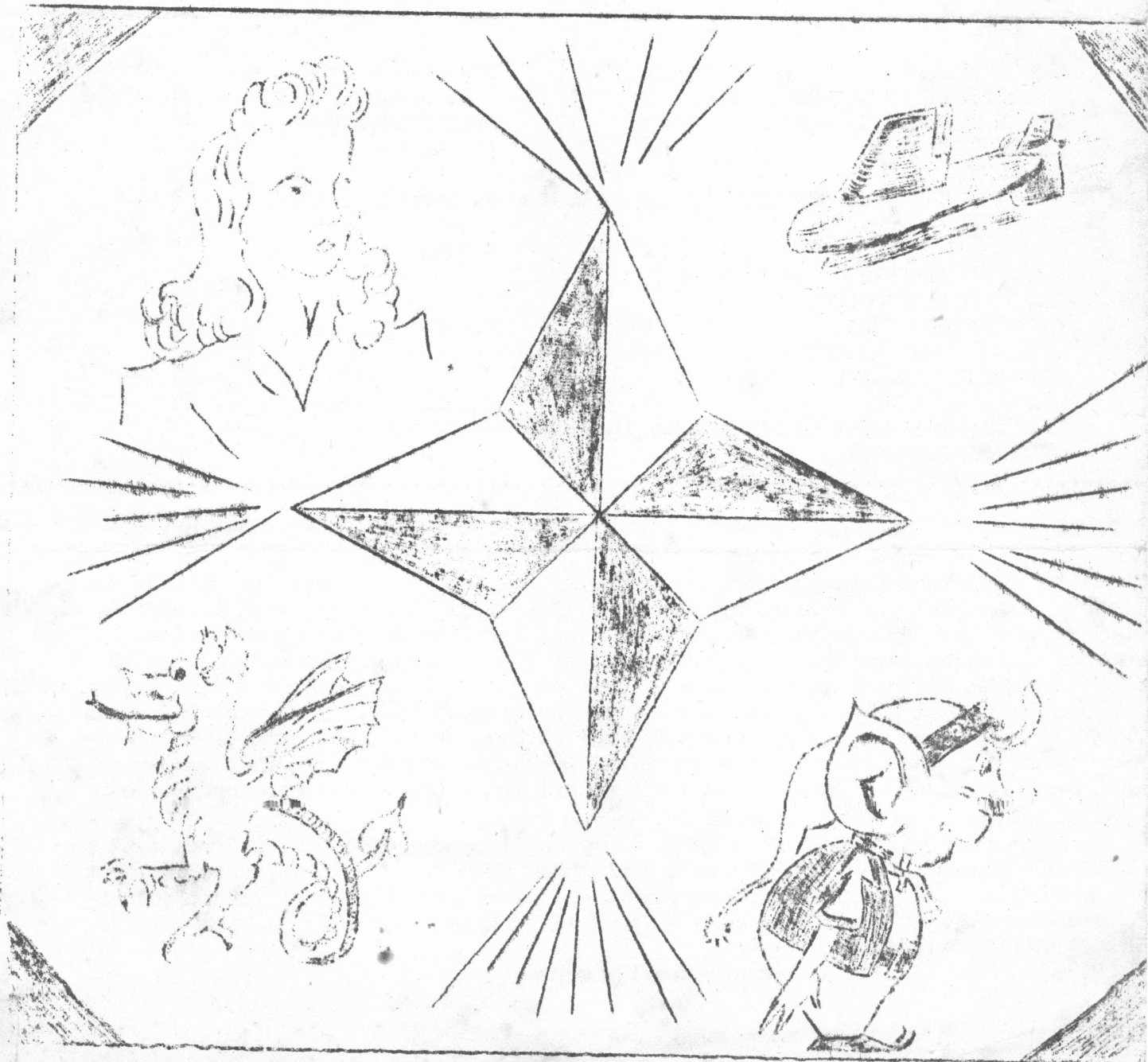


Operation

Fantast

March 1948

Issue 3



The official organ of the Liaison Department of the British Fantasy Library.

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 EDITORIAL NOTE: Once more I am full of apologies. This issue has gone hay-wire because of the overseas posting that hangs over me 'ead, like what'sisname's Sword. Many typographical errors occur, which should be easy to correct, but believe me, I have found it impossible to by any correcting fluid ! Duplicating is varied, but so were the duplicators I have used. The numbering of the pages has been messed about, (so have I), and I have a lot of stuff which I promised folk would be included, but which isn't. My apologies to you folk who sent me a story, article or whatever, that has been omitted - I'll use it next time. On the actual contents, well, my only word is, if you are a 'naice' person, avoid Ron's effort. In a humorous way, he has pointed out many things which are not normally included in a space-suit design, as done by our authors, but which are very necessary. You can guess, and you don't have to read it, do you ?

Now a personal note. I reported to my depot on the 12th Feb, and was sent on ORDINARY leave on the 13th. I still don't know when I go overseas, or where, but I expect it will be B.A.O.R. However, at the depot I have little facility for production of O.F. - or anything else - so until I finally get settled down, please bear with my faults and failings.

Fantastically yours,

K. F. S.

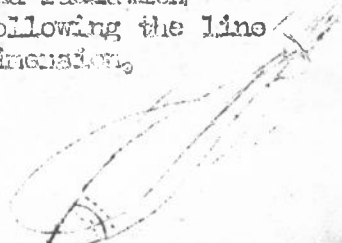
It was night over London and the moon, shining fitfully through the clouds, illuminated the well known face of Big Ben and the glistening curve of Westminster Bridge with the Thames flowing placidly beneath, as the hour of three o'clock was tolled. The tremendous Metropolis, heart of the British Empire was slumbering, ignorant of the perils threatening it.

Sixty miles to the South, in the galleries cut deep into the living chalk of the Downs, operators watched the dials and screens in front of them as the ever vigilant Radar pulses constantly swept the skies for the attack that was certain to come. For two years, ever since the collapse of the Third Reich and the devastation of Hiroshima, men had stood at their posts, here and at similar places over and under the British Isles. Until now they had waited in vain, their vigil only broken by the excitement of a false alarm.

Suddenly twelve bluish streaks showed on the screen, illuminated by flickering light, in front of a youthful technician. Swiftly, as automatic alarm bells tolled, his well trained hands went smoothly into operation. Far above ugly parabolic reflectors and Radar tubes swung into line with the approaching rockets. In the space of a few seconds invisible interference beams were criss-crossing the night sky to fasten on the giant atomic projectiles far up in the stratosphere. Where two beams crossed on a material object there was a brilliant flash of light and a puff of metallic vapour as the rocket was almost instantly heated to a temperature measured in tens of thousands of degrees Centigrade. Ten were destroyed but two carriers of death were left, streaking soundlessly through the upper air towards London. Travelling at well over five thousand miles an hour they missed destruction from the new interference beams hundreds of times. Once the fin of the leading projectile burst into incandescence but no serious damage was done. Together they hurtled down on the vulnerable, slumbering city beneath them.

Then a coincidence, which might never be repeated in the life-times of a thousand Galaxies, occurred. The two giant atomic bombs exploded at exactly the same moment. Not even a fraction of a ten millionth of a second, the time an atomic explosion takes to release its pent up energy, separated the annihilation of the two masses of radio-active material. Only afterwards was the power of these terrible engines of destruction realised. They had been designed not to merely destroy a city, but to utterly devastate a nation.

The two holocausts of coruscating, flaming energy crossed, intermingled and fought for supremacy. Nothing could stand these titanic forces, brought into being by the hand of puny man. Even space, the foundation of the Universe, buckled, fought back and.....broke. That, which had existed for time beyond the conception of mortals, snapped in the merest fraction of a second. Far up in the air the annihilating energy and radiation slipped through this crack in the space time continuum, following the line of least resistance, to a lower energy level in another dimension.



4.

The normal laws of the Universe, in constant flux, bent to allow for this new condition and the most delicate laws, those involving time, were affected most of all.

An opaque bubble expanded from this rent in the basic fabric of matter and quickly increased in size, but at an ever decreasing rate. In about five minutes it had reached its maximum stable size, with a radius of one hundred miles, and suddenly, as if it had never existed, broke and disappeared.

No longer was the country below typically English, with its hedged fields and country lanes, it was a land of titanic buildings stretching upwards for thousands of feet. The whole area was one gigantic city. Instead of peaceful hamlets and villages, tremendous ferro-concrete, plastic and quartz structures covered the whole area. Straight, wide highways arched across one another and enormous white globes lighted everything. On the flat tops of the buildings strange shapes, reminiscent of helicopters, crouched silent and motionless. To the Westward, on one of the few open spaces visible, a score of huge glistening shapes rested on great metal ramps. Their super streamlined bodies seemed to be straining towards the stars, towards which they pointed. The stars, for which man has been longing, ever since a solitary mutant ape wondered who it was when lighted the myriads of tiny fires in the sky in the evenings. They could be nothing but space-vessels, perhaps even designed for inter-stellar travel.

Even as the time bubble had burst spear after spear of flashing light shot through the darkness, which every now and again covered the land below as a cloud obscured the moon, as salvo after salvo of small rockets accelerated upwards into the stratosphere. As the last batch of these war rockets sent streamers of fire dancing towards its launching site, dawn began to flush the Eastern sky.

Within a few hours the Governments of the World realised that something serious had occurred. Communication with both London and Germania, a European State, had been severed. Disconnected messages had arrived from other Nations and cities mentioning terrible explosions devastating Germania. When more concise reports were available they learnt that Germania was writhing in her death throes beneath a pall of dust clouds which mushroomed far into the stratosphere, and even beyond it. Germania had been so utterly devastated that no living thing could live among the radio-active shattered ruins of this now non-existent nation. The aggressor had been absolutely smashed into the Earth, never to rise again. Other nations planning aggressive wars realised that retribution, as sure and as deadly as this, would fall on them if they continued with their plans

In hidden factories, machine-shops and laboratories throughout the World work on atomic weapons ceased. Not one of the workers in these illicit areas wished to remain. Not one worker would risk the annihilation of his country, friends and relatives for the whim of those in power in his country. They feared the laws of their country but they feared the justice meted out, so accurately and deadly, even more.

War was a thing of the past, a phenomenon historians would puzzle over and in the future, explain as a form of racial suicide, just as lemmings will at times drown themselves.

UNO was sitting, as it had been sitting for ten long years, discussing the problem of Germania, at its headquarters. A messenger handed the Chairman a radiogram giving the news about the destruction of Germania and the loss of contact with London. As he rose to present this information to the Delegates an aeroplane landed at the nearby landing field, and the passenger, a tall bronzed giant of a man, hurried to the UNO conference. After several minutes conversation with the Chairman he spoke to the waiting Delegates of all nations. As he stood before them the murmur of questions ceased, for he was a commanding figure, even in the strange clothes, made of plastics, he was wearing.

"Gentlemen," he began, "Dawn to-day saw the beginning of a new era. Germania saw fit to attack London with a score of rocket propelled projectiles and, in turn, was completely destroyed. She destroyed herself, although it was I, the elected leader of my people, whom launched the agents of her doom."

At this the Delegates to UNO stirred restlessly in their chairs. But the figure before them took no heed and continued:

"It was Germania who, last night, as you know it, sent two of her new atomic weapons flaming down into London. The forces which she brought into play were so stupendous that, throughout a small area, time as you know it was completely changed. Instead a new dynamic equilibrium took its place. Inside that unbreakable cosmic bubble time was speeded up to an almost unbelievable extent. One second outside it was equivalent to a year of your time inside it. The time bubble lasted for five of your minutes but, to us, three hundred years have passed since the explosion of those two bombs. Not one of the original inhabitants of London is alive; I am of the tenth generation of my family since then."

At this the British representative arose and walked out in disgust.

"In the first ten years practically the whole of the population of London died of starvation and disease, for the surface of the bubble was impenetrable. The remainder lived on hoarded food stocks, guarded, and afterwards paid for, by their lives. Some stayed near the circumference of the expanding bubble and obtained food that way. Ultra-violet light and electricity for power was obtained from two experimental atomic piles which had been set up. Artificial light was necessary during the whole three hundred years, as none penetrated the surrounding shell."

"Then a scientific miracle occurred. Children, born nine years before, were found to be mutants, probably from gamma rays which escaped being drawn into the space crack, and to be extremely intelligent. Within five years they changed the whole course of life in London. They developed practical synthetic foods, transmutation of the elements, chemistry, physics and mathematics and other sciences to a height undreamt of before."

"Then followed over two hundred years of adjustment, rebuilding and research for the day when the bubble of time would burst, for all the children born in this new world were found to have greatly increased

Intelligence and were able to progress far beyond the state now attained " by you. The ancient city of London is no more. Instead there has risen, Phoenix-like, a new Metropolis, self sufficient in every way. We have vessels built to travel interplanetary space, with overdrives, untried experimentally as yet, capable of reaching the stars or traversing the Galaxy. Even now our ships are out in space for the first time."

"The Galaxy is the true heritage of man. Will you accept it, or will you abandon it for trivialities and squabbles which will lead to your eventual destruction? In that thirty thousand square miles which the time bubble covered there are twenty million people, well housed, fed and educated. We could follow the heritage of man alone; will you come with us and share that heritage? There is no middle path, progress or regress. Will you progress and, together, advance to the dawn that is before you, or will you creep back into the black night of barbarism to whose edge you have crawled?"

As he finished speaking the throbbing thunder of the returning space-ships filled the hall. Down to their cradles they sank on pillars of flaming radiation. If he willed, man could use these to advance, if not.....

.....
The stencils for the above story were sent to me by JOHN NEWMAN, and I presume that he is the author. Thanks a lot, John.

Should it not have been John's work, my thanks to John for sending it to me, and my thanks to the author, whoever he may be.

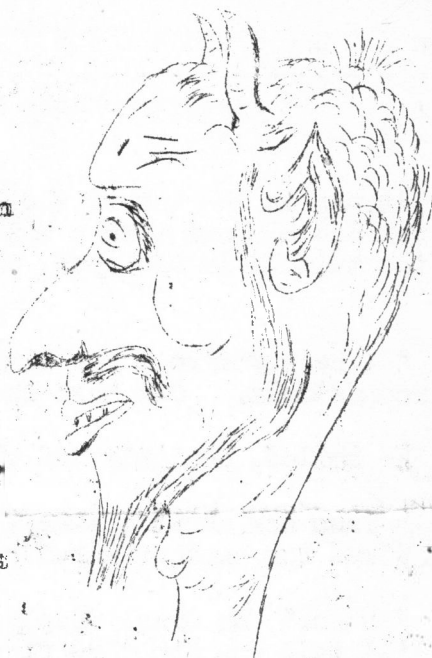
I enjoyed it, reading it, and I hope all you other FEN have also found equal pleasure in it.

KFS

.....
ADVERT. WANTED, a publisher to publish a reprint to end all reprints. By now you will probably have seen the new FANTASTIC NOVELS. I can offer a half share in one slightly soiled soul to any publisher who will put on the market a series of volumes containing a re-hash of all sf and fantasy ever printed, and who will keep on printing 'em until every one else gives up in disgust, and serves the FEN out new stuff.

GENERAL CHATTERING

by Captain K. F. S.



AVON FANTASY READER No. 4 was the last ... by reason of paper shortage ! and yet FANTASTIC ADVENTURES could become a monthly, and the RETURN of FANTASTIC NOVELS happened in January. I don't get it ! ? !
.....Tom Moulton is house-hunting - will any fen who may be in possession of Alf's Button or any other derivative of the late Mr Aladdin's Lamp please communicate with Tom..... B.F.L. Member Cpl. W. Kerr should by now have returned to the U.K. from M. E. - welcome back, Bill N 3 F are producing a checklist of British Fantasy mags... and also they are compiling lists of famous author's works - the total info available to N 3 F members will shortly need someone to compile a list of what documents tell you which ... or something like that.

.... Rog Phillips' new fen department in AMAZING - 'THE CLUB HOUSE' - looks like being a good spot for all them folk who want publicity for their fen organizations, or fanzines. What is more, it does not preach Shaverism ! but AMAZING are not the only folk to give free adverts to fen STARTLING have done it for yers an and yers, oh just ages - and they are now improving on the idea. All Fanzine editors and fan groups should advise STARTLING of all details in the first six months of the year, and THRILLING WONDER in the latter six months. The July ish of the St. will carry a complete review of all stuff received, and ditto the December ish of TWS....
.... I lifts me hat to all them there publishers, editors, etc. Peter Bell of Glsgow tells me he does not think SF and Fantasy receive enough publicity in the U.K. - how about all B.F.L. members writing a letter to their local papers, and trying to find out any other folk in the district who may be interested, but in the know ? ...
.... Will some very literate bloke do the same to the Editor of the TIMES ? What, no volunteers ? Ron Holmes wants some FEN to dig up ideas to attract the fair sex - B.F.L. has only three lady-fen, namely, Mrs. Myrtle Taylor, Miss Dapna Bradley and Miss Joyce Teagle - got any ideas for Ron, girls ? - Ron suggestion to date is that O.F. should have a shemale corner - not sure what it should consist of, but if you three fennes like to give me the low down, I'll see what can be done - whaddya want - household hints ? I don't seem to get much personal info for this column - rally round and give me the lowdown on things, pals So far, only four entries for the competition - I'm hoping for more, but results will appear next ish anyway how is NEW WORLDS No. 4 coming on, Mr Carnell ? There is an awful lot of fen want to know..... the Aussies got FANTASY No. 3, but would welcome copies of Nos. 1 & 2 if there any spares any place ... send 'em to Vol Molesworth 160 Beach Street, Coogee, Sydney, N.S.W. NECROMANCER is coming again soon, I hope D A M is now settled at his new home I've mentioned Norm. Ashfield's ALEMbic elsewhere in this ish, but I forgot to say he was running a competition - get in and win a book, chums..... can anyone tell me what has happened to Shasta's CHECKLIST ?and that is all the odd bits for this time.

Adios,

K. F. S.

0/ THE SURREALIST BURGLAR.

a strictly whacky short by F. G. RAYER.

It was in the bar of the 7th space-platform that I met Hank. The bartender had pointed him out with a nod and I'd crossed, encouraged by Hank's mild aspect and the twinkle in his eyes, which were pools as deep as the immeasurable void outside.

"I hear you're a new kind of burglar," I began, dropping on one of the mushroom stools. Out here in neutral space conventions did not matter.

He smiled, benignly and vicar-like, over his glass of Marsidrop. "I am."

"Then how about a story?" I asked, dropping my voice. His glass was empty so I waved for another Marsidrop.

"Sure." He drank deeply, licking his lips. "I'm a surrealist burglar --- and I'll tell you about my first job."

I digested this information silently, wondering what was to follow.

"It has both advantages and disa'ventages, as you might say," continued Hank confidentially. "Now take that first job I was on." He smiled, showing a tooth lone as a derelict in space. "It was on the night of the fair out on platform five. A toff bet he'd get the flag from the pole on top o' the power-house. Funked it, he did, and asked me to do the job secret-like for him."

He ruminated and I prompted him to drink up.

"Course I took it on," continued Hank when he'd drunk up. "Thought it an easy job, knowing no better in those days." He gazed moodily into his empty glass and I hastily ordered another Marsidrop.

"I nipped into the power-house and up to the roof," continued Hank as he imbibed. "It was a flat roof, high above the centre level. But the first thing I noticed when I got up there was a horrid smell of burning. 'Twer then I knew a surrealist burglar might find 'issel up agin things."

"'Twer a great shock --- the flag pole warn't a pole at all. It were a banana."

My mouth must have fallen open then, for he nodded quickly. "Aye, I'll have another Marsidrop."

He did,

"When I got over that thar shock I found the smell were worse," he continued thickly. "And thar was I --- surrounded by flames, crackling 'igh up the power-house, and the anti-fire units down on the lower level givin' a water display, as they call it. But I were a surrealist buglar, don't forget."

He laughed, tapping his tooth with a long finger. "Twer easy — I grabbed up this thar banana and slipped down to safety on the skin."

At this I goggled. "But.... but I don't get it !"

"You will if you radiograph that to Central News. For mysel', I'll have another Marsidrop."

.....

A HYMN FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY,

By Walter J. Norcott and KFS.

The men of Space,
the Warrior Race;
God give grace to the men of space:

Guide them on their outward flight
'thru the realms of endless night;
To a planet bleak and bare;
See them safely landed there.

The far-flung sons of the Human Race,
God give strength to the men of space.

Protect them whilst they stop and wrest
An Earthchild's wants from an alien breast.
Speed them surely back to Earth
To the fertile world that gave them birth.

Men of Space,
God give you grace
Who spread Man's seed thru the mighty waste.

.....

ADVERTISEMENT.

P. Pennington, 59 Dale Gardens, Mutley, Plymouth.

WANTS:

ASF BIRE's 1939 Nov.
1941 May Oct.

Julian Huxley's novel: Brave New World.

Has for SALE: THE LEGION OF SPACE Jack Williamson.

.....

THE OLD FOLKS AT HOME

by Kurt Fredericks.

The two old ones sat close up to the fire place, talking, as old folk will, of things and days gone by.

They bore a close resemblance, one to the other, these two. Both were weighted with years; both still had a youthful vigour showing suprisingly in their movements, and in their talk; again, both were of non-descript type. If someone had seen them, and later been asked to say what he could of their appearance, he would have found himself hard put to say whether they were dark haired, or grey; tall or short, fat or slim. But he would have been able to recall them had he met them a second time.

Finally their talk settled to an arguement common among old folk - which was the elder, and which the younger? They recalled this and that, to prove that they had existed when this and that happened; they remembered names and places, events and times; but no matter how far back the one recalled, the other went further.

At last the first said " It is is so, that we shall never settle ourselves this arguement. Another must make decision between us. It is not within my power to bring such a one here, but you can do so. "

Replied the second " To satisfy you that I am right, I will do so." And he rose and went out, returning shortly with a man whose appearance was much more youthful, but who wore an expression of great bewilderment. With a puzzled air, he looked around the place, and turning to the one who had fetched him, queried " Why am I here - where am I? I don't know you - until you - er - called me, I had never seen you."

The other old one (he I have called the first) rose and said " You remember me, we have had chance acquaintance."

" Yes, I rember you faintly - I can't think from where - but did you want me?"

" We think you may be able to answer a question for us, so he has fetched you. The question is, which one of us is the elder? " The second added " Can you answer, man?"

" No, you who fetched me have taken something from me, I know not what, but I feel its loss. Without I am confused, I don't know you - I don't even know myself!"

" Think hard, man." they told him.

The man stood, and looked, and wondered. At last he said " I cannot tell you. You who brought me I have never seen, and I feel that I should not yet have met you. You have taken me away from work which I had not yet completed, my heart tells me. The other I have met - several times, it would seem, but I cannot recall the places or the circumstances. "

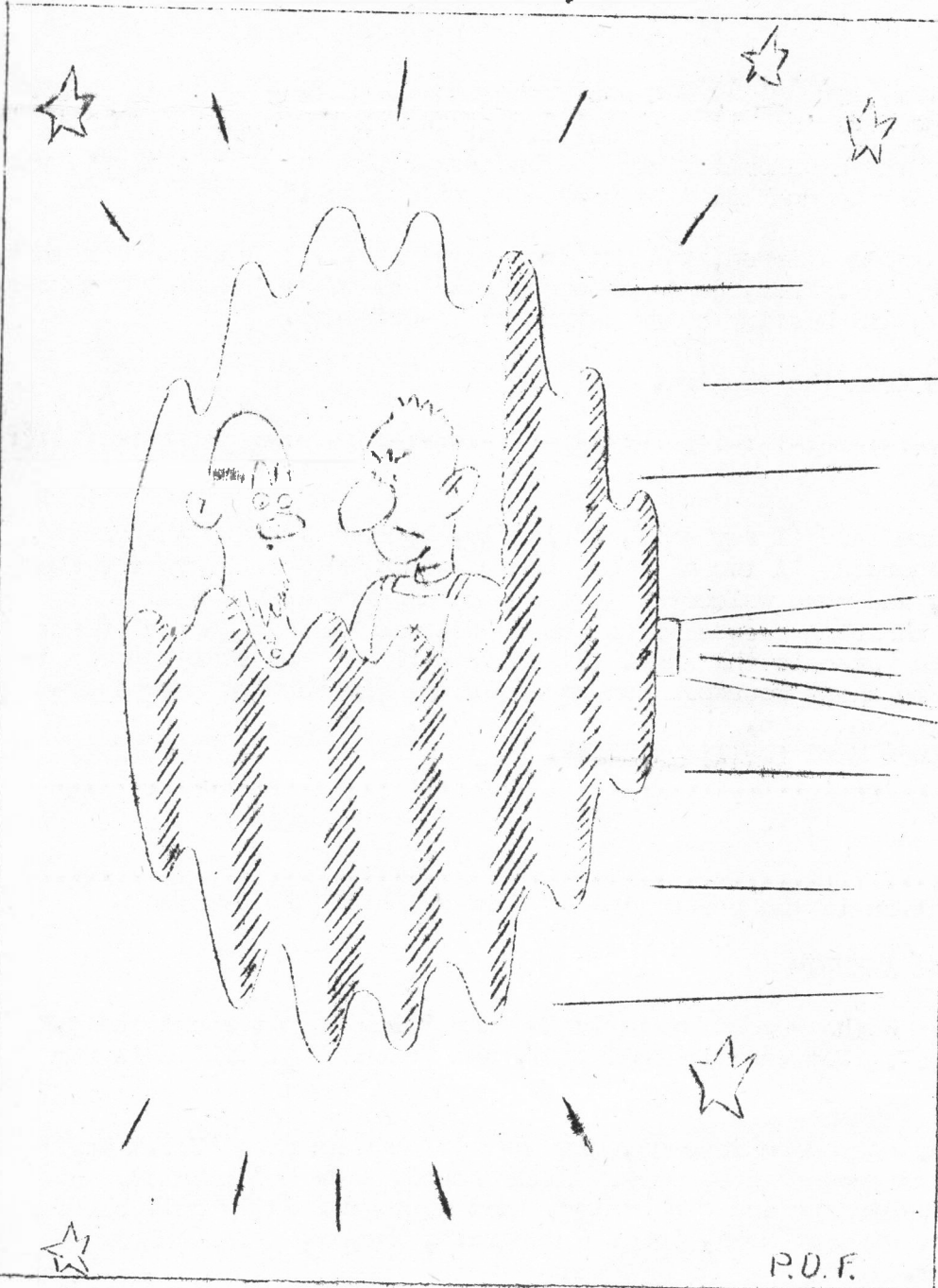
The two old ones looked at each other, and the first said " My idea was useless - your journey without need. We should have known."

cont./

DEAR READERS: I've got files and files of 'em, thanks, pals. A few extracts are reproduced here. Any spelling errors are probably mine. First, the last page of a letter from Peter D. Fortey:

Supplement. (Just like O.F., huh?). I missed the last post last night, so I am continuing here. I've not got anything extra to say, but now I've got time, I'll add these few comments on O.F. 2. (1) Liaison Dept. etc. - No. comment. (2) ID-egestion - Hmm. I can't make my mind (Yes! I have one) up about this. I'll give it Fair - Good. (3) Science IS Conquering Space - O.K. but rater simple. It could have been more advanced - after all, it was intended for fun, and they already know (or should know) that much.

" SO, PROFESSOR, THE LORENZ-FITZGERALD
CONTRACTION THEORY IS NUTS, HUH ? "



- (4) Whatever Necks - amusing - Fair-Good.
- (5) Inf. Bureau - Very good this is a very use-ful department.
- (6) Evolution of Arnold F.-G. - bit too long.
- (7) Appreciations ? Hmm. - no comment.
- (8) General Chuntering Very good. Probably best thing in the 'zine.
- (9) Trading Department - Useful.
- (10) Gertie the Gazelle - F.-G. - Amusing.
- (11) Purely Personal - Fairly interesting.
- (12) Why ? - Why ?
- (13) New Members - may prove useful.
- (14) Finale and Apology - you're forgiven.
- (15) R.S.S. - Very Good - For some strange reason I'm nuts about your crazy poems about Shower - I love 'em. Keep 'em coming.
- (16) Free advert for F.R. - It deserves it.

I see that I've been a bit stiff in some of my comments, but never mind O.F.2 is really good, and if future issues are as good as this, I sha'n't complain (why should I? I got it for free, anyway) Which reminds me. Why not make a small charge. I for one won't mind, and it'd help out with the paper costs.

Best Wishes, PETE.

P.D.F.

The following letter comes from a BFL member who wishes to remain anonymous. As I more or less agree with his sentiments, I am printing it. However, let me say that I will not make a habit of printing anonymous letters, even if the writer does disclose his name to me.

Dear Ken,

Thank you for a recent postcard acknowledging a letter of mine. I must say I enjoyed O.F. No.2, even tho I am a 'non-collector'. It's very well turned out indeed ! That's my opinion, and there's no criticism from me either! But here's a little matter I'd like to see commented on and brought to all members' notice in your next effort. This is what I am 'nattering' about -

In BOOKLIST, (Spring '48) Ron announces the disgusting response to his 'LUCKY 13'. Seven members took it up !! And furthermore the result of the 'Pilgrims 'thro Space and Time' effort. Three shillings short of requirements. The latter item, of course, is a bit more involved than sending in a 2^d stamp.

Now it is easy to sit down and smugly agree with Ron that disgust and despair are present in huge quantities ! I know that. Personally I'm - well - speechless ! I'm sure you are in full agreement with Ron over this 'little' matter. Again, I'm aware to 'rub it in' as it were, requires a little 'handling'. But if we are to get B.F.L. going properly it will need a little more action from members. I say 'going properly' in a rather reserved sense, of course, for Nigel, Ron, and yourself do your damndest always, to 'tear 'em up'. Could you not put in an 'obit notice concerning the number of members (minus 7, of course) who apparently use BOOKLIST and its announcements for 'bumf' ? I repeat I know its easy to talk, but there it is --- you must understand, Ken, I'm not suggesting you stir any stinks up on my behalf (!) but not possessing the means of typing, etc., etc., I can't write to every member (minus 7) as I'd like to do. If you'd care to consider this crib of mine and even print a word or two, tack my name on it by all means as a 'rather disappointed member' (!!) What do you think, chum ?

Sincerely yours,

Jas. Grimes.

Dear Jas, and other members. My apologies for the reference to anonymous at the head. I would have apparently mis-read your letter the first time. However, I have allowed the letter to and head to stand as printed, in order that folk may take note of all there-in. Regards, K F S.

.....

LETTER FROM LONDON. From a letter from Fred C. Brown, a London Fan, I quote the following extracts.

'As your new mag is the only amateur mag at present being published in the U.K. allow me to tender my best wishes for your success. Don't ask me to criticise it though, as I don't want to dishearten you. My own ideas of a fan mag are similar to Wally Gilling's, viz. NEWS, reviews, 'meet the author' articles, coming events in books and mags, chatter about fans and fandom, evaluation of various author's work, criticism of current issues of mags., etc., etc., Your supplement is definitely of value, particularly in these hard times when subs

for nags have to go a thousand miles before our appetite for reading can be appeased.

' Regarding the actual Slater mind-child, well, there's plenty of room for improvement. Duncombe's article was a lot of tripe. Kurt Frederick's story was just passable. Norm Ashfield's scientific page was not too bad, as far as it went. Your own Bureau was informative, though I think you haven't quite hit the nail on the head in your earlier reference to postage on page 8, as you appear to suggest that parcels can be sent without trouble to the U.S. My own experience....(Cut by K.F.S.)....

' General Chuntering is interesting and provocative in parts. On behalf of London FFans, I would like to reply to your query 'why do Londoners talk of forming a club and yet not form it?' My reply is that Londoners do NOT want to form a club. They find the present arrangement suits them down to the ground. The LONDON CIRCLE if you must have a name for us, meets weekly on Thursdays, swaps chatter, news, books, and magazines, and has no dues to pay, and no boring sessions dealing with Secretary's report, and Other Business, etc., and no worries about bringing out a fannag to meet a dead line.

It is in fact, simply a meeting of friends, which perhaps accounts for its popularity, and well-attended joy-night.

' New faces are still appearing, and their owners soon feel at home and become 'one of the crowd'. Call our loosely knit organisation what you will, but we like it that way. Last Thursday I deliberately brought up the question of 'should we revive the B.F.S.?' (Rest of letter cut by K.F.S., but a 'thumbs down decision' on all organised groups was reached.)

Fred continues to extend a welcome to any visiting Fem, who care to drop in at the meeting place, which for those of you who don't know, is the WHITE HORSE, Fetter Lane, (near Garages), any Thursday evening during pub hours.

LETTER FROM WISBECH.

Dear Fred,

I regret that I could not afford space to print your letter in full, but I think you will agree that the parts above give a fair representation of the whole text.

Inconsistency, Thy name is henceforth 'FRED'. You ask ME not to ask YOU to criticise O.F., and then proceed to tear strips off all round.

Dear me. However, I think you will agree that if I tried to copy the type of stuff that Walt gives us in FANTASY REVIEW, it would at best be a poor imitation. For one thing, I rely for most of my news on Walt. Most of my books are purchased after judging the reviews Walt gives us. He is at the hub of things, his contacts are far wider than mine, and so I can't match him. Therefore I try to be different. If and when I can scoop Walt, I will, but I don't wish to trespass on his preserves, so scoops will only be news. O.F. is an attempt to be more of a family affair I want to get into it all the personal items about US, not so much about the Yanks and Southern folk of the States (God bless 'em.) And as I see a fellow fan about twice a year, I most rely on what comes in letters. So if you can pass along some news, please do. Again, there are plenty of fem who think they might be able to write, if they were not too scared about reject slips. I offer them a chance to get an idea of how their stuff will look in print, and a chance to get other folks re-actions to it. I claim no copyright on anything printed, except my own stuff. Ownership remains with the writer, as I won't pay him anything.

This is not so much a defence, as a statement of my viewpoint, and I realise that I can never touch F.R. in its own field. Secondly, I don't want to. Therefore by publishing the stuff I do I hope to be different. The quality of the items depends on you and other fen. If you can submit better stuff than my present contributors, please do; they won't mind, and nor will I.

About you Londoners; well, I see your point, and I agree with it. But I'd still like to see an organisation of some sort in the hub of the Empire, which could run a convention for us, get some publishing done, and generally help all we solitary fen, who can't get together with anyone.

You must agree, that although there are not more FEN in London than there are in the rest of the U.K., they are much greater in numbers per square mile, and could therefore get more things done, if they were organised. However, if you want to be anarchistic, nothing I can say will alter it. I must admit when I visited the White Horse I enjoyed myself, and received a splendid welcome, and I am sure an equally excellent time awaits any FAN who calls on you.

So I wish you and all other Londoners the best of luck, and good times, in your way.

Yours in Fantasy,

K. F. S.

*** **

Announcing the revival of 'THE SYDNEY FUTURIAN SOCIETY' of Australia.

I am pleased to report that our friends 'down under' are back in action again. The following are quotes from a letter from Vol Molesworth.

" It is with pleasure that I write to inform you that you have been elected associate member No.12 of the 'FUTURIAN SOCIETY',.....

" Your application for membership created a change of outlook here in Australia. The War killed Fandom and when five of us revived the club last August - it is now eight years old - we were not too optimistic. However, in three months we have 13 active members, about 30 others on the mailing list who are interested but inactive, and a library of 270 items already. Your membership prompted us to drop the 'of Sydney' from the club's name and to launch out on a world scale to cater for all fans outside the dollar countries.....

" We feel we could make Australia quite a useful 'second base' serving fen in New Zealand, Japan, S.Africa, S.America, and the U.K. In future we are planning to publish a high-grade semi-pro mag, but we are not rushing in were angels fear----- "

I think all U.K. FEN will join me in wishing Vol and his colleagues the best of luck and all success in their venture, and we hope that the ship of the 'FUTURIAN' will not founder once again on the rock of interclub warfare, which has wrecked them -- and others -- on previous occasions. I hope FEN in the U.K. will take an interest in the activity of our cousins under the Southern Cross, and if you want to join 'THE FUTURIAN SOCIETY' the address is 'Vol Molesworth, 160 Beach Street, Coogee, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.' Subscription 10/6 per annum, Australian Sterling. The U.K. £ is worth about 25/- down under. Air letter forms are 6d, Air mail p.c.'s 7d, and an ordinary letter airmail 1/3. The club produces a monthly news-sheet, no prozines are published, but many books of SF and Fantasy exist. Plenty of swaps can be arranged.

INFORMATION BUREAU

Here is the list of issues of FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, from 1939 to 1947, which was pushed out of O.F. 2.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	DEC.
1939					1/1		1/2		1/3		1/4	
1940	2/1	2/2	2/3	2/4	2/5	2/6		2/7		2/8		
1941	3/1		3/2		3/3	3/4	3/5	3/6	3/7	3/8	3/9	3/10
1942	Vol 4. Nos. 1 to 12, by months.											
1943	5/1	5/2	5/3	5/4	5/5	5/6	5/7	5/8	5/9	5/10		
1944		6/1		6/2		6/3				6/4		
1945	7/1			7/2			7/3			7/4		7/5
1946		8/1			8/2		8/3		8/4		8/5	
1947	9/1		9/2		9/3		9/4					

At present Fantastic Adventures is monthly.

And just to help you out, here is STARTLING STORIES, 1939 to 1947.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1939	1/1		1/2		1/3		2/1		2/2		2/3	
1940	3/1		3/2		3/3		4/1		4/2		4/3	
1941	5/1		5/2		5/3		6/1		6/2		6/3	
1942	7/1		7/2		7/3		8/1		8/2		8/3	
1943	9/1		9/2		Summer 9/3		Fall 10/1					
1944	Winter 10/2		Spring 10/3		Summer 10/1		Fall 11/2					
1945	" 11/3		" 12/1		" 12/2		" 12/3					
1946	" 13/1		March 13/2		Spring 13/3		Summer 14/1		Fall 14/2			
1947	14/3		15/1		15/2		15/3		16/1		16/2	
1948	16/3											

In both the above cases, the numbers read so: Vol/ Issue.

You will have noticed that TWS and STARTLING have both increased their price. ~~XXX~~ For my own benefit as well as yours I queried the effect on subs., and in a very nice letter the Editor, Sam Merwin, Jr., informed me that subscriptions already in force would continue for the full number of magazines at the old rate, until the current sub. had expired.

About postage to U.S.A., you will note that Fred O. Brown says in his letter on Page 14 that he had difficulty. Well, I personally have had none. If anyone who cares to write and ask me about specific matter will do so, I will give 'em a specific reply. Please enclose stamp for reply.

I commented elsewhere on the fact that Avon Fantasy Reader was defunct after No. 4, and that FANTASTIC NOVELS had been re-introduced. Sub. for the latter is the same rate as for F.F.M., and the first of the new issue, Vol 1, No. 6. contains 'THE SHIP OF ISHBAK, by A. Merritt. REPRINT !!!

There does not seem to be any other definite notes on my pad at the moment, but don't forget the info. bureau is at YOUR service, anytime we can help. Just state your query, and enclose 2¹/₂d for a reply, or 1¹/₂d if you want the answer published.

Cheers, chums,

K. F. S.

STOP PRESS: The ARKHAM SAMPLER has arrived. This is no book for the lighter fan, but excellent stuff for the serious minded student of Fantasy.

STRANGER THAN FICTION

by Pete Pennington.

Just as the movies base their plots on love and murder, so science fiction makes use of new, novel, and original ideas. Some of these ideas are absurd, or seem to be. For instance, about ten years ago even the suggestion of an atomic generator being built into a ring, as now acceptable in A. E. Van Vogt's SLAN. Or where mind manipulates matter without the use of any intermediary material mechanism, as in the excellent example of Theodore Sturgeon's KILLDOZER.

But the very fact of our existence dispels the argument that this latter is absurd. I will endeavour to make this point clearer.

The evolution of life on this planet may be briefly and, I must admit, crudely put as follows ----

Out of the inorganic and primary elements of the universe evolve complex organic molecules, which go to build up even more complex cells. These cells in turn go to build up a protoplasmic organism better known as man. Of a complexity which staggers the imagination!

These mere specks of matter have the miraculous property of being conscious of their own existence. Also they are able to do such things as measure, weigh, and record the temperature of stars multitudes of light-years away in space.

They have also the property of being able to think, this thinking causes the peculiar phenomenon 'trouble'. Many other truly miraculous phenomena are also caused by these creatures, the details of which are too intricate to enter into at the moment.

On giving the above paragraphs a careful and logical analysis you are forced to the obvious conclusion: That the above paragraphs, which give facts that you know to be true, are statements far more fantastic than Vogt's generator or Sturgeon's mental entity.

I have often put forward the above argument to non-readers of science fiction. I think if the average person were aware and would grasp these facts, he would not condemn it, unread, as being 'illogical'. I am sure all men will agree on this point. So we must think twice before disregarding a story as being irrational.

.....

Note by K.F.S. One fan who read the proofs of this issue, wanted to know why I was including the item above. He said the information there is something which every fan knows, and anyway, he could write it better himself. I am still waiting for his script.

But my reason for including it, and other similar items? Well, it may not be as well composed as a professional writer would do it, or even as well as a real actifan would make it, but it is what PETER thinks, his view, and he has as much right to express it as the next man. Also, for a first shot, its good. I THINK SO. You can argue if you like, I won't mind, and I don't suppose Pete will, but when he gets your views on his work, it will help him with his next effort, won't it? What we want are people to give us aid, not sneers.

S P A C E - S U I T S .

A tissue of lies from the files of our eminent Librarian, Ron Holmes.
(Not accepted as an entry for the Competition in the January Supplement)

Yes, friends, I was there. At the birth of the first SPACE)SUIT. We had fitted the Laboratory Furnace up as a pressure chamber, inserted Jones Minor through the fire-door with the aid of a long handled shovel, and exhausted the chamber. As this was done by means of sucking the air out through the safety valve with a long rubber tube, we were all pretty exhausted by the time we were through.

But not half so exhausted as Jones Minor was when we took him out two days later. We justified our rigorous test, as we helped to remove his suit, wearing gasmasks, dettol pads, or chewing tobacco, by explaining to his unconscious form that this would be a mild case after a space wreck.

The suit had worked a treat, being nothing more than a self contained diving-suit with a sort of metal corset to stop the wearer from exploding; but there its value ended. Apparently the wearer had the choice of being wrecked near an easily accessible place, or of suffering the tortures of the damned. Jones Minor has often told us since that had he had the strength he would have opened the thing up and died happily.

But no such blessed release was possible to him, and, after the fashion of the 'Man In the Iron Mask' he just had to hang about and slowly do himself to death, 'doing what comes naturally'. It is amazing how long a bloke's beard can grow in so short a time, and as we felt the headpiece should be made of metal, we could see no way of overcoming the difficulty.

The beard, however, was but a small problem compared with the other inconveniences of being imprisoned in a space suit for a while. Jones Minor's nose rapidly began to run - no doubt the cold of space would account for it - and soon the stubble on his chin was frozen. We examined with interest the holes which had been peirced in the frontal glass of the helmet, and decided that Jones minor could not have lived more than two more days, by the formula $t = \frac{RF}{T}$ where R = rate of growth of beard, T = thickness of glass, F = force concentrated by frozen hairs, and t (of course) = the time taken to penetrate.

This, however, was not the greatest problem caused by the flow of nasal juices. The collar of the suit being tight, the helmet began to fill up, tankwise, this being aggravated by Jones Minor drooling. From calculations we decided that he had only six about ten minutes to live before drowning in his own juice. This calculation was too highly involved to be repeated here. Sufficient that it involves the gasses from other parts of the rising to the helmet, and while the pressure of gas slowed down the ever-mounting fluid, it also gradually created enough pressure to do incalculable harm to the innards of the suit. So that were it not for the greater capacity of the helmet, caused by the beard hairs burrowing their way into the face peice, Jones Minor would certainly have been a goner.

The last stage of our research was to examine the nether end of the suit. Here we had a complicated set of chemical reactions that is not easily explained to the layman. First of all the detrimental affect of acid on rubber and canvas is common knowledge, and the metal corset had saved therday there. But, most important was the matter of ammonia formation - this, due to the low temperature outside the suit, settled in solid form until it came in contact with the higher abdomen, where (as you

... Jones Minor was working quite a high temperature, then it vapourised. The result was a gradual rising and falling, and the formation of perfect refrigerating system. One can imagine the implications this startling fact had over the others already discovered - if it were not for this, Jones Minor's temperature would not have been so high, and his cold would not have been so bad.... and so on.

Our final step, in this great research, was to contact the great Einstein, and place our facts before him. He was baffled, dear reader, a case of too many permuted intergals - in any case it was too much for us. We have decided, and put this forward as the results of our research: that there is no value in a space-suit, you'll just have to be space-wrecked.....

But don't you think it would be a good idea if some-one built a space-SHIP first ?????

.....

ASTOUNDING INDEX :

A.A.J. Young (Tony) has come forward with an offer to completely compile an index of ASTOUNDING STORIES, and ASF, both U.S.A. and BRE, but he would like some aid.

I think such an index would be very welcome to many collectors, especially as it is his intention to list all contents, and I hope some of our major 'collecting Fen' will help Tony compile the index.

The most suitable scheme would be for some selected folk to make copies of title pages of ASF, year by year, and send them to Tony, and I am naming three folk who I know have pretty good collections - Tom Moulton, Ken Johnson, and Peter Fortey. That is U.S.A. Would you three start the ball rolling by writing to Tony, telling him what years you have complete, and can list with fair ease, and then Tony can write back and tell you what years he wants, and other detail.

For BRE's I call on Peter Bell and Norman Ashfield to step forward.

Any one else who cares to help will be welcome - just write Tony and tell him what years you can notify, and he will let you know what he wants.

When Tony has the first ten years (1930 - 1939) complete, I'll make out stencils, and produce it in book form. Helpers will get copies free, and the other folk who want will have to pay something towards costs. By the time I get that lot done, Tony should have been able to collect 1940 to 1945, and we will produce those five years, followed after that by yearly lists, up to date.

Tony's address is - A.A.J. Young, 17, Canterbury Road, Whitstable, Kent.

Rally round, lads and lassies.

.....

COMING HOME.

It can't be the beer,
That makes me feel queer.
Its the Dero of Shaver
That make my steps waver.

.....

STOP PRESS. 19th Feb. A letter from RON HOLMES this morning informs me he has been admitted to hospital. Sorry to hear that, Ron, but the FEN will have to be satisfied with O.P. for now, and await BOOKLIST when you get out. We wish you a speedy return to health, and your many and varied duties.

WEATHER CONTROL

by K F S

I have recently heard much talk, and received in letters comments, about the rain and snow-making experiments which have been conducted with some excellent results. But it would appear many of my friends and correspondents are rather uncertain of the real situation, and they expect greater things from these experiments than are possible.

Therefore I have made a small research into the various news items, and factual reports, and come up with the following: -

HISTORY: Vincent Schaefer (General Electric, U.S.A.) 1943, made an artificial cloud by breathing into a cold chamber. Into this cloud he dropped dry-ice (frozen CO₂) and ~~found~~ that a vapour trail was left, as by a bomber plane flying at 20,000 ft. This experiment was made whilst research against icing of (plane wings at high altitudes was being conducted. But he noticed a re-action which was not then of great use - that the vapour left a trail of submicroscopic ice-crystals. Currents of air disturbing the cloud spread the re-action so that the entire mass of vapour was converted to ice-crystals.

In November 1946 Schaefer dropped from a 14,000 ft. cliff some 6lbs of dry ice chips into a large cloud. The cloud was converted into powdery snow which fell but was absorbed by the dry air at a somewhat lower altitude. In a similar experiment it was found that a large quantity of dry-ice would freeze the cloud, but into ice crystals so small that they did not fall, but remained afloat in the air.

The Australian authorities caused, in yet another similar experiment, the precipitation of an inch of rain, near Sydney, over an area about 15-20 miles sq. This was in February, 1947.

In April, 1947, Colonel E.S. Ellison of a weather bureau in Oregon, U.S.A. conducted two experiments and caused rainfall, and snow storms, (in which it was estimated hundreds of tons of rain and snow fell over some 120 sq. miles) by dumping from a plane varying quantities of dry ice chips. It was stated in one publication that the value of the dry-ice used to force nature to do man's bidding was less than \$2.00. Another gives the amount used as 34 lbs at 5¢ a lb. About 1/6 worth.

In Oklahoma, 105 lbs of dry-ice were used to cause rain-fall over one town. One half inch of rain was the result, but the town footing the bill did not benefit! A strong wind blew the rain onto another town. The citizens of the second town were doubtless very appreciative.. Seven towns in the southern States of the U.S. used this system during August, 1947, with results that reached 2½ inches in one case.

Similar experiments have been conducted in Canada, with varying results.

OBSERVATIONS. We are told by the encyclopedia that water freezes at 32° F. But water in clouds can and does remain WATER (not ice) at -30° F. Dry-ice thrown into this suspended liquid gives the necessary drop in temperature, and solid bodies, to form the 'sublimation nuclei'. (Snow forms around dust-specks in the atmosphere.) But if you don't have any clouds, you can't shake snow or rain out of 'em, so arid areas where water clouds are rare (Sahara) won't benefit - the system won't work. Again, even if you do have clouds, you can't use just any old cloud. The cloud, or part of it, must be at a low temperature, at least as low as 32° F. During summer, you may be lucky enough

to have a cloud at 10,000 ft. or upwards, which will be at the right temperature. You may then be able to cause some rainfall. But, if the cloud is at, say, 12,000 feet, your rain has got a long way to fall through greedy, hot, dry, air, which will absorb the moisture, and at ground level a few measly drops will be the most you can expect.

In the autumn (fall) or spring, when air temperatures are lower, you may be more successful, in winter you can be pretty sure of success. The system may therefore be of use for getting rainfall for farmers in a very dry spring. Probably a more worthy and useful thing would be to ensure rainfall in watersheds, so that reservoirs may be filled without reliance on nature. The farmer could still draw his water.

This little resume, will I hope, show you that we are still a long way from the day the B.B.C. will announce that Parliament has ordered a fine summer day for August Bank Holiday, followed by heavy rain on Tuesday. But don't be discouraged - its a start, and a good one.

At the time of going to press, since the above was written, I have learned that experiments have been conducted this year in the U.K., but I have no definite information - if you can tell me anything about this, I should be obliged.

.....

OVERSEAS CONTACTS.

PAUL A DOERR, 203 E. State Street, Sharron, Pa., U.S.A., wants to swap mint cond. U.S.A. mags for mint condition British mags....fantasy and s.f.

J.R. Murtagh, 509, Selwood Avenue, Hastings, New Zealand, has a number of U.S.A. mags he desires to trade for others which he wants. His availables are for a large number of years, and his wants are mainly in 1940 - 1941.

I. J. ROTH, P.O. Box 819, Main P.O., Omaha, Nebraska, U. S. A., wants books by Ray Cummings, or Edmond Hamilton.

Joseph B. Baker, 1438 Addison ~~Street~~ Street, Chicago, 13, Illinois, U.S.A., advises me he can supply autographed copies of such books, as SLAN, Dark Carnival, WORLD OF A, and many others, in mint condition. Cover price plus postage.

.....

YOUR EDITOR NEEDS:

FIFTY YEARS OF PSYCHIC RESEARCH - THE MOST HAUNTED HOUSE IN ENGLAND
POLTERGEIST OVER ENGLAND - all three books by Harry Price.

Copies of FANTASY REVIEW, Nos. 1, 2, & 3. Copies of all British Fantasy and S.F. mags.

Any books dealing with the Arms and Armour of the Middle Ages.

WRITE TO ME AT THE USUAL ADDRESS IF YOU CAN SUPPLY ANY OF THESE.



OPERATION FANTAST

15

TRADING DEPARTMENT

We are not able to send squads of armed B.F.L. members thru gateways in time, as the heading would appear to suggest, but we can and do try our best to get what magazines you want, by all methods available. If we had a time machine of some kind we would make use of it, but so far all the appliances of that nature we have made have done nothing, apart from either blowing up or making weird noises.

Therefore all we can do is ask you what you want and try to find it in some other fan's attic, bedroom, coal-cellar, or one of the other usual conveniences. At this we do quite well, (boaster) but if you will tell us not only what you want, but what you have and don't want, it will help a lot.

If we can't get the stuff you want, we shall advise you on the best method of getting from someone else our contacts cover thru the B.F.L. all the U.K., and through correspondents, the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. South Africa we regret to say, is a gaping void on the map of Fantasy, at present ... at least as far as we are concerned if you know any actifen out there, please tell us.

Attached to the back of this sheet you will find an order form, and also lists of stuff at present on hand. If you want any of the items listed, fill up the form and post it in to us pronto don't delay, the stuff doesn't stay long. ~~DO NOT~~ SEND MONEY WITH YOUR ORDER. Wait until the invoice and magazines arrive, and then send your payment. If you want to place your WANT LIST in our hands, please ask for forms, stating what mags you are collecting. We will then send you a list showing all issues of the mag that have been published, you can delete those you have, and return the form. When items turn up, we will advise you, and you can then send money if you still want them.

If you have items you wish to sell, please send a list, stating the prices you want. We will either accept them in trade for your wants, buy them from you, or try and find another buyer if we can't use them.

Which I think has told you all about the trading department, as it now operates. As stocks of mags on hand decrease, the Trading Department will cease to function, but we shall be pleased to get for you definite orders of wants, and to try and get rid of your 'don't wants' at any time. In other words, folks with wants lists, definite orders, etc., will get their stuff, but there will be no lists of items advertised.

ADVERTISEMENTS:

.....
WANTED: Good copy of ASF USA for
October, 1944. A.A.J. YOUNG.
17 Canterbury Rd., Whitstable, Kent.
.....

CERRIL SHUTE, 19, Lawn Road,
STAMFORD

WANTED: ASF USA 1940 Mar. Apr. May. Jun.
Aug. Sept. Nov. Dec. 1941 May. Aug. Nov.
Dec. 1942 Mar. May. Dec.

Richard J. Hooton, Elm Cottage,
138 Ashgate Road, Chesterfield:

WANTED: Astonishing 1941 Sept.
1942 Dec.
1943 Apr.

.....
J.B. COLTHERD, c/o Strachan, 45,
Thirlestons Road, Edinburgh 9.

requires the following issues of
WONDER stories: 1930 Dec., 1931 Apr.

July, Aug. Sept. 1932 Jan. Feb.,
1936 Aug. 1938 Apr. 1939 Jun. Aug.
1940 ALL except Apr. and Aug.

ERIC LUMER, c/o IM/PKVV, London, W.C.1.

I am prepared to pay a good price for
American editions of the following magazines

"HORROR STORIES" "TERROR TALES"
"DIME MYSTERY"

WANTED ASF BRE 1941 Mar. July.
UNKNOWN BRE 1939 Aug Sep Oct.
Avon Fantasy Reader No.3.

Norman Ashfield, 27, Woodland Road,
Thornton Heath, Surrey.

.....
WANTED: ALL issues of ASF USA for 1940,
1941, 1942, and 1943.

R.R.F. Bailey, 14, Market Place,
Melton Mowbray, Leics.

.....
Peter G. Medcalf, 55, Elmbridge Road,
PERRY DAR, Birmingham, 22 B. wants all issues
of ASF USA for 1942 to 1945.

Notice to advertisers: Although we shall continue to print free of charge extracts
from 'Want Lists' held on file, in future small ads other than those inserted free
will cost 3d per inch, half page width. Quarter page adverts will be 1/6.
Half page 2/9. Full page - 5/-. For the information of advertisers, 250 copies
of this fanzine are now being printed, and it is distributed FREE.

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To: Miss Joyce Teagle, Riverside, South Brink, Wisbech, Cambs.

Please send me the following magazines, etc, which were advertised by the
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- " If Pocket Books ordered are no longer available, please send them to me as soon as further copies are obtained
- " Delete inappropriate sections, please.

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Jun. Aug. Sep.			Can.
Nov.	1/10	CAPTAIN FUTURE.	1946 May. Nov. 1/3
1948 Jan.	1/10	1940 Win. Spr.	3/3
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Oct.	2/3		1/10
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