





THE COLLECTOR
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CONTENTS

"Star Trek" Color Front Cover Illustrated by ROBERT KLINE	Page 1
Contents page	2
Editorial by BILL WILSON	4
Collector Cover Gallery	6
"Star Trek" Full-Page Illustration by JOHN BYRNE	7
Interview: WALTER KOENIG - Conducted by BILL WILSON	8
Full-page Science Fiction Illustration by STEVE FABIAN	10
"Star Trek Revisited" by SCOTT B. MILLER and JOSEPH P. FELLABAUM	11
"Star Trek Animation" Written and Illustrated by ROBERT KLINE	18
Full-page Color Illustration of Captain Marvel by CLYDE CALDWELL	22
"Captain Marvel And Company" by BILL CANTEY	23
"You Can't be STUPID If You Don't Even Try" by C. C. BECK	31
"SHAZAM! Is The Name of the Game" by WILLIAM REYNOLDS	32
SCHAFFENBERGER	34
"Captain Marvel's Rogues Gallery" by WILLIAM REYNOLDS	36
Full-page Illustration of Tom Tyler as Captain Marvel by JOHN ADKINS RICHARDSON	38
"The Adventures of Captain Marvel" by JAMES VAN HISE	39
"Zero Hero" by R. C. HARVEY	44
"Libage" Graphic Story Written and Illustrated by STEVE DITKO	46
Color Centerspread Illustration Featuring "The Thing" by SKIP OLSON	50
"A Short History of Pulp Fandom" by ROBERT WEINBERG	52
Full-page Illustration of The Shadow by JIM PINKOSKI	54
"The Heroes of Nostalgic Literature: PULPS vs. COMICS" by MURRAY BISHOFF	55
Full-page Illustration of The Spirit by WILL EISNER	66
"Resurrection of a Spirit" by R. FRANK MORENO, JR.	67
Full-page Illustration of Conan by GREG GATES	71
Full-page Color Illustration of Perry Rhodan by MIKE ROBERTS	72
"Today Germany, Tomorrow... The World!" by STEVE WRIGHT	73
MORE Sketches by JOHN G. FANTUCCHIO	78
Two-Color Full-page Illustration by JOHN G. FANTUCCHIO	79
"Greenhorn" Final Chapter by ALAN JAMES HANLEY	80
Full-page Illustration featuring Kirby Characters by JOHN BYRNE	90
Letters	91
"Farewell" Illustration by JOE SINNOTT	99
"Star Trek" Color Back Cover Illustration by ROBERT KLINE	100



COVER BY ROBERT L. KLINE

ENTIRE CONTENTS
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CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

KEN BARR	27, 29
C. C. BECK	28
HOWARD BENDER	52, 59
WILLIAM BLACK	26, 68, 94, 96
JOHN L. BYRNE	7, 90
CLYDE CALDWELL	22, 58, 60
STEVE DITKO	46, 47, 48, 49
WILL EISNER	66, 67, 70
JOHN ELLIS	11, 14, 39, 73, 75
STEVE FABIAN	10, 11, 25, 63, 91, 93, 95
JOHN G. FANTUCCHIO	2, 5, 24, 32, 36, 78-9
GREG GATES	71, 77
MARTIN L. GREIM	32
ALAN JAMES HANLEY	30, 80-89
R. C. HARVEY	31, 44, 45, 55, 97
JIM JONES	5, 33, 37, 97
ROBERT L. KLINE	1, 2, 18, 19, 20, 21, 100
ED LANCASTER	12, 16, 76
CLIFFORD NEAL	92, 93, 95, 97
DON NEWTON	4, 67, 91
SKIP OLSON	13, 50-51
BRUCE D. PATTERSON	14, 17, 27, 36, 37
JIM PINKOSKI	53, 54, 98
MIKE ROBERTS	72, 74, 91
KURT SCHAFFENBERGER	34, 35
JOE SINNOTT	3, 15, 23, 64, 99
BILL WILSON	4, 41

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TO BILL -
JOE SINNOTT

EDITORIAL

"SWAN SONG"

**BILL
WILSON**

Prone as I have been to "run off at the mouth" in this space in previous issues, I honestly must say it's hard for me to find the right words at a time when I am closing out a most successful endeavor; one which I hope has provided entertainment and food-for-thought for many over the years. What this all means is, plain and simple, this is the last issue of THE COLLECTOR. Because it is my "swan song", I've gone all-out to provide more pages of more color and more quality art and features than I've ever done before.. Hopefully I've succeeded in convincing

you, the reader, that this is the biggest and best issue of this magazine EVER. I set out to produce the very best FANZINE ever, but with so many other distinguished competitors, I'm sure I've fallen just short of that mark.

Regardless, I am pleased with the results of this issue so far; naturally as I write this I have yet to print any of the magazine, but I am confident it will prove to have been worth the many long, hard hours I've toiled on it. Now, I know many of you have read editorials of this type time and time again, and are probab-

ly praying that I don't go into the same old routine again...and I agree with your dislike of these things...BELIEVE ME, if I had my choice I'd just as soon not do an editorial this issue, hard as it is... However, I believe I owe it to the many fine people who have supported me and aided me in the past to give at least an explanation as to why this thing must end.

The most serious and tragic reason for my complete re-evaluation of my publishing career was the sudden death of my mother one Thursday evening in November of last year, 1973. Those of you who've met me at the New York Cons already know what a great help and inspiration she was to me in the preparation of the book, its sales, and the book-keeping duties.. never thinking of herself or her own serious illness; only of helping others. Were it not for the help of both her and my father, I would not have been able to do the near-impossible: to begin what was to be one of the longest-running fanzines ever at the ripe old age of eleven years old, and to make it a regular standard bearer at an age when most 'zine editors are beginning. (I'm nineteen now.) Naturally, when one works with a loved one, their absence is doubly felt, as in my case. Honestly, I lost two people; or at least one great lady who worked like two people. So, since it was her wish that I soon end the run of TC soon anyway, I could think of no better way to pay tribute to her than to end the magazine's run with this issue, dedicating it to her memory; wishing in vain that I'd had the chance to end the magazine's run sooner if it would've prevented her passing. More than ever I realize how hard it must have been for Kenneth Smith to dedicate an issue of his great PHANTASMAGORIA to the memory of his infant son... I felt for him then, and now I feel for him even more, for I know how he felt...

As the situation stands, my ambitions and aspirations for a career are in limbo; I'm unsure as to furthering my education, and in what field to specialize. At a time when my life is at a turning point, there is room for people to fill an empty void, a void not easily filled by any means, but there is no room for a magazine called THE COLLECTOR. It is time the magazine pays me back for the many years of work I put into it; and for it to pay me back, it must dis-solve so that there will be time available for more important things. A labor of love is no longer a labor of love when it becomes a chore...and a chore it has become. So it is best for all concerned that it end in a moment of glory than die in a mire of mediocrity.

I honestly enjoyed putting this issue together, but I did not enjoy writing this editorial, and I hope that never again in my life will I have to put such delicate feelings into words on paper. Please don't bombard me with requests to bring TC back;

Bill Wilson



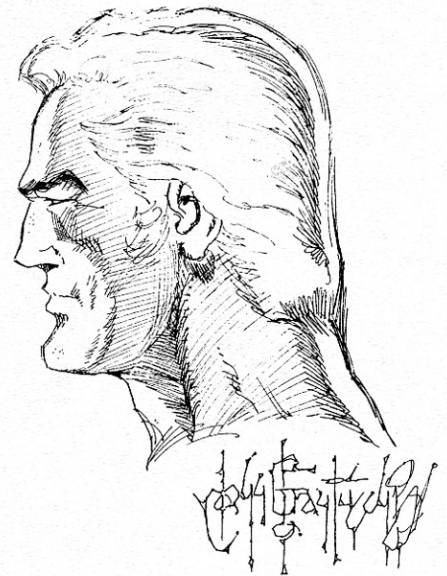
SUPERMAN



tough as it was to write this farewell, I don't think I could ever find the desire or the words to say "I'm back."
It's tough enough saying "goodbye".

To all those who have helped me now and in the past, to all those who have supported the magazine since its inception, and to all those who are reading this now, many thanks a thousand times over for this great experience. I'll never forget you.

—Bill



THE DEMONS

BY SIM SONG



HAL FOSTER...1937

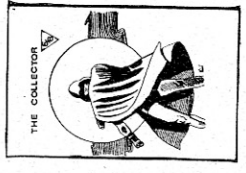
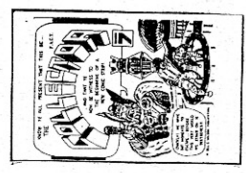
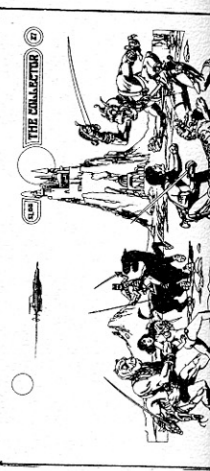
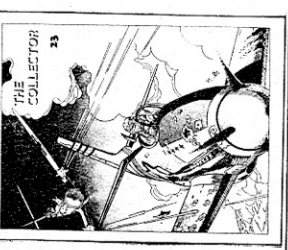
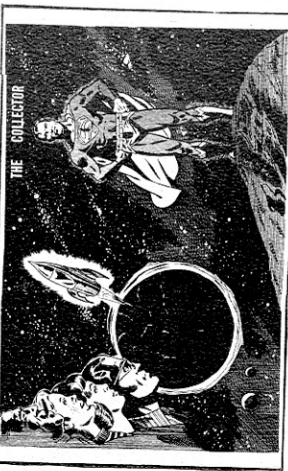
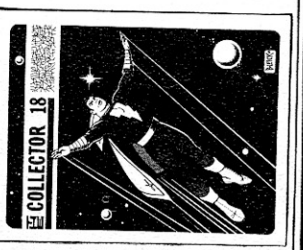
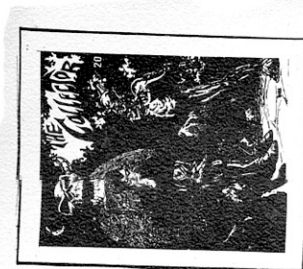


JACK KIRBY...1972

In 1937, a *Prince Valiant* Sunday sequence featured a story in which Prince Valiant killed a goose, hollowed it out and scraped it clean, made some slits for his eyes and mouth, and produced a 'Demon' mask to scare the villains out of the castle.

In 1972, Jack Kirby's new character, a supernatural hero The Demon, sported a similar visage, albeit with a few changes, naturally. Nevertheless, the resemblance remains unmistakable.

And so, artist JIM JONES has produced renditions of both versions.



THE COLLECTOR COVER GALLERY



INTERVIEW:

WALTER KOENIG

INTERVIEWED BY BILL G. WILSON

If the name "Walter Koenig" is not immediately recognizable by a majority of those reading this, perhaps the name of a character he portrayed on a certain S-F television series a number of years back is: "Ensign Chekov, of the U.S.S. Enterprise". Yes, the youthful Russian crewman from STAR TREK is in reality a very interesting and talented actor from No. Hollywood, California. He is also embarking on a writing career, and has even scripted one of the animated STAR TREK cartoon episodes.

Through the graciousness and surprisingly swift cooperation of the U.S. Postal Service, I conducted a multi-letter interview with the informative Mr. Koenig which follows immediately...

--- BILL WILSON

WILSON: First, how about some facts about yourself? (When and where were you born; where did you attend school; and what was your first "Big break"?)

KOENIG: I was born in Chicago around the turn of the century. I attended Fieldston High School in New York, Grinnell College in Iowa, and graduated from the University of California at Los Angeles with a B.A. in Psychology. From there I returned to New York, entered the Neighborhood Playhouse Professional School of Drama, completed the two-year curriculum offered and then returned to the west coast. My "first break" came when one of my drama teachers told me that I'd never make it as an actor because I wasn't "commercial" enough looking. I figure that if I could survive such a devastating pronouncement at that tender and impressionable age, the chances were I could stand up to the disappointments that were inevitably to follow - and which did, in spades.

WILSON: What's this about being born in Chicago "around the turn of the century"? You don't expect me to believe you're in your sixties or seventies, do you?

KOENIG: "Turn of the century" is my way of saying: "Let's leave it at that.". I have no particular vanity about my age... but when people in the business find out how old I am, it increases my problems in getting good roles, because I don't look old enough to play the roles I'm right for chronologically and I'm too old to play the parts I "look" right for...

WILSON: Did you read and/or collect comics, pulps, Pep buttons, and the like when you were a kid? (I know you're a big Pep comic-character button buff now...)

KOENIG: I was an inveterate collector as a kid. I avidly read comics up until about the age of thirteen. The only comics I actually saved were Joe Palooka - God and Ham Fisher only know why - but I had a large collection of Big-Little Books, and related 'nostalgia'. My favorite character was a guy named 'Black Hood', not so much from the comic book but from the short-lived radio program. I guess I like the idea that under a black hood my myriad collection of neuroses (I also collec-

ted neuroses) would be undetectable.

WILSON: When did you first find out about the STAR TREK project, and how did you land the job as Chekov?

KOENIG: I knew nothing about STAR TREK until it was already on the air. I was picked for the role through a set of circumstances that generally happen for an actor once in a lifetime: I had worked for Gene Roddenberry in a starring role on his Lieutenant series, for the director of the episode in which I made my STAR TREK debut on an Alfred Hitchcock Hour (in which Zalman King from The Young Lawyers, Mark Slade from High Chaperel, & Tony Muntante from Toma played my henchmen... and Jimmy Cain from "everything" played opposite me - God, how times have changed!), and for the casting director of the series in a lead role of a Russian student defector on the old Mr. Novak show. Consequently, when my name came up everyone knew who I was and, presumably, had kind thoughts.

WILSON: What was it like working with Bill Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, and the other cast members of the show? I've seen a few of the 'infamous' STAR TREK blooper films, and it appears you all had a great time filming the series...like one, big, happy family!

KOENIG: The cast members of STAR TREK were all quite professional and a joy to work with. Next question please.

WILSON: Did you ever play a part in the planning of a particular episode or episodes? What I mean is, did you do any of the writing then, or perhaps suggested a change or two in the script where your character was concerned?

KOENIG: My first year on the series, I was too insecure about my status (I wasn't under contract then) to say anything - but my lines and hope for the best. I did try

to make a valiant effort to bring some life back in Chekov in the third season, but by then the reins had changed and the new 'producer' was trying desperately to reduce the quality of the show to his own image; he didn't want to hear from nothing. His appointment to STAR TREK was clearly a case of a man succeeding beyond his station in life.

WILSON: What experience enabled you to characterize Chekov's Russian-accented, highly-exuberant personality?

KOENIG: A good actor draws from himself in order to bring truth to a role. This does not necessarily mean drawing from specific experiences. It does mean that he turns his skin inside-out and explores the facets of personality that lay dormant but alive among the viscera. I am not by discernible behavior an outgoing individual but that doesn't mean that twenty thousand fathoms within there isn't lurking an ebullient and highly - exuberant beast. The accent comes from my Russian extraction and an aptitude for dialect.

WILSON: Which TREK episode, and when, did you make your debut as Chekov?

KOENIG: I made my 'debut' in ST in "The Cat's Paw" episode in 1967. I believe it was the first script shot that season, but not necessarily the first one shown.

WILSON: Can you recall any episode(s) you particularly enjoyed and/or disliked?

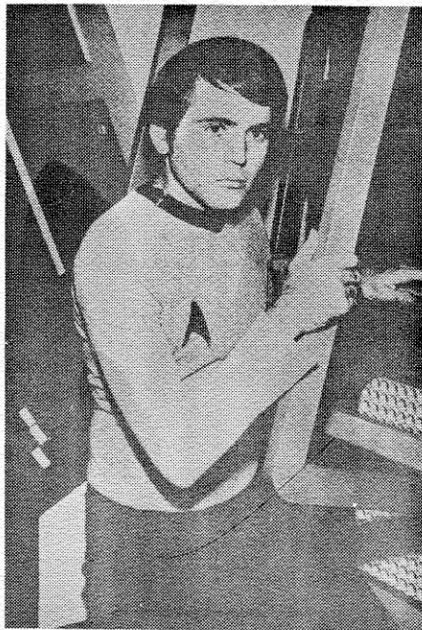
KOENIG: "The City on the Edge of Forever" by my friend Harlan is my favorite episode. I wasn't in it. Of those in which I performed I like best "Who Mourns for Adonias", "Spectre of the Gun", "Deadly Years", and "I Mudd". The episode I liked least was "The Way to Eden" because it was silly and because the character of Chekov was so totally subverted.

WILSON: What is your opinion of the new STAR TREK cartoon, and how did you come to write one of the episodes? And, what happened to the character of Chekov, in the transition from live-action to animation?

KOENIG: I've seen a half-dozen of the animated STAR TREK episodes and I thought they were pretty good. The stories had integrity and the backgrounds were quite nice. The problems inherent in drawing the characters themselves were readily apparent and need not be rehashed here... Chekov was not included in the animated series because, one: there wasn't enough time in twenty-two minutes of actual story time to adequately present all of the characters; two: I had already been given a writing assignment on the show when the decision to not use all the characters was made and I believe it was felt that I was being compensated this way; three: I had the least seniority and there were some economic pressures involved.

WILSON: How many scripts have you written for the cartoon series?

KOENIG: I wrote just one script. I was asked to write a second but chose not to do so. The writing of future scripts is academic, since I don't think the animated series is being renewed (That's not official).



Walter Koenig as Ensign Chekov

WILSON: Do you prefer writing to acting?

KOENIG: I prefer writing to waiting for the phone to ring. Also, I believe I have some intellectual ability that isn't properly tapped as an actor, and the writing satisfies this need. However, performing is terribly important to me. It's as much a part of my life as my left hand. (...I'm left-handed)

WILSON: Are you aware of any plans to revive *STAR TREK*, either as a live-action TV-movie, theatrical movie, or (the hope of all *TREK* fans) a regular TV-series?

KOENIG: At this juncture I know of no active plans to revive *STAR TREK*, in any form.

WILSON: What's your opinion of "TREKKIES" and hard-core *STAR TREK* enthusiasts, and their never-ceasing crusade to bring *STAR TREK* back?

KOENIG: Trekkies can be charming if they are very young. When they are thirty or forty years old, however, and *STAR TREK* is still the most important thing in their lives, I find myself formulating a psychological profile that isn't terribly flattering. As I have said at conventions & press gatherings, I do believe that the trekkie phenomenon is also a syndrome. For many people the sense of identification they receive from their preoccupation with the series serves ego needs and is at least as important to them as the sincere desire to see respectable science-fiction back on the tube.

WILSON: I've noticed a number of the *STAR TREK* Crew branching out into other fields possibly trying to shake any stereotyped role(s) they may have gotten from the series. What are you doing now? Any upcoming television or theatrical appearances on-tap?

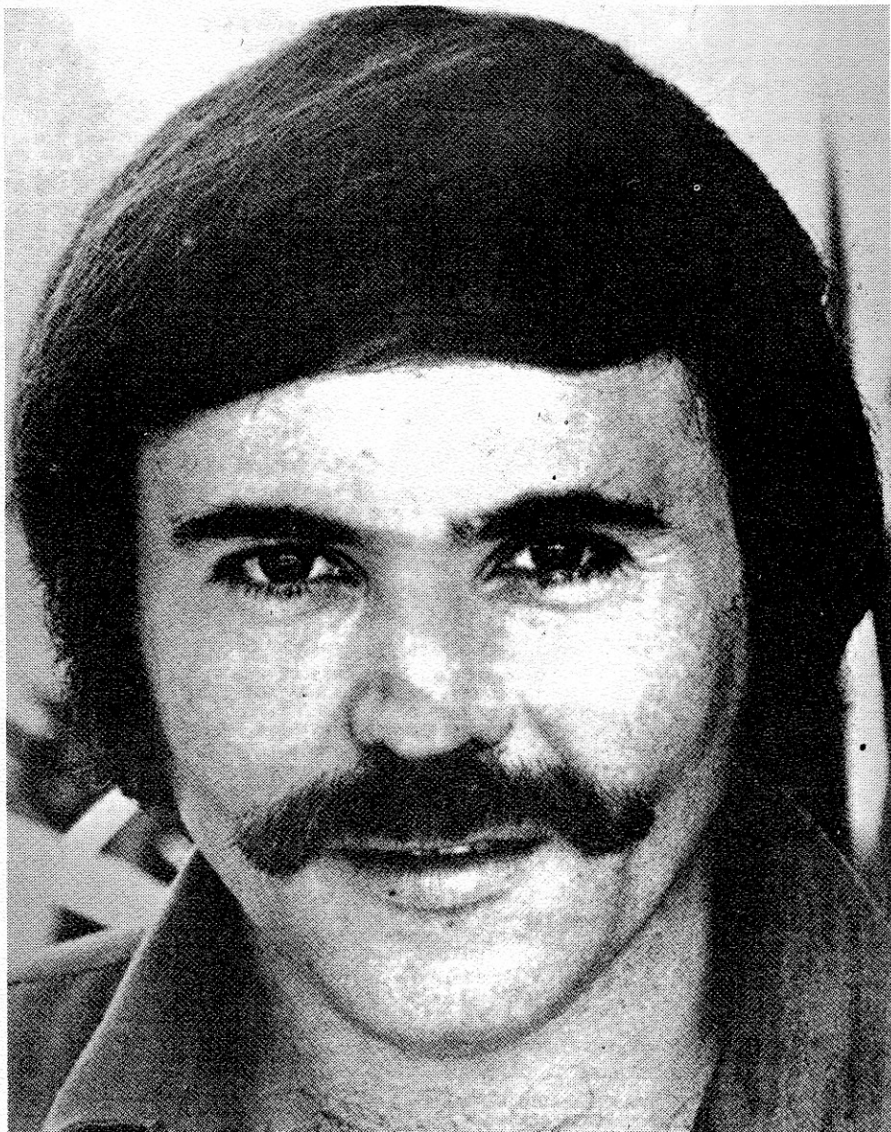
KOENIG: My career as an actor has momentarily reached a standstill. I did those two guest-starring roles on *Star Lost* (the less said the better), but since then nothing. My career as a writer is budding, if not quite yet blooming. My first feature script, 'Phantasm', has been under option for a year and will hopefully go into production shortly - executive caprice willing. My second screenplay, 'The Ghost Walker', is fresh off the typewriter and has been enthusiastically received in all quarters so far. No deal yet, but a lot of room for optimism.

WILSON: From what you've seen, what do you think of *STAR TREK* fandom, science-fiction fandom, and comics fandom?

KOENIG: Not a hell of a lot of difference between the three except that there are fewer females in comic fandom. That's been my experience, anyway.

WILSON: I understand you're a big *Pep*-button collector and buff. How big of a collection do you have, and do you collect any others bits of nostalgia?

KOENIG: Now you're talking my language! I collect Big Little Books, Fast Actions & Fawcett Dime Actions. I'm pretty well set with *BLB*'s, but am still looking for some of the others. I have about two-hundred comic character pinback buttons and I am constantly on the hunt for more. Perhaps you've seen my ad in *TBG* for comic pins, entitled, 'STOP ME BEFORE I KILL AGAIN'? Who's sick?! I'm particularly interested in Fawcett character buttons, pinbacks called Comic Togs and those with King Features characters represented. My third area of 'nostalgia' collecting is old bubble gum cards. I have about a thousand of these, mostly from the 1936-1942 era. I have incomplete sets of War Gum, Action, Skybirds, G-Men, Lone Ranger, and World-in-Arms cards. Finally, I also collect old Indian pinback buttons, silks, cigarette and gum cards.



WALTER KOENIG

WILSON: Finally, please tell me, how did I ever manage to talk you into granting me this interview?

KOENIG: By the simple process of presenting a truly superior fanzine. I was amazed at the quality of the copy you sent to me. I am not, as a rule, interested in the inside-scoop on an artist's idiosyncracies, who in comic fandom is a liar, who tells the best stories, or even who is the best illustrator. My interest is strictly on the basis of my own and personal psychoneuroses relating as they do to my childhood experiences, fantasies, aberrations, etc. However, I was duly impressed by your professionalism, by your dramatic presentation, and by the intelligence, organization, and care that went into making 'The Collector' an outstanding example in its field. I do in every sense consider it a compliment that you asked me to do an article for your final edition. I'd be quite interested to see where you are headed next. Whatever the field of endeavor, I'm sure you'll be enormously successful.

My greatest thanks to WALTER KOENIG for permitting this interview. My solitary regret is not being able to conduct an interview with him in-person. In his correspondence he appears to be an interesting and multi-talented person, and there is no doubt in my mind that he is in actuality that and much more. I look forward to the day I might someday meet him.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since the preceding interview was typed, I've learned that the animated *STAR TREK* cartoon has been renewed for a second season, beginning this fall. One of the first shows, if not the first, will be a story entitled "BEM", written by David Gerrold, author of the famous "The Trouble With Tribbles".

So, who knows? We may yet see another *ST* cartoon adventure scripted by Mr. Koenig!

--- BILL G. WILSON



SF

STAR TREK REVISITED



by Scott B. Miller & Joseph P. Fellabaum

To begin with, we would like to thank the many readers who made encouraging comments to us on our STAR TREK article in the last issue of THE COLLECTOR. We had no idea it would go over as well as it apparently did, but since you have made so many complimentary comments, we have been asked to write this "sequel". In it we'll be discussing a number of aspects of STAR TREK, most of which we did not cover the first time out. (And, for those of you who asked for them, we have listed the answers to last issue's "Trivia Questions" to relieve your mental anguish.) Finally from what we've heard, you really missed something fantastic if you were unable to attend the International Star Trek Con in New York City earlier this year. We regret having missed it ourselves...but... maybe next year.

Now with all of the personalities out of the way, we will commence with the main emphasis of our article. We are going to attempt a comparison of the "live action" STAR TREK series to the new cartoon version. Now that everyone has had the opportunity to view the new version, we feel that it is necessary for an in-depth look at the two shows from an objective point of view, and to examine the good & bad points of the cartoon version.

There are a number of "Prime Directives" that should be followed in the animated version that were originally established in the original, and particularly by Gene Roddenberry. The cartoon already has an excellent set of basic ideas; all that those in charge had to do was continue them from the original version. For some unknown reason, this continuum of ideas failed to be adhered to. Roddenberry, throughout the duration of the live series, was able to control the use of bug-eyed monsters. The alien life forms that were used contained a significant amount of believability...they were not of outlandish form, resembling a giant snail or four-armed tree. (These examples are two of many that were seen in the cartoon...)

A second aspect evident in the original series is the use of the mature vocabulary by all members of the cast. Mr. Spock, in three years of the show, always presented himself as a methodical and rational being, despite a few brief moments of surfaced emotions. His speech pattern remained on one level at all times. This, unfortunately, was not followed into the cartoon. Mr. Spock would be found speaking in apparent technical vocabulary one moment, and the next moment he would mouthing idiotic, childish statements, defi-

nately not in character for any Vulcan... and Mr. Spock in particular.

To continue on this line of reasoning for a moment, the cartoon, to our dismay, lacked any of the good old STAR TREK action. There appeared to be no inter-action of characters and their personalities. The "live" STAR TREK had conflicts between the people that forced the viewer to take part in the show's events. This element, unfortunately, is totally lacking in the cartoon. Next to this failure is the show's use of senseless and ridiculous gadgetry, with no statement as to how it works, or where it came from. For example: the "aquasled" and the "atmospheric belts". These both seem to be a bit too much. Even with the M-5 you were told who created it, and why he created it.

Again, this same idea is seen in the addition of the characters Arex & M'ttress...in the 1st cartoon show the camera panned onto these two new characters, and they looked utterly ridiculous. The viewer never really knows anything about them; what their special skills are or what their purpose is. In the "live" series, the viewer knows where Mr. Spock comes from, and just what he is capable of doing, physically, technically, and emotionally. In the cartoon, the viewer is never told just what Arex and M'ttress are there for.

Along with the afore-mentioned problems is incorporated the failure of the cartoon to have any background and musical effects. These two aspects actually created the atmosphere and intrigue of the original series, and since these aspects are





not present in the cartoon, it is difficult to get involved in the adventures, as it was easy to do in the "live" shows.

One fault of the cartoon which is not due to the creators is that the animation company, though they tried their best, just was not able to properly animate the show in a manner that would be conducive to its continuation as a high-level science fiction show. ((Editor's note: Through frequent correspondence with ROBERT KLINE, an animator on the cartoon series and a frequent contributor to the pages of this magazine, I am under the impression that the cartoon show may improve in over-all quality with this coming season's adventures.. and if the second season is handled as equally well as Bob's front-and-back covers of this issue of TC, I'm sure that all ST fans will be pleased and impressed.--BGW))

A factor of the cartoon's failure due to the network is the show's placement in a Saturday morning period rather than evening Prime Time. The time slot pits ST against funny and unintelligent kiddie cartoon shows; either an aid to the show's ratings or an insult to its integrity, depending upon how you view it.

Now...to get to the cartoon show's good points, and lift the reader's low opinion of the authors of this article. We apologize for the down-trodden tone of the article up to this point, but we are airing our own personal opinions and suggestions for the purpose of hopefully bettering STAR TREK, if only in some small, obscure way.

The good qualities of the cartoon on the plus side, however, are not of such magnitude as to balance out the bad. The best part of the cartoon show is that it is STAR TREK, STAR TREK that is not available anywhere else. In addition, the opening scene and monologue are very reminiscent of the original "live" ST. The animation provides the opportunity to enlarge the scope of "TREK", and serves to reunite the original cast. Despite all of the criticism we have aimed at the show,

we are rather pleased to see STAR TREK back on the air once more; no matter how it is done or in what form, it is STAR TREK returned.

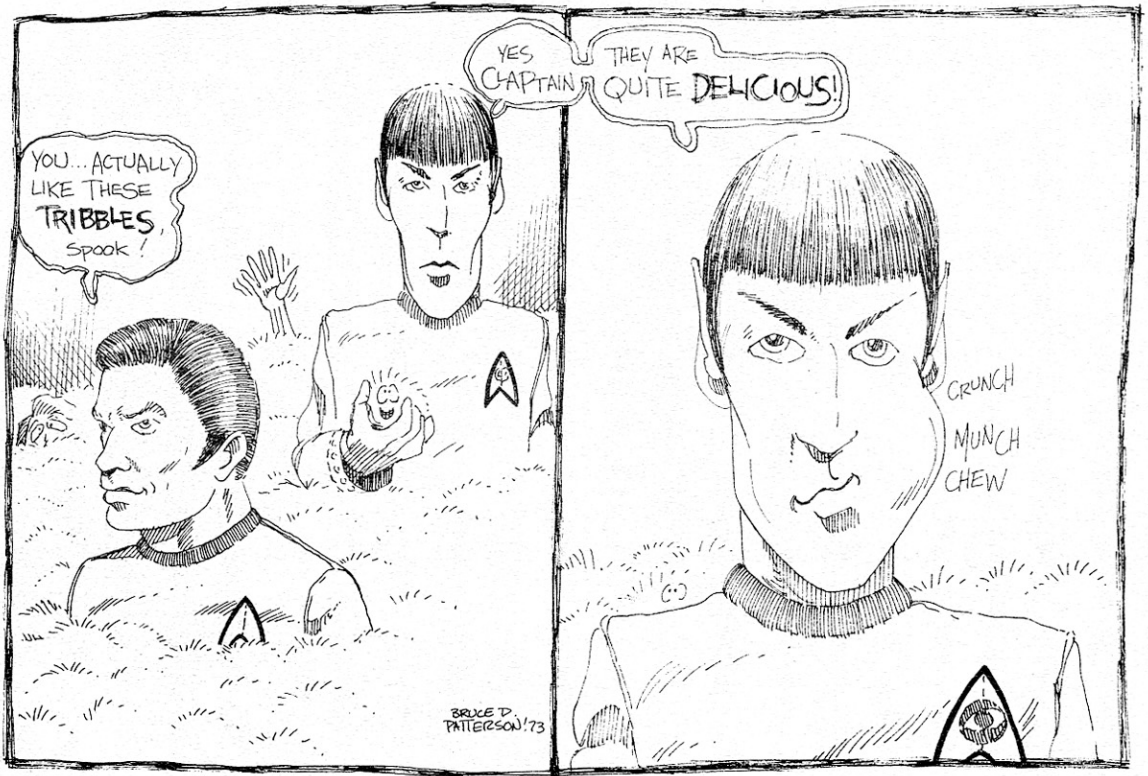
For those of you who are as big a freak on "TREK" as we are, hopes are high as always for the return of the "live action" STAR TREK. Several months ago, rumours were flying that Paramount was going to make a full-length feature movie of STAR TREK with the original cast, and hopes are still high for just that, though one can never really be sure of what the movie studios are up to. ((Editor's note: Look how long it took for the DOC SAVAGE movie to become a reality!--BGW)) There are also other indicators of the show's possible return, the most important one, of course, being un-dying STAR TREK fandom. The show has been dead for 4 years, yet the STAR TREK books are still being published and sold at alarming rates. The International Star Trek Convention which has been held annually for the past several years has proven its world-wide attraction to all types of people. "TREK" is still being aided by science fiction magazines throughout the world, and the show continues to live through the efforts of the AMT Model Company, and British and American television syndication. In the United States it is one of the top shows on the syndication market. The one thing we believe to be the most awesome aspect of the show is the undying attraction it has for the television viewer. No matter what time the show is on, the fans manage to be there to see it. Without the relentless efforts of the fans, STAR TREK would have fallen long ago with dozens of other shows; into the files of the never-to-be-seen-again...

If the show returns, there are seven things we have devised to make it as good as, or better, than it was originally:

1) The cast must be re-shaped, back to their previous status.







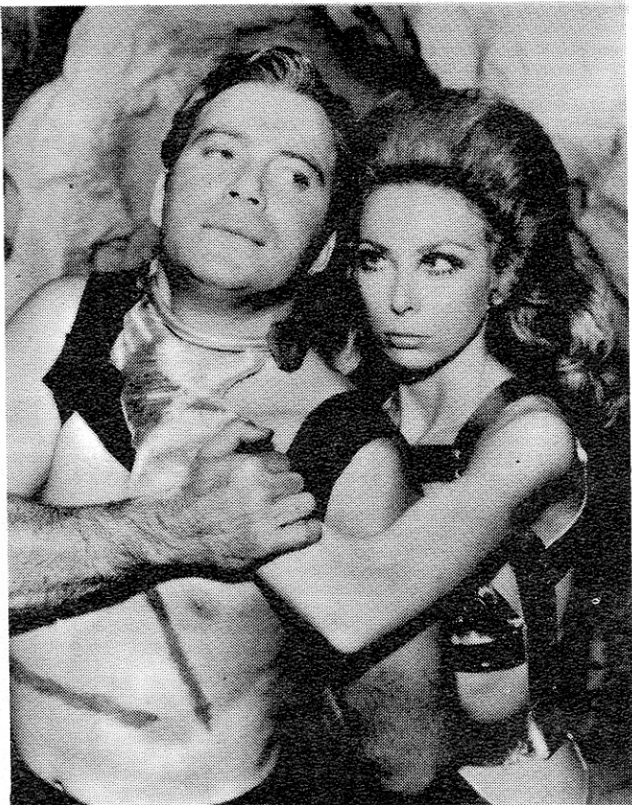
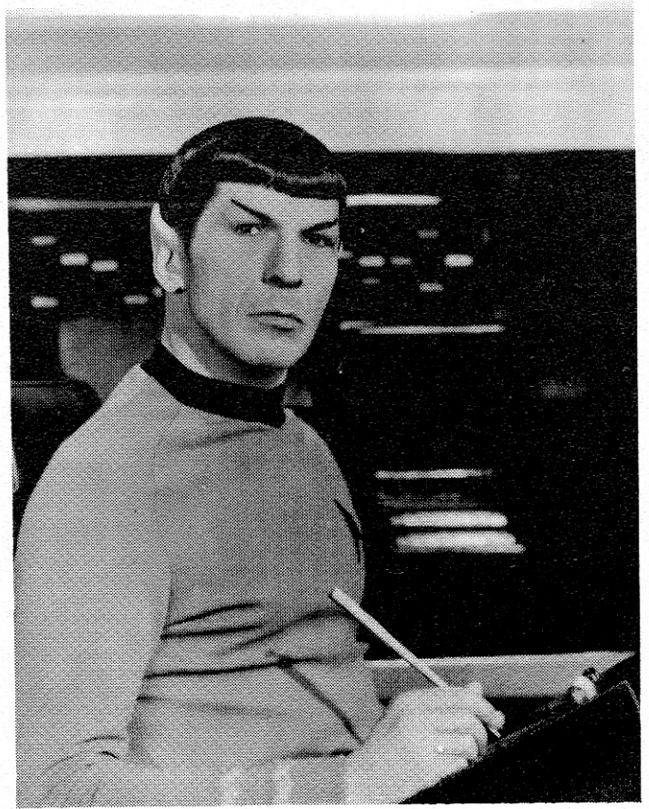
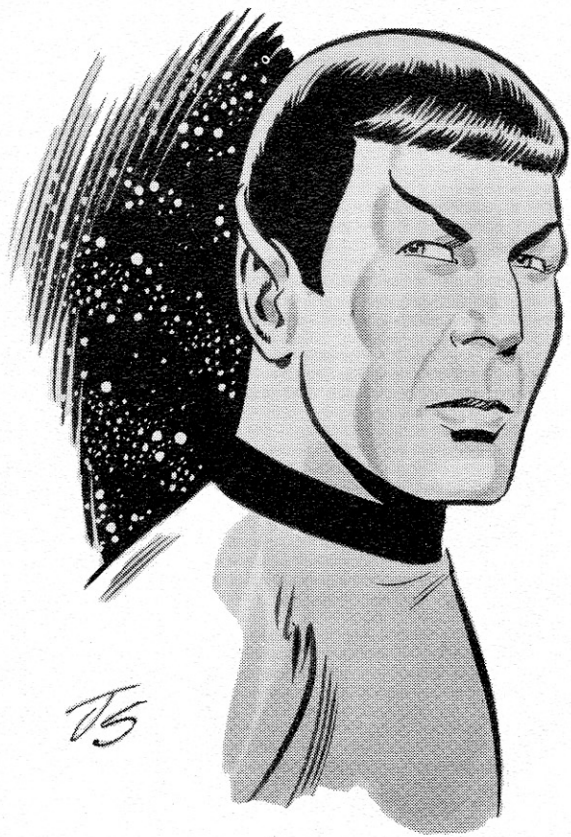
- 2) The format must be adjusted to ideas from the first-season.
- 3) The equipment and scenery quality must be continued.
- 4) Roddenberry, Jeffries, Fontanna, and Rugg must be back.
- 5) The new show must re-capture the magnetism of the original STAR TREK.
- 6) There must be further development of minor characters, when appropriate.
- 7) There must also be further development of planetary exploration.

We feel that if all of the above are accomplished in some way, the "new" STAR TREK will/would be even better than the first...

Everyone must take STAR TREK for exactly what it is: a television show, and nothing more. It offers enjoyment and excitement for all viewers of all ages.

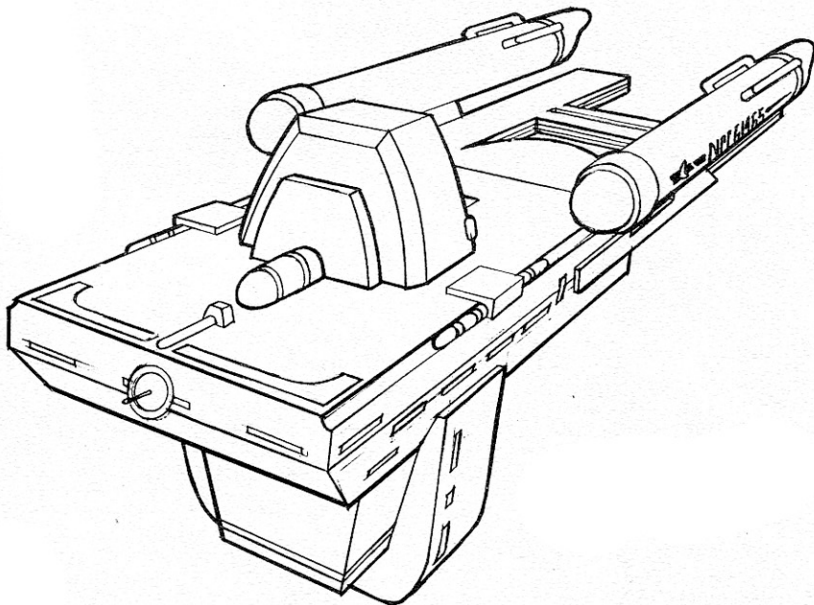
Even if we don't get the opportunity to see a "new" STAR TREK at some future date, at least try to remember what the show was trying to say; and see if you can put it to good use. There are a great many symbols and morals-to-the-story in the great STAR TREK episodes; all of them important, and all of them worth considering.







Lancaster



Reproduced here is a small selection of drawings produced for last season's shows. Some of the sketches are models. These were done to establish the appearance of a person, creature, or ship. The other drawings are layouts and were used in one of the episodes of *Star Trek*.

I started to list all the things I designed for the show, but it got to be too difficult. The truth is, about 85% of the aliens, spaceships and otherworld environments are my children.

Now, here is a breakdown on how an episode is produced:

STAR TREK

ANIMATION:

by Robert Kline

STAR TREK
"MORE TRIBBLES,
MORE TROUBLES!"

ROBOT GRAIN SHIP
©1974 FILMATION



The scripts submitted for *Star Trek* are read and OK'd by Gene Roddenberry. Then Hal Sutherland and his assistant prepare a storyboard based on the script. This consists of about 300 scenes. These pencil line drawings (the layouts, "A"), include all visual elements: backgrounds, props, characters, creatures, etc. Whoever designs an element makes several drawings from different angles. This is done so that the other artists will know what the things look like, and everyone will draw it the same way.

FROM "THE EYE
OF THE BEHOLDER"

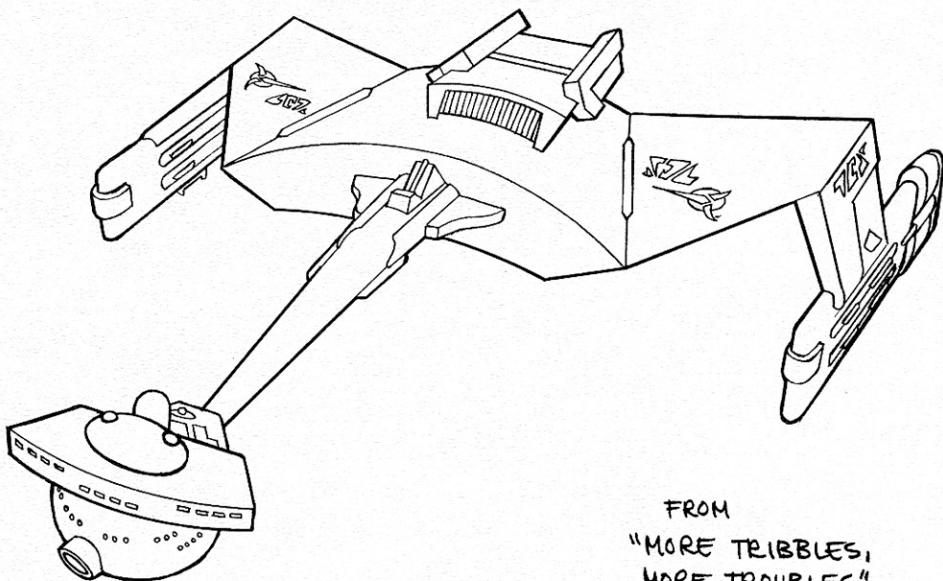
©1974 FILMATION

Simultaneously, the actors are recording the dialogue. When the animators get the layouts, they also get an "exposure sheet" for each scene. This details the time each word of dialogue takes on the soundtrack. With this information, the mouths and actions can be animated more accurately.

Meanwhile, the paintings department is working with the background layouts... They are rendered on illustration paper or acetate in full color.

When the animation is completed, it is xeroxed on cels and painted on the reverse side. The animation cels and backgrounds are placed together under the camera and photographed according to the exposure sheet. It now has detailed instructions from the animator and director on how the scene is to be shot.

Finally, completed footage is edited with the dialogue, sound effects, and the music added. Then it turns up Saturday morning on NBC...



FROM
"MORE TRIBBLES,
MORE TROUBLES"

STAR TREK
KLINGON SHIP
©1974 FILMATION

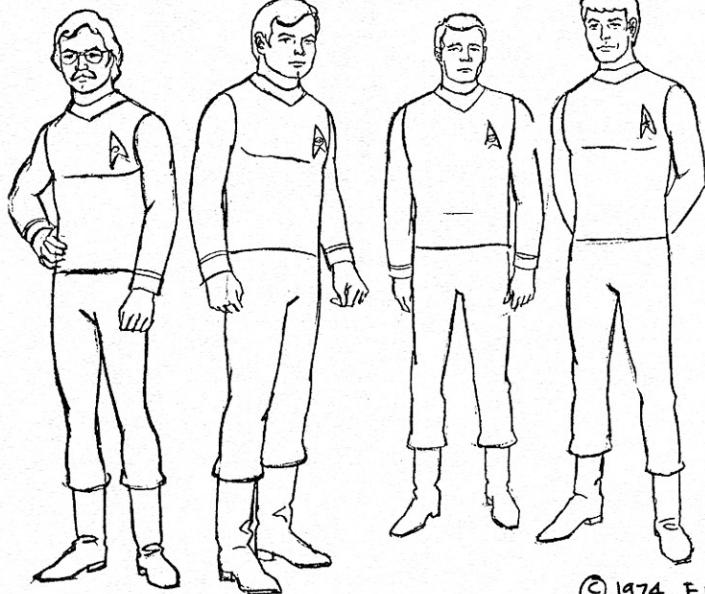
HERB
HAZELTON

BOB
KLINE

GEORGE
JENSON

GABRIEL
AND NEW
CREWMEN

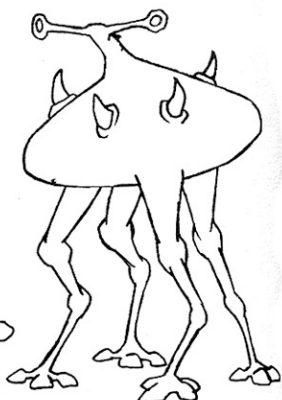
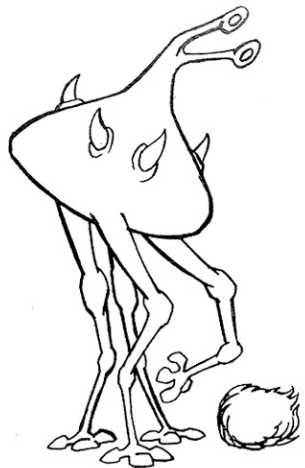
WHEN THREE GUYS
FROM LAYOUT APPEARED
IN STAR TREK



FROM
"THE TERRATIN
INCIDENT"

DRAWING BY
HERB HAZELTON

©1974 FILMATION



STAR TREK
"MORE TRIBBLES,
MORE TROUBLES!"
THE GLIMMER EATING
A TRIBBLE.
© 1974 FILMATION

"ALEEK-ON"
"YESTERYEAR"
STAR TREK

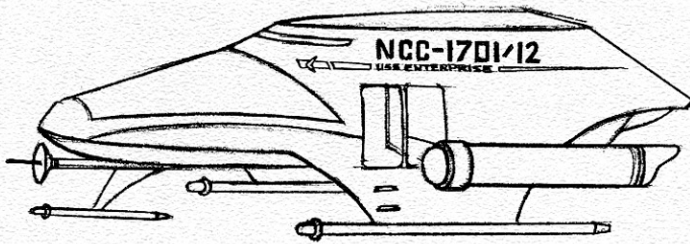
© 1974 FILMATION



FROM
"MUDD'S PASSION"

© 1974 FILMATION

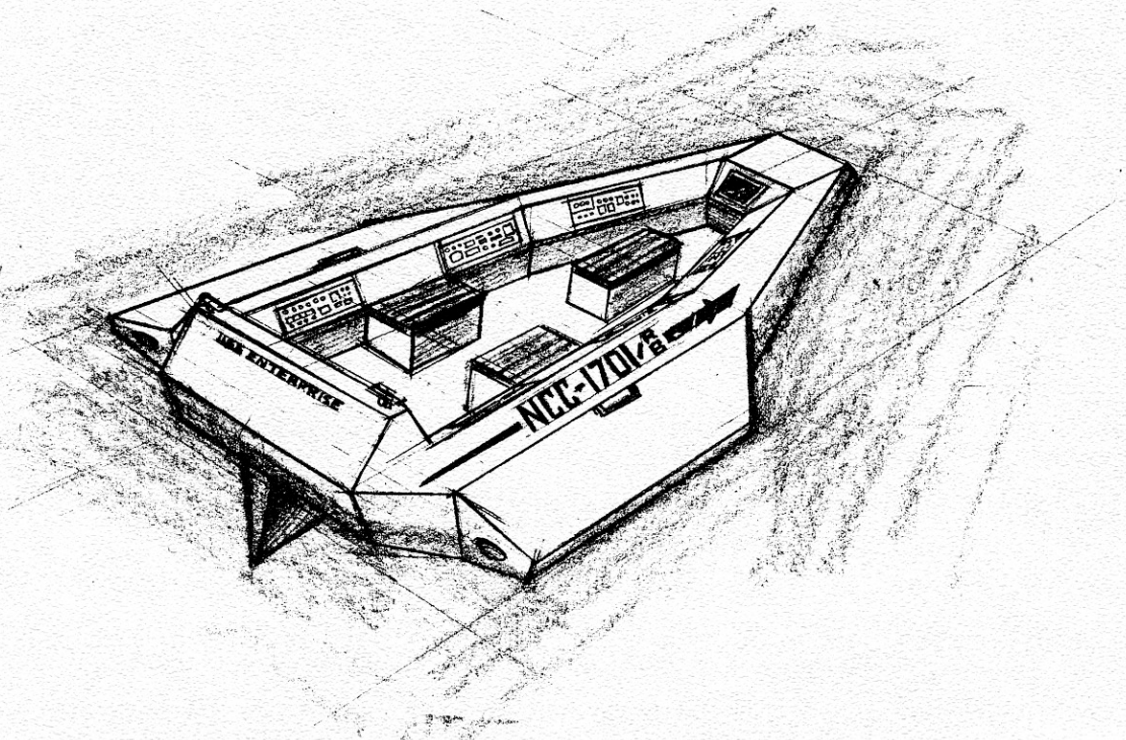
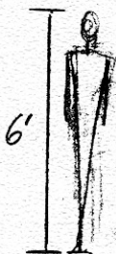


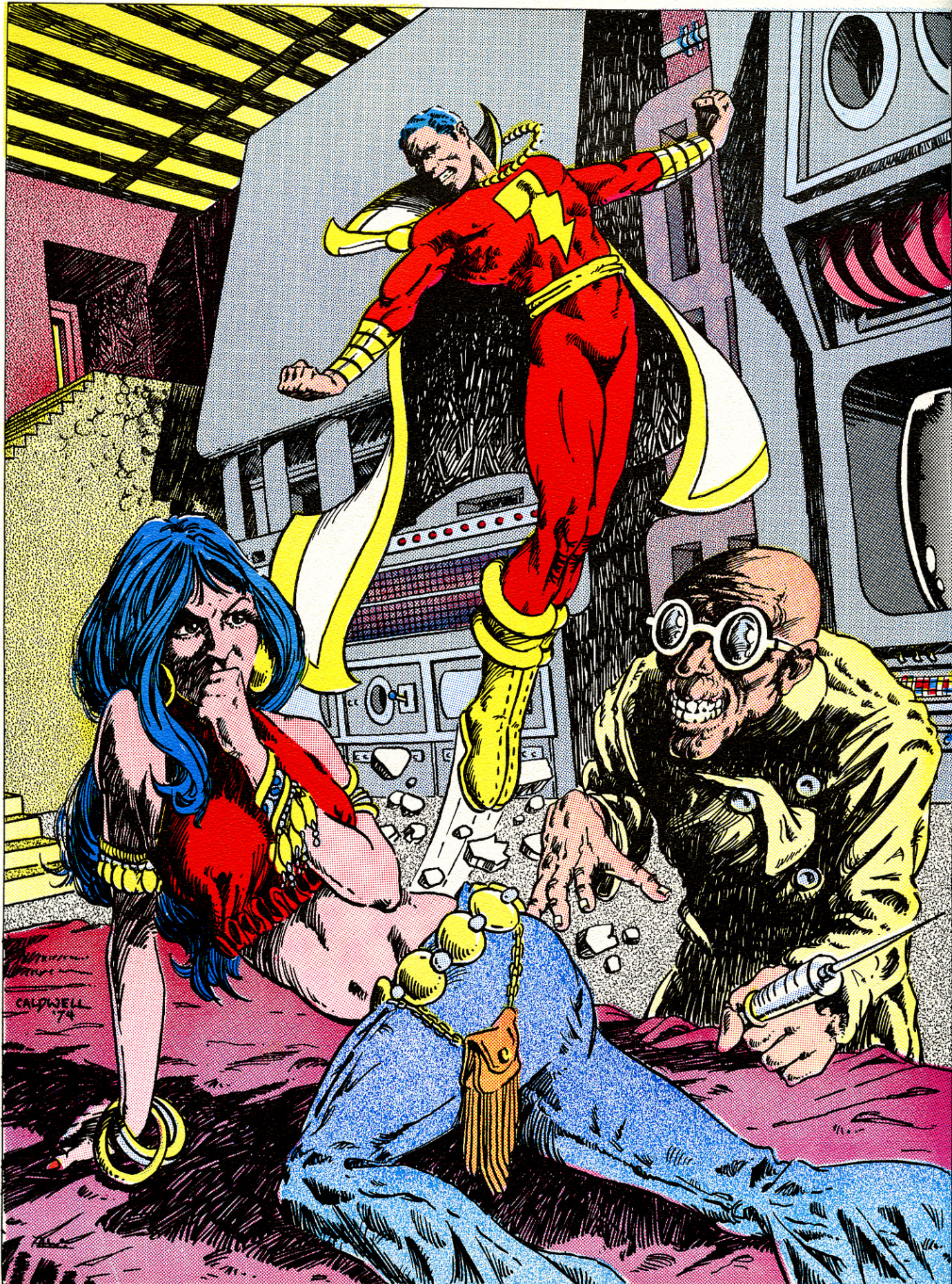


© 1974 FILMATION

FROM
"MUDD'S PASSION"

STAR TREK #13
"THE AMBERGRIS ELEMENT"
RAFT
© 1974 FILMATION



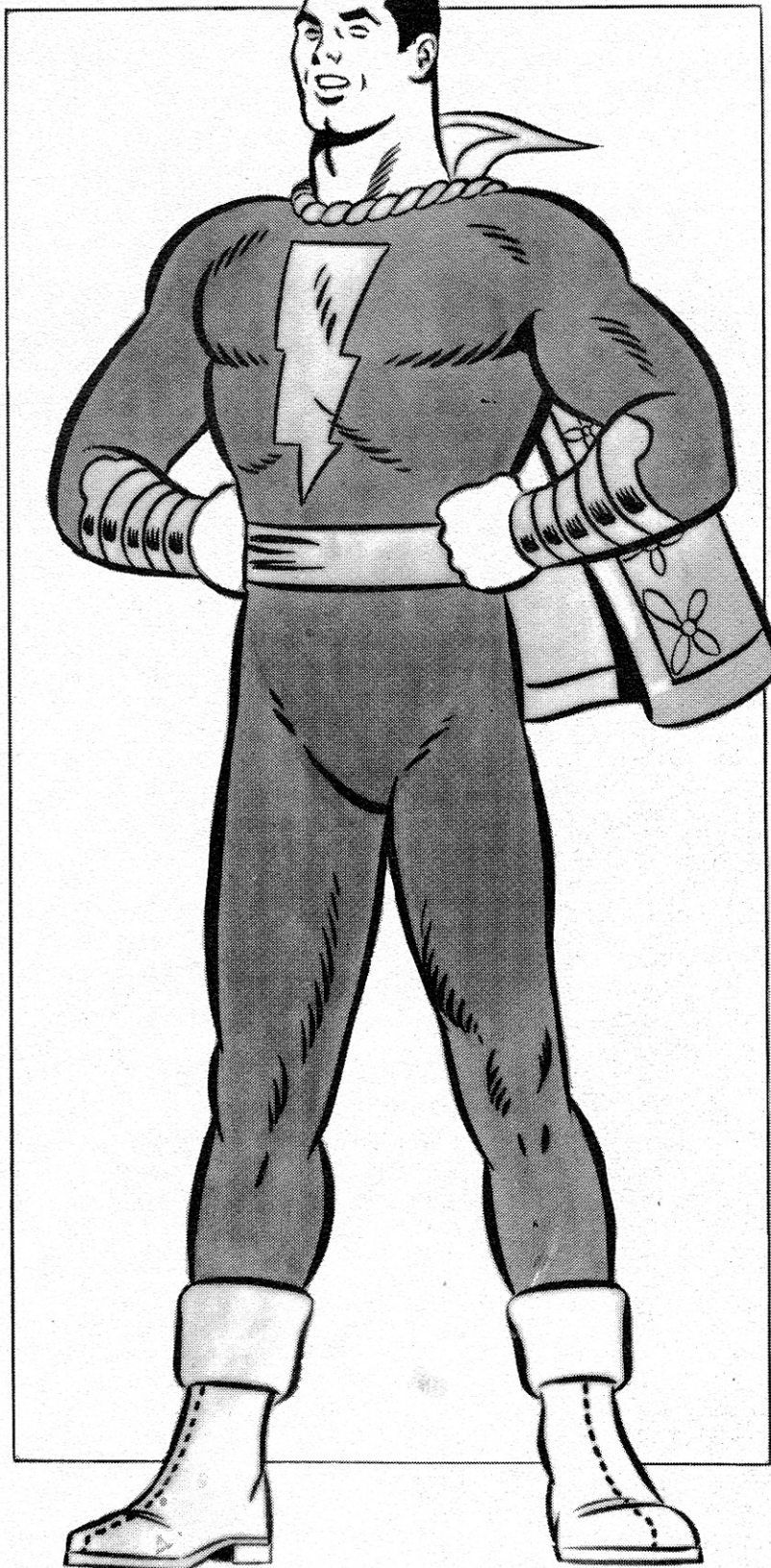


CAPTAIN MARVEL AND COMPANY

BY

**BILL
CANTEY**

It would not be possible for this fan to write an article on Captain Marvel without mentioning his legal conflict with Superman. I would find it easier to complete an essay on Sophia Loren without making a reference to her fantastic frontal equipment. However, it would be stupid for any fan to bear any malice towards National Periodicals for their involvement in that most famous of comics lawsuits. If you must have a villain, blame Fawcett, Captain Marvel's former publisher. It was Fawcett that pulled the rug out from under the Big Red Cheese, dropping the entire Marvel Family into oblivion. But, not because of legal pressure being exerted by National. The story of Captain Marvel's original rise and demise is interwoven with the Superman lawsuit and with the Man of Steel himself. That the success of Superman spawned a myriad following of powerful heroes in tight-fitting, colorful costumes cannot be denied by any logical mind. The wonder is not that Superman's publisher entered a stop and desist legal action against Captain Marvel's, but that other flying, bullet-proof heroes were not equally honored. In all likelihood, it was Captain Marvel's staggering sales record of over two million issues a month that caused him to be considered a business threat. In fairness, it must be considered that Superman was first. His company, later to be called National Publications, introduced the super-hero concept to comic books, complete with the colorful, skin-tight costume and secret identity in 1938. Fawcett Publishing Company took note of the success and decided to grab a piece of the action. Captain Marvel made the scene back in 1940, attired in a predominantly red uniform as opposed to Superman's basic blue with red and gold trim. Originally, Captain Marvel's outfit was more like a uniform than a costume. The top half buttoned tunic-like at the right shoulder. Gold braid decorated the lower sleeves, matching the lightning bolt on his chest as well as the gold trim on his white cape. The cape was worn casually as a soldier of the czar wore his secondary jacket, draped over one shoulder and fastened by a golden cord. A gold colored comberbund took the place of the more popular overbriefs, and golden jack-boots completed the outfit. Saratorially, Captain Marvel was outstanding. But, the tunic appearance of his uniform soon gave way to the painted-on look that is still used by most super-heroes today.



JOE SINNOTT
FROM C.C. BECK





The origin of Captain Marvel is as mystical in real life as in the character's introduction in *WHIZ COMICS*. Of course, National claimed it was a direct steal from Superman. Another theory has it that the Captain Marvel character evolved from a dream sequence in an old Fred MacMurry motion picture; a lampoon of Superman that was muted and made workable. In short, a take-off that took off. The third, and most likely, possibility was that the amazing Captain was a product emerging from the minds of talented men who were told to get busy and create a hero that would out-super Superman or they wouldn't get paid. And after a false start in *WHIZ #1*, wherein a black-clad hero named Captain Thunder sported a lightning bolt on his chest, Captain Marvel was introduced in *WHIZ #2*. Since *WHIZ #1* was a highly limited publication, *WHIZ #2* can be, and usually is, considered the first, official issue. Although a multitude of talent went into the 13-year career of the colorful Captain, including the omnipresent hand of Jack Kirby, the writing and drawing team of Otto O. Binder and C.C. Beck are generally credited with having the most influence on Fawcett's astoundingly popular publication. Captain Marvel's origin-introduction must be the most-often-printed data in comic-book history. After the successful Captain was featured in his own mag, an origin synopsis appeared on the first, inside page of every issue. Here, again, is that very brief briefing:

Shazam, an ancient wizard and arch-enemy of evil, was nearing the end of his days. Before passing on, he bestowed his powers on a poor, orphaned newsboy, one Billy Batson by name. Before tapping out,

old Shazam explains that his name is indicative of his powers. "S" for Solomon/wisdom. "H" for Hercules/strength. "A" for Atlas/stamina. "Z" for Zeus/power. "A" for Achilles/courage. And "M" for Mercury/speed. By speaking Shazam's name aloud, Bill Batson became, or was replaced by, the powerful Captain Marvel. The transformation was hidden by the flash of magic lightning. The puzzle of whether a single personality inhabited both bodies, or if Captain Marvel and Billy Batson were two different and separate people was similar to the more-recent Thor and Dr. Blake problem. But, unlike the Thor dilemma, Captain Marvel's status was never explained. True, Billy often spoke of calling on, and not changing to, Captain Marvel; but, Clark Kent would say, "This looks like a job for Superman.", even when no one else was around. So, there's no clue there. At the risk of offending a great many people, I'll take a chance on suggesting a similarity to a situation that actually existed. Jesus Christ spoke of God, and prayed to his Father in heaven when He himself was God, incarnate. Consider the other likenesses, the God-like attitude of old Shazam is undeniable. And Billy Batson was led by a mysterious "angel" to the secret grotto of Shazam to be informed of his destiny. Maybe that doesn't make him an exact copy of the Virgin Mary, but the result was a two first-ed saviour that appealed to a comic-buying public like no other hero; ... and his "ghost" permeated in the very fiber of comic book fandom for twenty years. Holy Moley. If the idea of comparing Captain Marvel to Jesus is blasphemous, then Captain Marvel is blasphemous and deserves to be -- struck by lightning. Of course,

it's argumentative if that particular facet of Christian faith played a part in Captain Marvel's creation, consciously or otherwise. Just something for fandom to kick around. To compound the confusion, Billy's twin sister made the happy discovery that she also possessed the power, & so became Mary Marvel. The Marvel Family had begun...

Meanwhile, back at the front, the legal battle was raging. The characters of Superman and Captain Marvel were similar. Both had secret identities, both wore gauzy outfits over powerful frames, both were invulnerable to ordinary weapons, both had the power of flight, both had black hair, and both put on their body stockings, one leg at a time. But, there were differences. Superman, in his guise of Clark Kent, was still Superman. Billy Batson was just another kid who could be dispatched with a crack on the head if a villain suspected his secret. Superman was from another planet. Captain Marvel a product of Earth, although magic played a heavy role. Superman was a more serious character, even to the point of coldness. Captain Marvel was more like a big brother type, or at least the way you'd prefer a big brother to be. The plots, like the drawings, were simplified. Perhaps the secret of Captain Marvel's success was that he played to a larger audience. By combining the appeal of a super-hero with the charm of nonsense-entertainment, Captain Marvel cleverly or accidentally doubled his potential and sold on both sides of the street.

When National took on Fawcett, all the smart money was betting on Fawcett, a giant in the publishing world. Fawcett's corporation lawyers had something to play with, and they would fight a holding action for over ten years without working up a sweat. National's hope was based on a former victory. They had successfully sued one competitor out of existence already. A Powerman character had been judged a steal and stopped dead before he could become a serious threat. Captain Marvel was another story, and before that story ended, the lawsuit began to affect the Marvel character almost as much as the character affected the court proceedings. Interesting changes occurred in the Captain Marvel personality during those years of litigation. He became larger, and friendlier, like a college fullback who'd just as soon play touch football with the neighborhood kids as chase criminals. He even went without a cape for one issue. A back-up hero came into being: Captain Marvel, Jr. made his appearance before Superboy. Later, Fawcett would claim Superboy was a rehash of their character. Curiouser and curiouser. A scrap of evidence on the much milder Superboy/Captain Marvel, Jr. controversy was recently uncovered and presented in the letters section of *GRAPHIC STORY WORLD #8*. In a neat bit of data sleuthing, Daniel Stryker uncovered a 1941 *SATURDAY EVENING POST* article predicting the coming of a Superboy character, six months before the appearance of Capt. Marvel, Jr. However, the planned project was for an anti-establishment character, a young and irresponsible prankster before the mature character of the heroic Superman evolved. An intriguing idea that never was realized. Superboy was more like a Jr. edition of Superman; the temptation to follow a good idea may have induced National to drop their original, and perhaps more interesting, idea. In any event, Superboy followed Capt. Marvel, Jr. into the realm of comics and confused National's legal position to some degree. National's claim was further weakened when Captain Marvel's secret identity became more of a dual identity. Bill Batson said, "Shazam!" in front of anyone; Super-



BLACK-73

SHAZAM!

man steadfastly maintained his secret disguise of Clark Kent as an important part of his character. Captain Marvel dropped his romantic interest and avoided a further similarity to his plaintiff. Actually, the Big Red Cheese's girl friend was a form of comedy relief. She was daughter of Fawcett's most infamous villain, Dr. Sivana. Beautia Sivana nearly drove her daddy nuts with her infatuation for the aloof Captain Marvel. Of course, Billy Batson was crazy about her; he was an adolescent lad and she was a knock-out with big knockers. But, in fairness to Captain Marvel's virility, his coolness to Beautia's advances might have been a result of his revealing costume. Unlike some other long underwear heroes, the Big Red Cheese was not allowed the security of the popular top trunks, ala Superman, Batman, the Phantom, etc. And could not allow himself that sort of excitement. How he must have envied the others. And how they all must have envied The Spirit. Anyway, Captain Marvel's romantic dilemma made a little more sense than the Superman/Lois Lane/Clark Kent triangle. But Beautia never gained the fame of Miss Lane. Which was just as well; if she'd stayed longer, she'd have been remembered less fondly... With the passage of time, the differences between the two, battling super-heroes became more evident. The smart money doubled their bets on Fawcett; Superman had met his match and then some.

Then the final catalyst occurred. Comic book sales were falling off as the medium entered the fifties and the age of television. Super-heroes were left on the stands for the more popular crime and horror magazines. Captain Marvel had weathered the storm; most likely National would give up its "cease and desist" suit. But wonder of wonders, Fawcett threw in the towel. Failing sales, not pressure from National, convinced Fawcett to get out of the comic book business. No jury brought in a verdict against the Big Red Cheese.. they never deliberated. In 1953, Fawcett withdrew its legal team. Captain Marvel & the rest of the Marvel Family were never to appear in strip form again. By default National had won a successful injunction. And the name Captain Marvel fell into disuse. Why maintain a copyright on an unusable name? Why, indeed?

Almost ten years passed before the super-hero concept was "re-discovered" by comic fans and publishers. "Camp" gave the industry a boost, and editors like Stan Lee made the idea interesting again with a new attitude; human personalities and even personal problems plagued the once simple super-hero. The, in 1965, M.F. Enterprises, a minor league publisher, latched onto the unused name of Captain Marvel. The result was a new super-hero;

this time clad in purple. The new model was a robot with the ability to detach a fist, arm, leg or even his head; and send it flying across the room to score a hit, then recall the wayward member of instant re-attachment. It was a bad idea, badly drawn. The only reason for mentioning it at all is that the publisher must've grabbed the expired copyright on the name, Captain Marvel, because a third Captain Marvel was in the making, and with it came a second lawsuit. The Marvel Comics Group had decided to couple the nostalgic name with an up-and-coming super-hero creation of their own. The purple Captain Marvel of M.F. Enterprises was already an obvious failure when Marvel Comics attempted to buy the copyright to the character's name. M.F.'s agent held out for an exorbitant amount, and Marvel's madmen told him to take his demand and stick it in his ear; the word, Marvel, was already part of their registered trademark, and they'd proceed to name their new hero Captain Marvel on the strength of that precedent. A minor attempt at a lawsuit was begun, then the matter was settled out of



court with Marvel Comics buying the copyright for a nominal sum and M.F. Enterprises leaving the comic book scene.

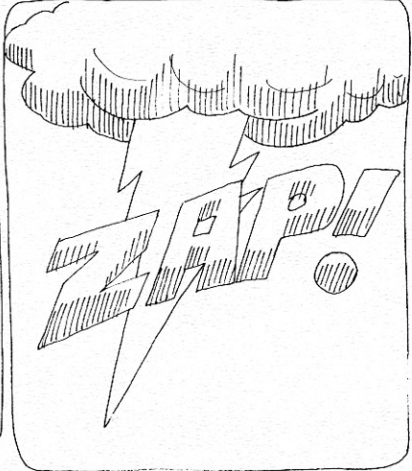
The third Captain Marvel has been an off-again on-again project since its conception. The last time I looked it was on. But this fan has the impression that Marvel's Captain Marvel is "slipstreaming" National's, and only the interesting situation of two, different Captain Marvels caused Marvel to give theirs one more try. But Marvel's version presented some intriguing questions to the student of the comic book medium. First, he was introduced as having an out-of-space origin. But, National's Superman had the out-of-space origin sewed up legally. It was one thing to rattle National's cage with the name, Captain Marvel, but to steal Superman's thunder was pure madness. However, poor sales have plagued Marvel's Captain since his beginning, and he never became a serious threat to the Man of Steel's popular

-ity, Maybe it was a rush job from the very start. But it was not done with Marvel's usual care. A background, and a good one, had already been established. He was a "Man of the Kree", that mysterious race from beyond the stars. The Kree had been mentioned in some well-written Marvel adventures, and had become a part of the undertone of super science fiction that permeates most of the Marvel line of comics. But the Captain Marvel creation caused Marvel's writers to zoom in on the Kree situation, and the result was the destruction of an intriguing mystique. We should never have gotten a close look at a Kree. They should've remained hidden in their space-suits. Captain Marvel might have affected a humanoid disguise to walk among us earthmen. But that's water over the dam, and muddy water at that.

Fan writer Tom Crawford really did some fine research, and let fandom & Marvel in on the critical results, via an article in *FANTASTIC FANZINE* #6*7 and in a letter printed in Marvel's *CAPTAIN MARVEL*, #15. The problem was fair writing plagued by a gross lack of scientific knowledge.. Still, Marvel seemed determined to make their new character succeed. Captain Marvel was revamped, with a complete overhaul in appearance and powers, in issue #16. New writer, new artist, new costume. In issue #17 he picked up an "alter-ego", in teen-ager Rick Jones, and became highly reminiscent of the Big Red Cheese. Captain Marvel, trapped in a limbo-like "negative zone" could be called into action by young Rick for a limited time, providing Rick Jones took his place during the prescribed period. Confusing, but at least no known laws of science were violated. To date the situation stands, with Marvel publishing a second-league super hero with the untouchable out-of-space origin, and having the brass to predate the original of the same name from a legal standpoint, causing National to refrain from naming their magazine *CAPTAIN MARVEL*. It is not difficult to imagine a behind-the-scenes truce arranged to suit the present situation. If National holds a sword over other publishers concerning the out-of-space origin, then Marvel holds a club over National in the underwater department. The Sub-Mariner could tell Aquaman to get out of his ocean; Subby was there first.

Some other interesting sidelights

were created in the thirteen years of the Original Captain Marvel's fantastic run. Some have gone by the board with National's surprise revival of their leading feature's most serious rival. But, there was food for thought in the original Captain's concept in spite of its ultra simple appearance. Almost everyone over thirty remembers The Big Red Cheese. Not just



A STARTLING REVELATION!

THIS IS KINDLY-LOOKING C. C. BECK, FAMOUS CARTOONIST WHO DRAWS CAPTAIN MARVEL FOR SHAZAM COMICS. MANY READERS ASK, "WHY DOES HE ALWAYS DRAW BILLY BATSON SO STUPID-LOOKING AND CAPTAIN MARVEL SO MUCH LIKE A BIG RED CHEESE?"
 WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL US WHY, MR. BECK?

YES!

BY
 C. C.
 BECK

THE REAL REASON IS THAT
I HATE THEM BOTH!
 DOES THAT SURPRISE YOU?
 IT SHOULDN'T!

FIRST, LET ME GET RID
 OF THIS ARTIST'S
 SMOCK...

...NOW I'LL TAKE OFF
 THIS WIG AND
 MUSTACHE...
 AND EYEBROWS...

NOW DO YOU SEE WHY I
 HATE THEM?

HEH
 HEH
 HEH

HOLY MOLEY! C. C. BECK IS REALLY
 CAPTAIN MARVEL'S WORST ENEMY—
 THE MAD SCIENTIST SIVANA!
 OR PERHAPS SIVANA IS REALLY
 C. C. BECK...WHO KNOWS?

comic fans; everyone. They may be vague about the rest of the Family, but they do remember him. Curiously, the best remembered alter-ego is Captain Marvel, Jr.'s Freddy Freeman. Freddy was not a member of the Batson family. He was an injured youth, rescued by Captain Marvel after a battle with a super-villain caused the incident that almost killed the unfortunate youth. Billy Batson or Captain Marvel could invoke the assistance of the departed Shazam by entering the hidden cavern and rekindling the departed wizard's magic flame. The spirit of old Shazam would appear and usually give advice and guidance. This time the good Captain asked Shazam to save the dying Freddy Freeman. The result was a younger version of the Big Red Cheese in a uniform that sported blue where his predecessor's was red. It was, and is, a well-done strip, better drawn than the senior's with a more novel alter-ego. For although Shazam prevented the injured boy from dying, he was lame for life. The result was that the cripple newsboy is often "disremembered" as Captain Marvel's other self by former, but not current, fans of the Big Red Cheese.

The "other self" problem became very confused in the twilight of Captain Mar-

vel's first career. In a whimsical tale, the god in charge of throwing the magic lightning that transformed Billy into The World's Mightiest Mortal developed a bad shoulder. He missed his mark, the lightning hit another kid, and Boom! Captain Marvel and Billy Batson came face-to-face. Holy Moley. Holy Moley. Although that episode would seem to offer conclusive proof that Captain Marvel and Billy Batson were indeed two, separate people, the "feeling" of the story lacked any such conviction. An exponent of the "one personality/two forms" theory could easily claim that the chance encounter was not unlike a grown man traveling back in time to see himself as a boy. No one could ever accuse Marvel's editors of not giving its readers food for thought. Most of us are still chewing. Just plain, bad editing did occur in the fifties when the Marvel Family conducted an investigation that proved beyond doubt that the Atlantis legend was no more than a myth. But, one of the most memorable Marvel Family adventures of the forties was an Atlantis story, divided into three parts: past, present, and future, with the present segment taking place underwater. However, the

contradiction was not nearly as alarming as it should have been because the Marvel series concept had already been stretched into an almost ho-hum situation.

The Lieutenant Marvels added another strain to the reader's "suspension of disbelief". Billy Batson had three cousins, also named Billy. When they said, "Shazam" with him they could become Lieutenant Marvels. Other characters included a sham Marvel, Uncle Marvel by name, who "adopted" the orphaned Batsons and Freddy. There were villain Marvels, and a very young fake, female Marvel named Freckles Marvel. Sometime during the parade of human Marvels, the ultimate indignity occurred. A funny animal hero, Marvel Bunny was featured in Fawcett's Funny Animals & in his own mag. More than one good idea has died from over-success; perhaps the long "leave of absence" saved the Big Red Cheese as well as endearing him to comic fans and lovers of nostalgia everywhere.

The new Captain Marvel, National style, is not really as bad as its critics claim. The difficulty is in finding the proper attitude, not for fandom, but for sales. The first few issues and the Giant Shazams were swell tributes to the most successful super-hero of the golden

KEN
BARR



age of comics. Perhaps by the time this article is published National will have found the handle and Captain Marvel will have regained his deserved status. National Periodical Publications is the Big Red Cheese's best bet; they have the heart & muscle if Captain Marvel still has the magic...

EPILOGUE - CATALOGUE

There is so much material available on the Big Red Cheese that another article was needed about as much as Custer needed more Indians. But, the comic fan's interest in the subject of highly successful super-heroes is insatiable.

A one-two-three punch of readily available publications might be the best beginning for fans of the Captain Marvel phenomenon. First, National's fine tribute in the form of the giant SHAZAM! magazine. Add to that, THE STERANKO HISTORY OF COMICS-Vol.2, quickly followed by the big SHAZAM! issue of COMIXSCENE #2. It is especially satisfying to note that National's big SHAZAM! and STERANKO'S HISTORY are of identical format, making them fine companion publications.

The next best article is Dick Lupoff's "The Big Red Cheese", from the hard & /or soft cover book, ALL IN COLOR FOR A DIME. It's a professional writer's look at a boy-hood hero and what made him tick. Super-fine flavor is derived from this feast of nostalgic comic recollections. If the ultimate fanzine exists, this is it.

On the fanzine scene, Bill Black produced the best illustrated article on the golden age Captain Marvel. Bill also wanted to revive the original Captain in comic strip form, but was stymied by the old National injunction. His Captain Paragon gives some indication of what it might have been like. And it might have been better than the recent revival of Captain Marvel by National; certainly it tops some of the current crop as well as a large segment of the forties version by Fawcett.

THE ROCKET'S BLAST SPECIAL #8 is a thin 'zine devoted entirely to Captain Marvel. While Gene Arnold's account of the SHAZAM! saga is not as well-written as Steranko's or Lupoff's, it is certainly better than mine, and he contributes keen insight into the success story. Illustrations by Robert Kline, Don Newton, and C.C. Beck enhance the warm feeling that a well-remembered, favorite feature inspires.

Strangely enough, Jules Feiffer's THE GREAT COMIC BOOK HEROES barely touched on Captain Marvel's career. But, Feiffer was one of the very few old time comic book fans who didn't like the Big Red Cheese; and mentioned him only because of his overwhelming popularity with his own childhood cohorts. Still, it remains an interesting and entertaining book. While I don't share Feiffer's view on Captain Marvel (or his talent for writing) we both have a deadly tendency to discuss the Big Red Cheese, and other golden age greats, in the past tense, although many of them are still around. Maybe, in my case, and especially in the consideration of Captain Marvel, I've made the ever-popular "Freudian slip", subconsciously delegating the Big Red Cheese to the past, concluding that the Big Red Cheese cannot survive in today's world of comics.

We shall see...

-BILL CANTEY-



COMIX & FANDOM

COMIX AND FANDOM is a new, "special" kind of fanzine. It's produced by the PITTSBURGH COMIX CLUB and contains articles and artwork by its members, and is edited by HOWARD BENDER, whose fine art has appeared in numerous fanzines in recent months, including THE BUYER'S GUIDE and THE COLLECTOR.

The first issue should be ready soon. Price is \$1.00 plus 25¢ postage and handling. (\$1.25 total)

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