

SPIRAL

--November 1954--

--Number Nine--

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 } other fanzines gladly arranged. All letters received are (
 } subject to use in the letter column unless the writer says (
 } otherwise. Unused material will be sent to the Fanzine (
 } Material Pool unless the author indicates otherwise. Boo! (

"Wer sägte den Boot Courtneys?"

SPIRALITIES - OF A SORT

You will no doubt notice a variety of changes present in Spy this issue as compared with previous issues. For one thing, I'm merely two months overdue in bringing the crazy thing out (enough reason already to incur fannish wrath in quantity!). For another thing, I've decided that it is necessary to change my entire approach to the publication-- shall we all sit through the gruesome details?...

I have been finding it increasingly hard to bring out Spiral as each issue went along. It wasn't that I disliked doing it or that the job didn't satisfy me--indeed the last issue pleased me immensely--but I'm in so many darn activities at school and such that fanning just had to be put off from day to day to day. Unfortunately the days roll into weeks and the weeks into months and so here we are, four months later, and still no Spy. I have been receiving threatening letters from many people--Penny Rich and Dennis Murphy in particular carrying the biggest hatchets--demanding to know whether it was late or simply deceased. And after I faithfully promised in #8 that I wouldn't become a victim of annishitis!

Well, what with being musical director of the schools amateur show (a very big project), and being write-up editor of the school year-book (a very big project), and being a struggling young senior trying to get decent grades for college entrance (a very big project indeed!), I could hardly find any time to reply to fan letters, let alone publish a fanzine. And then the fact that for the past two weeks I've been home recuperating from an operation that took out a third week certainly didn't help too much. Result: no Spiral.

So the conclusion I came to was this--Spy had to change, but fast. Therefore, this issue will contain no outside material to speak of and very few letters from the readers...it is intended to help me clear out over 100 fanzines that have received no replies, and to cut down the zillions of notes I have taken the last four months for this

column. Judging by your many letters in the past, "Spiralities" has always been considered the best item in the magazine, so from now on I have decided to make "Spiralities" the magazine--more or less. I have on hand several good articles and stories, by Harlan Ellison, Dick Ryan, Don Wegars, Terry Carr, Roger Dard, Charles Harris, Dick Geis, Claude Hall, Ted White, and others, which would make a beautiful anniversary if printed all at the same time. Instead, though, I'm going to dish them out, one at a time, one per issue, to supplement each issue. Also I intend to print quite a few letters (many dealing with the controversies Spiral has begun) in future issues, although this issue won't have too many. But the bulk of future issues will be just me--and so if, one time, you see my arm hanging from your copy, and another time, my pearly-white upper molars, you'll realize why!

In this way Spy will probably begin to take the form very much like Chas. Wells' GREY--a fanzine which appears quite often but which doesn't need much time to put it together. I think it will be possible now to keep up a monthly schedule without tearing my hair apart--and goodness knows I can't afford to lose any more. Gone will be all the illustrations of the past and most of the covers, gone will be the 30-plus-page issues. But I think you'll enjoy SPY as much as you have in the past, for I'll try to keep the popular parts of it just as good. Thanks to all of you who took the time to write and see what was the matter--even though I maybe didn't answer you, it did make me happy to know that there are many who are also concerned about Spy.

ANYBODY FOR A DATE? Last issue I asked all those who wrote in to tell me the exact date that they received their copy, so that I could get a rough estimate of how long it takes third-class matter to travel across the U.S. I think the results may be helpful to all faneds, so here they are:

Only 8 readers remembered to answer my question, but they all gave pretty much the same results as would be expected. Considering that I mailed the issue July 20 from Illinois, the dates it was received were: July 26 in Michigan and Iowa; July 27 in Virginia; July 28 in Ontario (CANADA), California, Rhode Island; July 29 in Connecticut; and July 30 in New York.

Although freak local conditions will always make exceptions, I think therefore that, judging by the above results, a general rule can be made--faneds, in order to make sure your readers receive your issue by a certain date, it should be mailed about two weeks before then if the reader lives across the country from you, and about one week before then to close surrounding states. In other words, it takes printed matter a minimum of one week and a maximum of two weeks to reach its target, barring certain exceptions. These results I hope will be considered carefully by the careless editors who have many times acted as though "three days" is all it takes. Certainly, first-class matter takes only three days at the most; but printed fanzines are something else!

FANZINES BEWARE! As a small concluding note to this page before tackling the fanzines in general, may I mention that a few months ago I broke down and spent 69¢ for a staple remover...heh heh heh... Even Vorzimer's triple-duty double-inserted staples are no longer a challenge. (The preceding was an unsolicited testimonial for Ace-brand staple removers, pat. no. 2033050.)

COMES THE DELUGE

Each issue I swear that from then on I will faithfully reply to every fanzine that I receive and not cause the entire bunch to pile up for the next issue. Each issue also sees a pile piled up from the previous issues. This particular issue sees over 100 fanzines sitting in a pile eight inches high, leering up at me with pleading eyes. So again I must apologize to those of you who didn't receive a letter from me--really, it isn't that I'm trying to ignore you, it's just that I don't have any time at all!

From now on however I think I'll stop trying to make myself do the impossible and attempt to do the next-best thing--review most of them in Spiral. After this issue of Spy, therefore, consider that your zine will receive a fairly-detailed resume of my feelings toward it in my SPIRAL. That way I won't feel too bad if I can't write you personally--although, if it were possible, I'd much prefer the latter.

On, then, to the deluge.....I have at hand three issues of PSYCHOTIC (#14, 15 & 16). Dick Geis has been accused for some time of no-longer being interested in fandom and PSY, but with these issues he chokes all those accusations by presenting some really great issues. With #16, PSY goes bi-monthly in order to handle his material better, and we all hope that PSY continues to be as good for a long time to come. Dick realized that cutting himself out of his magazine also cut down the zine's value. This is something that every faned should realize before it's too late: don't make your zine into simply a means of printing scads and scads of material. A fanzine needs personality, and that means that an editor must express himself often in his publication. Every case of annishitis stems from the editors cutting out their personalities from the public--and I am certainly glad that Geis realized that when he did. ## He asks in #16 just where Fandom's Leading Monthly is, now that PSY is bimonthly--and then suspensefully states that it lies in some new fan yet to become tops. Which leaves us all turning and asking each other, "Who?" Maybe by next issue we'll know--I certainly don't right now.

Pete Vorzimer, the Great Producer, seems to have been halted temporarily by some faulty machinery in his factory--ABSTRACT's #6 and #7 appeared a month apart, as usual, but the big Conish did not appear until over a month after it was due. Tak, tsk, Pete! However, the delay can be forgiven somewhat by the material in this newest 100-pager. Although the thing as a whole is primarily Vorzimer, material by Bloch, McKinney, Moreen, Wegars, Grennell, Donnell, Hall, Ellison, Stewart, Carr and others makes for a good time. I can't help feeling, though, that Pete is so winded that his annish will have to be several months late....who else besides me notices an immense similarity in productivity and thinking between Vorz and Harlan Ellison?...

HYPHEN has made two more appearances in the form of #9 and #10, both excellent. #9 is edited by Vince Clarke as a more or less convention issue, British style. #10 is even better than usual, forcing me to say that if you aren't receiving "-" you are missing an immense amount of fun. (Write Walt Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Rd., Belfast, North Ireland for details. Every fan reviewer nowadays seems to say, "Well, you all know Walt's address so there's no need to print it."; so my printing it is for those of you who don't know it! And shame on you for not knowing it by now. Shall we all dance?)

Aside from PSY, AB, and "-" it seems that the other leaders are taking it easy right around now--and it has me worried. FOG is long overdue, OOPSLA should have seen another issue by now, DEVIANT has not been heard for four months, and even VARIOSO is suddenly quiet. What gives, kids? Meanwhile PEON and Chas. Lee Riddle have suddenly come to light again with two good issues--#32 and 33--which definitely place them back in my top ten. C'mon, Don, Gregg, Caroland John--let's get rolling again! ('Course, I'll admit that perhaps I haven't been setting a very good example....)

Nock's COSMIC FRONTIER, Watkins' DAWN, Carr's VULCAN, Hitchcock's UMBRA, Peatrowsky's CONFAB, Chappell's NITE CRY, McCain's REVIEW, and Hickman's STF TRENDS all have appeared in good faith and constitute the bulk of the present-day "average" zines. Particularly encouraging are the results obtained by Ted White in his ZIP, and Jim Bradley in his LYRIC. Both these are fast becoming top-names.

Roy Squires, editor of S-F ADVERTISER, quietly gave over all control of the magazine to Ron Smith, who combined it with his own INSIDE. This lessens the number of photo-offset zines by one, the other ones I can remember being FANTASTIC WORLDS and DESTINY. But how come the editorial address is still that of the old ADVERTISER? Very confusing.

This year is not the time for one-shots, it seems--at least in the technical sense of the word. Hitchcock-Multog-Nock whipped up one called HANGNAIL, more or less insignificant. The only other one I've seen this year came from Clarkson-Magnus combined and was called BLOODSHOT, and a good job it was. There's something fascinating about any one-shot...I wish they were more in style nowadays.

Ray Thompson's ECLIPSE has metamorphosized into BIBBILTY, and the result is a curious combination of spontaneous editorialities and undecipherable mimeo spots. Ron Ellik has changed FANTASTIC STORY MAG into a reprint-zine, and soon will change the name to MALIGNANT. #6 is devoted to reprinting several items from QUANDRY, some good and some bad. I must disagree with other reviewers, however, and say that I find FSM quite appealing in its new form. Next issue will reprint some items from Tucker's old LE ZOMBIE, which, by the way, is being revived--or at least that's what I hear. I'm not sure but I think Grennell (the Dean himself!) is mixed up with the revival in some way. If LeZ comes back to life it will be a curious thing indeed--especially after reading about its accomplishments over a decade ago in The Immortal Storm. More luck to you, Herr Tucker.

Tom Piper's long, lo-o-o-ong expected FASCINATION has finally appeared: it's good but I wouldn't want to bet that it will see another issues. UNDERTAKINGS is a new one from Sam Johnson, who apparently got tired of typing non-standard stencils for his old SFANZINE. Here is another zine to watch.

And then comes Charless Wells' FIENDETTA, in six delicious flavors and editions--or almost that. I've long lost track of what issue of Fiend was which, hoping that at least GREY would stay in a regular groove. Alas and alack, my hopes are in vain, for Wells has transferred GREY to Larry Anderson, who changed everything but the name. Larry has an unusual knack of publishing a variety of things, all of which have his same rambling style--GREY, PLANETOID, and COMIQUE being the examples for this issue. This closest thing to the old GREY nowadays is Raleigh Multog's ANEW, but that doesn't strike me as very permanent.

Three items are of special interest... THE SAUCERIAN, a zine unbelievably full of material pertaining to flying saucers, comes from Gray Barker, Box 2228, Clarksburg, W. Virginia in entirely new format from his past issues. Nan Gerding and Bob Farnham finally came up with this year's CHIGGER PATCH OF FANDOM, announcing that it would appear more regularly after this. Very good. And FANTASY TIMES has celebrated its 200th issue with a special 30-pager that is certainly anything but fannish in nature--even so it is quite readable, containing articles by such as Groff Conklin, Sam Mines, and Bill Hamling; plus a cover by Frank R. Paul. The most interesting thing in the whole issues is the fact that Taurasi has been in the black with F-T since 1948. We should all publish a zine for SF readers instead of fans!

TRA-LA, TRA*LA, OF FOREIGNZINES AND APAZINES... The sudden cropping up in this country of British and Canadian fanzines has brought up discussions in several fanmags as to the relative worth of U.S. and Canadian zines...I shall pass over that question right now but promise to come back to it in a later issue. There have been many new foreign zines reaching me, however... From England comes TRIODE, a very-nicely done thing from 58, Sharrard Grove, Sheffield, 12, England and apparently a group-edited zine. Material by Clarke and Willis do not hinder the magazine at all... (Now, lest I get many notes from disgruntled Willis-Clarke admirerers, the preceeding was a lesson in reverse psychology, or something like that. Do I have to explain all my jokes?)

The second and third issues of a very funny item called BEM have also arrived from Tom White and Mal Ashworth at 3, Vine St., Cutler Heights, Bradford.4., Yorks., England. This is admittedly an immitation of HYPHEN's brand of humor, and the amazing part of it is that it works!--even to the point of using material by Bob Bloch, Bob Shaw, Vince Clarke, and similar HYPHEN-writers. (Hyphen-writer, Hyphen-writer, Rah!) ## But why do all these European-type zines use the same size paper? Is that the way it comes over there? (By the way, I just realized that I've got the first two issues of "-". Just thought you might like to know.)

A BAS, another funny fanzine, this time from Canada and Boyd Raeburn, 14 Lynd Ave., Toronto, Ontario, has made a quick name for itself by pouncing on Peter Vorzimer but furiously. It uses similar wordage in replying to several other fans which it dislikes, saying to Sally Dunn, for instance, "in spite of your tirade, we shall continue to slap down to the best of our ability any cretin who persists in lousing up fandom." Supposedly a project of the Derelicts fan club, I imagine most of the work is done by Raeburn, all of which adds up to both heated arguing and hilarious antics. We have certainly not heard the last of A BAS in the fan press.

CANADIAN FANDOM states it wants comments on its material rather than its reproduction, which in my opinion is the best in the business. Okay--the column "Phi Alpha" by Howard Lyons is alone worth the price of the fanzine. The latest issue contains an insert of an "average American crudzine" which I would wager originated in the very near vicinity of Gerald Steward, the editor. The fanzine's continual (and sometimes justified) attacks on certain American fanzines have irritated many, but personally I'd just ignore them and enjoy the other good material that Can-Fan can present.

In the absence of FIE, which I have unfortunately never been able

to see a copy of, the one remaining Canadian zine is MIMI, the product of Georgina Ellis at 1438 Fifteenth St. East, Calgary, Alberta. The #2 issue is delightfully confusing, but out of the 38 pages is a memorable article by Norman G. Browne as an overall advisory column to new fans. It's a very well-done article and the best thing Norman's done since FILLER #1 appeared. (#2, by the way, is coming--and Norm requests all fans to send in items to 33 Lyonsgate Dr., Wilson Heights, Ontario.)

I can't imagine why I put the apa-zines in with these others, but anyway, they are. Both GRUE and SKYHOOK from the last FAPA mailing are excellent and available, I think, to subscribers. Write Redd Boggs or Dean Grennell respectively, because they should be respected. Dean has also taken to answering his letters by printing a thing called La BANSHEE...what with La Banshee, Le Zombie, and the like, Grennell must be le-la-ing all over the place. Also received, and thank you to the senders, have been Ted Wagner's SINUS-FICTION PUS, Calade Hall's CLAUDIUS (easy way to think up a title!), G.M. Carr's GEMZINE 4/4, and Dick Ryan's DEVOIR. The last one in particular I would like to see made bigger and a sub-zine.

THE NEW ONES The turnover of new fans these last four months has been quite high. Not only have the nearly-top zines not appeared regularly, and the many other editors changing their zines a lot, but a whole host of entirely new fans have appeared. The names and addresses of these will be included for the benefit of established fans who may want to trade with some of these newer ones.

George Jennings 11121 Tascosa Dr., Dallas, Texas, has mimeod first a 1/4-size thing called FWF DIGEST, wherein the main sport was figuring out what FWF meant. Lately he has issues TAST in full-size, with a story by Ron Ellick and carrying undoubtedly the biggest lettering my name has yet gotten in a fanzine--it could probably be seen 20 miles away in a blizzard. Good reproduction and editorial.

Wayne Strickland has issues a one-shot called BORED STF and it was so indeed. The paper stock for the front cover must be at least 60-pound slick white, if that's any consolation. 4930 Orchard Ave., San Diego 7, California.

I have a half-size zine called MINI (not MIMI!) here from "Jacob Edwards, 1010 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church Virginia," which is a fantastic thing indeed--but the cap type face is very appealing. The editor is supposed to live on the other side of town from Ted White, the reason his number being only 4 units different from Ted being that Ted lives on the corner and then there's no thoroughfare and then the street starts again and then there's "Jacob." Personally the whole set-up smells slightly fishy (my nose is sensitive to fan hoaxes now, for which see the article a little later this) and I would venture that "Jacob Edwards" is just a creation of Ted. I have been wrong before but I'd bet I'm right this time--the whole zine is set-up queerly ("Jacob" doesn't have a typer so he uses Ted's, Ted writes a long guest-column in the issue, the editor reviews fanzines in a way that no neo-fan could or would dare review zines, etc.). It's all quite fascinating, though, and if you received MINI as a trade I wonder if you're wondering the same thing...huh?....

Two issues of DIFFUSE, from V. Paul Nowell, have arrived from 6528 Gentry Ave., N. Hollywood, Calif. The zine is better--much better--than average beginners and I hope it can continue, even though

Paul had used Vorzimer's machine to duplicate his zine and Pete has now moved. The second issue had an excellent and very funny take-off on Dagnet by a D.M. Payn, the only one I've liked other than one written once by Don Wegars. A good letter column, a novelty item by John Hitchcock, and a column by Dick Geis (now deceased) (the column, that is, not the writer!--I'm not trying to start another hoax!), made a very good offering. Get this.

Ray Youstra Jr., 10441 Central Park, Chicago 43, Ill. (getting near home, eh wot?) has put out IMAGINE THAT! a readable but obviously neofannish effort. Duplication is excellent. Ray draws the greatest cartoons in crayola with his letters to me in a truly de-style, though, and has a lot on the ball. All he needs is the right material and he'll go places but fast. Watch this.

TELLUS is a half-sized zine put out by Page Brownton, 1614 Collingwood Ave., San Jose 25, Calif. This issue is #3 and is a curious combination of rather mediocre material and excellent art-wrok, some of which I can't believe is just mimeographed. Other than a rather funny "SF Fan's Dictionary" the material is not noteworthy-- but here again is a zine that could get much better. The whole tone of the magazine is as curious as this offer by the editor: he will pay "about \$1.25 for MAD #1, 2, 3 of 5, apiece." He must really want them! (Suggestion: have you written the publishers to see if they have them? They did about six months ago.)

SCINTILLATION, as they spell it, is the product of Mark Schulzinger, 3423 Larona Ave., Cincinnati 29, Ohio; it really isn't too bad after reading, for the editors have a nice style; but the poor mimeoing and peculiar-sounding material probably scare away the majority of the readers before they can even tackle it. For instance, on the first page the editor states that "complaints and adverse criticism to be sent to Army Skurow (address withheld)." You figure that one out.

NUCLEONICS, edited by L.S. Bourne, c/o R.L. Bingman, 3709 S.E. Hawthorne, Portland, Oregon, is edited rather slaphazardly by Larry, put published beautifully by "the Geis Publishing Co." and illustrated to perfection by Jim Bradley. The latter deserves most credit for the issue. This will have to improve material-wise or else settle for being an art-zine. Really, tho, Bradley is tops. Tell me, Jim, does your work turn out as good on mimeograph?

Randy Brown came out with a perfectly miserable thing called INTERPLANETARY (1/4-size, vaguely mimeod); but in his second attempt he improved very much--it is HARK, full-sized, and colorful. Mostly just rambling comments, but Ron Ellik again contributes to another first-issue. I salute Ron for all the work he does for starting eds--more of us should remember the trouble we had when we first began.

The most promising of the entire lot of beginning zines comes from Mike May, 9428 Hobart St., Dallas 18, Texas. Mike is not unknown to many fans, for he previously pubbed six or so issues of the EC FAN JOURNAL before beginning an SF fanzine in the form of EPITOME, two issues of which have reached me. He has very good material, excellent mimeographing, and a personality that stretches wide from shore to shore. Boob Stewart reviews the Frisco, Don Donnell tells another story in his typically excellent fashion, and Ted White swears away at the results of his color-printing. Mike handles the letter-column

very well, and the informality and good editorial handling are of such high quality and so absorbing that I actually didn't notice the absence of any illustrations until I looked specifically for them. Even the green paper is just right for the zine. I can't help but compare EPITOME to Shelby Vick's CONFUSION, much in the same manner that I compared Don Wegars to Lee Hoffman last issue. Can it be that these two comparatively newcomers are the beginning of another fandom rich in natural humor?...I wouldn't be surprised. Mike seems to have a lot of enthusiasm and, if he keeps on producing for a few more issues, EPITOME will reach the top shortly. If you're not receiving this zine I heartily recommend that you do, and soon!

EPITOME, by the way, has already been noted for one thing--it carried in its first issue the same article by Ron Ellik that appeared in the #1 issue of Piper's FASCINATION, word for word. As both issues arrived at my house but seven days apart, apparently the mix-up lies with Ron, who, in his haste to help out two more beginning eds (as cited on the previous page), mailed the same article to two by mistake!

One more first-issue sits on the bed facing me, and I'm somewhat at a loss as to how to face it back. (In case you're wondering, all the fanzines, notes scribbled at odd moments, newspaper clippings, etc. are sitting on my bed to my left, in neat piles according to their classification--this is how "Spiralities" is organized. But I'm beginning to wonder--it's getting late tonight, and how am I going to go to bed with all this stuff sitting on it? Woes-of-a-Faned #734.)

To get back to the business at hand, the fanzine is COUP, a nicely-mimeographed item from "The Coup Group", 14 Jones St., New York, N.Y. Its 30 pages are quite impressive, with black print and blue headings--but its material is unusual, to say the least. It takes the stand that fandom and science fiction must "reform or else", and then proceeds to name everything--practically--that it thinks is wrong in the field. The editorial of this first issue should be read carefully before any analysis of the contents is made--because this group is trying to do something different. What, I can't quite say right now--but I'll guarantee that if they keep at it it will be something big. The trouble, though, is this: after writing a very serious editorial pointing out that their group is "in a very real sense, a Left Opposition; fandom hasn't had one since the Futurians, who weren't too awfully Left", the rest of the zine does not go on to explain their basic ideas. Indeed, the rest of the zine is composed of slices and beefs at anything and everything, the only person the group apparently admires being Ernie Kovacs, indeed a very funny fellow (I remember him from network TV), who undoubtedly is the reason for the "Aunt Albert's Cooky Nook" later on in the issue. Oh, yes, they also like Harlan Ellison. Fellows, you're gonna have to make yourselves more clear--or are you just trying to present an interesting fanzine and be done with it? I doubt it, but I also wonder whether I will appreciate future issues... At any rate, COUP deserves much watching from fandom...

OF SPECIAL INTEREST Concluding (I hope!) the fanzines for this issue are three special efforts which deserve mention because of their being outstanding results of much hard work. The first is Lee Riddle's 1953 CHECKDEX of all prozines of that year. Begun by Steve Curtin, Lee took it over when Steve found himself incapacitated by the U.S. Navy. It costs 25¢ from 108 Dunham St., Norwich, Conn., and is a neat little listing, by author, of every story

published in 1953. A nice job, Lee, but one question--with the pages measuring 10½x6, just what type of mimeograph did you use?

I mentioned last issue of the F&SF announcement of Donald H. Tuck and his HANDBOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY. Since then I have received my copy, and am fully convinced that it is worth my \$1.50. It is published in pica type on 150 legal-size pages, and contains practically any information you'd want to know concerning science fiction and its books and authors. The bulk of the book is composed of an alphabetical encyclopedia of knowledge, including notes and books of famous authors, the contents of all anthologies, information about all motion pictures that have appeared, etc. The appendix includes pen-name tables, a chart showing the full histories of all sf magazines this century, a list of all pocket-sized books, and numerous other items. Complete up to 1953, Tuck's book is full of thousands of details, all of which are quickly available to the reader. Although Don lives in South Africa, the book can be obtained in the U.S. from H. Devore, 16536 Evanston St., Detroit 24, Michigan. If at all interested write Mr. Devore for more details. Meanwhile, cheers to Don Tuck for a most worthwhile project!

Finally, the most important news to come in a long time is that The Immortal Storm, after a delay of over a year, has at last been published and mailed out. There is really no way of ranking this superb job of Sam Moskowitz except to call it unique--and I certainly hope that any fan with five dollars to spare will send it to ASFO Press, 713 Coventry Rd., Decatur, Georgia, before this hard-cover edition is sold out. Moskowitz covers the history of fandom in minute detail from its very beginning up to a short time before 1940. It is a fascinating look at the first fans and why they did what they did--and I honestly can speak in nothing but superlatives over this entire work. Please take my word for it that here is something which you definitely won't want to miss. Sam Moskowitz and the Atlanta group have given fandom a most-worthwhile contribution--and now I am hoping that someone (I don't know who) will continue this history up to the present time, or at least through the war years and beyond. True, as Moskowitz says, any fannish doings past Pearl Harbor may be just history repeating itself (wherein lies the title, The Immortal Storm), but at least they should be recorded by someone who was a fan at the time. Any volunteers???

Along this line, I am planning on writing and distributing--separate from SPIRAL--a rather detailed account and analysis of all important fannish doings of this year, 1954. This project is still brewing around in my mind right now but I'm pretty sure I'll attempt it sometime early next year. After considering all the many developments which took place this year, particularly in the fan press, I think it will make an interesting tale; so you can more or less start watching for further announcements around the first of the year. And with that note we conclude--finally!--this issue's fanzines!

K A Y M A R T R A D E R

If you buy, sell, or trade STF mags and books
be sure to get the current listings and prices.
Just a thin dime will bring a copy of
K-T into your mail box. K.M. CARLSON
1028 Third Ave. So--Moorhead, Minnesota

A LOOK AT THE PRO'S

The entire pro field seems to be precariously silent at this time, and I don't particularly care for the silence. Perhaps the most noticed blow in the past four months was Sam Mines' leaving Standard as editor of SS, TWS, and FSM; now Standard is struggling along with a board of editors, a curious set-up indeed, and trying to immitate SaM's success in the letter column and elsewhere. I really have quit buying the three magazines now because Mines was the important selling point, as far as I was concerned. Indeed, the only magazines I buy regularly anymore are Galaxy, Astounding, F&SF, and Fantastic Universe--the others have no sting anymore. (I will admit, though, to buying Imagination and Universe when they review Spy--a pretty selfish motive, eh?!!) ## Two hopeful notes, however: Future has improved quite a lot after switching to digest-size; and Science Fiction Stories (also a companion to Future) has changed from an annual to a quarterly. Lowndes, at least, seems to have an eye for optomism.

The flow of pocket-sized books has leveled off some, too; the chief casualty being the Ballantine line, which, at least in these parts, has hit a stand-still. Ballantine being the leader for so long, I hesitate to wonder what will happen to the rest of the field. The more notable publications these past few months are these: Two Bob (Wilson) Tucker books have seen light, THE TIME MASTERS (Signet #1127) and THE LONG LOUD SILENCE (Dell #791), both being worthwhile reading. Arthur C. Clarke's fine book, AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT, has appeared in a Permabook Label (#310) for 25¢ and is well worth the money. Cardinal has brought out an interesting anthology called GREAT TALES OF FANTASY AND IMAGINATION (#156), containing stories by well-known authors of general fiction (Maugham, Benet, Kipling, etc.), very much like the earlier Bradbury-edited TIMELESS STORIES FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW. Perhaps the finest of the group now at hand is Richard Matheson's I AM LEGEND, Gold Medal Book #417, which certainly makes for some intriguing reading: this book is recommended by every review I've seen of it, and I won't argue with the majority!

Ads for Doubleday's Science Fiction Book Club have now appeared on the back covers of every prozine published, this club apparently flourishing well. ## Just noticed this interesting paragraph in a story by Roger Dee in the May issue of F&SF.... "Time deteriorates," he said in the archaic patois learned through patient months of study. "Let us place this show on the thoroughfare."

Uh, yes....

CLEAR OUT THE BASEMENT

I am bound and determined today to clean out my files of a multitude o f old newspaper clippings, magazine articles, and the like, some of which have been sitting, waiting to get in print, for almost a year! Here goes...

The amount of pertinent articles appearing in national magazines has apparently subsided for the time being to a dull ripple. PAGEANT

MAGAZINE (incidentally, a very readable digest-sized publication on the CORONET-type shelf) for August carries a nice-looking group of drawings by Fred L. Wolff showing various scenes in space. They are from the book WORLDS IN SPACE, due sometime this year (I don't recall seeing it as yet). ## And the August 24 issue of LOOK boasts of a long article by J. Gordon Vaeth, a Navy rocket expert, entitled, "How Close Are We to Space Travel?" Mr. Vaeth seems to think we're about 100 years away from said condition, but I'll be glad to make a big wager with him. (About two weeks ago, in early November, there was much talk going around in the papers about space-stations, et al, due to one scientist stating that Russia has done much research on the idea. The U.S. government made no comment.) Both articles are interesting, but not very--there's no need, in other words, to go scurrying around, looking up back numbers of the magazines, unless, of course, you're somewhat cracked and collect all such articles (like me!)

Mysterious happenings have been recorded in the papers like hot-cakes. Last December 11 (see?--told you these were old!) the papers carried an article about a family TV set that suddenly had a woman's face appearing on the screen, and the face wouldn't go away. It is probably still sitting there, while technicians mumble. And last April the national TV magazine, TV GUIDE, carried the story of the many sets in England which suddenly carried the test pattern of a Houston, Texas station that had gone off the air three years before! Mystery, it appears, reigns.

But that isn't all. LIFE MAG devoted an article recently to showing the many Frenchmen who had sworn they had seen the work of flying-saucer men. And the AP of August 25 carried similar stories from Oslo, Norway. To conclude things, the Chicago newspapers of September 23 had write-ups about the Chicago housewife who told of the many messages she had received from "a planet called Clarion", whose inhabitants "have been visiting the earth in what we call flying saucers." It seems that on one of their visits they observed the earth's crust and then announced, through this woman, that Chicago will be destroyed by a flood from Lake Michigan just before dawn on next December 21. Wilmette being just north of Chicago, undoubtedly I live in the danger areatoo.

Perhaps the only solution to all these is to pack up and move away from the Lake, but fast! We've already been flooded--in a minor manner--once this year, killing ten fishermen. I imagine all the Chicagoans will start moving pretty soon now...but one question: couldn't the flood wait at least until after Christmas???

OF CONS AND SUCH

SHALL WE BE CONVENTIONAL? Another convention has come and gone and still, over two months later, I have yet to see any Conreports in the fan press other than from Vorzimar. Even the person who was supposed to write a report for Spy has yet to be seen (although I'm still hoping!). Dogonit, anyway, a lot of us had to stay home over Labor Day weekend. We'd like to know what went on there from a number of fanmags--or am I just asking too early?

At any rate, from what I did learn, it seems Cleveland won the

site for 1955, an outcome that most of us took for granted anyway. They seem to be well-organized right from the start, for a special progress report has already appeared, containing complete details as to when, where, and how much. The "how much", by the way, is now \$2.00, which should be sent to the 13th World Science-Fiction Convention, P.O. Box 508, Edgewater Branch, Cleveland 7, Ohio. This doubling of price should bring in a lot more money, and I hope that Cleveland will use it wisely. Rather than increasing the expenses to meet the income, fellows, it should be possible to use just enough to meet expenses, and then send the remainder on to the next convention. By doing this year after year, we can really hold a slam-bang 100th Anniversary Convention, eh kids??!

Besides approving the rise in registration fee, the convention members also approved two other important resolutions, one being a minor censure of the 1954 Oklacon for being held at the same time, an action which was quite correct in my mind. After all, even though it had good principles at heart, holding the regional convention did make it seem that the Oklacon committee was brushing off the Frisco committee. ## But more important is the approval of the "Convention Rotation Plan," which divides the U.S. up in three sections--west, east, and central--and compels the convention to rotate yearly from one to another. This is fine on the surface, but I seriously wonder if it will prove to be helpful in the long run...

The motive behind the move, of course, was to make it easy for everyone in the country to get to a Convention, as far as transportation costs are concerned. What I dislike is that this more or less forces a convention on some city which may not want it that certain year. So long as, say, a New York group is just bursting to sponsor the 1956 Convention, okay; but what happens if the next year there is only half-hearted interest from some Western group to hold the Con? It seems that inevitably some year, with this plan, some group is going to have to shoulder a con that really shouldn't have to at all. The resolution contains a clause which makes it easy to amend it whenever circumstances warrant it, so I hope that this will keep this "rotation plan" from ruining some convention-year.

Technically, too, the Con is no longer a "World" con, being limited to just U.S. and Canada (I seriously doubt any Mexican moves). However, past experience has taught that any attempt to have the Con elsewhere other than in North America will not succeed.

One happy note, though--even though the national Con may be too far away from you a certain year, there's no need to worry, because with all the other cons around the country there's sure to be one near you sometime during the year. For instance, the Midwestcon is a very annual event, not to mention the Westercon in California and the Fanvetcon in New York. There's also the Oklacon in Oklahoma and the Metrocon in New York. And this past summer saw the Border Cities Con in Detroit. And just last week I received word of the Agacon, to be held in Atlanta next April! Gee, con wonders never cease?

To conclude these condoings, I had to look again when I first saw this news item in the paper last September 18: "Some \$20,000 worth of rare stamps were reported stolen from the American Philatelic Society convention in San Francisco Friday. The stamps were missing from convention headquarters at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel." Now, which little fan hid in a closet for two weeks to get money for a Gestetner? (At least it's comforting to know that there still is a Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco!)

OTHER FAN EFFORTS TO FLASTER WITH THE SINCEREST FORM... It seems that nowadays the idea is that, if one fan does something, another fan must immediately do the same thing, only better, or bigger, or littler, or something-er. The sudden influx of a multitude of various conventions is one of these games. But there are others, such as....

A game has been going on recently to produce the smallest-measuring fanzine--why, I don't know, but it just has. I have at hand a copy of Don Wegars' BLUR, 24 sheets each measuring 2"xl-1/8", which Don kindly sent me. This "Game of Mite," as Wegars labled it, apparently began with Larry Anderson's DROOL, and then Ted White's SMITTY. Not having seen either of them, I can't make a final decision, but if any get smaller than BLUR we'll all need magnifying glasses in the morning. It appears that somewhere, however, there is a smaller zine, for Don writes: "...I find, tho, that they've beaten me to the punch and I'm still not the smallest. Egads..." And his letter is covered with tear-drop stains. Tsk tsk, and such a noble try too.

Another battle seems to be shaping up with the business of polls of various types. This era's pollstering began with Pete Vorzimer, who decided to have his readers write in and list, in order, their top ten fanzines, so that Pete could make an accurate listing of which fanzines fandom liked the best. This poll went on for a number of issues, even going so far as to ask readers to list their top 25 choices (in order, yet!). Vorz announced the results a number of times, each time being different because of another hundred or so returnees and the elapsing of time....Well, then Chas. Wells decided that he should also take a poll to determine the top ten fanzines, except that he would just ask the readers to list them in any order, and not fool around with complicated point-systems, as Pete had. The results of Wells' poll have not been seen as yet. One important point Charles stressed was that he was more qualified to distribute ballots through GREY than through ABSTRACT, because readers of AB would be prejudiced, whereas GREY was not a prejudice-invoking publication. (AB constantly ended up in its own top ten.)

Next came word from Gregg Calkins that he would make a poll of the top fanzines, through his OOPSLA. The thing different about his was that he figured that only faneditors should be allowed to vote, because they--and not the casual reader of OOPS--would be in more position to judge such a question. Undoubtedly he also felt that, by eliminating casual readers, the voters would be less prejudiced than if neos who read OOPS alone also voted--and he was probably right. So far Gregg hasn't printed his results either, but when they do appear I suggest we take the results of the three different ones, add a little ketchup and throw them all together and see what happens. Right now I'm lost.

One more poll is being taken too at this time--a very complete poll of each fan to determine practically egverything about him that is known. Then all the results will be put together, supposedly ending up with all the characteristics of the "average fan." I don't recall who's idea this is, but questionnaires have been distributed with a number of fanzines. (Further investigation on my part yields that Gerald A. Steward is handling the survey, one which is patterned after a similar one held by Bob Tucker some six years ago.) The results of this will also be interesting, particularly to see what changes have been found since six years ago.

Then there was the surge a few months ago where everyone suddenly wondered where and how their heroes-of-interlineations had first appeared. Various fanmags started voicing their ideas as to the origin of such legendary figures as Courtney, Jgyvi, etc. About that time I was reading a book for American history and came across the fact, as stated in Chester Wilmot's book, The Struggle for Europe, that during World War II General Bradley, while talking to one of his fellow officers over the phone and learning of a great new offensive plan, uttered the immortal words, "Hot dog, Courtney, this will bust him wide open!" But what General Bradley would do with a busted hot dog is more than I can say--wouldn't the mustard escape? (Those of you dangerous enough to doubt this can look on page 675!)

Perhaps the most noteworthy achievements on imitation are the many new apa's that have cropped up. WAPA seems to have gotten new life blood, for I saw somewhere that Bob Peatrowsky had taken over the organization to fix it up and put it back on its feet--more power to you, Bob!

About three months ago the idea of WAPA began to take shape, until now the apa has grown into something worth-while. WAPA, of course, is for Whimsical Amateur Press Association, and if my memory serves me correctly it was Larry Anderson's brainchild (shoot me if I'm wrong!). The idea is for each member to have a definite date to publish his issue, and then mail it directly to other members. The publishing schedule puts one week's interval between mailings. As I am not a member I don't know how well it's doing right now, but rumor has it that so far it's doing okay.

Also about three months ago Pete Vorzimer started fishing around with a new apa idea, which finally turned out to be The Cult and got under way in September. Being a member of this group, I can vouch that it is doing very well right now. The idea is that there are 13 members, each of which has to print the official organ, THE FANTASY ROTATOR, sometime while a member. The editorship rotates among the members from issue to issue, each editor mailing out FR to all other members, and then letters of comment going to the next editor in line, who has two weeks to put out his issue. FR has seen four issues so far, and is turning into a very nice letter-zine. The Cult also appears to be surviving very well and, if it continues to gain speed, may well someday be the most important achievement of Pete Vorzimer, who has since stepped down to be just another member.

Comparing The Cult to WAPA, each has its advantages and disadvantages (the principle advantage of both being that there are no dues involved). Everything else equal, I'd bet that the Cult will survive the longer, or achieve more, because each member has a definite amount of responsibility that WAPAN doesn't have--the Cultist must carry on and make his issue of the OO as good as before, whereas the WAPAN simply issues his individual mag and that's all. (Remember, though, I don't know too much about WAPA and would appreciate some more information from Someone Who Knows!) At any rate, good luck to both groups!

MISCELLANEOUS, HO HO! About a month ago I received an interesting letter from the Central YMCA in Chicago, concerning the new science-fiction course it was sponsoring this fall. This course was undoubtedly fashioned after the successful and similar

idea tried in New York last year. The course is running for ten weeks and costs \$12, not bad for what you get. As in New York, famous science-fiction experts in the vicinity (and Chicago is a big vicinity!) will talk to the class about their various aspects of stf. Some of those who are teaching include Wilson (Bob) Tucker, Melvin Korshak, Fritz Leiber, Mark Reinsberg, Julian May, and William Hamling. I don't know how well this idea is doing in Chicago, but if it does as well as New York's (and it should) it will be another important step in educating the public about science fiction.

Thanks to those who helped me find Jack Harness and Ed Cox last issue. I've also received a number of other address changes, and perhaps you'd like to check these against the ones in your books. These are the new addresses:

Jack Harness - Cochran Hall, Meadville, Pa. (it seem Jack is moving constantly, and apparently the 555 Westover Rd. address in Pittsburgh is no longer correct)

Ed Cox - c/o Lee Jacobs, 15 Ave. 36 (Apt. 14), Venice, Cal.

Ted Serrill - Box 456, Hamilton Hall, Penn. State U., State College, Pa.

Burt Beerman - 26232 Pembroke Rd., Huntington Woods, Mich.

John L. Magnus - 203 Noah, Oberlin, Ohio

Gray Barker - Box 2228, Clarkesburg, W. Va.

Wait till you see the publicity that comes with the new movie, "Gog: frankenstein of steel."--Gray Barker sent me a folder, and apparently when the movie comes out, "CRIX go ga-ga over gog!" Complete with people standing on their heads and circles galore. Gog!....
Apparently Lee Hoffman has moved from Savannah and joined a ranch somewhere. The horses were too much for her....Paul Mittelbuscher says in a letter that he's quitting fandom....Star Rocket S-F Correspondence Club has folded, together with Multog's STAR ROCKETS. Judging from reviews SR received it won't much be missed. (Now, Raleigh, put down that hatchet! I never saw a copy of SF!!)....
THE LIVES AND TIMES OF ARCHY AND MEHITABEL, unabridged edition, is now available from Doubleday in a new, \$1.98 edition. I suggest you try this out on your player piano....Fantasy Press, Lloyd Eshbach's semi-pro publishing house, has been incorporated, which I imagine makes it even more pro....

Terry Carr has turned his Fanzine Material Pool (I refuse to type out the official abbreviation!) over to Peter Graham, after apparently tiring of the project. The Pool has been built up by Terry into a very worthwhile thing, particularly for new faneds, and Terry went out of his way to help everyone in finding the right material and making the Pool a meeting-place for material and needs of all types. Congratulations and a salute are very much in order to Terry, who did a swell job. And good luck to Pete, in hopes that he does just as fine a job with this important project.

Both BALLYHOO and POGO COMICS have folded. Egad, man, what's to come of us? By the by, for about a year I cut out the Pogo strips faithfully from the newspaper, both black-and-white and colored. If anyone can use them, or would like them, speak up, as I'm going to toss them otherwise. Also, POGO PAPERS is now out, and excellent....
"Tales of Tomorrow", that old TV show that supplies conventions with films from time to time, is back on the air--with the same old films! Meanwhile, ROCKETSHIP X-M has been released for use on television as an "old" movie...but I'll still take H.G. Wells' excellent

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME, which has made the rounds on TV a number of times. Even though a very old (and stilted) film, it has something indescribable about it that's appealing. If you ever have the chance, don't pass it up.....There must be someone else besides me who always has to think twice in order to avoid confusing the Chuck Harris of HYPHEN fame with the Charles Harris who edits INFINITY--or am I just naturally mixed-up?.....My total library of fanzines measures exactly 41 inches high. Should I stop collecting them or what? Please answer, Mr. Sandman..

EGO-BOO, EGO-BOO, EGO-BOO BOO BOO... Well, I told you the letter section would be short this issue! Actually, though, I do want to thank Gregg Calkins for the very nice comments he made re Spy in the following letter (well, if I've got to choose one letter, I might's well choose one that compliments me!):

"With this issue you have just jumped up to a much higher place in my estimation. Your own SPIRALITIES is very, very enjoyable and easily the high point of the issue...Let's face it. Fanzines today aren't as good as they once were. I would go so far as to say that the overall level of fanzine quality is about 50% below what it used to be. But just the same you manage to produce a highly enjoyable issue--so much so that I'm dashing off this letter to you and ignoring many other fanzines to do it. You can take that as a compliment, if you wish. I do.

Gregg"

Well, gee whiz, dad, thanks kindly--I only hope that this change in Spy doesn't change your view too much....and that wraps up another issue. I very much want to hear from you as to how this change hits you--whether you like it better, the same, or worse--and also the latest news youknow. Next issue I'll print the many letters continuing the "what-is-a-fan" contrivency from last issue, plus a feature or two that I know you'll enjoy. Till then, then... (double-talk!)

Denny

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