

# THE ACOLYTE



Alva Rogers

I am He who howls in the night  
I am He who moans in the snow  
I am He who has never seen light  
I am He who mounts from below

— H.P. Lovecraft





# THE ACOLYTE

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## EDITORIALLY SPEAKING ---

**TIME OUT FOR BRAGGING.** The editors of The Acolyte have been walking on air the past few weeks as the result of a recent notice of Aoky in Department of Criminal Investigation, Anthony Boucher's weekly column in the San Francisco Chronicle. Boucher said of us: "Take out a subscription to The Acolyte. This is a mimeographed quarterly, edited by Francis T. Laney and Samuel D. Russell, which contains such invaluable items as check-lists of books by celebrated fantasy writers, annotations (somewhat in the Baker Street Irregular manner) on the mythos of H. P. Lovecraft, and sound articles surveying the works of little known fantaisistes. For a year (four issues) send 50 cents to The Acolyte, 1810 N. Harvard, Hollywood 27. You won't regret it." For a week or so thereafter we were swamped with subscriptions, and believe that we have added some very solid readers through Mr. Boucher's courtesy. Thanks a lot, Tony.

---ooOoo---

**FANTASY FORUM UPHEAVAL.** The torrent of provocative and worthwhile letters from you readers has forced us to do something to keep Fantasy Forum from filling the entire magazine. In the future, many of the longer letters will be revamped into independent articles, as was done with H. C. Koenig's. In addition, letter excerpts dealing largely with bibliography will be published in the new Banquets for Bookworms section, leaving Fantasy Forum free for the discussions it was originally designed for. The continuation of both these columns rests solidly upon you readers, for without contributions from you they will quickly falter. So write us a letter today.

---ooOoo---

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PLANS.** The Acolyte staff is contemplating further pamphlets in the series started with the Tentative Bibliography of H.P. Lovecraft. These booklets will be mimeographed in a uniform 8½x11 format, and will sell at from 10¢ to 25¢ each, depending on the number of pages. First to appear will be the Evans-Brown-Laney checklist of pulp fantasy and scientific fiction magazines. Not an index, this listing will give exact information on volume and issue numbers, skipped months, and other similar essential information for the collector. Probable price will be 25¢. Also scheduled for early release is a complete, three-way index of Unknown--listing contents of each issue, story title list, author list. The bibliography of Clark Ashton Smith is also well along toward completion. If these three items go over with the fan public, they will be but the beginning of a large and elaborate series. For these projects, the Acolyte staff has been augmented by William H. Evans and Mel Brown.

---ooOoo---

**IN COMING ISSUES.** Inasmuch as our plea for material last issue resulted in such dainties as the Leiber and Koenig articles, we shall try it again. So.... In order to maintain our present standards, such as they are, we are desperately in need of serious meaty articles and essays dealing with various phases of fantasy, weird, and scientific fiction. You need not be a polished writer; if you have information you think your fellow fans and collectors would enjoy, why not jot it down and send it in to us? We will gladly give it whatever polishing it may need, so don't feel that you have to be a "name" writer to contribute to us. We can also use a few poems; however, at this time fiction is desired only through arrangement.....If present plans work out, the next issue will be a special one, containing much staff-written material on a topic of interest to all weird fans. However, we'll make no definite promises, except that #9 will appear on December 15, 1944. 'Til then, cheerio.

--FTL/SDR



# THE WORKS OF H. P. LOVECRAFT:

## SUGGESTIONS FOR A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

by Fritz Leiber, Jr.

-oOo-

In his Appreciation of H. P. Lovecraft, W. Paul Cook wrote: "He was quite alone in the dreams which he spread on paper...His work owes not even an atmosphere to anyone save himself. Since his advent weird fiction has owed more to Lovecraft than Lovecraft owes to all the body of preceding writers."

Few will disagree with this evaluation of Lovecraft as an innovator. But it naturally brings up the question: Just what, specifically, does weird fiction owe to Lovecraft? What new materials and methods did he contribute to the literature of supernatural terror? Thoughtful and scholarly attempts to answer this question are in order, not so much to honor Lovecraft as to provide weird fiction with the critical and realistic comments that are essential for the healthy growth of any branch of art.

The following paragraphs are a modest attempt to point the way for such answers, to single out some of the phases of Lovecraft's work and style worthy of much more extended treatment. They may contain errors of emphasis and omission. But if they give rise to more carefully planned efforts, their purpose will have been accomplished.

Perhaps Lovecraft's most important single contribution was the adaption of science-fiction material to the purpose of supernatural terror. The decline of at least naive belief in Christian theology, resulting in an immense loss of prestige for Satan and his hosts, left the emotion of supernatural fear swinging around loose, without any well-recognized object. Lovecraft took up this loose end and tied it to the unknown but possible denizens of other planets and regions beyond the space-time continuum. This adaptation was subtly gradual. At first he mingled science-fiction material with traditional sorcery. For example, in The Dunwich Horror, the hybrid other-dimensional entity is exorcised by recitation of a magic formula, and magical ritual plays a considerable part in the story. But in The Whisperer in Darkness, The Shadow Out of Time, and At the Mountains of Madness, supernatural terror is evoked almost entirely by recital of the doings of alien cosmic entities, and the books of sorcerous ritual have become merely the distorted, but realistic, histories of such entities, especially with regard to their past and future sojourns on Earth. There are, of course exceptions to this trend of development. In The Dreams in the Witch House, for instance, he tries a somewhat different tack: the combining of traditional witchcraft with modern multi-dimensional geometry. But as a general trend it seems to hold good.

It would be interesting to see this trend traced in detail, to know the degree to which other writers pointed out the way for Lovecraft, and to have some well-documented opinions as to the extent to which Lovecraft succeeded in his purpose.

The Cthulhu Mythology and the Arkham-Alhazred background constitute a very interesting problem. In this sense: Lovecraft asks us to accept, for the purpose of most of his stories, a world in which there is not only an Innsmouth and an Arkham and a Miskatonic University, but also a great body of forbidden knowledge well-known to a considerable number of sober and reputable scholars. In other words, he does not set his stories in the real world, but in the slightly, but significantly, different Arkham-Alhazred world; and since his characters



know of this forbidden knowledge, they are somewhat more susceptible to cosmic terror than ordinary individuals.

Most weird authors have occasionally fabricated occult books and authorities to quote from. But few if any have done it to the degree that Lovecraft did (so that mention of the Necronomicon became a kind of interior signature of his stories) and with such consistency that a definite alternate real-world is created. Arthur Machen, for example, though inventing, I believe, a few quotations from classical authors, did not postulate a set of closely-guarded books in the British Museum dealing with the history of "the little people".

This device gives Lovecraft's stories a potent kind of authenticity and---paradoxically!---puts them at a further remove from the real world. A detailed study of the growth of the Mythology and the background, and also an appraisal of the extent to which it helped or hampered Lovecraft's writings, would be very worth while.

Closely related to the Mythology and the background is Lovecraft's intensive use of the document-story. That is, the story that purports, a la Poe's Ms. Found in a Bottle, to be a real document rather than a mere tale. This device is common in weird literature, but again few if any authors have taken it quite as seriously as did Lovecraft. He set great store by the narrator having some vitally pressing motive for recounting his experiences, and was ingenious at devising such motives: justificatory confession in The Thing on the Doorstep and The Statement of Randolph Carter; warning, in The Whisperer in Darkness and At the Mountains of Madness; attempt by the narrator to clarify his own ideas and come to a decision, in The Shadow Over Innsmouth; scholarly summing up of a weird series of events, in The Case of Charles Dexter Ward and The Haunter of the Dark, to name but a few.

Use of the document-story had a progressive effect on Lovecraft's style, favoring the employment of a matter-of-fact, uncolored prose and a dispassionate, scholarly viewpoint. Certainly there seems to be more witchery of words in an early tale like The Dunwich Horror than in a later one like The Shadow Out of Time, though the latter story has greater unity and technical perfection. There is much to be said both for and against the objective style of his later stories as contrasted with the more subjective style of his earlier ones.

Regarding Lovecraft's style---that is, the way he told a story rather than the materials he used---the most noteworthy feature is perhaps his dependence on confirmation rather than revelation. (I am indebted to Henry Kuttner for this neat phrase.) In other words, the story-ending---The Outsider and a few others excepted---does not come as a surprise but as a Final, long-anticipated "convincer". The reader knows, and is supposed to know, what is coming, but this only prepares and adds to his shivers when the narrator supplies the last and incontrovertible piece of evidence. In The Case of Charles Dexter Ward the reader knows from almost the first page that Ward has been supplanted by Joseph Curwen, yet the narrator does not state this unequivocally until the last sentence of the book.

So closely related to his use of confirmation as to be only another aspect of it, is Lovecraft's employment of the terminal climax---that is, the story in which the high point and the final sentence coincide. Who can forget the supreme chill of: "But by God, Eliot, it was a photograph from life." or "It was his twin brother, but it looked more like the father than he did." or "They were, instead, the letters of our familiar alphabet, spelling out the words of the English language in my own handwriting." or "...the face and hands of Henry Wentworth Akeley." Use of the terminal climax made it necessary for Lovecraft to develop a special type of story-telling, in which the explanatory and return-to-equilibrium material is all deftly inserted



before the finish and while the tension is still mounting. It also necessitated a very careful structure, with everything building from the first word to the last.

Lovecraft reinforced this structure with what may be called symphonic prose---sentences that are repeated with a constant addition of more potent adjectives, adverbs, and phrases, just as in a symphony a melody introduced by a single woodwind is at last thundered by the whole orchestra. The Statement of Randolph Carter provides one of the simplest examples. In it, in order, the following phrases occur concerning the moonlight: "...waning crescent moon was high in the vaporous heavens....wan, waning crescent moon peered through the noisome vapors....pallid, peering crescent moon....amorphous, necrophagous shadows dance beneath an accursed waning moon...." Subtler and more complex examples can undoubtedly be found in the longer stories.

In a letter reprinted in The Acolyte (Summer-1944) Anthonyoucher states that Lovecraft, like Poe, achieved horror by overstatement rather than understatement. This points the way for another interesting critical study. Or for several---at least, it suggests several things: 1. Lovecraft's use of a detailed description and history of feared entities, as in At the Mountains of Madness, as opposed to the more sketchy and shadowy demoniac entities of M. R. James and others; this of course involves the difference in their subject-matter, particularly Lovecraft's use of science-fiction material. 2. Lovecraft's Machenesque mentioning of pieces of forbidden knowledge known to the narrator but too terrible to be revealed to the reader, involving references to the unmentionable, the nameless, and so on. 3. (and in this regard Lovecraft employs anything but overstatement) His practice in some stories of having no actual visible horror, but letting everything rest on inference. For example, he begins The Whisperer in Darkness with the statement, "Bear in mind closely that I did not see any actual visible horror at the end." And he sticks to it, for what has the narrator Wilmarth seen at the end? Photographs of odd stones and footprints---and even those might have been doctored. A bizarre dictaphone record---which could have been faked. The written and verbal statements of Ekeley---all of them possibly lies. Some queer machines, some actual footprints, some confused alien voices---all susceptible to faking. And finally a head and hands that might have been wax models. None of these things are horrible in themselves, none of the evidence is incontrovertible---everything depends on the inferences that the narrator and reader make. In this story, in one sense, Lovecraft makes a greater use of understatement than James, whose narrators generally physically sense, at least for a moment, something monstrous and supernaturally horrible.

This brief essay omits many phases of Lovecraft's work worth study. For example, the use of several balancing sources of horror (see especially The Dreams in the Witchhouse) and a shifting of the focus of horror, so that the feared entities gradually become the fearing entities, as in The Shadow Out of Time and At the Mountains of Madness (where the reader, at first dreading the Old Ones, comes to sympathize with them in their dread of the Shuggoths.)

But if it calls out additions, disagreements, and corrections---and especially if it stimulates the present enthusiasm for Lovecraft into crystalizing in definite appraisals and summings-up, as in the Derleth-Wandrei prefaces and the Laney glossary---so much the better.

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GUTETO. An amateur magazine devoted to Esperanto. The current issue contains an 8-page descriptive bibliography of scientifiction and fantasy books published in this language of the future. 5¢ postpaid. Morojo, Box 6475, Metro Station, Los Angeles 55, California.  
(paid adv.)



# THE WAY I HEARD IT

Anthony Roucher

They were telling ghost stories. It was an odd assortment of guests; but then you expected that at Martin's. There were an actress and a reporter and a young doctor who made amateur films and an elderly professor of English and several just plain people.

Martin finished the one about the female medical student, and they were all duly horrified, even though you couldn't call it a ghost story proper. Somebody threw another log on the fire, and there was a pause for refilling glasses.

Then the actress spoke. "Now I know this one is true," she said. "because the girl who told it to me heard it from a man who knew the cousin of one of the people it happened to. So there."

"What you call direct evidence," the reporter murmured.

The actress didn't hear him. "It happened in Berkeley," she went on. "It seems these people were driving up in the hills on a dark, dark night, when all of a sudden they heard-- Only I ought to tell you about the car first of all. You see, it was a two-door sedan - you know, where you can't get out of the back without climbing over the people in front."

A man who worked in a travel office interrupted her. "Sorry, but I know this one. Only it happened in New Orleans. A friend of mine who's a steward on a boat--"

"That must be something else. I tell you I know this happened in Berkeley."

"I heard it in San Francisco," the reporter put in. "A friend of mine tried to run the story down, but he didn't get anywhere."

"Don't quarrel, children," Martin said. "It is a Berkeley legend; I've heard it a dozen times up there. And I don't know where else it might be current. Let's go on to a new story."

The doctor objected. "But I don't know it. And besides, I'm looking for something for a short supernatural picture. Would this do, do you think?"

"It might at that."

"Then somebody tell it."

"Yes," said the professor of English. "By all means tell it."

The actress unruffled herself. "All right. Now please be quiet everybody. These people were driving up in the hills..."

"A doctor and his wife," the reporter added.

"I've heard a clergyman," Martin said.

"I don't think that matters. Anyway, they heard these moans, so they stopped the car. And there under a hedge..."

"The way I heard it," the travel man protested, "she was standing on the curb."

"But don't you see, she has to be lying down, because she's really---But that would spoil the story, wouldn't it? I'm sorry. So they go over to her and help her into the car..."

"Don't forget the suitcase."

"What suitcase?"

"But she has to have a suitcase, because..."

"I don't see why."

The doctor was getting impatient. "For the Lord's sake, will somebody tell this story? I don't give a hang about suitcases. I want to hear what happened."

Three people started at once. The actress won out and went on.

"So they ask her where they can take her, and she says she doesn't know."



"She doesn't know! But that kills the whole..."

"Of course, how can you..."

"Please," said the professor quietly.

"She doesn't know then," the actress continued calmly. "She tells them later. Oh, I should say they put her in the back seat. You have to know that. Then she tells them where to take her--she's very pale, of course, and beautiful and sad--and they take her there. And when they drive up to the house..."

"Only first they notice..."

"No, not till they get there."

"Well, the way I heard it..."

"Let's hear her version first," Martin suggested. "Then you can argue."

"So they look around and she isn't there any more. And you see there isn't any way she could have got out without their knowing it, because the car was a two-door thing. That's why I had to tell you about that. And it looks impossible and they're worried; but they go up to the house anyway. And a man answers the doorbell and he asks what the matter..."

"No!" the reporter broke in sharply. "He says, 'I know why you have come.'"

The actress thought. "Yes. I guess you're right. He says, 'Don't tell me why you've come.' Only they tell him anyway--which is just what people always do--and he says, 'Yes. You're the tenth people' (that sounds silly, doesn't it?) 'you're the tenth people who've brought her here.'"

"Only what he really said," the travel man explained, "is, 'She's come here every night for a month now.'"

"But why?" the doctor asked. "What's it all about? You'd have to know the story back of it to do anything with it."

"Don't you see? It was his wife that he'd murdered."

"That's screwy," said the reporter. "It was his daughter. She was coming home from school and was killed in an accident at that spot and was trying to finish her journey home. That's why the suitcase."

"It was his daughter all right," the travel man said, "but the way I heard it she'd taken poison and then changed her mind and tried to get home only she was dead."

"Humph," the doctor said.

"You see," Martin explained, "you've got your choice. Anything will do for your picture. That's the way with legends."

"It is indeed a curious legend," the professor observed, "and one deserving scholarly study. Mr. Woodlcott, I believe, dealt with it on the air, and I happen to have given it some further attention myself; I think I might be able to reconcile your variant versions."

"Ooh," said the actress. "Go on."

The fire crackled and shone on the glasses. "It is basically a Berkeley legend," the professor said, "though it seems to have spread far from there. In the original form, the suitcase is correct and so is the girl's lying down. The people in the car are variously described--I think because it occurred to various people."

The actress gave a stage shudder. "You mean it's real?"

"He means it may have several independent sources," Martin enlightened her.

"Of the explanations, yours, sir, is the most nearly accurate," the professor continued, nodding to the travel man. "It was the suicide of a daughter. She had been driven from her home because of the father's madly melodramatic suspicions of her affair with his assistant--which proved to have been quite innocent, if terribly sincere. She had loved her father dearly. Sorrow overcame her, and she took poison."



But afterwards she wanted to get home to tell her father that he was forgiven."

"And did she ever tell him, if she never got there?"

"The visitations ceased," the professor said pedantically.

"And you found out all this from your researches?"

"Yes," in a toneless voice.

The fire had almost died down. Now it flared up brightly, and for a moment Martin could see the professor's face. He sat in shocked silence. He should have realized it before. There was no other way a man could know so much about it. Through the darkness, he could half see a smile on the old man's lips now. He was remembering that, after all, his daughter had forgiven him.

"It's a fair enough story," the doctor said at last. "But I still can't see it as a picture."

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## DECADENCE

When the Great are fallen,  
And the Mighty is strewn in weeds,  
And nothing but remnants reach  
In twisted, sodden grotesqueness  
Towards a slate-grey sky...  
It is then I like to sit,  
Lax and weary, on a stone  
And watch the mists slip by.  
It is then I like to listen.  
Perhaps to the strains  
Of a mighty symphony of another day.  
Or mayhap idly peruse some fragment  
Of philosophy  
Written when the lights were on  
And things worked.  
Yes! There is something about decadence!  
The ebbing, receding pulse of a culture,  
With the numbed survivors grubbing in the rubble  
Of the once-great.  
There is something about Decadence.  
With life sluggish and pointless,  
Lighted by a flickering candle here,  
By a spot of intelligence there.  
But mostly solence and grey mists  
And toppled walls and vacant windows,  
And the quiet long grass pushing up in the roads.  
Sometimes, sitting on my stone, I think  
All that is past was done that I  
Might sit on my stone in the mists  
To regard the ebb-tide placid and serene.  
To survey the decay and enjoy it.  
But soon, I fear, the fools will start anew  
To try turning on the lights and starting the machines  
And build again and clear away the grass,  
So that I shall have to go again  
With the eternally shifting mists.  
But we shall return another day,  
And I shall sit on my stone  
And regard the sweet, scattered remains  
Of another Decadence.

---Fywert Kinge.



# The Battle That Ended The Century

## (M.S. FOUND IN A TIME MACHINE)

Probably by H. P. Lovecraft

-oOo-

(Note: This odd item was one of the minor sensations of weird fandom back in the summer of 1934. With no signature appended, two legal sized mimeographed sheets, bearing the following whimsy, appeared in the mail boxes of the old Lovecraft weird gang. The postmark was "Washington, D.C.", and the blank envelopes gave absolutely no clue as to the sender. Though he denied it vigorously, Lovecraft was pretty generally suspected of having had a hand in the leaflet, which certainly shows many marks of his style. The editors of The Acolyte felt that a reprint might be of some slight interest; consequently we induced August Derleth to prepare a glossary of the names mentioned in the "Ms." (most of them prominent figures of the Weird Tales circle), and in addition have appended certain letter excerpts bearing on the matter. Thanks are due to August Derleth, Clark Ashton Smith, and Duane W. Rimel for their assistance and/or the loan of material. ---FTL/SDR.)

-----oOoOo-----

On the eve of the year 2001 a vast crowd of interested spectators were present amidst the romantic ruins of Cohen's Garage on the former site of New York, to witness a fistic encounter between two renowned champions of the strange-story firmament--Two-Gun Bob, the Terror of the Plains, and Knockout Bernie, the Wild Wolf of West Shoken. Before the battle the auguries were determined by the venerated Thibetan Lama Bill Lum Li, who evoked the primal serpent-god of Valusia and found unmistakeable signs of victory for both sides. Cream-puffs were inattentively vended by Wladislaw Brenryk - the partakers being treated by the official surgeons, Drs. D. H. Killer and M. Gin Brewery.

The gong was sounded at 39 o'clock, after which the air grew red with the gore of battle, lavishly flung about by the mighty Texas slaughterer. Very shortly the first actual damage occurred--the loosening of several teeth in both participants. One, bouncing out from the Wolf's mouth after a casual tap from Two-Gun, described a parabola toward Yucatan; being retrieved in a hasty expedition by Messrs. A. Hijacked Barrell and G. A. Scotland. This incident was used by the eminent sociologist and ex-poet Frank Chimesleep Short, Jr. as the basis of a ballad of proletarian propaganda with three intentionally defective lines. Meanwhile a potentate from a neighboring kingdom, The Effjay of Akkamin, (also known to himself as an amateur critic) expressed his frenzied disgust at the technique of the combatants, at the same time peddling photographs of the fighters (with himself in the foreground) at five cents each.

In round two the Shokan Soaker's sturdy right crashed through the Texan's ribs and became entangled in sundry viscera; thereby enabling Two-Gun to get in several telling blows on his opponent's unprotected chin. Bob was greatly annoyed by the effeminate squeamishness shown by several onlookers as muscles, glands, gore, and bits of flesh were spattered over the ring side. During this round the eminent magazine cover anatomist Mrs. M. Blunderage portrayed the battlers as a pair of spirited nudes behind a thin veil of conveniently curling tobacco-smoke, while the late Mr. C.-Half-Cent provided a sketch of three Chinamen clad in silk hats and goloshes--this being his own original conception of the affray. Among the amateur sketches made was one by Mr. Goofy Hooey, which later gained fame in an annual Cubist exhibit as "Abstraction of an Eradicated Pudding".

In the third round the fight grew really rough; several ears and other appurtenances being wholly or partly detached from the frontier battler by the Shokan Shocker. Somewhat irritated, Two-Gun countered with some except-



tionally sharp blows; severing many fragments from his aggressor, who continued to fight with all his remaining members.

The entire affair was reported by Mr. W. Lablache Talcum, his copy being revised by Horse Power Hateart. Throughout the event notes were taken by M. le Comte d'Erlette for a 300 volume novel-cycle in the Proustian manner, with illustrations by Mrs. Blunderage. Mr. J. Caesar Warts frequently interviewed both battlers and all the more important spectators; obtaining as souvenirs (after a spirited struggle with the Effjay) an autographed quarter-rib of Two-Gun's, in an excellent state of preservation, and three finger-nails from the Wild Wolf. Lighting effects were supplied by the Electrical Testing Laboratories under the supervision of H. Kanebrake. The fourth round was prolonged eight hours at the request of the official artist, Mr. H. Wanderer, who wished to put certain shadings of fantasy into his representation of the Wolf's depleted physiognomy, which included several supernumerary details supplied by the imagination.

The climax came in round five, when the Texas Tearer's left passed entirely through Battling Bernie's face and brought both sluggers to the mat. This was adjudged a finish by the referee--Robertieff Essovitch Karovsky, the Muscovite Ambassador--who, in view of the Shokan Shocker's gory state, declared the latter to be essentially liquidated according to the Marxian ideology. The Wild Wolf entered an official protest, which was promptly overruled on the ground that all the points necessary to technical death were theoretically present.

The gonfalons sounded a fanfare of triumph for the victor, while the technically vanquished was committed to the care of the official mortician, Mr. Teaberry Quince. During the ceremonies the alleged corpse strolled away for a bite of bologna, but a tasteful cenotaph was supplied to furnish a focus for the rites. The funeral procession was headed by a gaily bedecked hearse driven by Malik Taus, the Peacock Sultan, who sat on the box in West Point uniform and turban, and steered an expert course over several hedges and stone walls. About half way to the cemetery the cortege was rejoined by the corpse, who sat beside Sultan on the box and finished his bologna sandwich, his ample girth having made it impossible to enter the hastily selected cenotaph. An appropriate dirge was rendered by Maestro Sing Lee Bawledout on the piccolo: Messrs. De Silva, Brown, and Henderson's celebrated aria, "Never Swat a Fly", from the old cantata "Just Imagine", being chosen for that occasion. The only detail omitted from the funeral was the interment, which was interrupted by the disconcerting news that the official gate-taker--the celebrated financier and Ivar K. Rodent, Esq.--had absconded with the entire proceeds.

Mr. Talcum's report of the event, illustrated by the well-known artist Klarkash-Ton (who esoterically depicted the fighters as boneless fungi) was printed--after repeated rejections by the discriminating editor of the Windy City Grab-Bag--as a broadside by W. Peter Chef. This, through the efforts of Otis Adelbert Kline, was finally placed on sale in the bookshop of Smearum & Weep, three and a half copies finally being disposed of through the alluring catalogue description supplied by Samuelus Philanthropus, Esq.

In response to this wide demand, the text was finally reprinted by Mr. De Merit in the polychromatic pages of Wurst's Weakly Americana under the title "Has Science Been Outmoded? or, The Dwellers in the Garage." No copies, however, remain in circulation; since all which were not snapped up by fanatical bibliophiles were seized by the police in connection with the libel suit of the Wild Wolf, who was, after several appeals ending with the World Court, adjudged not only officially alive but the clear winner of the combat.

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THE BATTLE THAT ENDED THE CENTURY: Glossary of Names.

(Note: Rather than to alphabetize them, we have listed these names roughly in the order of their first appearance in the "Ms".)

Cohen's Garage -- (No significance)

Two-Gun Bob -- Robert E. Howard

Knockout Bernie, the Wild Wolf of West Shokan -- Bernard Austin  
Dwyer (of West Shokan, New York)

Bill Lum Li -- William Lumley

Wladislaw Brenryk -- Andrew Brosnatch (??)

D. H. Killer -- David H. Keller

M. Gin Brewery -- Miles G. Breuer

A. Hijacked Barrell -- A. Hyatt Verrill

G. A. Scotland -- George Allan England

Frank Chimesleep Short, Jr. -- Frank Belknap Long, Jr.

The Effjay of Akkamin -- Forrest J. Ackerman

Mrs. M. Blunderage -- M. Brundage

Mr. C.-Half-Cent -- C. C. Senf

Mr. Goofy Hoocy -- ??

W. Lablache Talcum -- Wilfred Blanch Talman (author of the fine  
Two Black Bottles)

Horse-Power Hateart -- Howard Phillips Lovecraft

M. le Comte d'Erlette -- August Derleth

J. Caesar Warts -- Julius Schwartz

H. Canebrake -- H. C. Koenig

H. Wanderer -- Howard Wnadrei

Robertieff Essovitch Karovsky -- Robert S. Carr (Whispers, etc.)

Teaberry Quince -- Seabury Quinn

Malik Taus, the Peacock Sultan -- E. Hoffman Price

Sing Lee Bawledout -- Franklin Lee Baldwin

Ivar K. Rodent -- ??

Klarkash-Ton -- Clark Ashton Smith

Windy-City Grab-Bag -- Weird Tales

W. Peter Chef -- W. Paul Cook

Smearum & Weep -- No one or firm intended, just a general slap

Samuelus Philanthropus -- Samuel Loveman (NAPA bigwig and ardent  
book collector and poet)

Mr. De Merit -- A. Merritt

Wurst's Weakly Americana -- American Weekly

-----ooOoo-----

Letter from August Derleth to Francis T. Laney, July 30, 1943.

"...There's no reason why the BATTLE THAT ENDED THE CENTURY should not be reprinted. I believe that HPL did have a hand in it, regardless of his denials."

-----ooOoo-----

Letter from Clark Ashton Smith to Duane W. Rimel, September 13, 1934.

"I enjoyed hugely the Ms. Found in a Time-Machine, and think that there is no doubt whatever about the authorship. HPL may, however, have been assisted a little in this lucubration by the fertile brain of R. H. Barlow. The names were a positive scream..."

-----ooOoo-----

Letter from H. P. Lovecraft to Duane W. Rimel, August 10, 1934.

"As for that recent spoof in weird & science fiction circles, I was amused to note how many have attributed it to me...despite the fact that it is scarcely the sort of thing a staid old-timer would be likely to start. Especially since the Eastern recipients say it came long before I passed through Washington. I found a copy when I got home, & was considerably amused by it. If you'll look more closely, you'll see that I was not left out--since "Horse-Power Hateart" can scarcely refer to anyone



but myself. Oddly, the only name given without a comic twist is that of Otis Adelbert Kline. I don't know why they left him as he was--it would have been easy to think up something like Oatmeal Addlepat Crime. The fling at (---) was rather apt--though many of the others were so personal that they can only be guessed at by those not 'in the know'. Curious that one of the corrections looked like my script--I didn't notice it, but will take another glance if I can find the thing."

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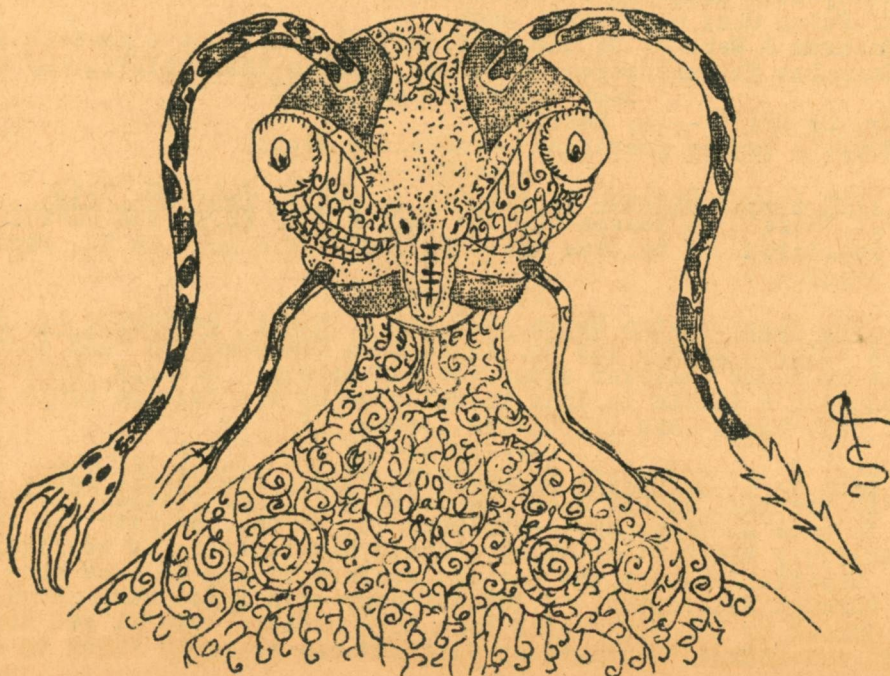
## *The Law of the Swamp*

Thick, black swamp . . .  
Adulteress of the brooding night.  
Hide your dark and secret laws  
From staring eyes.  
Return the questioned contemplation of the owl  
With sly indifference.  
Relax your length of indigo  
Until an unsuspecting one  
Inquires of your false security,  
Then draw and suck his flesh with greed  
And smack your thick, black lips!

---Ruby Diehr

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A DRAWING BY CLARK ASHTON SMITH





Ervoool made his way up the great lightless stair to look at the dead realm of ice and stars.

Had a scientist of our age been able to get a glimpse of Ervoool he would have classified him as a horrifyingly unique freak of human birth. There was the central eye, so large and strangely filmed as to keep one from noticing the two tiny, heavily lidded sub-eyes that flanked it. Below the eye was the delicate, poignantly lipped mouth through which Ervoool also breathed. Short neck, squat body and limbs were muffled in a thick napped, neutral colored garment. The eight fingers on the thumbless hands were more like nicely jointed claws. The bare feet were without toes. But, more than all these special features, an anomalous quality of the skin of Ervoool would have baffled and made avid for closer view that hypothetical, timeless scientist of our day and age.

However, the great circular, stone hewn stair with its round, long echoing well was without light and an observer would only have heard the quick breathing of Ervoool and the disturbingly sharp, glasslike sound of his footsteps.

Had a scientist of our age been able to spend some little time with Ervoool he would have become less sure that Ervoool was a freak. The toeless feet were strangely boned--and hooved with a flexible horny substance. The clawlike fingers were exceedingly precise and delicate in their movements. The central eye was all too nicely accommodated for by facial bone-structure to seem the freak extra-eye of an engulfed twin. These facts, taken in conjunction with many others--such as the absolute absence of hair--would slowly and unwillingly but inevitably led the hypothetical scientist to an astonishing conclusion; indeed, the obvious utility and concatenation of Ervoool's freakish features could have but one explanation: Ervoool belonged to a different species, a completely differentiated offshoot or development of the animal man.

And this was true - for no human of our day had hand in the hewing of that great lightless stair or in the shaping of the miles-deep caverns from which Ervoool slowly clambered to the long deserted, frozen outer world. Nor were those caverns, except for small part, the work even of Ervoool's people and their forebears.

Had that hypothetical scientist of our day been a man with great powers of observation and analytic scope, he would no sooner have decided that Ervoool belonged to a different and later species than he would have begun to fear that a much more tremendous problem had fallen to him. In short, he would have become aware that Ervoool's vestigial organs were "all wrong". The central eye had remnant of a filmy sub-eyelid; the finger-claws had remnants of connecting webs; the hairless skin showed--not traces of hair follicles--but traces of scales. Further examination would have brought to light other corroborating features, and strangest of all, a set of green-tinged lumps around each wrist. Their symmetrical arrangement and the spiral whorl of veins that covered each one would seem to preclude the possibility of their being any kind of diseased growth--and Ervoool did not seem to benefit by them in any way. But--if they were vestigial organs--they were vestiges of no organ any physiologist, zoologist, or paleontologist ever saw or postulated. The hypothetical scientist would have been staggered, thrilled, and in no common way awed by the conclusion toward which this new set of data pointed; he would have searched his mind for alternate explanations, he would carefully have reviewed and



tested his observations, he would regretfully have looked back at his discarded first hypothesis of freakishness - but in the end he would have had no choice: Ervoool was indeed not evolved from man but from some reptilian ancestor, some reptile or reptilian creature no man of today ever saw, either in life or fossil.

This conclusion would not have amazed or annoyed Ervoool. Every schoolboy of his race knew how their kind had branched, ages back, from a sombre reptilian stock, now almost extinct. Ervoool himself belonged to a set of advanced thinkers who credited that original reptile stock with an intelligence and cultural level that more conservative and race-centric scientists denied. Ervoool humorously pretended to see in his own name traces of a reptiliansqueak approximated by a blur of consonants: "Llllrvvvl". But he seriously believed that the primal shaping of the great limestone caves in which all life now hid was the work of those reptiles whom some of his friends dismissed with the phrase "eldritch beasts". As he slowly ascended the great stair, resting at intervals, his imagination went back to the prehistoric, eon-distant days when it had finally become obvious that even the equatorial regions of earth were irrevocably unfit for any kind of life, when it had become obvious that no surface water could--barring cosmic accident--ever again be anything but ice. He dreamed of the time when reptile scientists, by means of cunning instruments, had located this set of deep limestone caverns and had patiently bored this shaft down to it. The steps up which he plodded might well be the work of his own kind, but not the shaft, surely not the shaft! All reason was against that view. His own race's whole history, known and fabled, had taken place in those dim caverns beneath; it must have been spawned there.

Ervoool paused again for a little, panting, and smiled inwardly at paradox. He thought of the cosmology his primitive forebears had painfully imagined: a cosmology in which the universe was an infinite limestone solidity except for the cavern-system in which they lived. He thought of the difficulty they must have had in admitting the possibility even of other caverns. He thought of the ridicule that must have heaped on the first one who climbed a dangerous, half-choked shaft and brought back word of the terrible stars, of the active persecution of the stone-worshipping priests. He thought of the doubting wonder with which a later, scientific age had listened to the daring hypothesis that all life had originally burgeoned on the dizzy outside of the earth and had only recently sought the slower-chilling deeps, mysterious and dim with their phosphorescent vegetation. Now that daring hypothesis was a long established fact but--thought Ervoool, still smiling--how little that tremendous fact meant to his people and how few of them ever climbed the restored shafts--the work of a studious dictator--to look at the motionless ice and the terrible glittering stars!

The conceiving entire of the gigantic gulf of time lying between Ervoool and our age is no proper task to set any hypothetical scientist, or even that almost fabulous end-product, Ervoool. The multiplicity of species, the many times that cultures and other complexities had come to the fore, the near-extinction of all life when the sun dramatically shrank to a blazing dwarf star, the autumnal panorama of re-evolution and change as that bright dwarf burgeoned and imperceptibly cooled--these are matters too infinite for mind, too tremendous for feeling.

One can only guess aghast at the number of non-human things that built their stony strongholds, waged their terrible wars, and wrought beauty in their mysterious times of peace.

One can only wonder--as at the transcendant improbability, the ultimate miracle--that Ervoool resembled man as much as he did.

Had that brilliant hypothetical scientist been also a great creative thinker he would long have wondered at that miracle of resemblance, and the longer he wondered the more he would have felt himself



shaken to the deeps of his being by emotional and imaginative responses of which he had never thought himself capable. Why should that resemblance be? Man and creatures manlike had vanished from the theater of evolution long even before the sun had become a bright dwarf. In the light of this fact, Ervool's resemblance to man of our age became definitely unwholesome. Far properer that he resemble his one-eyed reptilian antecedent. Far properer that he be a tentacled brain, a scaled and furry burrower, or some nightmare creature beyond depicting--almost anything would be more proper than this abhorrent resemblance to a poor and ill-adapted creature so long gone. Of a truth, there was a remote connection between Ervool and Man--the immortal germ plasm--but this germ plasm also connected Ervool with a million other forms of life that had come since and before. Why should the tiny continuity between Ervool and man have such a fearfully great influence? Those two sub-eyes of Ervool--they too were vestigial organs, but for eons animal life had been single eyed. Those two sub-eyes of Ervool were the atavistic vestiges of a two-eyed form of life that died before those latter eons began. They were vestigial organs that the late reptiles never had--vestigial organs that had remained for eons latent in the germ-plasm, that had jumped those eons, suddenly to reappear.

It was monstrous--as though Ervool's progenitors had dreamed a vision of the engulfed past, a vision of the first species that wrought greatly upon the earth and felt the stirrings of far things, a vision of man. And as if they had created themselves in the image of that vision. As if Ervool's kind was but a harking back to an inconceivably distant beginning.

If that hypothetical scientist and creative thinker had been also a physician cunning in diagnosis he might have gained the ultimate clue. For he would have noted in Ervool and all of Ervool's fellows symptoms of disease: fever, organic degeneration, and liability to sudden, unheralded death. And, although he would for some time have postulated a great mild plague, he would eventually have been drawn to the startling conclusion that disease was the natural state of Ervool's people. None were without it. Their very flesh seemed always on the verge of dissolution, the ultimate cells grown eccentric and unpredictable in their individual behavior. This, more than the scaliness, accounted for the peculiar quality in the texture of the skin of Ervool--for his very skin shimmered with imminent change.

Ervool knew these things, knew the continual nearness of death, knew the senescence in his bone-marrow. And, as is characteristic of one near death, his mind was full of reminiscences, of visions of the past--but not of his own past alone, not even principally of his own past. No; the mind of Ervool, as the minds of all of his kind, was filled with a shifting, flitting panorama of memories that went back to his reptilian forebears, their fishy forebears, and beyond. Memories that stretched back through the steaming maelstrom of earth's indian summer, through that and beyond. Memories that had slept in the immortal germ plasm for untold eons.

Ervool and his kind were dreaming of a primeval and eon-vanished lineage; they were dreaming of man; their very flesh was dreaming that dream; their very flesh shaped them in the image of that dream.

Even Ervool, advanced thinker that he was, tried to avoid the conclusion apparent: the immortal germ plasm was dying and, as dying things do, was turning to its youth.

The limestone caverns, hollowed by the interminable seeping of slow-chilling waters and with air refreshed by a readapted vegetation dependant on internal radiation, shaped by the vanished reptiles, would support life for ages to come--but life was at the end of its course. The immortal germ plasm, which stretched its continuity back to the



first cell that teetered into patterned organization in the steamy primal sea, was dying.

Ervoool, panting, driven by atavistic impulses, had now reached the top of the great stair and slowly made his way through fallen stone and age-old snow, sifted from a sky from which snow would never sift again, past fallen tower walls, which no new frosts would ever crack, no new sleets weather. The cold, crept an eighth of the way from the freezing point of water to absolute zero and still creeping colder, bit his skin--but he scarcely noticed it, for his eye was lifted up to the marvel of the terrible, dizzying stars. They seemed to him for a moment the malign accomplices of time and death. He was lost--so completely lost that he first thought the high musical tinkling but the projection of his vision. Then it came again and seemingly louder than before and he lowered his eye and looked fearfully about him--and saw the source of the unearthly crystalline music. It was unbelievable---and yet he saw it, saw it too clearly for any doubt: there was a stirring and a restlessness in the ice about him, a kind of patterned organization come to the ice and snow, a kind of speaking life that had ice for its body. The immortal germ plasm was dying but an unearthly restlessness and stirring in the ice would persist for further eons--until all heat and all movement were no more.

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## THE GREY MOUSER

### I

Soft sandaled feet press lightly on the stones  
That cobble Lankhmar's mazy alleyways;  
A greyish cloak melts in the river mist  
That, like the ether of the alchemist,  
Fumes round the corner from the nighted bays  
To chill with sorcery men's blood and bones.  
Only a bat whose sharp ears caught one sound  
Knows that the Mouser is on business bound.

A jewel from Quarmall or a girl from Kled;  
A caravel said to be docking soon;  
A rune that Sheelba magicked from the dead;  
Or a dread whisper from beyond the moon ---  
What man can name the thing the Mouser seeks  
Or read the smile that links his swarthy cheeks?

### II

The City thrusts black towers at the stars  
And bars the forest back with morticed stones  
And seals the scent of flowers in stone jars  
And locks earth's secrets up in brass-clasped tomes.  
No satyr may live there, no faun survive  
The stench and clangor of each crowded street;  
The white-fanged beasts of night cannot contrive  
To gnaw an entrance through its black concrete.

Yet, 'mongst the gargoyles on its slated roofs,  
One grey masked face leers down with living grin  
That mocks the scurry of the city's floor;  
Two grey gloved hands pry ope the library's door,  
And break the ponderous tomes and scribble in  
Footnotes that give the lie to all proud proofs.

---Fritz Leiber, Jr.



## Howard Phillips Lovecraft & E. HOFFMAN PRICE

My first sight of H. P. Lovecraft was when he welcomed me in the lobby of a third class hotel on St. Charles Street in New Orleans in 1932, a month after I had decided to go out for full time writing; and behind my almost Mongolian calm I was pretty much thrilled at the chance of talking to the master of all weird writers.

He wore a baggy and threadbare suit of what might be called snuff-color; it had been neatly and inconspicuously patched in at least two places. He made some remark about having just finished laundering a shirt in his room. From this I knew that I had come face to face with a man who preferred the feeding of brain and soul to staying at home to stuff his guts and doll out his frame. I, too, had travelled when a sight and a sandwich was better than a banquet and being in the same old rut.

A snapshot the late Farnsworth Wright once showed me had prepared me for a man of striking appearance; but the unusual prominence of the lower part of the white of the eye, so striking in those pictures, was not, as I remember, at all conspicuous when I saw H.P.L. himself. For the rest, he was inclined to be stooped, somewhat the stoop of the Chinese scholar; thin, narrow face, long chin and jaw, and intense brown eyes. His speech was quick, jerky, whether coming from nervousness or from animation and the high speed action of his mind, I didn't know; looking back, later, and from further meetings, I decided that this might have resulted from a blend of both.

The next striking aspect was his choice of words: an animated and highly keyed dictionary! Yet so natural and unaffected was his use of formal locutions, "two-bit" words, bookish expressions, that I suddenly realized that if he spoke as other people did--THAT would have been an affectation.

Then, just as abruptly, there came an end to my appraisal; the strangeness of the man had worn off, and it was as though I had known and liked him for a long, long time; it was good to be in his company, pleasant, and stimulating, and refreshing; a "good guy", a sound fellow, a solid man.

I had heard that he was sternly opposed to drinking of any kind, and so, as a matter of courtesy and not at all with the idea of hypocrisy, I had hidden the five cases of home brew, the keg of raisin wine, and other alcoholic treasures. In lieu of New Orleans prime refreshments, I offered New Orleans second line: coffee, which he enjoyed and drank in enormous amounts, with four heaping spoonsful of sugar in each cup, throughout the entire twenty-eight consecutive hours we sat in my apartment on 305 Royal Street, chatting at a fantastic tempo. We were well met!

I had a big pot of chili con carne, one of my bachelor apartment staples. It was good to see H.P.L. stow the stuff away. He relished highly spiced dishes; and when, a year or so later, I saw him in Rhode Island, he asked me to make him the Indian Curry I had described. The spices---coriander, ginger, caradmon, fenugreek, pepper, Lord alone knows what else---caught his ear, and the blistering, blasting sauce tickled his palate. Others knew him as an ice-cream connoisseur of international championship stature; I remember him as one who could zestfully stoke up on spicy foods of the spiciest.

The man's enormous enthusiasm for novelty of idea, of food, of spectacles, of word combinations; this, if anything, could be called as characterizing H.P.L. I have met in all my time only one or two others who equalled him in what I call "mental greed", that insatiable,



everlasting hunger for impressions, sights, knowledge of no matter what kind or source--all fuel for the psychic furnaces, or perhaps, "mash" for the psychic retort from which he distilled personality.

He did not drink liquor nor smoke, and, judging from all his conversation and letters, women simply did not exist as far as his personal life was concerned; but in all other fields, I am sure he never willingly left anything untried, untested, unappraised. Detailing the man's versatility would be futile, and it has been done by those who knew him far better than I; my sustained impression from that day in 1933 right up to his last letter to me, shortly before his death in 1937, was that of unbounded gusto, one who like Ulysses had indeed become a part of all that he had seen.

This trait is what made HPL so fascinating; though our lives, taken detail by detail, could not have been more unlike, we shared this acquisitiveness as to ideas and impressions. And, because of the utter unlikeness of so many aspects of our personalities, each found the other stimulating.

Twenty eight consecutive hours of fencing, of debating about one of my first professionally written stories, Tarbis of the Lake; the magnificent hair-splitting wrangles over each comma! Later, some of my Vieux Carre crowd came in; persons I felt he'd consider a lewd and bawdy crowd, too alcoholically and carnally and frivolously inclined to be tolerated with ease. I had a few qualms, because I knew that the man was different in outlook and background; I feared that he'd be embarrassed or bored.

He was neither. When he took the floor, they listened to this odd, this unique, this bookish, this pedantic seeming man; he held their attention from the first word. And his utter assurance was beautiful to see, and so was his entire un-selfconsciousness. That first impression I had gained, of his tendency toward nervousness in encountering strangers, was not typical of him; perhaps it didn't really exist, and was only the result of my misinterpreting a peculiarity or mannerism in speech.

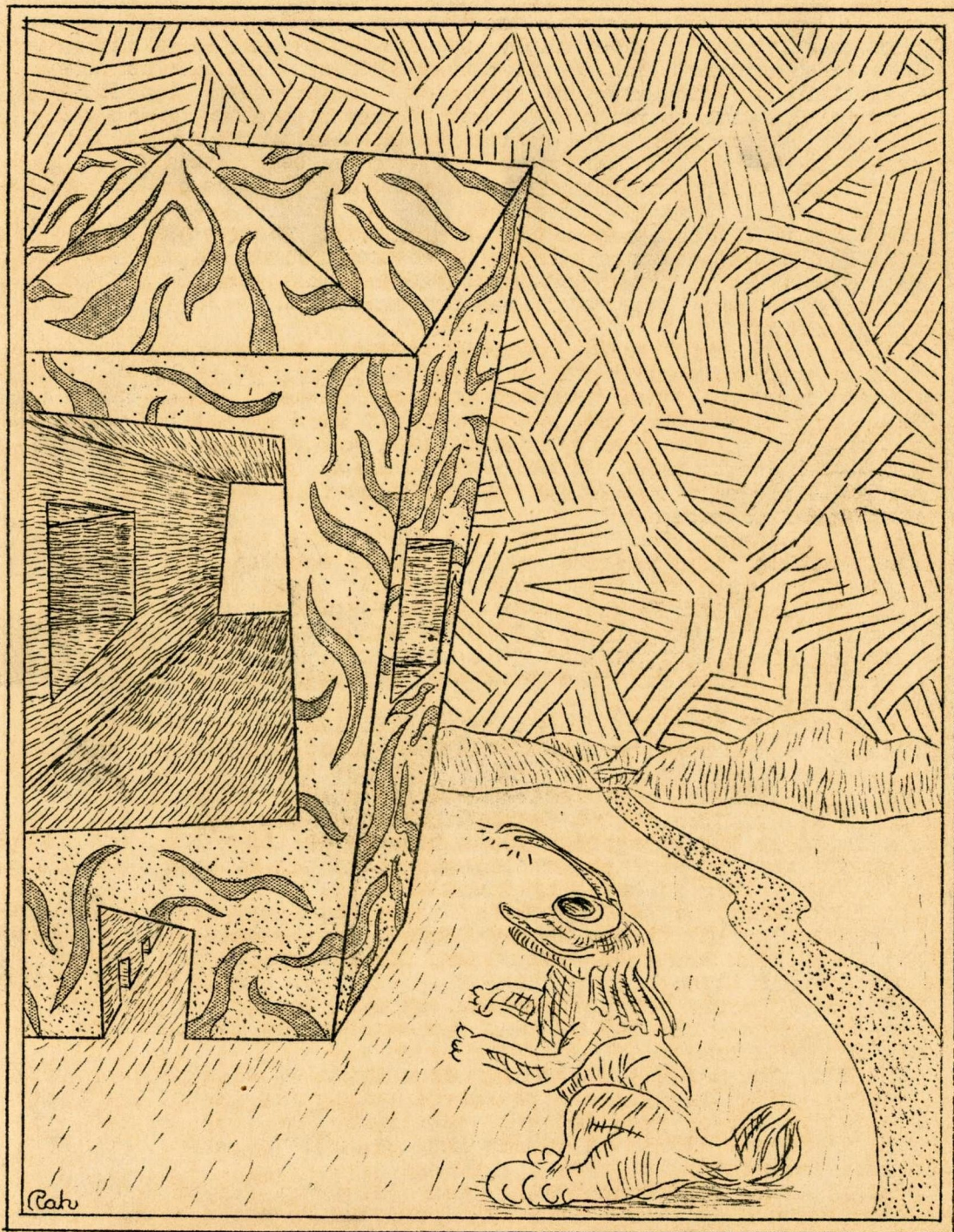
He went back to Rhode Island, but not until we had decided, in high whimsy, to account for the disappearance of Randolph Carter, a sequel to the Silver Key. The result, Through the Gates of the Silver Key, was published a few years later; the opening scene is a dressed up description of 305 Royal Street. At the time, I did have antique Boukhara and Feraghan carpets hanging on the walls, and wrought iron censers sitting here and there; and there was an Adam fire place, though I didn't know it until he identified it.

In Providence, we had another of those thirty to forty hour sessions, unbroken by any sleep. Harry Brobst, an apprentice psychiatrist working in a local madhouse, joined us, and we went to the cemetery just off Benefit Street, around 4 A.M. Next day, I made Indian Curry, Harry--I wish I could get his address; my last letter was returned unclaimed--bought six bottles of beer, somewhat to my astonishment, as we were in HPL's house.

But HPL, the perfect host, had not a frown of disapproval; after all, beer was then legal, we were not violating the law of the land, he asserted by way of justifying his attitude. However, he refused to touch the beer. "What'll you do with it all?" he asked, out of scientific curiosity.

"Hell, drink it," Brobst said, and I'll never forget HPL's incredulity; it was as though Harry had promised to evoke a familiar spirit. And what I enjoyed most was HPL's growing incredulity as he watched us drink three bottles apiece. He could not quite believe that we would not pass out, almost at any instant; perhaps he expected us to vanish in a puff of flame.





KLOM AND THE SLIBAK







He loathed sea food, yet he took me to Pawtuxett (Rhode Islanders please check) for the famous steamed clam dinner. After ordering for me, to be sure I got the super-deluxe, he said, "While you are eating that God-damned stuff, I'll go across the street for a sandwich; please excuse me."

Those are his very words. And for HPL, that grand Puritan, those were unusual; unique, I believe. His "damns" were for state occasions; this utterance could only come in the presence of a supreme horror, such as a man eating sea-food!

In the space allotted me, I cannot begin to touch the details of that week-end in Rhode Island, and of the ride, in my Ford, to parts he'd never visited because of lack of bus or street-car connections; a ride which made him frankly admit that his aversion to motor cars had been a bit out of order. He named the Model A, after his fashion, "Great Juggernaut". And ever thereafter, writing me, he ceremoniously inquired after the health of Juggernaut, as well as concerning that of my cats, Nimrod and Kiki. We were both cat lovers and cat respecters.

I left Providence early one morning. He rode with me to guide me out of town. His return afoot would be one of those walks he loved. There was not yet any traffic. I pulled up, finally, for him to alight. I do not remember what words we exchanged. I remember only how he stood there, a hand raised, to wish me good luck. And, though I did not then know it, that was the last time that I was ever to see Howard Phillips Lovecraft. Only the other day, I found an old highway map and tried to deduce the location of the spot approximately, but time has tricked me, and all that I can certainly remember is the man and the morning quiet.

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## DESTINY

A flaming star is newly made---  
within the womb of placid time  
conceived, and born in cosmic pain.

An empire rises with the sun---  
and with it sinks beneath the sea,  
its glory and its beauty slain.

A million wonders of infinity  
that rise and live,  
then fall.

What purpose?

Three old women. . .  
weaving. . .  
in a dark cave. . . .

---Banks Mebane.

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(Extract from The Black Book of Clark Ashton Smith)

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE WEIRD TALE.

The weird tale is an adumbration or foreshadowing of man's relationship--past, present, and future--to the unknown and infinite, and also an implication of his mental and sensory evolution. Further insight into basic mysteries is only possible through future development of higher faculties than the known senses. Interest in the weird, unknown, and supernormal is a signpost of such development and not merely a psychic residuum from the age of superstition.



# LITTLE-KNOWN FANTASISTES — HAROLD WAKEFIELD

## 6. MARGARET IRWIN -ooo-

Margaret Irwin, British author famous for her historical novels Royal Flush, The Proud Servant, The Stranger Prince, and None So Pretty (the first three of which have been selected by the Book Society), seems little known in America for the other side of her writings: tales of the weird and uncanny which entitle her to rank with the greatest masters in this field.

Though Miss Irwin has published only two fantastic books, she has achieved an enduring place in fantasy's hall of fame. The publication in 1924 of Still She Wished for Company caused a small furor. Quickly going out of print, this volume became a choice collector's item. It was not until 1932 that it was reprinted, with an attractive jacket by Monsell. Later still, it appeared in the cheap Penguin edition.

Still She Wished for Company is that rare thing--a full-length weird novel that maintains the reader's interest to the last page. It opens in the 20th Century with the girl who has always been subject to strange longings for the past. A portrait of an enigmatic personage entitled only "Gentleman Unknown" exerts a peculiar fascination over her. From here the story swings abruptly back into the 18th century and we meet the beautiful, dreamy Juliana Clare living at Chidleigh with her family, one of the richest and most famous in the county. Juliana is anxiously awaiting the return from Europe of her oldest brother, Lucian, to take his place as head of the family, since his father's death. He appears, and proves to be a small, dark man, with satyr-like features, and with vague stories surrounding him concerning his friendship with Cagliostro, the Comte de Saint-Germain (who claimed to be 500 years old) and the other alchemists with which Paris at this time abounded. Indeed, it is soon apparent that Lucian possesses no ordinary powers, being able to transport his sister (who has unusual psychic qualifications) through time and space in his search for the ideal woman. From here on, past and present are interwoven in masterful fashion. The supernatural scenes are used sparingly and with just the right amount of restraint to double their effectiveness. To give an example of only one such scene: Juliana, after spending the day happily at a river party is chatting in her cousin's room just before going to bed. On leaving for her own room, she hears a voice at the foot of the stairs and, looking down, finds herself gazing at the 20th century owner of the house, who is looking back at her in terror. Flying back to her cousin's room, she enters it and finds it deserted and practically bare, everything being heavily coated with the dust of years. As the story progresses, we even find lines of Walter de la Mare's poetry coming into Juliana's mind in some inexplicable fashion.

The death of the wizard Lucian while trying to escape after killing a French nobleman upon whom he has been practicing his sorcery, brings to an untimely end his almost successful pursuit of a girl in another age and releases Juliana from her strange wanderings through time. The closing paragraph, which I shan't quote here, is a little work of art in itself. This sketchy synopsis gives an entirely inadequate picture of a truly remarkable and artistically finished story, through which like a motif runs the refrain, "Time Was. Time Is. Time Shall Be". One thing that will strike the reader is that the characters are not merely puppets, but real flesh and blood creatures. It seems amazing that Lovecraft did not mention this story in his "Supernatural Horror in Literature", while giving space to many other stories



of far lesser merit. One can only conclude that he never encountered it.

The other volume of Miss Irwin's weird writings, Madame Fears the Dark, consists of seven short stories and a play. Three of these are especially outstanding. "The Earlier Service" tells of the terrible experience of a young girl in a church in which the Black Mass had been performed five centuries earlier. Here we have all the elements of a typical M. R. James masterpiece--the setting in an ancient church, the antiquarian poking around among the curious carvings and manuscripts, and the gradual building up of a dramatic climax. Equally effective is "The Book", which tells of the hideous change that comes over a stolid business man when he reads a musty tome which mysteriously appears one day in his library--a book in which new passages appear daily to lead him further into evil. His eventual attempt to break from its influence accomplishes his death. In "Monsieur Seeks a Wife", Miss Irwin returns to the 18th century to relate the visit of a young nobleman to a remote and desolate region of France to choose a wife from among three young and impoverished French aristocrats. This story contains a particularly vivid picture of a witches' sabbat.

The stories mentioned show what a loss weird literature sustained when Margaret Irwin did not continue in the genre. There is no doubt that she could have stood with Blackwood, James, and de la Mare. One has only to read these stories to realize how a skilled hand can make even such old themes as satan worship, witchcraft, and demoniac possession become terrifyingly new. Indeed, despite the position she now holds in modern letters, many critics consider her chief fame will rest upon these two books, Still She Wished for Company and Madame Fears the Dark.

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## BOOK REVIEW

*Francis T. Laney*

SEEKER TO THE DEAD. A. M. Burrage. Published by Gerald G. Swan, London, 1942. 3/6.

(Mr. Wakefield omitted this volume from his column dealing with Burrage, and we publish this review of it somewhat as an addenda to last issue's column. Thanks must be extended to Forrest J. Ackerman for the loan of this volume for review purposes. FTL-SDR.)

Seeker to the Dead turns out to be a book-length novel dealing with a combination of necromancy and possession. Dr. Garrow, the villain of the piece, is a Satanist who desires to revive a deceased inventor named Thurley in order to possess himself of certain secrets which Thurley is supposed to have taken to the tomb with him. In order to perform this necromantic feat, the blood and breath of a dying man are needed, and there are certain hideous rites which must be carried out. Roger Moorlock, our dashing hero, takes a job as secretary-companion to Dr. Garrow and finds himself in the midst of these horrors. The tale carries us through a series of painful scenes, and builds up gradually to a very good peak of weird horror. In the final denouement, Thurley's body is revived, but is occupied by some unknown fiend, who rends Dr. Garrow and his servant Trode.

This novel is badly marred by the conventional plot form, and by one of the most nauseous love elements it has ever been my misfortune to encounter; however, the story otherwise carries genuine power and, despite its faults, is well worthy of a place in one's permanent weird collection.



## Swamp Mud

I've never seen a fog-stained swamp; my brain  
Has never dared to seek the haunt where wings  
Of headless swollen things stir pagan blood,  
Where lisping bubbles rise from mud-clogged lungs.  
I've only paced the straggling tar terrain,  
The city's coal-flaked crust; the rancid din  
And dust absorbs my being. And yet at night  
I fly through gray stone skies to hidden hells,  
And gasp...and crawl through sodden veils of slush  
And weed...I run from yawning crocodiles.  
A dream! laud I in havoc fright. At dawn,  
I stare...my boots are oaked with wet swamp mud.

---Sylvia Moore

---ooOoo---

## Strange Entity

Her hair floats out across the moon  
And swirls upon the brackish water,  
(Catching the wind in rigadoon....)  
They say she is the devil's daughter.

There is no image of her face  
Upon the lake's black countenance,  
For evil finds no mirror space  
When midnight conjures its seance.

She is no wisp of fog or mist  
Nor summer's fleeting cumulus;  
She is the answer to a tryst  
With a diabolic incubus.

---Cosette Middleton

---ooOoo---

## Brief Song

Brief is the hour for shining gossamer wings--  
Brief as the vanished glory of the moon,  
Swift is the hour of dark for all earththings--  
Swift as the muse of song that dies too soon;  
Surely the hour of another dawn shall come,  
Robbing these skies of music, silver-tossed,  
Surely the voice of beauty is not dumb--  
Surely the song is not forever lost.

The curtains of the west draw slowly near,  
And silently down the avenues of night,  
The winds tip-toe, in strange and prudent fear;  
One star remembers - Polaris with his light  
Holds high the lantern for the ones who roam--  
For wandering spirits to find the pathway home.

---Edythe Hope Genee



# NODENS DEPARTMENT — THE READERS

(The following information has been gleaned from the various letters received concerning Nodens. It is rather amusing to note that, though scores of complicated reference volumes ignore our Celtic friend, Webster's Unabridged turned out to give rather complete information. The following individuals contributed to this compilation: C. J. Fern, Jr.; Fritz Leiber, Jr.; Burton Crane; Ray Karden; and Basil Davenport. The editors of the Acolyte wish to thank them and the other persons who wrote in on the subject. --FTL-SDR.)

---oOo---

Nodens is one of the Latin forms of the name of a Celtic-Gaulish god variously known as Lludd, Ludd, Nudd, Nuada, Nuadu, and Nuada Argat-Lam (Nuada of the Silver Hand). (Other Latin forms of this name include: Nodons, Nodens, Nudens.) Nuada Argat-Lam, in the Irish Leabhar Gabhala (Book of the Invasions) was one of the kings of the Tuatha De Danann, the second race of demigods to possess Ireland. He lost his hand in battle and his skilled artificers made him a limb of silver after seven years work--hence the "Silver Hand" epithet.

He was probably the equivalent of the Brythonic Lludd, a god and/or mythical king and warrior of the ancient Britons. The name London is derived from him--Caer Ludd (Lud's Fort) being the early form. This derivation would provide ample reason for HPL considering Nodens to be benevolent; how could he think anything else of the patron diety of the chief city of his beloved England?

Moreover, the discrepancy in the attributes accorded Nodens by HPL and Duranty can be explained by a contradiction in the Leabhar Gabhala. The 11th Century scholars who compiled this volume believed that all the mythical and historical races of Ireland were descended from the same stock which can be traced back to Adam through Japhet and Noah. In line with this, they first describe the Tuatha De Danann as "the most exalted representatives of the principle of benevolence and knowledge". A few pages later, however, they set down the ancient pagan tradition claiming that the Tuatha De Danann were or may have been demons. The almost insufferably repetitive Irish Mythological Cycle and Celtic Mythology of H. d'Arbois de Jubainville (Hodges-Figgis, Dublin, 1903) remarks only that "contradictions of this sort are not uncommon in the Books of the Invasions", and lets it go at that.

The Tuatha De Danann were all adepts at the science of Goibniu or Druidism (magic). The old sagas tell of many magic battles between the Druids and the Firbolgs, the original race. Incidentally, the Irish name for Druidism was Maithis, interestingly close to Mati (another name for the Egyptian god Thoth). It may be noted that both Druidism and the Egyptian religion were cults of the dead.

All this, however, still leaves untouched the question of the abyss (Nodens, Lord of the Great Abyss). Any information that may be discovered on this point will be appreciated.

Another Machen reference to Nodens came to light in the course of the investigation. In The Great God Pan, near the end, there is given the following inscription, which was found on a pillar near the spot where Mary Vaughan was conceived, with Pan as the father: DEVOM-NODENTI, FLAVIVSSENILISPOSSVIT, PROPTERNVPTIAS, QUASVIDITSVBVMBRA. This may be translated as: "To the Great God Nodens (the god of the Great Deep or Abyss) Flavius Senilis has erected this pillar on account of the marriage which he saw beneath the shade." This, it would seem, carries a definitely malevolent context. Davenport mentions Caerwent--Machen places the above pillar in a small museum in Caermaen.



# POSTSCRIPT TO THE CHECKLIST OF M. G. LEWIS - H.C. KOENIG

As a collector, I was delighted to see the check-list of "Monk" Lewis, prepared by Messrs. Cook and Barlow. First editions of Lewis have been somewhat out of my reach, but I have always been hopeful of finding a "sleeper"; hence I always keep a list of his books on file. My list differs in some details from that of Cook and Barlow, so I thought the readers of The Acolyte might be interested in a brief addenda. At the moment, I don't recall the sources, and therefore do not guarantee the accuracy of my dates.

To the best of my knowledge, Lewis did very little original work. A great many of his plays and books were translations, chiefly from the German, although in 1799 he translated Juvenal's "Thirteenth Satire" under the title, "Love of Gain".

Also not mentioned in the Cook and Barlow checklist is Rolla, or the Peruvian Hero, translated in 1799 from a play by Kotzebue entitled Spanier in Peru oder Rolla's Tod.

Some six years previous, in 1793, Lewis translated Schiller's play Kabale and Liebe; four years later it was published as The Minister.

My notes indicate that The Castle Spectre, A Dramatic Romance was produced at Drury Lane late in 1797, not in 1798 as shown in the list.

Alfonso, King of Castile is listed as a play, 1802. I believe it appeared in book form before its production on January 15, 1802.

In 1803, Lewis produced a monologue of a mother confined in a madhouse; he called it The Captive. This is not mentioned in the list.

Nor do I find The Wood Daemon in the check-list. This was a two-act play subtitled The Hour Has Struck, and was written in 1807. It was increased to three acts in 1808 and finally in 1811 it was rewritten and called One O'clock, or The Knight and the Wood Daemon, a musical romance.

My list shows The Bravo of Venice as appearing in 1805, not 1804. This novel was a translation of Abellino, der Grosse Bandit by Zschokne. Lewis added a new character and a concluding chapter.

Rich and Poor, which was really The East Indian put to music, was presented at the English Opera House in June 1812. Incidentally, The East Indian was based on a story, Epistolary Intrigue, begun when Lewis was a youngster.

One final item. In the second edition of The Bravo of Venice, there is an announcement stating that Legends of the Nunnery by Lewis has gone to press. I do not believe that this book ever appeared. Perhaps some other reader has some information on this title.

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## *The Corpse Gate*

I met him there by the old corpse gate,  
As the bats began to fly.  
The wounded sun, with bloody ray,  
Sank to death in the shadowed sky.

I thought him a mourner leaving late,  
But my throat grew tight and cold,  
For on his gray-blue face there lay  
A patch of graveyard mould!

---Dorothy E. Jacobs



# BANQUETS FOR BOOKWORMS

(This new department will appear as often as we have material for it--which, we hope, means that it will grace every issue of The Acolyte. This will not be a book review column, strictly speaking, but rather will devote itself to the mention of newly published books which the editors feel will be of interest to fantasy lovers. All readers are urged to give us any information which they feel may be pertinent; publishers, too, are requested to give us advance announcements of new books in the field. This emphatically will not be a review column, however, but will confine itself to announcements of newly published and/or newly discovered books dealing with fantasy in the broad sense. Any material slanted at Fantasy Forum which seems more appropriate here will be included in Banquets for Bookworms. --FTL/SDR.)

---ooOoo---

ARKHAM HOUSE OUTPUT. Highlighting the summer's crop of fantasy are the newest items in the Arkham House line. The Eye and the Finger, by Donald Wandrei; and Jumbee and Other Uncanny Tales, by Henry S. Whitehead have already appeared at \$3.00 each. Scheduled for an early appearance are Marginalia, by H. P. Lovecraft; and Death Worlds, by Clark Ashton Smith. These four volumes are must-get material for all true fantasy lovers, and those who have not already done so are urged to order all four volumes immediately. Each is \$3.00 postpaid, and they may be had from Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin. --FTL

---ooOoo---

VIKING PUBLISHES NEW TYPE WEIRD OMNIBUS. The ninth volume of "The Viking Portable Library" (\$2.50 at your bookseller) is Six Novels of the Supernatural edited by Edward Wagenknecht. Slated for September release, Six Novels is a new departure in anthologies, a collection of six unabridged supernatural novels, each preceded by a special introduction. The contents of this 896 page volume include: The Beleaguered City, Mrs. Oliphant; The Return, Walter de la Mare; The White People, ~~Frances~~ Hodgson Burnett; The Terror, Arthur Machen; Sweet Rocket, Mary Johnston; Portrait of Jenny, Robert Nathan. Sounds like a buy. ---FTL/AD

---ooOoo---

BART HOUSE OUTPUT. The HPL pocketbook has now been followed up by Rebirth: When Everyone Forgot, by Thomas Calvert McClary, 25¢ at most newsstands. This far better than average fantasy novel originally appeared as a serial in Astounding Stories, back in 1934. This new edition has been completely redone, and is a big 25¢ worth. ---FTL

---ooOoo---

SLEEP NO MORE. What bids fair to be one of the very best of weird anthologies is in process of being published by Farrar and Rinehart. The volume is edited by August Derleth and illustrated excellently by Lee Brown Coye. The editors have before them a photostat of the jacket, a very effective picture of a man in bed surrounded with a horde of nameless terrors and entities done in a style reminiscent of Frank Utapatel. Neat. Derleth mentions in his most recent letter, "This book must sell so that the book of ghosts, of utterly strange, and perhaps of s-f can follow." If Farrar and Rinehart contemplate further anthologies in our field, it is up to us to give this venture support. The pulp fantasy is more and more cracking into the big-time publishing houses, and it looks very much as though a fantastic renaissance were in the offing. Arkham House can supply this volume at \$2.60. --SDR.

---ooOoo---

TONY BOUCHER RECOMMENDS SOME SEMI-FANTASTIC DETECTIVE TALES. We quote from Mr. Boucher's letter: "Your true fantasy lover never likes ration-



al explanations, but there's been a certain school of the detective story that often manages to overcome that dislike. Melville Davisson Post, John Dickson Carr/Carter Dickson, and Clayton Rawson have produced stories with such superlatively eery background (the automaton in Carr's The Crooked Hinge is as creepy as anything in M. R. James) and such an authoritative background of black magic research that even the (usually brilliant) rational explanations don't keep them from having marked value as borderline items in a fantasy collection. Now there's a new name in that school: Hake Talbot. Any connoisseur of the impossible situation is strongly recommended to investigate his The Hangman's Handyman (Simon & Schuster, 1942) (also reprinted in Two Detective Novels magazine about a year ago. --FTL) or Rim of the Pit (Simon & Schuster, 1944). The latter, by the way, involves a windigo ---the same strange thing as in the classic Blackwood story, although differently spelled."

---ooOoo---

#### AUGUST DERLETH DISCUSSES ARKHAM HOUSE'S LONG RANGE PLANS.

I have gone over Robert E. Howard's work and selected 29 titles, including his Hyborian Age essay on the background of his stories, for printing in 1945 in an omnibus (\$5), which will be one of our largest books. Repeated pleas for all the Conan stories in one volume had to be discarded; such hacking, sawing, fisticuffs, and general carnage became sickening after the sixth story, hilariously ridiculous after the ninth. The 28 stories chosen will have among them tales of Conan, King Kull, Solomon Kane, Bran Mak Morn, and others. The book will be prefaced by HPL's fine appreciation of REH done for Fantasy Magazine back in 1936, as well as by a brief House introduction. The novel Skull-Face is the only Howard novel to be included. The book has not as yet been titled, but will probably be called either Wolfshead and Others or Skull-Face and Others.

If the way can be cleared for it, the Hodgson omnibus will be titled The House on the Borderland and Other Novels (the others being The Boats of the 'Glen Carrig', The Ghost Pirates, and The Night Land). No price has as yet been set on this one.

The line-up for Arkham House in 1945, unless something unforeseen happens--like an insufficient sale of the 1944 titles--will be definitely as follows:

The Hounds of Tindalos, by Frank Belknap Long, Jr.

The Opener of the Way, by Robert Bloch.

Something Near, by August Derleth.

Wolfshead and Others, by Robert E. Howard.

Who Knocks? 30 Great Spectral Tales edited by August Derleth, published by Farrar and Rinehart (if Sleep No More is successful!)

and possibly also the Hodgson omnibus, though likelihood is that this will have to be put over until 1946, paper shortage making that mandatory.

---ooOoo---

#### RANDOM HOUSE TO PUBLISH A SCIENTIFICTION ANTHOLOGY.

It is highly gratifying to note the increased number of first-class book publishers who are dipping more and more into the pulp fantasies for their productions. Fans will be particularly delighted to learn that Random House, encouraged by the literally spectacular sales of Great Tales of Terror and the Supernatural, has decided to follow it with a companion volume of scientifiction. This effort will be edited by Angelences N. F. McComas and Ray Healy, and will consist very largely of former pulp material. The editors are making use of the libraries of F. T. Laney and of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society in making their selection. This column hopes to present full details in the next issue. -- FTL -- 26 --



# FANTASY FORUM

THE READERS

---ooOoo---

RITA BARR, Texas poet, speaks of books and horses:

Thanks loads for the plug on Three Prophets on Pegasus (Rita's forthcoming book) and me. I cannot for the life of me imagine myself as a prophet--and the last time I was on horseback (at a Dude Ranch at Bandera last summer) the horse was about nine feet tall, and he didn't run straight along in the usual fashion--just BOUNCED up and down, like this - - - - -! AND the MEMORY was most PAINFUL! I couldn't, hard as I tried, stand up high enough out of the saddle to avoid him, and he certainly was not a GENTLEMAN by any standard.

---ooOoo---

WINFIELD T. SCOTT, Literary Editor of The Providence Journal, adds to the HPL Bibliography:

The following, I feel quite sure, is a complete list of the Lovecraft poems first published in the Journal. At that time we had what was called a Wednesday Page: it was a page of verse, articles, odds and ends more or less literary and more or less from local or nearby talent; it paid for material - or, in other words, constituted genuine publication and not reprinting. "The Messenger" did not appear on the Wednesday Page, where all the others appeared. It was a contribution to B. K. Hart's "Sideshow" column, and was in answer to BKH's printed threat to send a local ha'nt to HPL's doorstep at 3 a.m.

The Messenger	Providence Journal	December 3, 1929
Brick Row	"	January 8, 1930
Nostalgia	"	March 13, 1930
Night Gaunts	"	March 26, 1930
Background	"	April 16, 1930
The Dweller	"	May 7, 1930
The Well	"	May 14, 1930

---ooOoo---

JOHN HOLLIS MASON, fan and beginning writer, holds forth from Toronto:

Ron Conium (Toronto collector...ftl) and I were discussing The New Adam last night and in the course of the conversation he made the remark: "Your penchant is for stories heavy on the dramatic". That got me wondering about something that's been a source of puzzlement to me for years. I've found that stories I really go overboard on are in many cases stories that a lot of fans don't seem to be at all interested in. A story that I thought, and still do think, to be one of the greatest things the mags have produced in the horror line, "Hell Is Forever", got scarcely any commendation at all. People around here, and particularly people who like Lovecraft, don't think much of it. Whatever the reason for it, the lack of enthusiasm I found for this story was surprising. The only explanation, I suggest, is that a lot of stf and fantasy readers don't seem to care whether or not a story is dramatically powerful. It would be hard to determine just how big this proportion is; I'll never believe that it embraces most of the readers because it's well nigh impossible to tell just what most of them do think and I'm not willing to accept Wellheim's contention that the fans represent nearly all points of view.

Another story of intense dramatic power is Asimov's "Night-fall"; tops with me but ignored by the fans, though it did receive a little bit more commendation than "Hell". "Asylum", also powerful, hit the spot with quite a few, it appears; but two of van Vogt's others, "Cooperate or Else" and "Repetition" (one of his favorites!) suffered the same fate, apparently, as "Hell". And both these stories are



right up on top as far as I'm concerned. They were both finely told and dramatic, had excellent ideas behind them and were generally very satisfactory. But --

I hope this indifference to the dramatic and literary elements can be changed because to my mind the future of scientifiction and fantasy generally depends upon its recognition. The only stories that last are the ones that depict some realistic characters in combat with their environment, or factors that have arisen therefrom, with real feeling. Such a story is Weinbaum's "The New Adam". That's why, to my mind, it should last in the minds of those who at present can appreciate such quality.

---ooOoo---

BURTON CRANE, puts in his oar. This discussion was brought on by a remark of FTL's that "The Horror at Red Hook" was marred by the way in which HPL bowdlerized the various rites:

I agree with you that a writer who keeps ranting about "unnamable horrors" and "secret rites", without ever giving a hint as to their nature, invites a chorus of "so whats?" But don't get the idea that Phallic worship is all "the old phallic worship". I have actually witnessed the rites in Japan. In most of the country villages they live on, little changed, with the boys and girls (and the staid married couples of the community, too) pairing up in the woods for their one night of sexual freedom in the year. Shinto has taken over a good many of the naturist beliefs of Taoism and many older religions (preserved because Buddhism absorbs rather than eliminates conflicting faiths, adopting any god anybody suggests as a Boddhisattva) and there is not too much official displeasure. Of course, back in the '90's, Japan decided to be a modern nation and officially frowned on mixed bathing in the cities, relieving oneself in public, and phallic symbols in all the shrines; but all persisted away from the centers of population. In 1927 or thereabouts, a propaganda campaign for the return of the "good old days and good old ways" placed new emphasis on the ancient naturist beliefs.

But, if you run the real stuff in a short, who the hell's going to buy it? It's safer commercially to talk about "the rites no man may look upon and go his way unscathed".

"The nameless orgies of the damned"  
Have filled my belly full.  
So many writers sing their fame  
I say, let's name them with a name  
Like Sm-Thavol or Murgasaem  
Or even Bull.

"The rites no man may look upon"  
Have sold full many a book,  
But what the hell, Bill, you and I  
Or any guy with half an eye  
Would take that chance. So What? We die!  
We want to look!

---ooOoo---

E. HOFFMAN PRICE comments on this and that:

"The Fantasy Forum" is about as meaty, constructive, pointed, as any comparable column I can recollect. All too often, the gossip column becomes a bale of so what?--chit-chat, gagging, wisecracking, which has an appeal only to the Inner Circle, the editor and his buddies. The more mature outlook gives a mag much wider appeal. And the big difference between amateur journalism and professional is that the latter, of far wider circulation, has to have broad and general appeal; even the



"intimate" column of the big daily has for all its folksy-ness an appeal to the outsider, who isn't in on the gags. While FPA--in some Chicago daily, I forget which--devoted much space to quipping back and forth with pet contributors, he kept things so under control that the million or so who did not contribute or wage controversy with him or with other contributors nevertheless found the show attractive. One does not want an amateur mag to "sound professional", granted. On the other hand, and up to a marked degree, the more professional the copy, the better does an amateur mag serve its mission. Amateurs of photography--to cite just one instance--in many cases have a technical skill and craftsmanship and artistic taste which few professionals can surpass; amateur implies "work for the love of it", it does not imply "bungling, immature, childish, inept, crude, unskilled". All these defects usually do taint amateur work, and so universally that they have been taken as the essence of being an amateur: whereas actually the essence is, the amateur doesn't do the work for money or as a business. The ideal amateur, I say, is one so skilled and with such mastery of his art or craft that he could, if he so desired, earn substantial sums, or even impressive sums---yet, having other means of livelihood, he pursues his art or craft for the love of it. Whatever amateur falls short of such performance still has something to be achieved; which you of course know. The maturity and usefulness of much of the copy which you, and a few other amateurs, have been publishing indicates that you certainly are aware of this point: though a great many seem not to be.

HPL can in the above sense be considered almost a true amateur. He had skill and technique, yet he stated to me, many a time, that while he did indeed receive cash for pieces of his writing, he abhorred the idea of having to make a living as a writer, and would prefer to earn his living as, for instance, an elevator operator. He added that his business was criticism, revisory collaboration; and I have every reason to accept his statement of attitude as entirely sincere, so that though he did have fiction commercially published, his spirit was truly amateur, in the original sense of the word.

-----ooOoo-----

We bring our "Fantasy Forum" to an abrupt halt; in order that we may use the last stencil space left in this issue to support a new bibliographical project. Unbeknownst to us, one of our colleagues--Louis C. Smith, 475-A Eagle Ave., Alameda, California--has been working along very similar lines to those mentioned in our editorial on page 2 of this issue. In the current issue of Lethe (10¢ from the above address) he has run an "Open Letter" of considerable length in which he reviews previous attempts at fantasy bibliography, including the most recent--Boucher's letter anent "The Great Bib" in a recent Shangri L'Affaire. This latter project called for a group effort which was to be collated and coordinated by some individual volunteer. Smith has volunteered for this position and offers to perform the following functions: (Quotation is condensed) 1. For the time it requires to get the project under way, Smith will issue a 4 to 8 page leaflet detailing progress. 2. He offers his address as communications center until a bibliographer can be selected. He wants all who wish to participate in this research to write him--telling what they have to offer of what phase of fantasy, etc. they have already made a listing, or are willing and able to undertake. Also he wants to hear any and all ideas and suggestions. The first leaflet will contain these letters. 3. As a small beginning towards the Great Bib, he plans to present a table of contents and crosslisting of Unknown, (stealin' our stuff! --ftl/sdr) which will go out as a supplement with the next issue of Tellus as a separate supplement. He is also doing a table of contents listing of WT.

The Acolyte staff will do all in our power to help this "Bib", and suggest that our readers do likewise. A truly worthy undertaking.



(paid advertisement)

## SALE

THE HYBOREAN AGE, a "LANY" (Los Angeles-New York) Memorial Volume for Robert E. Howard, with Foreword by Lovecraft and chronological account of Conan's career by P. Schuyler Miller. Price, \$1.

'Thirteen Phantasms' by Clark Ashton Smith, in Fantasy Magazine, March, 1936. Same issue: A biographical sketch of Derleth. \$1.50.

'The Garden of Fear', Robt. E. Howard; 'The Dark Beasts', Frank Belknap Long Jr; and others. In Marvel Tales #2. \$2.

'The White Sybil', CASmith, a Fantasy Publication. 75c.

'Athane', a story of beauty, by Jack Chapman Miske. Last 5 copies of a limited edition of Chaos #1. 75c.

First printing, 'The Nameless City', HPL, with woodcut. Also Howard, Keller, Wollheim, Rimel, Derleth. The only issue of Fanciful Tales of Time & Space. \$2.

'The White Gulls Cry', by P. Schuyler Miller. #1 Unusual. \$1.50.

'The Discovery of the Future', Robert Anson Heinlein's dynamic speech delivered at the 3d World Science Fiction Convention. 25c.

'The Elfin Lights', Carl Jacob's 'Man from Makassar', 'Annabelle Reeves' by Ralph Milne Farley, and others. Marvel Tales #5. 75c

Interview with Dr William Olaf Stapledon, M.A., Ph.D. Including photo. 'Fantasy Loses Lovecraft' and other items. In Scientifiction for June, '37. (British) \$3.50.

First printing, 'The Doom that Came to Sarnath'. Also Simak's 'The Creator', Schuyler Miller, Amelia R. Long and others. \$1.50.

'Hymn to Satan'. For the piano. 25c.

'Mystery of the 33 Stolen Idiots' by A. Worth (pseud. Keller) 50c

'Shadow Over Innsmouth', in Canadian Weird Tales. Different interior picture from American, plus cover illustration. \$1.

Original printing, 'A History of the Necronomicon', 35c.

'Weird Tales issue of Fantasy Magazine, with CLMoore's 'Nymph-- of Darkness', illustrated by the authoress. Linoleum block of HPL. \$2

'Woman of the Wood', Merritt, 2 parts, Science Fiction Digest. \$5

AND SPECIAL STOCK OF Fantasy Fan, Fantasy Magazine, (British) Fantasy Magazine, Strange Tales, Uncanny Tales (Canadian), Polarix, Futuria Fantasia, The Alchemist, Specula, Spectra, British Reprint Edition Unknown, Munsey excerpts, etc.

Vomaidens Portfolio #3, lithographed fantasy nudes. 35c.

## BOOKS

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