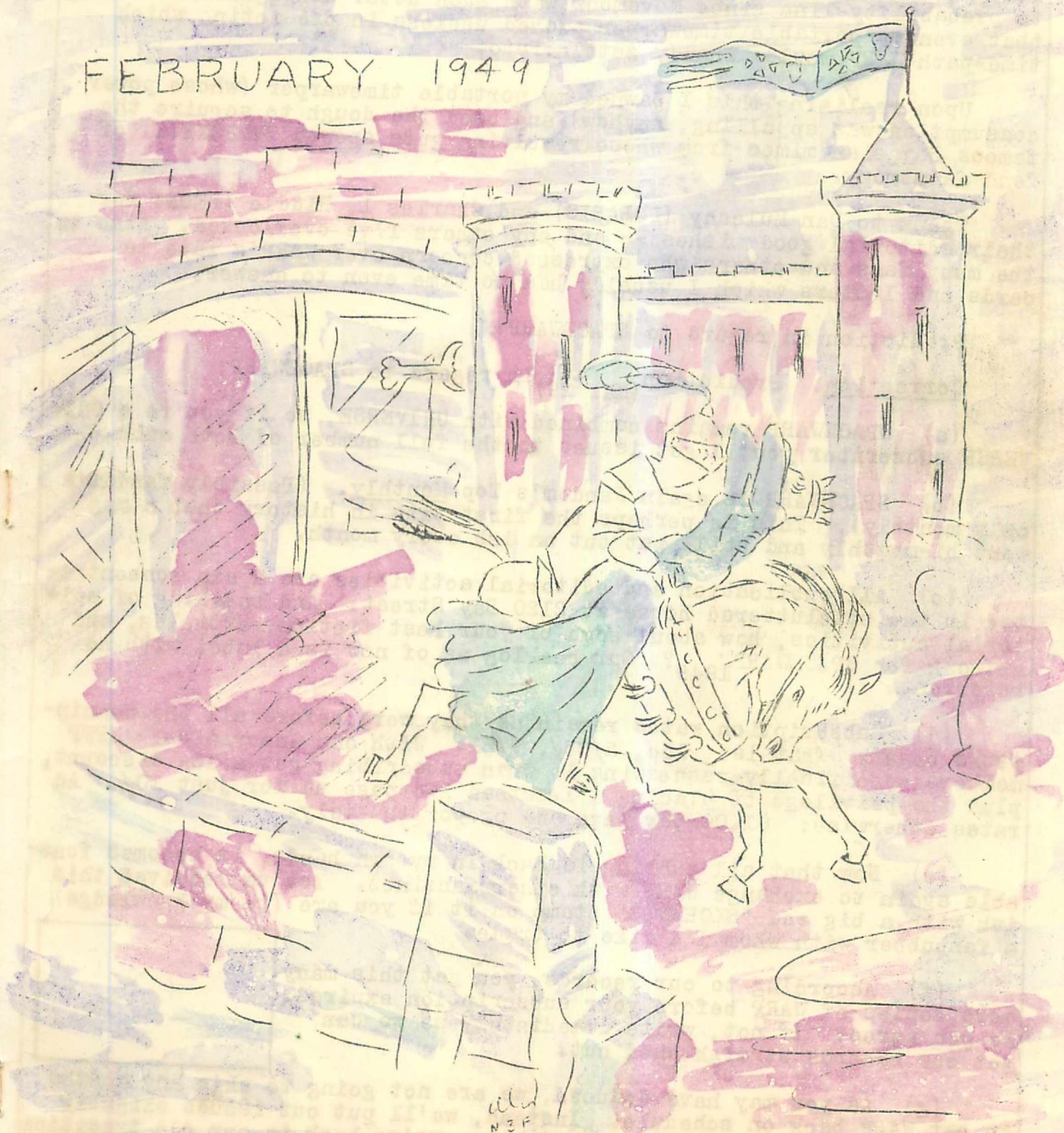


# SPACEWARP

VOL. IV No. 5

FEBRUARY 1949



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\*     AAA   AAA     T I M B E R !     AAA   AAA  
\*     AAAAA AAAAA     AAAAA AAAAA  
\*     H     H     (Convolutions from the editorial cell.)     H     H  
\* \* \* \* \*

YOU ARE, I devoutly hope, reading this around the end of March or the early part of April, 1949, and have by now lost all faith in what you see in WARP's editorial column, my forecasts having proved consistently 180° out-of-phase.

There is but one extenuating circumstance: The fate of WARP and its possible mergerzines has been whipping about from probability-line to probability-line since November with such utter disregard for sanity that even my portable timewarper proved useless in predicting which time-path WARP would finally settle into.

Upon realizing this I pawned my portable timewarper (whose power consumption was appalling, anyhow) and used the dough to acquire the famous Boggsian mimeo from whose revolving guts spewed TYMPANY(I) of fond fanmemory.

Thank to Dan Mulcahy (POLARIS) and Charles L. Riddle (PEON) for their editorial good wishes -- and any others I've overlooked. Also to the many fans and others who expressed concern over WARP's fate in cards and letters which I usually had no time even to answer.

Prediction in regard to SPACEWARP:

Correction: Prediction (Mar 29) in regard to SPACEWARP:

(a) SPACEWARP remains combined with UNIVERSE, so if you're a UNIVERSE subscriber you'll get issues to the full number of both subs.

(b) SPACEWARP is again Fandom's Top Monthly. (Possibly fandom's only monthly). This is perhaps the first time in history that a mag went bi-monthly and still put out an ish every month.

(c) All publication and editorial activities are again concentrated in the stfluttered house at 2120 Bay Street. And speaking of editorial activities, how about some of your best fiction, articles, and artwork for SPACEWARP 1949? Our backlog as of now is a label with no referrent.

(d) Subscription rates remain as they were before all the connip-tions began. That is: 15¢, 2/25¢, 9/¢1. With one innovation: NFFP members specifically requesting it when subscribing get a 10% discount, plus the privilege of placing a less-than 1/4-page ad for just 10¢. Ad rates otherwise: \$1.00 per page and proportionately.

(e) Now that all pubbing is back in my own hands, it becomes feasible again to exchange WARP with other fanzines. You've received this ish with a big red "EXCHANGE" stamp on it if you are (to my knowledge) a fanpubber with whom I'd like to trade.

(f) According to our records, you get this many more copies of WARP before your subscription expires. Do you agree? If not, write immediately so we can get our records straightened out.

(g) As you may have deduced, we are not going to skip any months to get WARP back on schedule. Instead, we'll put out issues slightly less-than a month apart till, eventually, we're back to our old tradition



of hitting the mail the first of the month the fish is dated. By the way: don't keep it a secret that WARP is again out. In the shuffle of publishers our master mailing list disappeared, and the substitute we've assembled depends a good deal on memory and guesswork. So indignant yells from subscribers who didn't get their Jan and Feb WARP are in order.

(Which winds up, permanently, I hope, publication-snafu details)...

\* \* \*

Comment on this month's cover eagerly awaited. It's based on a suggestion by Vaughan Greene, that hearts and minds might be combined to produce an attractive bit of ~~cover art~~. Maybe someone with artistic ability will now be inspired to do us a good cover using this new technique.

"NPL: Pro and Con" is one of the last articles the fabulous JaClem wrote before dropping out of fandom. It's had a rather remarkable history since then -- first being slated for WARP, but somehow getting lost in a shuffle of papers in the nether regions of the bureau that serves as one of my filing cabinets. Resurrected several months later, it went into the NPTT Misc Bureau and was sent to Ray Nelson for UNIVERSE. For some reason it was stencilled but never used by that mag, either. However, when UNIVERSE and WARP merged, the JaClem item was among the stencils Ray turned over to George, and thus it went into the WARP-MUTANT pool, from whence I fished it for your edification this fine spring day. How do you begin to see why fans go nuts?

With this installment of "SEF Broadcasts Again" we institute a new policy. Namely: the name of the author of each episode will not be revealed until the succeeding issue. This enables you to test your knowledge of fanwriters' styles and quirks, and also, perhaps, lets you compare the chapters on their own merits and not on the reputations of the fans who wrote 'em.

Because of our speeded-up schedule, it is also necessary to modify the contest procedure a bit. If you want to write a chapter, let me know on a postcard. Each month I'll shuffle the cards, draw one, and notify the fan concerned, who can then (provided with an advance copy of the preceding episode) have a few extra days to write his saga.

That popular column "File Thirteen" is missing this month due to the speedup, yet knowing that you will throw tantrums if deprived of your monthly quota of pronouncements from the Flaming Fan of Minneapolis, I swiped his review of Weinbaum's book while Stewart was off-guard. You'll find it on page 19. Redd has begun accumulating notes for future columns, so you can anticipate high blood pressure and a vast amount of fascinating fanlore while reading future WARPs.

Correction to paragraph (b) on previous page: WARP is not fandoms only monthly. How could I have overlooked that inimitable publication FLUB, the 5¢-per-ish brainchild of Wallace Shore and Phil Waggoner, which is available from Wallace at Bob 1565, Billings, Montana. This, of course, is not a free plug. Perish the thought.

Speaking further of fansines, have you seen Vol. I #1 of these two:

SHADOWLAND - S.J. Martinez, 1830 E. 15th St., Tulsa 4, Oklahoma. No set price. Send him a dime or so with your request for a copy. Fanpubbing runs into money. This is a promising new way to fanpub books, expanding, among other things, Woodford's

notorious theory that sex is sublimated ~~sexism~~. Another unique feature is the almost complete absence of typing errors, a ~~feature~~ associated but seldom-found feature of fan literature.

THE OUTLANDER - 10¢ and worth at least three times that. This is the GO of the Outlander Society in Southern California. The Outlander Society consists of Rick Smeary, Len Moffatt, John Van Couvering, Con Pederson, Stan Woolsten, Alan and Freddie Hershey and -- but need we go on? THE OUTLANDER's contents are lithe, voluptuous, nubile, etc. No other fanzine can make that statement! Bust your piggy bank and ship the loot to John Van Couvering, 10558 S. Downey Ave., Downey, California.

I AM currently confronted with an insoluble dilemma which perchance can be solved by some of you slannish minds. Hearken:

For reasons best known to itself, our college assembly committee varied its usual diet of ancient Army orientation films ("The World Cannot Exist Half Slave and Half Free!") and brokendown baritones with irresistable urges to sing the Largo al Fagotum, and last week presented for our edification a magician-hypnotist.

This character, after some routine card tricks viewed with deep apathy by all concerned, announced he would demonstrate the power of mind, and called for volunteers from the audience. Inasmuch as about 3/4 of the students are veterans, this was a futile request. Finally he suggested that the audience nominate someone of known integrity as the victim. Which we did -- everyone joined in calling for the Dean to go up on the stage.

The Dean is a dignified gentleman of some 70 years, and it is utterly incredible that he could be in collusion with the hypnotist. Anyway, he allowed himself to be hypnotized, and the magician then announced he would demonstrate conclusively that a person under hypnosis is unconscious of his surroundings. So the magician unbuttoned the cuffs of the Dean's shirtsleeves, then loosened his tie and unbuttoned his shirt down the front. Then, grasping the shirt at the back of the collar, he jerked it off the Dean's back, after which he brought the Dean out of his trance.

The problem is this -- the Dean wore a coat over his shirt, of course, and this coat remained on during the entire proceedings. How, then, was the magician able to remove the shirt? Deep thought and endless discussion in Physics lab as well as in math classes failed to unearth a practical solution. The answer probably lies in the field of topology, but you'll have to figure it out @- I can't.

All I know is what I seen wit muh own eyes.

.....nuff till MarchWARP

r-tRapp

ROSCOFUCIUS SAY:

He who lives life of Riley  
Better beat it before Riley finds out.

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## PSYCHIC RESIDUE

\*\*\*\*\*

### Providence after Lovecraft

by

ANDREW GREGG

Providence hasn't been the same in the last eleven years since H. P. Lovecraft died. Since 1937 there have been civic improvements, housing projects, and a general deterioration in those weird and mystic places that made him love the city. True, Poe Street, Benefit Street and the others are still there, but the older houses are going fast, and there is a movement afoot to rip down the Portuguese section on Benefit Street for a new housing project.

Clifford Eddy, a good friend of Lovecraft, told me of how he had seen Poe Street, near the western waterfront section just off Eddy St. Sordid and squalid and poor by day, he thought it might be weird and romantic at night. Together they went down there near midnight and found it true. Standing on the rocky, unpaved street, they looked up at the street sign lit only by a flickering arc light. "Poe Street", named after the mad author. Only two unpainted houses were the buildings on that street thirteen blocks long. It still runs parallel to Eddy Street and Allen Street, between them.

Today there is one house and a warehouse. It is still unpaved, and there is a small and totally ignored sign, "NO DUMPING." It seems to have lost all of its old mystic beauty.

Benefit Street starts in a slum area, passes through the best part of the city, and ends up in another slum. The statue of Roger Williams with its back to the Moses Brown School, Bryant College, Brown University, and one of the better class residential sections, looks down on a poor section of Benefit Street, with its littered sandy hill on Congdon Street near the foot. The statue itself is a beautiful piece of work. Roger Williams, a thick stubby figure, looks down on the slums, and, across the widest bridge in the world, the down district and the state capitol. Out of the corner of his white concrete left eye he can see the small park with the original spring where he gathered his followers to form the city.

Two miles or so to his right and a little in back is the Butler Hospital, where Lovecraft's father and mother were committed, and the Swan Point Cemetery, where Lovecraft is buried. I went with the Eddys on Thanksgiving Day to see it. As Mrs. Eddy mentioned in one of her letters to T.S., there is a sign at the gates, "The gates are closed at dusk, no admittance after sunset."

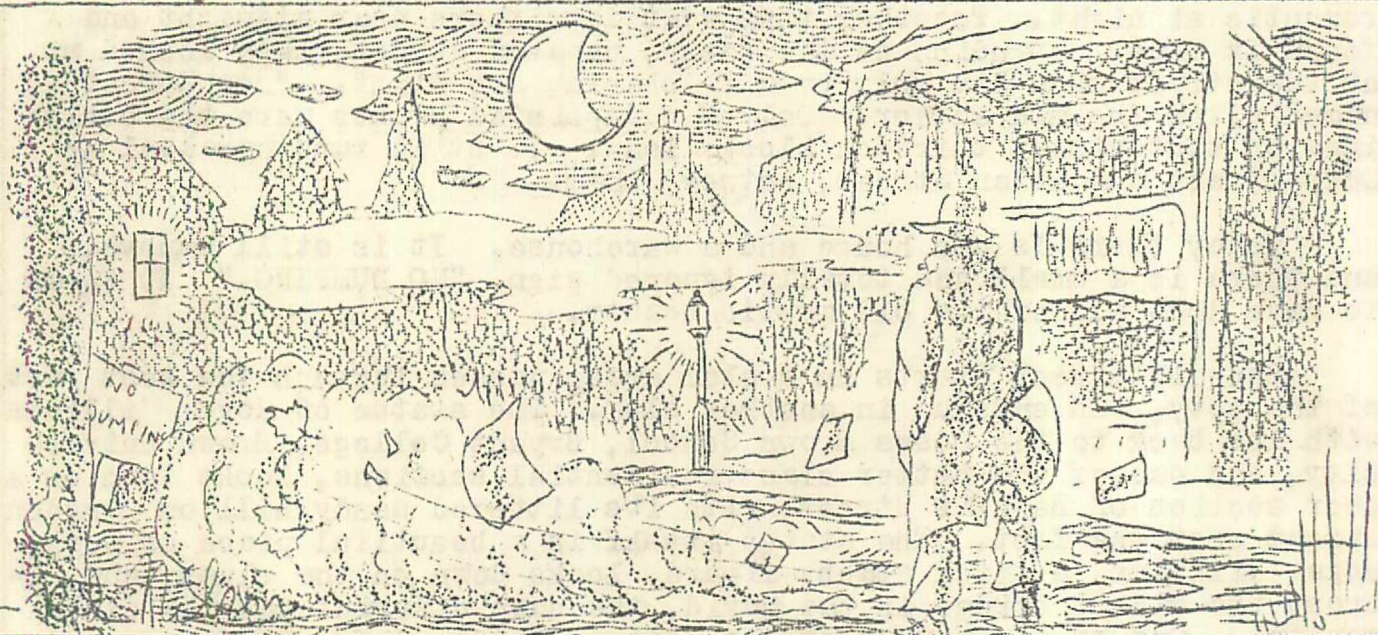
The tall slim Phillips family monument has his name and the dates of birth and death on the back. There is no individual marker over his grave, and the Eddys couldn't tell me exactly where it was. Nearby is the Stranger's Rest, a small round structure of rocks piled four or five feet high, with a conical roof on stilts over that. The cool interior has a bench in the center, and Lovecraft used to enjoy sitting and meditating there.

Such is the general condition of Providence. Stf fen seem somewhat scarce there. There are Clifford and Maribel Eddy, and their daughter Ruth, living at 125 Pearl St. Ruth is the only one that didn't know HPL, except that she used to hear him when he came in the early hours of the morning to visit the family. Mr. Eddy has been writing fantasy stories for some time. A couple of his stories have been reprinted lately in the Arkham Sampler. Ruth had her own radio program and now writes fiction and newspaper feature articles. There is Ralph H. Carter, of 67 Health Ave., a non-participating fen I ran across in an old magazine shop. He told me he has 1300 issues, of every stf mag, but doesn't get or read fanzines.

Most of HPL's stories were centered in the Massachusetts back country or the cities of Salem and Moorehead, north of Boston, but some were about Providence, and Benefit Street. These slums will probably be going soon. Still a little weird and fascinating, yes, but firetraps. One fire out of control could wipe out all of these old buildings. The next few years might well see their demise.

See Providence while you have the chance. It's just 180 miles from New York and about 50 from Boston. If you live within a hundred miles, see it before Benefit Street goes, by all means.

- END -

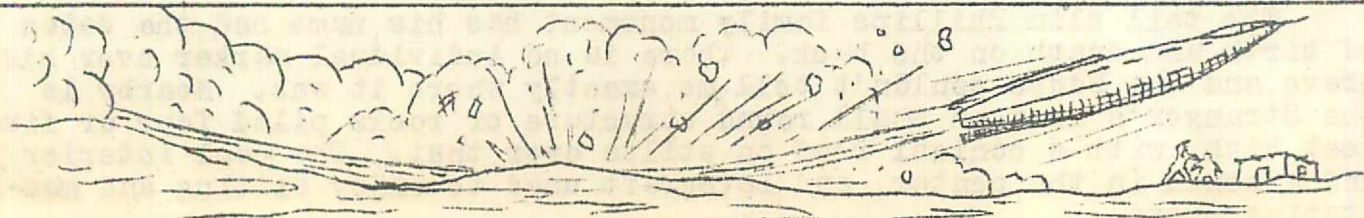


#### LITTLE THINGS LIKE THAT MAKE A BIG IMPRESSION DEPARTMENT

"At the end of their previous meeting, a few months ago, the cold, impersonal contempt with which she had spat into Shallon's face showed that she must be active in the growing revolt against the military which he symbolized."

Cabal by Cleve Cartmill, SSS, Jan 49

Join the National Fantasy Fan Federation, world's #1 Stfclub!



# STF BROADCASTS

Part Two of what will undoubtedly be a fanzine classic of 1949. Do YOU want to go down in history as one of its authors?

SEVERAL MILES from the building which contained the FITS editorial offices, two people crouched tensely in the dilapidated bedroom of a

## AGAIN!

Chapter II

third-rate hotel. On the bed lay a suitcase, its lid propped open to reveal a tangle of intricate electronic and sub-electronic circuits and a complex control panel. The inside of the suitcase lid was of a metallic, mirrorlike substance, and reflected the image of a cathode-ray tube upon which an electron beam was dancing erratically.

The woman shrugged uneasily in her skintight black silk evening gown, removed a long black cigarette holder from between her ripe crimson lips, and snarled impatiently at her companion.

"Fix it, you fool!" She tapped one high-heeled foot to emphasize her words. "We must learn who is to ride the Mars-rocket!"

The burly man fumbling with the control-panel did not answer, but snarled a steady flow of non-English profanity. Hulking and bullet-headed, he was having a difficult time adjusting the delicate controls with his thick, clumsy fingers.

"Bah, Igor, you are a fool!" screamed the woman, kicking him in the ribs and seizing the controls in her own slim, scarlet-nailed fingers. Grumbling under his breath, Igor moved reluctantly aside.

A moment later the dancing of the scanning-beam slowed, then became a steady horizontal sweeping of the screen. Triumphantly the woman plugged in a connecting jack and a picture began to form.

"See?" snapped the raven-haired, voluptuous female. "It needed but a minor adjustment. Why are you so stupid, Igor?"

Igor did not look at the woman, but bent his sullen gaze on the screen as he replied with a sort of mechanical facility, "All men are stupid beside the wisdom of The Priestess," he muttered.



The two bent closer to the screen, which by now showed clearly the interior of Upperberth's office, and the four people in it.

Fifteen minutes or so had passed since von Heina's fateful designation of Glover Mackintosh as the man to ride the Mars-rocket and write the story of the trip for FITS' readers. Mackintosh had passed from dazed horror to vociferous indignation to trembling resignation to determined refusal back to dazed hor-

ror.



Starr, her lipstick practically consumed by the frequent necessity for her to distract Mackintosh from contemplation of the fate that awaited him, was now engaged in repairing the damage with the aid of her compact.

Responding nobly to the emergency, von Heine had taken over custody of Glover Mackintosh. The physicist had the gangling, quivering Assistant Editor manuevered into a corner of the room and was now engaged in pressing bottle after bottle of beer upon him.

At first the going had been rough, but by now Glover Mackintosh was grasping the bottles willingly, nay, even eagerly. Perhaps it was his desperation that fostered such a great thirst, or perhaps he preferred death by drowning in beer to death in the limitless vacuum of upper space. At any rate, he was now evincing a lamentable tendency to fall flat on his face every time von Heine turned away to open another bottle.

"Steady, Kamerad!" granted the German physicist, grabbing Mackintosh just in time. "It would be stupid of us to be injured in a minor accident on dis, de seefning of Man's conquest of shpase!"

"Yer-r-r-r pur-r-r-rectly r-r-right," agreed Mackintosh, developing for the first time in his life the rolled r's of his Scottish ancestors. "Why, laddie, dinna ye ken that we'r-r-r-r aboot to make hic, I mean, hic, oops -- hiestory."

"Jawohl!" shouted von Heine, who had been at the beer himself. "Der schip vill through der air go like dis--" and he tossed an empty beer bottle at the ceiling by way of illustration.

With a gasp of horror Mackintosh dodged out of the corner and staggered under the bottle, managing after a precarious fumble to catch it as it fell. Weakly he sat down on the floor and glared up at von Heine. "Guid losh, mon!" thundered Glover Mackintosh. "Dinna ye ken there's thrippence deposit on each of these?"

PROWNING IN PERPLEXITY, Igor looked from the spy-ray screen to the woman beside him. "I do not understand," he ventured timidly. "What are they doing?"

"Who knows?" answered The Priestess angrily. "The customs of this land are strange to me as they are to you. Have you gained any information as to who will pilot the space-ship?"

"I do not know," muttered Igor, baffled. "It must be one of them, but how can we find which one?"

"Damn it!" hissed the mysterious woman known as The Priestess, stamping her foot petulantly. "Why did the spy-ray have to break down just when the bearded one was about to reveal the name?"





Igor studied the screen again. Starr was still powdering her nose. Mackintosh was lecturing von Heine on the virtues of thrist. Upperberth, alone of the four, was hard at work. He sat at his desk scribbling furiously, outlining the publicity campaign which would precede the actual launching of the rocket.

"Perhaps it would be simpler to liquidate all four of them?" suggested Igor, fondling a small, sharp dagger.

"Don't be a fool!" snapped The Priestess contemptuously. "Even the stupid police of this land would sense a plot to prevent the flight if all were to die! We will learn who is to pilot the ship -- and then he, and he alone, will die!"

"He?" grunted Igor questioningly. "Perhaps, Priestess, it was the girl who was chosen?" He leered appreciatively at Starr, who was now straightening the seams of her nylons. "I would much enjoy disposing of her," he added.

"Keep your mind on business!" snarled The Priestess, kicking him again. "No, they wouldn't choose the girl. Have you never heard of their quaint concept, 'Chivalry'? Since there is possibility of danger in this flight, the men would not allow a woman to pilot the ship."

"Incredible!" marmured Igor. "Perhaps it is the fat one, then?" he added, pointing to Upperberth's image.

"Hmmm," mused The Priestess, biting her lips in perplexity. "It must be either him or the bearded one -- they would never pick the small, thin one who jumps at loud noises for such an important enterprise. You notice, Igor, the fat one sits with a grown and writes, while the others seem to be merely passing the time in idleness. What does that indicate to you?"

"Please, O Highborn One, I see no meaning in it," said Igor, drawing away in expectation of another kick.

"Stupidity, as usual," commented The Priestess, giving him one in the shin. "He is the one chosen for the flight, of course. Now, realizing that he faces possible death, he writes letters, or perhaps instructions for disposal of his property if he should not return alive."

"Of course!" breathed Igor, looking at the screen with renewed interest. "It is all so simple when you explain it, Priestess."

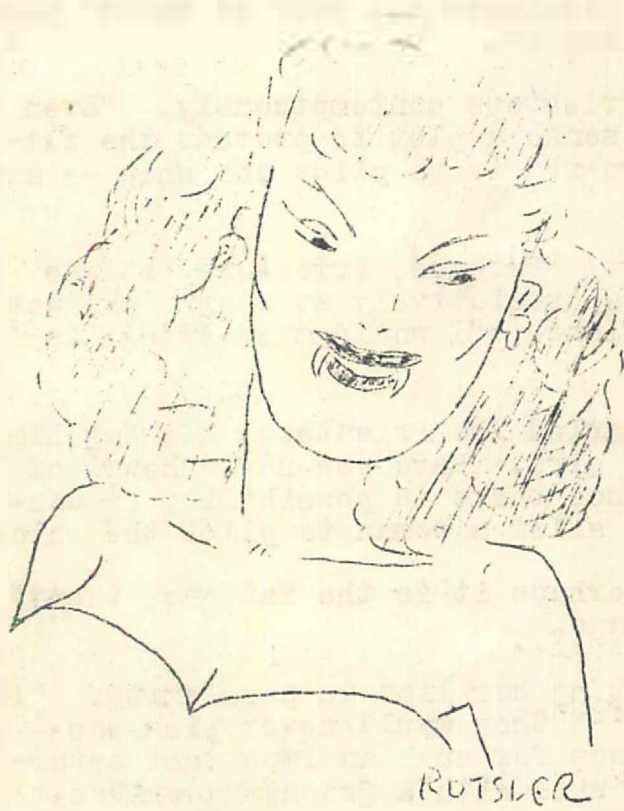
"Silence, dog! I must plan!" screamed The Priestess, kicking him viciously in the same shin again. Howling in pain, Igor dodged away, but in grasping his injured knee dropped his dagger. Into the spy-ray receiver it plunged.

There was a blinding green flash, a sputter of acrid smoke, and the screen went dark.

Igor dropped to hands and knees and began beating his head on the floor at the woman's feet. She gazed with her flaming green eyes at the ruined transmitter for a long while, then glanced at the terrified slave and said calmly, "If we were in our own land now, Igor, I'd have you flayed centimeter by centimeter for this. But I can't dispense with your help just now, even stupid as you are."

"Yes, O Queen of Life and Death!" squeaked Igor between thumps. (9)

"At any rate, we know who the rocket-pilot is," she continued. "Igor, you will dispose of the fat one tonight. And remember," she added, "Not only is your life forfeit for your stupidity of a moment ago, but if you fail me in this task, our whole empire may crash to the dust from which it sprang. Do you understand, stupid one?"



"Yes, O Priestess," said Igor, chambering slowly to his face. "Shall I bring you the fat one's ears as a token of my success?"

"I need no tokens of your success," snapped the Priestess. "For you will not fail. Not," she added thoughtfully, "if you want to escape this slaying. Perhaps I'll have you sprinkled with salt afterward."

Igor blinked doubtfully.

"Now get out of here, you fool!" The Priestess screamed in sudden rage. "Get to that office before the fat one departs, and follow him until he reaches some lonely place suitable for your work. And then--"

"I know," grinned Igor. "He will cease to think about piloting a space-ship. Then I will

return here and we can return to our homeland, O Priestess?"

"Perhaps," The Priestess replied. "But I may not be here when you return. It will do us little good to eliminate the fat one if the bearded one chooses another to replace him. I think I will call upon the bearded one this evening and find out just what his plans are."

Thoughtfully she lifted the cigarette holder to her lips and then puffed a smoke ring that floated lazily above the ruined spy-ray mechanism. Igor stole softly from the room.

The Priestess watched the blue smoke settle softly toward the circuits.

"Besides," she murmured to herself, "Black-bearded men always did fascinate me."

- END OF PART TWO -

Who are "The Priestess" and Igor? From what mysterious realm do they come, and why are they so anxious to prevent the takeoff of von Heine's rocket? Will Igor liquidate John Upperberth? Will Igor be given the de-epidermizing treatment? Will Glover Mackintosh sober up enough to go AWOL before takeoff time? Will von Heine fall for the Priestess?

What is this, anyway, space-opera or soap-opera?  
Don't miss Part Three in the MARCHWARP !

## DUPLICATE FANZINES FOR SALE

|                                                                        |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Fan-Tods #16 (Spring 1947). This is the FAPA edition .....             | \$.15 |
| Reader and Collector (Oct 1946), Fritz Leiber, Rimel, etc..            | .15   |
| Cosmos Magazine (1942?) A British fanzine -- a curious item.           | .03   |
| Science*Fiction (Jan 1946). Bob Bloch, James Blish, etc.....           | .10   |
| Plenum #3 (Oct 1946). FAPAstuff on general semantics.....              | .10   |
| My Time Annihilator (1939?). A curiosity from early days...            | .03   |
| Panit Stories (Fan) (Nov 1944) Virgil Partch draws LASFans..           | .05   |
| Two Fingers (Jan 1945). Notorious Laney-Burb one-shot.....             | .10   |
| Shangri-L'Affaires (Aug 1944) Laney, Ebay, Burbee, etc.....            | .10   |
| Fan-Dango (Fall 1946) Laney's outspoken "Pacificon Diary"...           | .20   |
| Horizons (Sept 1946) Harry Warner's FAPAZine. Nuff said....            | .10   |
| Pacificon Combozine (1946) 22-mags-in-one, near-mint.....              | .65   |
| Fan-Dango (Spring 1946) Laney in frenetic mood .....                   | .10   |
| Memoirs of a Superfluous Fan, Yerke's history of early LASFS           | .25   |
| <u>Redd Boggs, 2215 Benjamin St., N.E., Minneapolis 18, Minnesota.</u> |       |

r-trapp fills the page by reviewing

### THE CURRENT CROP

Bloomington News Letter: This estimable zine, which sometimes looks like a publisher's circular, this time sports six planographed pages with news of new fantasy books, plus a detailed listing of railroad travel facilities available to Conventioneers. Bob Tucker, PO Box 260, Bloomington, Ill.

Dawn: (April). Third ish of the newszine which is already an established institution in fandom. The current feud, showing signs of developing into the hatchet-throwing stage, is about what fans should find over in letterzines. (Oops, for "newszine" a few lines back, read "letterzine.") 13 legal-size pages this time. For 10¢ an ish, who could want more? Les Fried, 2050 Midland, Louisville 4, Kentucky.

The Alembic: An accumulation of comments, news, and generalzine items from the fans of Britain. Interesting to WAFreaders in the current ish is a round-robin serial on the "Stf Broadcast" principle. Titled "Century's End," it's a serious rather than humorous saga. The Alembic, says its editor, is free to his friends, and not available to others. But if you want to try for a copy, the address is S. Norman Ashfield, 'At the Sign of the Black Cat', 27 Woodland Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, England.



Joined FAPA last year and found it an ideal place to be when I quit fandom. After all, that's where "old fans go to die" as Rick Sneazy put it. I'm not that old yet, though.

Joined NFFF and now find myself in that unstable position called a Director. So is r-trapp -- we sink or swim together!

Joined Young Fandom, too. Nice little club and is ideal for you newer fen. (Plug.) Lately, I've joined one of the most fitting amateur press clubs. SAPS they call it. Lotsa fun.

Have 500 promags of which I still need to read stacks. Not very many books, for, after all, I'm as poor as any other fan!

Fizzikil info: I was born. Some 19 years ago, too. Have both eyes and hair. Both brown. My ears and tendrils are normal color, not that brown hair and eyes aren't, of course. I also breathe, eat sleep (very little) and drink. Most people do.

Like music (hot) and even play sax. Like photography and have a camera which I use once in a while. Like target shooting and have quite an arsenal here. (Not all mine, but I use all of them).

Don't like most of the things other fen don't like. So I guess I'm normal. I'm directly opposite Ben Singer in a certain belief, although not very devoutly. Being a Mainer, I'm a Republican but can't vote yet, so who cares? I don't.

If anyone wishes to know more about me, please send request accompanied by any issue of UNKNOWN from 1939-43.

- END -

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\*\*\* SOLAR POLITICS \*\*\*  
\* \* \* \* \*

by T. E. WATKINS

**W**HEN GERMANY fell in 1945, news of the disaster (from the German point of view, that is) filtered through the Army news services and reached our outfit way out in the South Pacific, bound by boat to Okinawa. Bits of information reached us as to the German plans. They had better V-weapons on the drawing boards; a vast store of gas weapons, which our air superiority had prevented them from using; an atomic bomb almost ready to go.

And they had other strange devices in the planning stage, which our victory had nipped in the bud. One of these struck my fancy. They were going to build a platform and float it in the stratosphere by means of gas balloons. On it they planned to mount a gigantic lens to be used as a burning glass effect on the English cities. We all felt that sounded somewhat unworkable.

Recently this platform idea has come into the news again. The item was published in The Kansas City Star, a paper that is so conservative that they ran the flying saucer news on the third page next to the lemon pie recipes. The morning Star of December 30 1948 carried a story by Elton C. Fay, dateline Washington, December 29th, to the effect that

American Army and Navy circles were considering a platform stationed in space near the moon. This device was mentioned in an annual report by James V. Forrestal, Secretary of Defense.

The idea is to place the platform in such a position that it will form a satellite around the Earth. It will be beyond the earth's gravity pull and a permanent installation. The purpose would be twofold: as a military device it could be used to guide the guided missile; in peace time it could be used to overcome the present difficulties of television and radio transmission. Present plans indicate an automatic device, with no personnel; however if the platform could be manned, rockets could be launched from it to any part of the Earth's surface.

In the December issue of THRILLING WONDER STORIES, L. Ron Hubbard had a little tale titled "240,000 Miles Straight Up," in which he described a fight between another power and the United States over control of the Moon. His idea was, that he who controls the Moon could launch a rocket to any part of the Earth's surface, and thereby control the Earth. This was an extension of another German idea, geopolitics. The average G.I. heard a lot about that during the war -- every orientation film contained something about Geopolitics. Most of us could say it in our sleep. "He who controls the heartland of Europe and Asia, controls the Earth's largest land mass; and he who controls the Earth's largest land mass, controls the Earth."

All of which makes one wonder whether L. Ron Hubbard got his story from the Secretary of Defense report, or whether the experts in the Government got their idea of the platform from L. Ron Hubbard's story, or whether they both arrived at the idea independently.

Certainly the science fiction fans might give LRH a little credit, and if the platform becomes a reality, we can call it "Hubbard's Heaven." We could sort of circulate that around in advance to make it stick. We will have competition because the German ideas involved will cause some dim minds to call it "Hitler's Nest," or something. You understand I am talking about the nickname, not the official name -- the official name will be something unromantic like, "Military Outpost, Spacial, M-1," which will be shortened to MOSM-1 in the official orders.

The official name will mean nothing to the average G.I. He will call that outpost whatever his fancy dictates. And we might as well get "Hubbard's Heaven" started. Of course there is the danger that the Army will station G.I.s out there for some length of time on a short bear ration and the name might degenerate to "Hubbard's Half Moon." Don't get it don't you? After all, it's "half way" to the moon and, well -- it's away OUT there in the Earth's back yard.

In view of this certain orientation of the G.I. mind, perhaps it would be better to give the platform over to Hitler, and save the Lunar supply base for Hubbard. The supply base on the Moon and near the platform is a logical development. And, if I know my supply bases, it will be loaded with rations and the "Hubbard Heaven" nickname would be a natural.

Whatever the name, "solarpolitics" will be a factor in the future. We will be hearing, "He who controls Hitler's Half Moon will control the guided missile. He who controls the guided missile can scare the pants off of almost anyone from Chinese Communists to Argentine dictators; and he might even get himself mentioned regularly on the Tibetan prayer wheels if he's a mind to." - END -

## TROOPSHIP TO FRANCE

by PAUL D. COX

THE STARS sparkled bright but cold. The moon was a bright silver disc but on the wane; paler than a few weeks ago. It lingered sadly on the tail end of the harvest season. Miraculously the fog did not blanket the city as usual. London was quiet tonight.

The warmth of early autumn was gone. The fragrant smell of burning brush had been wafted away by the first chilling winds of winter. Already, this evening, cold night wind swirled around corners and squeezed into every alley and street of the city.

Day leaves rustled across the yard and fingers of the wind ruffled their hair. They didn't notice. The man, his wife -- they stood on the hard packed earth of the court yard with winter's black skeleton trees around them.

They stood, his arms around her -- a kiss and then faint murmurings.

He wiped away a tear from her cheek with a corner of his scarf and spoke softly. "Gwen, darling, I'll be back; a year at most and this will be over and I'll be back with you and the children. Stop crying and tell me that you can spare me to my country for just a year." He smiled down into her tear-stained face.

"All right, Mark. It's necessary, I suppose." Her lips trembled but were brought under control quickly. "But why, why all this eternal fighting? It's so -- so wrong. Will there never be an end to it?"

"I don't know. Perhaps someday there will be an end. For us, though, it'll be over in a year, or maybe even less. We can whip those barbarians on the continent easily. Then I'll be back. We'll take life easy and watch our children grow."

He strode into the dark interior of the house. "Fix the bed. I'll see if the children are all right," he said over his shoulder. She followed slowly into the house.

Up early the next morning, Gwen went down to the docks to watch him board the troopship. He went to report to the commander.

THE STREETS near the docks were thronging with people, mostly women and children. There was a great clattering and yelling from the crowd. Small boys ran here and there calling to their friends. Most of their elders were lined along the street to watch the regiments swing by.

Then the troops marched down the street. Oh, it was fine and bright and very martial. The men marched briskly along in fresh clean uniforms. The rhythmic tramp of feet and the flashing steel and shouting colorers gave the place almost a carnival air.

Once she saw Mark for a brief instant among all the soldiers. She waved and shouted to him but he didn't notice. He looked straight ahead and marched as all the soldiers did.

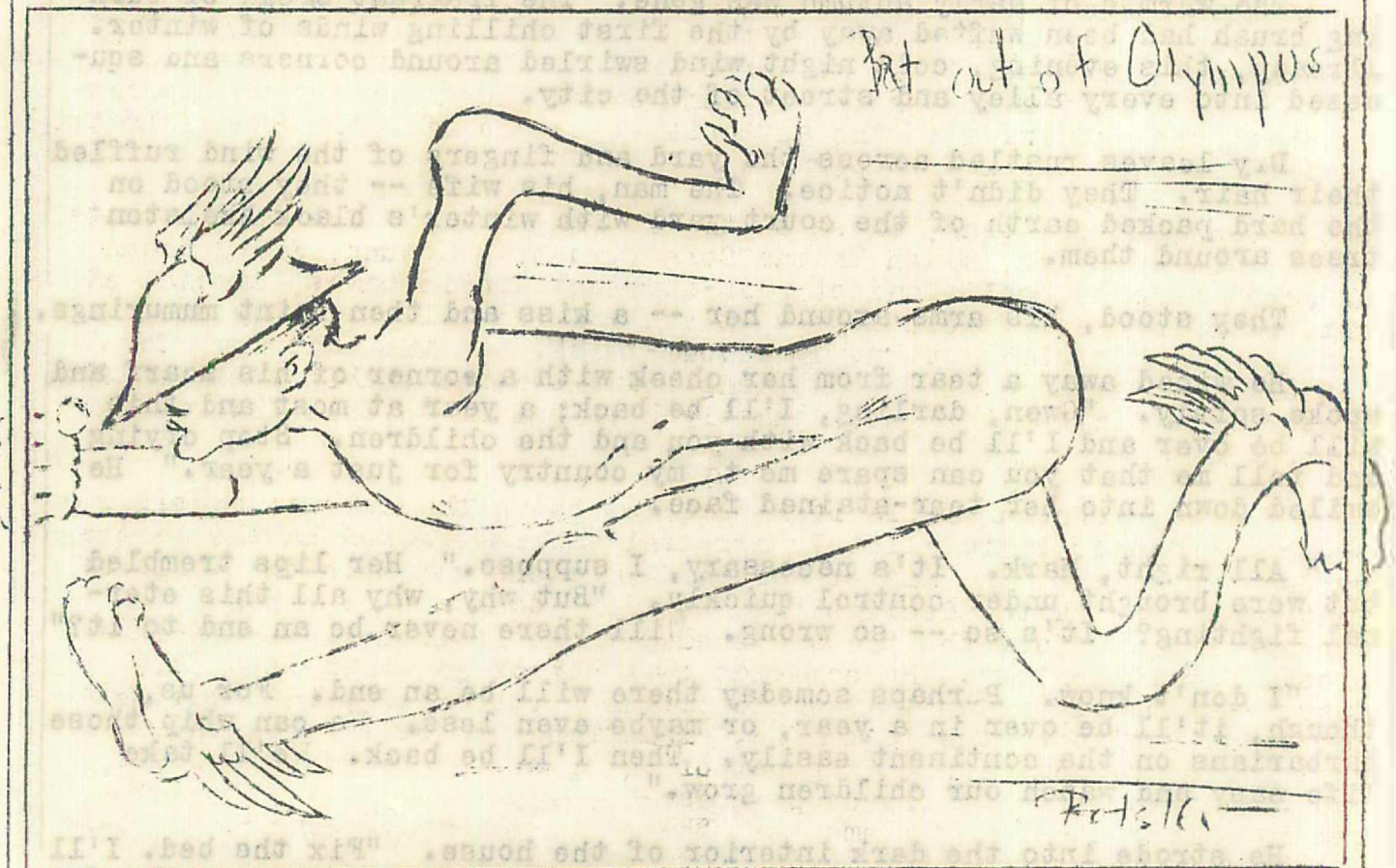
It seemed like many hours before the last of the troops had boarded the waiting ships. The greater part of the crowd had drifted off, since there was little to see but the endless lines of soldiers filing up the gangplanks.

The clatter and thump continued as the horses and supplies were forced up the loading ramps.

GWEN MADE HER WAY back through the city, hardly aware of the dust from the street and the angry cursing of a cart driver when she blocked his way. Nor aware of the chant of the farmers selling their wares in the town market place.

Gwen waited a year, five years, and many more, but Marcus, her Roman soldier-lover; never came back to London town.

- END -

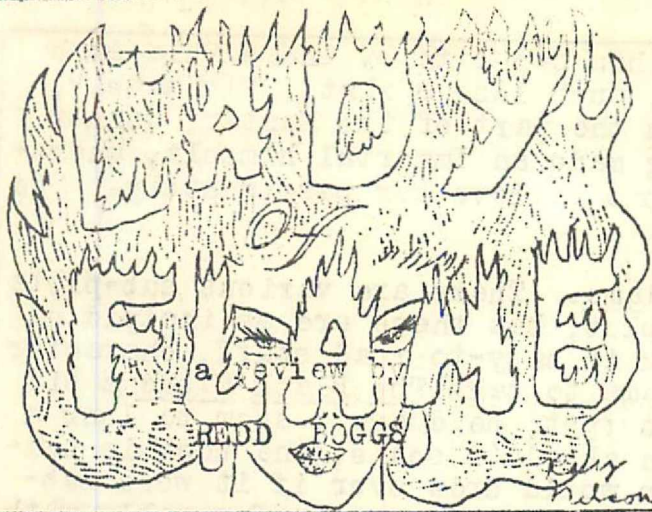


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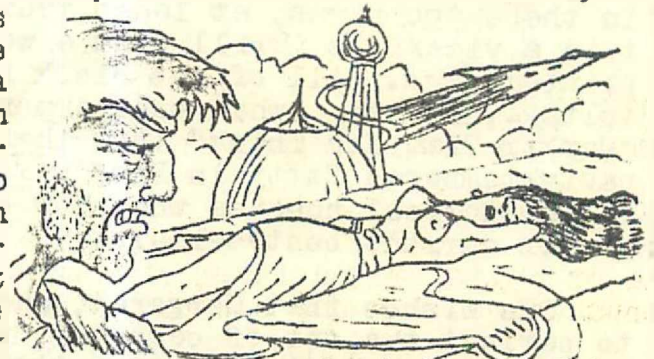
This guy, Thomas Marshall Connor, killed a man, 1907. He did him in with his Bare Hands. In the insanity of erinson wrath Thomas Connor slew his fiancée's lover -- and was executed for the crime.

This lovable character is the hero of Stanley G. Weinbaum's The Black Flame (Fantasy Press, P.O.Box 109, Reading, Pa., 1948, \$3.00), which is the story of what happens when Mister Connor fantastically regains consciousness a thousand years after being strapped in the hot-seat, to find himself in a New

World that doesn't qualify for the adjective Brave. Somehow, a millennium hence, the people have lost the Rabbitt energy and ambition that made America Great, and the murderer from the 20th Century discovers that he is a wolf among sheep, a plumb cultus lobo against whose brawny chest the pain-rays of the authorities bounce off like 88-millimeter shells off the noggin of Superman.

Sounds interesting, doesn't it? It isn't very. You form a mental picture of rough, tough Thomas Connor rushing around, doing deeds of great heroism, oblivious of pain-rays and atomic bombs launched at him, slamming the autocrats of that era and generally setting the world to rights with supermanly savoir-faire. On the contrary, Tom Connor actually does exactly nothing about the deplorable state of 30th Century civilization! What a ghastly betrayal of science fiction tradition!

The way Weinbaum tells it -- and he, being the author, should know -- Thomas Connor is immediately arrested and imprisoned in the palace by Joaquin Smith, "The Master" of the Immortals who rule the world in that age. The Master decides that "Killer" Connor's strength and strong will are just the factors needed to revitalize the sheep-like breed of that century. He commands that Connor go about doing his duty, -- a lovely order that would please 9 out of 10 males, but Connor turns out to be the 10th male. Meantime, Connor's strength and good looks are admired by Margaret of Urbs, sister of Joaquin Smith, who claims the royal title of princess and is called The Black Flame. She slinks onto the scene like Theda Bara and proceeds to act like slinky women are supposed to act. One might suppose that Joaquin Smith, anxious to revitalize the race, would welcome an affair between the otherwise-recalcitrant Connor and the Black Flame -- but on the contrary, he frowns upon such an eventuality. This whole inter-play of contrariness leads to an impasse any way you look at it. *Ray Nelson*



For some 100 pages this sorry display of stupidity continues. The Flame slinks, Connor sulks, and Joaquin Smith commands. Finally, the commoners revolt and plant an atomic bomb in the palace. There is no mushroom cloud, no particular damage, and apparently not a sign of hard radiation, but there's plenty of atomic fire, so Connor has the opportunity to rescue Margaret of Urbs, a splendid he-man exploit -- only she really wasn't in any danger at all. Occasionally Connor also es-

capas various and sundry designs upon his own life by incredible dumb luck, not so much as lifting a finger, much less a fist. Ultimately, through some high-powered reasoning on the part of the Master, Connor is rewarded for doing nothing by being made an Immortal himself, whereupon he wins Margaret, too. He has come to love her passionately. She kissed him once, you see.

That is the story of The Black Flame. There are various sub-plots and further developments of the main plot, but these are as insipid as the main thread of the yarn. The book is easy-to-read stuff, characteristic of Weinbaum and, although he seems to take The Black Flame a bit more seriously than most of his pulp output, he doesn't seem to lack a sense of values on the subject. On an absolute scale, the book is tolerably good pulp material which Merwin would crow over if it were submitted to him brand-new for TWS. The writing compares unfavorably with some of Weinbaum's shorter work, but here and there it sparkles, and always it suffices to describe and evaluate the conventionalized future-world he has taken for a setting.

Incidentally, in addition to the story outlined above, there is a novelette included in the book. This story, "Dawn of Flame", describes an earlier adventure of Margaret of Urbs, in which she outwits a backwoodsman who stands against the Immortals' conquest of the Ozarks during the wars the Immortals fought against the barbarians of that age. The hillbilly hero, Hull Tarvish, is a straightforward characterization cut rather close to the Lil Abner pattern, but he is more believable than Thomas Connor who, as has been intimated, is first revealed as a mentally unbalanced murderer, then as a fighting man among pacifists -- and subsequently shows no evidence of being either violent-tempered or rough and tough. An opportunity for superman Connor to display his brute strength or 20th Century cunning in a smashing climax, or at least, a chance for doing a Jimmy Cagney on the Black Flame's up-tilted chin, would have saved this story.

The Black Flame herself is a gorgeous creation into whom Weinbaum has pumped enough pulpish sex to burn holes in an asbestos copy of Hollywood Detective. Although the author keeps nudging us and hinting that Margaret of Urbs has "unexpected depths", he never reveals much more than her physical side. However, she is easily the best character in these two yarns, at least from the viewpoint of any male who can obtain a vicarious thrill from a woman whose only existence is on the printed page. All of the Black Flame's sex appeal seems pretty low voltage, however, when one compares her with April Bell of Williamson's "Darker Than You Think" (now there was a sexy woman!), or with that nasty-tempered Betty in Pong's To Keep Her Kill, or indeed with most of the historical hussies who show extreme cleavage on the book-jackets of the current best-sellers.

One wishes that Margaret, who being an Immortal has had 600 years to perfect the art of coquetry, would stop making like a 16-year-old high schooler trying to vamp the football hero, and begin using her high-pressure allure. The average circulating-library heroine could have had Connor in bed in 15 minutes; girlish little Amber did better on her first conquest than the Black Flame did on her last.

But perhaps it isn't her fault. Weinbaum tells us that although the Black Flame is 600 years old she has remained physically a girl of 20. Many women in the northern latitudes do not mature sexually till they are close to 30.

HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT  
Pro and Con  
by Jack Clements  
c/o NFFF MSS + Bureau

It seems a lot of bandying about has been done of late concerning the merits and demerits of the late H.P. Lovecraft. The dissenters have made all sorts of remarks, some truthful and some rather ridiculous. The Lovecraft worshippers have retaliated with equally truthful and ridiculous replies.

Yet neither side stops to consider Lovecraft's work as a whole. It is either great or terrible, depending on the reader's viewpoint. I myself feel that Lovecraft is more or less on the great side, though his dissenters have some good points. One such point is the ridiculous names given to the gods in his stories. Also the manner of expression of some of his characters is somewhat on the foolish side. For instance, when, in the middle of a quiet conversation, one yells out "OH YOG-SOTTOTH...OH GOD OF THE NETHER REGION...AHHHHH!" it has a rather comical effect, rather than being terrifying.

And too, the conglomeration of adjectives which Lovecraft employed to describe an unintelligible, unthinkable, unimaginable horror only succeed in defeating their purpose.

But here the dissention ends. For with these faults, Lovecraft still managed to get across a feeling of horror. (( Beer, what a noble ambition... Ed)) His atmosphere, while said to be overdone by some, was a perfect background for every story.

His characters were vividly real. None of them were beyond comprehension. He did not employ the brave, stalwart hero that one encounters so often in both fantasy and non-fantasy fiction.

His plots, weird tho they were, were handled in a realistic manner, in spite of cries of terror every paragraph or so. His story, "The Outsider", is the greatest thing he ever did, and one of the best horror stories ever written.

"The Dunwich Horror" is truly a masterpiece of weird fiction.

"In The Vault", while not a fantasy, produces a feeling of revulsion and horror so great that its impact is breathtaking.

I could name any number of stories which are masterpieces of weird fiction. The name Lovecraft is enough to guarantee greatness in any story. Yet his dissenters, most of whom admit that they have read only one of his

(over)

stories, continue to decry his works, about which they know nothing. Some have even been heard to admit that they have read none of his works. While it is certainly no crime to dislike Lovecraft, it is a crime of ignorance to renounce him when one knows nothing whatsoever about his writings.

Many tear him down because it is the current fashion. Wilkie Conner, for instance, remarks that the only thing he has against "Weird Tales" is that they once printed stories by Lovecraft. Here we see a case of follow-the-leader. Conner seems rather fond of following the remarks of one demoted sergent who hailed from a distant planet. First Mr. Conner does this with Kuttner, then with Lovecraft. I suppose it is easier to parrot the remarks of others, but it seems to me that honest expression of opinion shows more intelligence.

I suppose in some future issue of "Startling Stories" . ye Ed will treat us to a witty remark concerning Lovecraft, only to have Conner record it, write an article concerning the possibility of a future space war, and slyly mention that Lovecraft would probably be a lousy space-man, or some such irrelevant remark.

Well, I suppose it is rather amusing, at that. It is much easier to kick a man when he's down.

END

((That's all the biting and clawing for today, kiddies. Henceforth all slander will be confined to the letter section....Ed))



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QUIEN SABE ?

((Because the interesting contents of our incoming mail usually end up as articles or other features somewhere in WARP, there never seems to be much to throw into this column. And now that fandom has a choice and roaring letterzine, we, frankly, do not see much advantage in running a lettercolumn in WARP.

We have at times considered replacing it with a department to be called "The Reaction Chamber," where we'd summarize reader2 reaction to the preceding ish, its best and worst features, etc.

Next month we intend to resume our habit of putting the author's address with his byline, and invite you to comment directly if you especially like or disagree with anything you read in these lurid pages.

But, like all warplans, we pause to see what you want. Let us know, huh?[[

Dear Art:

The SPUV finally arrived. Though it was a bit messy, it was a pretty good issue. I'm afraid, though, the lack of neatness will keep it off Merwin's highly vaunted A-list.

The most interesting thing in the issue was Redd's File 13. I thoroughly agree with his opinions in re fantasy movies. People hereabouts referred to the same pax he mentioned as being crazy.

Have you heard about Manly Banister's forthcoming anthology? He has bought a press, several fonts of type, and \$54 worth of paper. His article on book-binding was tremendously successful. The article was in the March issue of Profitable Hobbies, and his book about book-binding is now available. It is something that every fan and fannette ((Ed's note: I always thought the terms were "fan" and "fanny."))((Publisher's note: After seeing some of the examples at the Torcon, I agree.))

WILKIE CONNOR

Dear Art:

Romance of Alchemy finished up in fine style. This is the kind of article I like to see -- one that gives a person a lot of information to chew over.

Glad to see Stf Broadcasts Again. I have a suggestion (purely selfish, I assure you). Why not reprint the original story complete in one volume? I'll wager you'd sell quite a few copies. (Or did you throw away the original stencils?) ((When "The Great STF Broadcast" began, WARP was still a hectozine. But you'll hear more about this suggestion in the March WARP.))

WILLIAM JAMES

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Volume IV -- No. 5  
 - FEBRUARY, 1949.  
 (Issue Number 23)

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**Artwork:-** COVER by r-trepp  
 INFERIORS: Ray Nelson, Wm. Rotsler, Trev Nelson, r-t.

SPACEWARP  
 Published by  
 ARTHUR H. RAPP  
 2120 Bay Street  
 Saginaw, Michigan 48607

Printed Matter Only  
 Return Postage  
 Guaranteed

SPACEWARP, combined with UNIVERSE, is a monthly amateur publication of (presumably) interest to science-fiction and fantasy fans. Subscriptions, advertising, and manuscripts are all welcomed.

Editor: ARTHUR H. RAPP  
 Assistant: BILL GROOVER

Mutually cooperating on a semi-permanent basis:  
 GEORGE YOUNG  
 STEWART MITCHETTE  
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**ADVERTISING RATES**  
 One dollar per page, half or 1/4 pages proportionately. Circulation this issue: 115 copies.

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