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# COSMOPOLIS

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Number 35



February, 2003

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## *Lurulu Completed*

*from John Vance*

Dear VIE Subscribers,

Several weeks ago my father finished his work on *Lurulu*, sequel to *Ports of Call*. The story is now being prepared for publication.

*Lurulu* was written using software adapted especially for Jack by our friend Kim Kokkonen. This software, called 'BigEd', is similar in function to Wordstar and runs under DOS. BigEd enables large font sizes (Jack works with 32 characters per line) and drives an 'Accent' speech synthesizer through the computer's parallel port. A QWERTY keyboard enhanced to Jack's specifications has tactile features to assist navigation. Video output is converted from VGA to NTSC and is viewed on a 30-inch TV which rests along with the keyboard, processor and other items on a purpose-built workstation structure.

BigEd files are ported to MS Word using 'WordPort' software. As received they contain such things as spurious characters and spaces, and occasionally the results of a stuck CapsLock key. I make a first pass through the files to correct margins, eliminate the noise, and generally implement conventional formatting. My mother Norma makes a second pass to begin the critical work she has always performed, concentrating on details and bringing to Jack's attention any small questions or inconsistencies she might find. When Norma finishes her work, the story will be read by a final group of proofreaders (including VIE personnel) before being sent to the publishers.

Blindness has slowed Jack's work but in general he remains philosophical about the difficulties. Frequent computer crashes and occasional loss of files have definitely caused moments of frustration, not to say panic; fortunately nothing has ever been irretrievably lost thanks to a rigorous backup procedure and the Unerase command. A recent improvement made by Kim archives periodic filesaves to a special directory and this increases our comfort level significantly.

While Jack's work is largely done, ours is just beginning. This final stage will probably take another two to three months.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

*John Vance*

*President, Vance Integral Edition*

Oakland, California, January 29, 2003

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# In Support of Paul Rhoads

*from John and Norma Vance*

To whoever is interested:

The Vance family has known Paul Rhoads for many years. We know that he is intelligent, well-read, principled, talented, and compassionate. We are not associated with any religious philosophy but we do not choose our friends on the basis of belief. Our friends are interesting, imaginative, and fun, and Paul is a close friend of ours. We are indebted to him for taking up the tremendous burden and responsibility of organizing and managing the Vance Integral Edition.

Paul has been the subject of a variety of criticism for his writings in the newsletter COSMOPOLIS. It has been suggested that he might try to leave his mark on Jack Vance's work. This notion is laughable and only serves to show that the critics firstly do not know Paul very well, but also do not understand the way the project works. For example, no text has passed by fewer than six pairs of knowledgeable eyes, and further, every edit to every text is documented. Paul's aesthetic influence will indeed be felt throughout the edition: his engravings and the AMIANTE font will display the stories in the most elegant way possible.

We can't believe we've lost many potential readers because of exposure to Paul's COSMOPOLIS articles. He has never claimed to write for Jack Vance, or for anyone else. Paul is a passionate man, and argues and defends his views vigorously; those who cannot tolerate his viewpoints or style are forewarned not to read his essays. But we believe in Paul's innate goodness and stand firmly by him as a person, as a contributor to COSMOPOLIS, and as Editor-in-Chief of the Vance Integral Edition.

Best regards to all,  
*Norma Vance and John Vance II*  
Oakland, California  
January 29, 2003



## A Statement of Support for the Publication of the Writings of Paul Rhoads

*by R. C. Lacovara*

### PREFACE

Over the last few months, exchanges have occurred between various individuals and Paul Rhoads, the corporate vice-president of the VIE. These exchanges have appeared in COSMOPOLIS and various bulletin boards. The

gist of the exchanges has ranged over a variety of topics, including a typeface called AMIANTE that Mr. Rhoads designed and in which our books are printed, to matters of content of COSMOPOLIS articles, to Mr. Rhoads' artistic capabilities, and to assertions that Mr. Rhoads misrepresents Jack Vance's ideas and opinions. Worse, there are people who maintain that Mr. Rhoads deliberately distorts the views of Jack Vance in accord with a hidden agenda of Mr. Rhoads', specifically Mr. Rhoads' political and religious views.

There is more, but discerning readers will begin to see that I am reporting discontent (bordering on whining) of several individuals, and may wonder why such discussions need be brought to light in COSMOPOLIS. For this reason: gentlemen may disagree, but they should never become disagreeable. And many of the things which I find in the bulletin board, and indeed, which have appeared in COSMOPOLIS, are disagreeable to me, as Mr. Rhoads is a friend of mine, and many of the things laid at his feet seem untrue or unjust. They are particularly disagreeable to Mr. Rhoads, since he bears the brunt of the complaints and criticisms to which I refer below. I wish to make a statement of support for Mr. Rhoads that anyone may refer to.

I would also like to point out that since much of the criticism revolves around articles published in COSMOPOLIS, and since I founded COSMOPOLIS originally and determined, to a great extent, its scope and content, that I have certain bragging rights and perhaps some claim to know just what was intended for COSMOPOLIS, and what was not. Please note also, that this statement is not meant to represent the position of the Board of the VIE, nor its corporate officers. I now present a few points, which must be considered personal opinions, informed, of course, by my experience with the VIE and COSMOPOLIS.

CONCERNING THE ARTICLES IN COSMOPOLIS: I conceived COSMOPOLIS when I attended the first corporeal gathering of the earliest VIE volunteers at the home of Jack Vance about three years ago. There, with Mr. Rhoads, we recognized the need for a regular vehicle to keep volunteers and subscribers informed of our progress towards publication. With a smile in my heart I christened the publication 'COSMOPOLIS' and subsequently edited the first volume, dated January of 2000. Ever since that time, COSMOPOLIS has been an open publication. Criteria for publication of articles have been that the articles relate, in some way, to the work of Jack Vance, and further, the criteria stated by Jack Vance through Kirth Gersen, that COSMOPOLIS is a "magazine devoted to the life and affairs of the civilized universe". This broad charge has been interpreted liberally: I once published an article on finding Internet sites which would help sky watchers find the International Space Station as

it transits the sky near their homes. Few articles have ever been rejected under this policy.

*Take special note:* the non-rejection of articles isn't because of some confused notion regarding the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, often referred to as 'freedom of speech' by those who really mean 'free access to all media'. Americans are guaranteed the right to express themselves, but they are not guaranteed unlimited free access to media of expression. That is, the VIE is under no onus to provide anyone a platform for speech of any sort. We reject few articles because we wish to make it as easy as possible for anyone to bring their thoughts on Jack Vance's work to the attention of other Vance readers.

In that context, Mr. Rhoads has published many articles of great length, which have attracted both praise and criticism. To the critics, Mr. Rhoads has invariably responded politely—I defy anyone to show otherwise—with the invitation to publish their own views either as a letter to the editor, or as an article. Not surprisingly, only a few of the critics of these articles ever take up this open-handed offer. In some cases where they have, we have been entertained by the discourse.

There have been cases in which, in response to one article or another, someone has written COSMOPOLIS to say: do not publish any more articles like this or that or I will (a) cancel my subscription to COSMOPOLIS or (b) cancel my subscription to the VIE. Occasionally the threat is accompanied by a rationale which justifies the writer's upset, but sometimes the justification is merely that the articles don't belong in COSMOPOLIS. Since I, among others, decide what belongs in COSMOPOLIS, such an argument has little force. And to be blunt, I don't care if a disaffected individual cancels their subscription: as a means of persuasion, who is affected?

If it could be shown that COSMOPOLIS only publishes articles which I (or Derek Benson, the present editor of COSMOPOLIS) approve of, then there would be valid criticisms of the publication policy. However, during my tenure as editor of COSMOPOLIS, I published (and indeed, spent much time editing) articles with which I disagreed, as well as articles in which I was simply not interested. Today, however, the sometimes onerous task of deciding what goes in and what goes out falls to the current editor, Derek Benson, with whom I sometimes have disagreed, but whose editorial policy I nevertheless fully support.

To those who dislike certain articles in COSMOPOLIS, I can only assert that it is the VIE which determines what it will print and what it will not, and if you do not like to read, for example, Mr. Rhoads' articles, then we offer this panacea: do not read the article.

CONCERNING THE CONTENT OF ARTICLES BY MR. RHOADS IN COSMOPOLIS: Mr. Rhoads writes articles of two sorts.

One sort clearly discusses the progress of our volunteer effort. These articles do not seem to incite unusual criticism or contention, for obvious reasons.

In the other sort of articles, Mr. Rhoads seeks to generate serious interest in Jack Vance's works as great literature, pertinent to our lives and times, by relating Jack Vance's works to current political and social situations. In other words, he seeks to attract attention to Jack Vance by initiating the dialogue of criticism of the works of Jack Vance. Like all thinkers, Mr. Rhoads perceives the world through his personal filters, that is, his opinions are informed, shaped, and strengthened by his beliefs. The rub is that his 'filters' are not those currently in vogue: they are Roman Catholicism and American democracy. I believe that it is not Mr. Rhoads' view of the world or of Jack's works which upsets some people. I think it is the belief systems through which Mr. Rhoads interprets Jack's works. Mr. Rhoads is a Roman Catholic and an American patriot: these identities, but more fundamentally, the mere public discussion of Roman Catholicism and American culture disturb some people.

As justification for calls that Mr. Rhoads not write what he thinks, some critics contend that people may mistake Mr. Rhoads' beliefs for those of Jack Vance. That is, they might infer that Jack Vance is Catholic, or an American patriot, a capitalist, or eats live, wriggling kittens for breakfast. I contend that only the most careless reader could ever confuse Mr. Rhoads' beliefs with those of Jack Vance, but in any event it is not shameful to be confused with Roman Catholics or even such desperadoes as patriotic Americans. (It would be unfortunate if someone made such a mistake, but not really as serious, say, as running a red light.) Recently one person listed a variety of friends who, having been enticed to read Vance, were delighted, but professed that they could never read a VIE publication because of Mr. Rhoads' association with the VIE. How odd. I can only warn other sensitive individuals that our books are printed in Italy, and if they do not like Italian food, they are well-advised not to purchase our books.

For the sake of other folk who may by now have 'discovered' that Jack Vance eats live kittens for breakfast, I state for the record that in the several breakfasts that I have personally seen Jack consume, he ate nothing which would disturb any but the most militant (and intrusive) vegetarians: eggs, toast, and sometimes cereal with milk. For the same folk, I note that Mr. Rhoads has repeatedly, in terms comprehensible to the dullest intelligence, stated that he writes his own views and interpretations, and when on rare occasion he represents the viewpoint of Jack Vance, he clearly states that Jack has said some specific thing to him explicitly.

Personally, I believe that some individuals, who argue earnestly that they are concerned that Jack's true feelings on religion, politics, sex, or breakfast will be mis-

understood as a result of Mr. Rhoads' articles, are in fact overly ingenuous. I suspect that deep down, or perhaps not so very far down, they are antagonistic to Roman Catholicism, American democracy or American capitalism. I think that they use their claim that Mr. Rhoads' articles misrepresent Jack Vance's true beliefs speciously. I believe that they are simply opposed to one or more of the ideas which Mr. Rhoads subscribes to, and will use any method to remove from print the writings of anyone who promulgates ideas opposed to their own. Indeed, the refrain that Mr. Rhoads' writings will be taken as Jack's ideas, and that these ideas are so illiberal that Jack's writings will be discredited, has become very tiresome.

For the record, I am not a Roman Catholic. I am, however, an American patriot, and a capitalist, albeit not a terribly successful one. I seldom eat any sort of breakfast.

**JACK VANCE IS NEITHER DEAD NOR INCOMPETENT:** Curiously, I find that the critics are in the position of defending the ideas and reputation of Jack Vance, or at least, defending what they think are Jack Vance's ideas and reputation. I've no idea what gives people the notion that they must defend someone who can not only defend himself, but is certainly capable of doing so in far more literate terms than anyone else I know of. If I should like to know, for example, what Jack considers exciting fare for breakfast, I would simply ask him. He is an adult, and capable of expounding and defending his positions and ideas. He does not require the assistance of people, some of whom have never met him, to defend himself from the writings of one of his friends!

**A CRITICISM OF MR. RHOADS WHICH HAS SOME BASIS IS THIS:** as a corporate officer, the statements of Mr. Rhoads carry a cachet of corporate authenticity which those of unaffiliated writers necessarily lack. This is further enhanced by Mr. Rhoads' statements that he has known Jack Vance over many years. In recognition of this, Mr. Rhoads has made the effort in his articles to separate his opinions and beliefs from those of Jack Vance. My thought is that anyone who reads Mr. Rhoads' critical analyses must have seen these disclaimers many times, and that it should be sufficiently clear to all when Mr. Rhoads is expressing himself, or something said to him explicitly by Jack Vance.

**I MUST REJECT CLAIMS THAT** critical reception of Jack Vance is adversely affected by the analyses written by Mr. Rhoads. There are three reasons for this: the first is the vulgar, pragmatic, but demonstrably true axiom that there is no such thing as bad publicity. The second is that Jack's works are impressive—if not, astounding—in and of themselves, and dwarf the best efforts of critics to either enlarge or decrease their true stature. The last of three reasons is that it is impossible to believe that anyone who wished to judge Jack Vance would do so only

on the evidence of Mr. Rhoads' writings. In one hundred years, the reputation of Vance may be acknowledged by all, and if so, the efforts of the VIE will have contributed in some small way. But certainly, the writings of Jack Vance's critics (both enamored and disaffected) will be forgotten if not lost along the way.

**A SIDEBAR FOR THE ATHEISTS AND THE UNDECIDED:** if you would like to know, almost exactly, what Mr. Rhoads believes about the supernatural, read the *Baltimore Catechism*. It's an interesting read: as an atheist or agnostic you will have little to fear from it despite the fact that the underlying beliefs and teachings have radically changed the world, mostly for the better. What is intriguing to me about the *Baltimore Catechism* is that in one concise place virtually everything that comprises the beliefs of Roman Catholicism may be found.\* This is in contrast to the plight of one who tries to find out, for example, what a Buddhist believes—at least I have found no straightforward approach to this task. Nevertheless, Buddhists do in fact hold profound and deep beliefs, it's just harder to sort out what they are.

I have digressed, perhaps shamefully, but should anyone care to respond to this in *COSMOPOLIS*, I think that Derek Benson will be happy to print their thoughts. I cannot promise to respond on the topic of whether or not a God exists, since I hold no evidence or certainty whatsoever as to His existence or non-existence, hence I never know which side of the argument to take.

**COSMOPOLIS WELCOMES DISCUSSION OF THE WORKS OF JACK VANCE:** this should be obvious to all by now. Articles which discuss Jack Vance's works, provide criticism, or, less formally, talk about your favorite book: all such articles are of interest to the VIE. There is no doubt in my mind that Mr. Rhoads falls into this category.

Demands to restrict the content of articles in *COSMOPOLIS*, merely because the discussion of some topic is unpleasant, or might be so to a hypothetical third party, are jejune and hence unwelcome.

*Bob Lacovara,*

Founder and former editor of *COSMOPOLIS*,  
Business manager and member of the board of the VIE,  
Effectuator of the Vance Integral Edition



\*More readily available is the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. This is available at <http://www.vatican.va> You may find it in several languages by appropriate navigation.

# Work Tsar Status Report

as of Jan. 26, 2003

by Joel Riedesel

## WAVE 1

Wave 1 continues to proceed at the standard VIE speed. Thirteen volumes are either in binding or have completed binding. Four volumes are either being printed or have completed printing (and would therefore be ready for binding). The last five have finally had their frontispiece etchings completed and will now complete the final review process before printing.

Paul Rhoads recently received an update from Stefania Zacco at SFERA concerning the Batch 5 volumes:

Good afternoon.

Schedule:

3 Feb: batch 5 at printer's

5 Feb: corrections out

12 Feb: corrections cleared

5 Mar: books printed

24 March: books ready for packing

Sorry, not exactly what you had in mind, but quite realistic.

The final step is boxing and shipping, planned to begin on March 24 with VIE personnel. It will soon be time to dust off that bookshelf you have waiting for those first 22 volumes.

## WAVE 2

There are 2 texts in special handling due to extraordinary status of their texts (*The Stark* and *Guyal of Sfere*). There still remain 7 texts in the Monkey step, but these should be completed in the next month or two. And there are currently 7 texts in the Techno-proof step. I fully expect Monkey and Techno to be complete for Wave 2 (and all the VIE, therefore) in another few months.

Meanwhile, TI has a full plate with 26 texts currently active and 10 unassigned. They've been busy. There are currently 7 texts in Board Review and 6 texts in Implementation. Another 8 texts are moving quickly toward Post-Proofing while 6 texts have completed Post-Proofing and are either under final review or ready for volume collation!

The VIE pipes are full and running smoothly. I fully expect we'll see significant change in the next six months which will lead us much closer to finalizing potential dates for completion of Wave 2 and the VIE oeuvre!



# Post-Proofing Report

by Chris Corley

Five Wave 2 texts have been completed by Post-Proofing since the middle of November, and no texts are currently in Post-Proofing. A sixth Wave 2 text cleared Post-Proofing long ago, leaving 76 texts remaining for Wave 2. This sounds like a daunting total, and it will in fact take a lot of work, but Wave 2 is much more heavily weighted toward shorter texts than was Wave 1. Wave 1 had twelve texts longer than 65,000 words, compared to only three for Wave 2; Wave 1 contained nearly 2.4 million words in 50 texts (47,800 words per text), while Wave 2 has 2.0 million words in 82 texts (24,600 words per text).

The numbers stated above for Wave 2 are somewhat misleading because they do not take *Lurulu*—for which I do not yet have a wordcount—into consideration. Nevertheless, there will be many more shorter jobs in Wave 2 than there were in Wave 1, and this will allow a higher throughput of texts when things get really busy.

Several new proofers have volunteered their services since the end of Wave 1, and most of them have been incorporated into an existing Post-Proofing team. More volunteers will always be welcomed! All teams are eager to continue, and the quality of their work so far in Wave 2 is meeting, if not exceeding, the standard they set for themselves in Wave 1.



## The Case of the Missing Hyphens

The *Moon Moth* Experiment

by Susan Yong

Saturday, January 18, 2003

New volunteer Michael Miller, having responded to Paul's COSMOPOLIS 34 appeal for someone to create the VIE electronic archives (VIE-EA), is introduced to a group of VIE managers, who welcome him by embroiling him in a lengthy sometimes-heated debate over how best to create and maintain the EA: which file format to use, which textual elements to include in the EA, how best to create the initial EA, and how to update the EA with future errata.

Thursday, January 23, 2003

Five days and 128 messages later, the debate now centers around which version of the VIE source text should be used to derive the EA files. One camp believes the text should be derived from Composition files (the so-called 'fin' files), which are set in Adobe InDesign.

The main advantage of this approach is that the 'fin' files reflect the *final* textual corpus as published in the VIE. The second camp believes the EA should be derived from the final pre-composition file (the 'cor-bf' file), which is in Microsoft Word format. Proponents of this camp believe that the 'fin' files will be contaminated with typesetting artifacts that must be cleaned out for the EA. The main drawback of starting from 'cor-bf' is that post-composition errata (including those reported by Post-proofing) must be re-applied to the text.

To test the relative facility of the two approaches, an experiment was conducted using *The Moon Moth* text. For Camp A, John Schwab dumped an RTF file from the *Moon Moth* fin file. Besides the expected mess of the 'Space-Gram'-encoded messages, and a few stray optional hyphens, the text appeared relatively clean. For Camp B, Suan Yong (that's me!) began from the *Moon Moth* cor-bf file, and read through the *Moon Moth* 'bis' file (which recorded all post-compositional queries and changes to the text) to find textual changes to apply.

With respect to resolving the big debate above, the conclusion of the experiment remains open, with the final decision yet to be made. However, the *Moon Moth* experiment yielded an unexpected discovery—a curious artifact which managed to slip through a loophole in the VIE procedures. This is the main subject I wish to highlight in this article.

The Discovery:

A few Vancian hyphens, painstakingly preserved by the TI wallahs in the cor-bf, had somehow disappeared in the final VIE text. The words in question are: inter-personal, non-existent, mask-less, and micro-seconds, all of which are hyphenated in Jack's manuscript obtained from Oakland.

Remarked the Bob: "Who imp'd this file? This is really kinda sad. The hyphens aren't show stoppers, but are we really in control of what hits print?"

Initially, I thought these changes had gone undocumented in the bis-file, since I had parsed the bis-file in creating my EA candidate text. If this were true, it would mean that something had gone horribly wrong in the VIE procedures (since *all* post-compositional changes should be documented). But Chuck King pointed out that the change was indeed documented; herewith the bis-file entry:

p 9/19 (95/612/648) Rogue Hyphens  
char-acteristically/characteristically  
Remove hyphen/word break. Other suspects:  
p 9/23 (as-ton-ishing), 10/12 (inter-personal), 11/3  
(exer-cise), 27/4 (non-existent), 32/9 and other places  
(mask-less), 34/6 (micro-seconds)  
PWR; Fix  
21 - fixed  
(PCRV 652) Fixed

Ah—illumination! The cor-bf did indeed contain the correct Vancian hyphenation; however, the Composition Review Team (CRT) had discovered a few rogue hyphens, and had clumped them into a single query. When Paul reviewed the CRT queries, at a glance he figured all the entries in the list were true rogue hyphens, and OK'd the changes; for the same reason I had failed to notice the changes when performing my experiment.

So what exactly went wrong? In theory, one of the CRT reviewers should have checked each query against the cor-bf. But then, it is needless work to check the 'obvious' cases (like as-ton-ishing, clearly rogue hyphens); but the Vancian hyphens in question are unusual enough that they do indeed look like rogue hyphens. As we've continually learned throughout VIE work, the term 'obvious errors' has different meanings to different people—more so when dealing with some of Jack's idiosyncrasies. The only solution I can recommend to avoid future episodes like the above: CRT reviewers should lower their 'threshold of obviousness', and check any 'remotely-questionable' cases against cor-bf.

Remarked the Bob: "So we spent an hour on the hyphen in 'micro-seconds', decided it should be there, but lost it anyway. Wonderful, wonderful."



## C'est la VIE!

by Patrick Dusoulier

End of October last year, Norma Vance informed Paul Rhoads and me of some queries made by Jack's agent in France, Pierre Lenclud. They seemed to have something to do with using restored VIE texts, but the message was somewhat unclear, especially since it had come through Jack's agent in Italy and had probably become a bit garbled in the process. . . I undertook to investigate, and eventually managed to talk to Pierre Lenclud. He confirmed to me that two French editors intended a new publication of a number of Jack's novels: DENOEL and GALLIMARD, two very major editors. . . They wanted their new editions to be the best, i.e. based on the latest original versions of the novels. They were keen to get those versions in English, and would give them to their translators.

In fact, I assumed they didn't plan to do a complete re-translation, but use previous translations, compare them with the latest English versions, and amend the French translations. And that's how it turned out to be. . .

At that stage, I confirmed to Pierre Lenclud that I would act as VIE correspondent for France, and he gave my name to the two editors.

And then . . . nothing happened! Until early January, when Sébastien Guyot, SF editor for GALLIMARD, called me about *Space Opera*. I checked the VIE status of the text, to see that *Space Opera* had not yet undergone the TI process, and was in fact waiting to be Techno-proofed. I did that job myself, and reviewed all the proofing notes already there. There was the usual assortment of punctuation queries, spelling variants and typos, all rather nuncupatory as far as a French translation was concerned. But there were fifteen definite 'issues', which I listed for GALLIMARD to be checked against the current French translation. While I was at it, I asked them for their French text and proposed to do the comparison myself, if they agreed (by that stage, I had read *Space Opera* twice in a row, I was fairly familiar with it!). They readily complied. A few days later, I sent them a 27 page Word document with various issues, a large number of them being merely composition issues, typos and spelling errors in the French version, but a few of them were of a more interesting nature.

#### 1) The '15 issues'

These were definite TI issues found in the original text. I was pleased to see that the French translator had corrected 12 of them already. Some of them were obvious, such as 'pavanne' in Jack's original text, which became 'pavane' in the French translation (since this is the correct French spelling anyway . . .). Some were less obvious. In particular, there were two interesting cases which I will detail here:

Original version: Dame Isabel asks Bernard Bickel, "in a frosty voice":

*"Do you refuse to believe, then, that sensitive and intelligent creatures of one world are unable to comprehend the artistic efforts — including the music — of equally sensitive and intelligent inhabitants of another world?"*

*Bernard Bickel realized that he had caught a Tartar, and decided upon retreat. "No, of course not. Not at all.*

=> The unfortunate double negative in the first sentence was spotted by Linnéa Anglemark. There is no doubt that this is an error, Dame Isabel's mastery of English is not to be doubted! The text should read:

*Do you refuse to believe, then, that sensitive and intelligent creatures of one world are able to comprehend the artistic efforts — etc.*

. . . and this is indeed what the French translator did: *Vous refusez donc de croire que les créatures sensibles et intelligentes d'une planète sont capables d'apprécier les efforts artistiques* 'capables' is 'able'; 'unable' would have been 'incapables'.

The other unfortunate contradiction (spotted by Bob Lacovara while typing the text) is:

Original version: poor Roger has been trying to convince Dame Isabel to use 'three-dimension records' instead of live performances . . .

*Roger could summon further arguments, and listened while Dame Isabel and Bernard Bickel debated the merits of Cassandra Prouty against those of Nellie Mlanova*

=> this looks very much like a typo by oversight, and should read *Roger could summon no further arguments*, or alternatively, *Roger could not summon further arguments*,

. . . and yes, the French translation reads correctly as: *Ne trouvant pas d'autre argument, Roger écouta Dame Isabel et Bernard Bickel* (literally: 'not finding any other argument')

Let's see the three remaining cases where the French translator was not as vigilant:

#### a) The Biancolleli/Biancolelli inconsistency.

This one came out of Techno-Proofing, my good old 'GNP' method . . .

In the beginning, Dame Isabel says: *We must have Biancolleli*, but later, we have: *"We could sue," asserted Julia Biancolelli, somewhat feebly.*

=> I doubt there are two distinct singers in this category, with almost the same name. The most Italian-looking spelling is the second one (this 'elli' at the end is very common) but I double-checked on the Web, for what that's worth. The fight was short, and the winner was Biancolelli with 824 strikes, against a measly 9 for Biancolleli . . .

#### b) The dungeon affair.

To accommodate the 'zants and their particular *weltanschauung*', Dame Isabel decides that some changes have to be made in Beethoven's *Fidelio*: the word 'dungeon' must be replaced with 'desert'. Otto von Scheerup protests:

*"The meter is changed," growled Otto von Scheerup. "Die Wüste; der Burgverliesz."*

=> Linnéa spotted the three errors contained in this original version:

*Die Wuste* (the desert) should be *Die Wüste* (with an umlaut).

*Burgverliesz* is an incorrect spelling, should be *Burgverlies*. (I have found one isolated instance of 'Burgverliesz' on the Web, though, but this was against 1360 for 'Burgverlies' . . . There are spelling deviations on the Web too, of course!)

On top of this, a dungeon, in German, is not masculine, but neutral: it should be *das*, not *der*.

The French translator caught one out of three, left the dungeon untouched:

— *Le mètre est changé, grommela Otto von Scheerup. Die Wüste, der Burgverliesz.*

#### c) The Zauberflöte incident.

Dame Isabel's Company is staging Mozart's *The Magic Flute* for the Striads. We are into the opening scene: *The curtain rose; Tomino came forth pursued by a serpent, and so went the performance.*

=> Linnéa spotted this one. It is *Tamino*, of course . . . and his girl friend is Pamina, as every opera-lover knows! Admittedly, this confusion exists, and I have found six articles on the Web, about *The Magic Flute*, where the character's name was put as 'Tomino' (Anglo-Saxons are not as sensitive to vowels as us latins!) I also found 2,220 articles about *The Magic Flute* with 'Tamino', fortunately, so Mozart can rest at peace in his tomb. Note that it was essential to make a search related to *The Magic Flute* since 'Tomino' is also a frequent Japanese name . . .

## 2) Integrity problems

This is where we can be thankful that GALLIMARD is a conscientious editor, and wanted to do a check. I found two very severe integrity issues in the French version that was sent to me:

### a) Missing text.

A part of the original version has disappeared. This may be due to the scanning process from the published version, or a file corruption . . . I don't know, I couldn't find the French book in libraries! Whatever the reason, this is a major issue, of course, which will be easily repaired. For the record, the missing part is in Chapter 8, where the French text contains:

*Le moniteur parla ; Darwin Litchley traduisit d'une voix morne.  
Une heure plus tard, l'express arriva. Le moniteur reçut son compte de piles et sans plus de façons quitta le Phébus.*

This corresponds to:

*The monitor spoke; Darwin Litchley translated in a dull voice.  
An hour later the flyer arrived. The monitor was paid his batteries and without further ado departed the Phoebus.*

Even without the original text in hand, the hiatus is obvious. The whole passage about the monitor asking to be paid 850 batteries for his fee, and threatening to "infect the *Phoebus* with approximately ten million infant Water-people, more or less similar to himself" if Dame Isabel doesn't comply, has disappeared. I suspect this corresponds simply to a few pages of the previous French published text having been overlooked while scanning it, since the first sentence is at the bottom of a page.

### b) Misplaced text.

A significant portion of text (4 pages in the French version) has been put in the wrong place in Chapter 13, so that the Rlaru audience suddenly appears for a first presentation, when this presentation hasn't even been discussed or prepared yet. This text appears further down, so that the reader is now made aware of preparations for a first presentation, after it has been performed.

## 3) Translation issues

I will spare you my remarks on some strictly syntactical, or style-related, translations: they would be nuncupatory to non-French speakers. I will just mention two issues of interest:

### a) Translation error.

In Chapter 9, Captain Gondar is trying to convince Dame Isabel to make a detour to another planet in the Hydra constellation, by tempting her with another troupe of musicians as excellent as those of the regretted Ninth Company:

*Captain Gondar massaged his forehead. "Of course. But this planet in Hydra is no less advanced than Rlaru. The people might even agree to send a troupe of musicians to Earth, on the order of the Ninth Company."*

=> "on the order of the Ninth Company" . . . On the same level of excellence, of a comparable level, etc.

Unfortunately, the French translation came out as:

*d'envoyer une troupe de musiciens sur Terre, pour le compte de la Neuvième Compagnie.*

which means literally 'to send a troupe of musicians to Earth, on behalf of the Ninth Company'. Apparently, 'on the order' was misinterpreted as 'by the order', resulting in an absurd meaning in context.

### b) Translation deviation.

This is a special case, where I think the translator must have assumed a typo in the original text . . . Since this was a real possibility, I first checked with Norma Vance, to determine Jack's position on this. Might as well show you the exchange of mails:

Me to Norma:

*Space Opera*: a question

Among several issues of translation that I raised, there is a 'funny' one. I need your feedback on this, as to what Jack actually intended. Let me explain:

In the episode on the planet Zade, "there are at least sixteen variations of the intelligent species", all humanoids, but very disparate in color, anatomy, and of course, cultural habits. There is mention of:

the Stagag-Ogog Clawbills ('les Becagriffes Stagag-Ogog': OK)

the Water-people ('les Aquatiques': OK)

the Striads ('les Striades': OK)

the Mental Warriors ('les Guerriers Fous': that's OK in context)

. . . and the Three-walkers!

For the 'Three-walkers', I stopped in my tracks when I saw the French translation: it is 'Les Marcheurs de Forêt'. This means literally (I'm sure you've worked it out already) 'The Forest walkers' . . .

The French translator has considered Jack's 'Three-walkers' as 'Tree-walkers' . . . It may be a misreading of the original text, or it may be a deliberate decision: the translator may have thought that 'Three' was a typo for 'Tree'!

My personal feeling about this, for what it's worth: I like the 'Three-walkers', it's infinitely more mysterious and intriguing than 'Tree-walkers'. One is free to imagine anything: do those people always walk by groups of three, for religious, or cultural, or sexual



reasons? Do they have three legs, maybe? (I'm thinking of *Three-legged Joe!*) Or three toes per foot? Or . . . ?

We don't have yet whatever evidence is available in the Mugar Library (Alun might be able to get it sometime in the future). So my question is:

Could you tell me what Jack actually wanted, or barring that, how he feels about it today? Which of the two has his preference? 'Three-walkers' or 'Tree-walkers'? If it's definitely 'Three-walkers', I'd love any comment on what he imagined there is behind this name!

To which Norma responded very quickly with:

Dear Patrick:

I'm inclined to agree with you about the Three-walkers. Let it be whatever the reader imagines. Jack thinks he wrote Three-walkers and would as soon let it be that: total mystery! So—change back to Three-walkers; give the reader something to ponder.

Have fun!

Norma

I followed Norma's advice, and 'had fun' . . . I confirmed Oakland's position to my GALLIMARD correspondent, and proposed as translation: 'les Trimarcheurs'. It sounds almost like the English original word, and is based on the prefix 'Tri' (for 'three') and the word 'marcheurs' (walkers), nothing sensational of course. It is similar in construction to a common French word 'triporteur', literally 'Three-carrier', a sort of three-wheeled bicycle with a large container, used in the old days for fast urban transportation of various stuff. They've disappeared from the streets nowadays . . .

I'm really glad I had this opportunity to work on a French edition of Jack's works, and I hope to have many such opportunities in the future: it would be good to be able to ensure that the care we take in the VIE to restore Jack's oeuvre to a pristine state can be extended to other languages. I also hope that, somehow, a form of acknowledgment to the VIE will be expressed in the future French publications based on our texts. We'll see what comes out of it, but on the basis of this *Space Opera* exercise, I expect the GALLIMARD people to see where their editorial interest lies, and that they will be keen to come back to us in the future!



## Nectar of the Gods

### The Vancian Pursuit of Whiskey Appreciation

*by Chuck King ("If we modeled ourselves after you, sir, there'd be no room to move for the whiskey." — Sail 25)*

#### PART III: AMERICAN WHISKEYS

This is the final installment in a three-part series of articles on the appreciation of whiskey. Based on references scattered throughout his works, Vance seems to have some appreciation for the Water of Life, and at the very least a number of his readers enjoy a wee dram from time to time. In the first part I gave some general background on how whiskey is made and some tasting tips; last month's installment went into more depth about the whiskeys of Scotland and Ireland. This article focuses on whiskeys from the United States.

Although they are technically 'American Whiskeys', whiskeys from Canada are their own category of spirit, related to but distinct from the whiskeys produced further south. As I explained in the first installment of this series, I do not have sufficient experience with Canadian whiskeys to include them in my discussion except tangentially. By excluding them I cast no aspersions whatsoever on Canadian whiskey as a genre or any brand thereof. Indeed, exploring fine Canadian whiskeys is a goal of mine for the future.

*He raised his highball. Marvellous stuff, whiskey. The elixir of dreams. Incorrect. Not dreams. Whiskey sharpened the senses, slowed time. [ . . . ] Sense and sensation. . . He closed his eyes, sipped his highball. The flavor of oak and mellow grain. The wetness of water, flowing over his tongue. — The Flesh Mask*

Where the Scots and the Irish work their magic with barley, American distillers make their whiskeys from predominantly corn, rye, and wheat. Almost all American whiskeys contain a small amount (around ten percent) of malted barley in the mash, to foster fermentation, but the character of American whiskeys comes from the other grains.

The most prominent American whiskey is bourbon. The name comes from Bourbon County, Kentucky, whence came popular early examples of this style. In the old days Bourbon County was much larger; it has since been subdivided into other counties, but a part of it is still called Bourbon County. Ironically, the present Bourbon County is dry: one cannot legally buy its namesake spirit there.

To be called bourbon, under U.S. law, a whiskey must employ at least 51% corn in the mash, and be stored in new charred oak barrels. (The requirement for new barrels generates a steady supply of used barrels, which are sold to Scotch distillers.) If a whiskey is stored in new charred oak barrels for at least two years, it can be

called 'straight' whiskey; i.e., straight bourbon whiskey. If it was distilled in Kentucky (as the vast, vast majority of American whiskey is) it can be called Kentucky straight bourbon whiskey, but bourbon could be made anywhere; it does not have to be made in Kentucky.

There is a separate category of American whiskey called 'Tennessee whiskey', which includes the most prominent brand of whiskey in America, if not the world: Jack Daniel's. Tennessee whiskey is the subject of much misunderstanding. I would like to clear up a few misconceptions:

First, Tennessee whiskey is made from exactly the same ingredients as bourbon. If it were made anywhere else, it would be bourbon. The 'Tennessee' designation is more of a public relations issue than designation of a distinct style of whiskey. Indeed, there are presently two Tennessee whiskey distillers—Jack Daniel's and George Dickel—and the whiskeys they make are nothing like each other.

Some people distinguish Tennessee whiskey as 'sour mash'. Well, it is, but so is essentially all bourbon. Furthermore, sour mash fermentation (where some of the remnants of the previous distillation are added to fermentation of the next batch) does not make a practical difference any more. In the early days of distilling, using sour mash fermentation promoted consistency and prevented contamination, but with modern industrial practices those are not serious problems today. The 'sour mash' designation on a whiskey bottle is today essentially ad copy.

Both Tennessee whiskey distillers employ charcoal filtering. Bourbon producers do not generally charcoal filter their whiskey, but some do. To the extent that there is a specific characteristic that separates Tennessee whiskey from most bourbon, that would be it, but the charcoal filtration does not automatically make whiskey Tennessee whiskey, and, as noted, even though they share this similarity, the two Tennessee whiskeys are still remarkably different in character.

So, in my discussion of bourbon, I am going to include the Tennessee whiskeys, because they are, essentially, bourbons. Certainly, Jack Daniel's is different in character from Jim Beam, but not more so than, say, Maker's Mark or Wild Turkey.

In contrast to the scores of Scotch distilleries, there are only about a dozen distilleries in the United States, but some produce many different brands of whiskey. The ones worth discussing are almost all bourbons. (But, see the discussion of rye whiskey, below.) The factors resulting in differences in bourbons are not the same as those affecting Scotches, with the exception of aging. American distillers don't use peated malt, and all bourbons are aged in new casks. But there is a very significant new variable in bourbon production: the recipe, or 'mashbill'. Scotch malt whiskey is made from a

mash of 100% malted barley; bourbon is a combination of three different grains.

The predominant grain is corn. By law it must make up at least 51% of the mashbill; in practice, it is usually closer to 75%. The remaining grain is eight to twelve percent malted barley, and the rest either rye or wheat. Most bourbons are made with rye, but by no means all: Maker's Mark and the Weller and Old Fitzgerald families are prominent bourbons made with wheat.

Kentucky and Tennessee experience much more drastic extremes of temperature in the course of a year than Scotland; significantly, it gets much hotter there in the summers. Consequently, whiskey ages more quickly. While most Scotch malts are only starting to come into their own at eight years, bourbons are usually bottled at around four years, and five or six years in the barrel can produce a superlative bourbon. In recent years a number of older bourbons have appeared: Jim Beam now sells nine-year-old Knob Creek all over the place, and bourbons twenty years old or more, most notably under the Hirsch and Van Winkle labels, have gained wide repute. Based on my experience with old ryes (see below), I am hesitant to spend the money necessary to investigate these ancient bourbons.

Most Scottish malt distillers, if they bottle and sell their own product at all, sell their whiskey under a single brand name—usually, the name of the distillery. A few have more than one (e.g., Springbank also bottles Longrow; Tobermory bottles Ledaig) but those are the exceptions. By contrast, American distillers have numerous brand names, and brands move from distillery to distillery with little if any indication on the bottle. Sometimes it can be a bit of a puzzle to figure out at which distillery a bottle of bourbon was made. For example: the Stitzel Weller distillery closed in 1992. But the Weller brand name endured, and production moved to the Bernheim distillery. Then in 1999 the Bernheim facility was bought by Heaven Hill, so now the Heaven Hill line of products is made there. But when Heaven Hill bought the distillery, the Weller brand was sold to another company, and now Weller whiskeys are made at the Buffalo Trace distillery. Which used to be the Ancient Age distillery. Furthermore, Stitzel Weller used to make Old Fitzgerald; production of that line also moved to Bernheim when Stitzel Weller closed, but that brand went to Heaven Hill with the distillery, and so it is still made in the same place, but by a different owner. Soon (if not already) you will be able to see bottles of the different Weller or Old Fitz brands sitting next to each other on liquor store shelves that were actually made by three different companies, in up to three different distilleries: the oldest from Stitzel Weller, intermediate aged examples from Bernheim, and new product from Buffalo Trace or Heaven Hill.

By my count, at present there are an even dozen distilleries making bourbon (including Tennessee whiskey) in the U.S. They are:

Buffalo Trace (formerly Ancient Age), which makes Buffalo Trace, Blanton's, Elmer T. Lee, Old Charter, and the Weller brands. Note: Elmer T. Lee is one of the few whiskeys named after a living man—Lee is the mostly-retired master distiller from Buffalo Trace, but I understand he still comes down to the warehouse to pick the barrels of bourbon that will be bottled with his name on them.

Barton, which makes a dizzying array of mostly lower-tier bourbons. Its most prominent brand is Ten High; its best product is Very Old Barton.

Jim Beam, which of course makes the various varieties of Jim Beam whiskey, as well as Old Crow, Old Taylor, and the Old Granddad family. Beam also makes a series of specialty small-batch bourbons: Knob Creek, Basil Hayden's, Baker's, and Booker's. Baker's and Booker's are two more bourbons named after living people: Baker Beam is a former master distiller, and Booker Noe, the grandson of Jim Beam himself, is the figurehead for the distillery—his picture appears in the portrait gallery of Beams that adorns every bottle of Jim Beam whiskey, showing the whiskey-making family line that stretches back over 200 years.

Early Times. Early Times whiskey (at least, that sold in America) is not bourbon; it is aged in used barrels. But the Early Times distillery does produce a prominent bourbon: Old Forester.

Four Roses. This distillery's products are not sold in the U.S. but are, I understand, common in other parts of the world. I had my first taste of Four Roses bourbon in a bar in the Paris airport en route to GM2!

Heaven Hill, discussed above, which, besides Old Fitzgerald, makes Evan Williams and Elijah Craig, as well as lots of other lower-tier brands. Usually, if you see a low-priced mystery bourbon, it's a safe bet that it's from either Heaven Hill or Barton.

Labrot and Graham. This (in its current incarnation) is a relatively new distillery. It produces a bourbon called Woodford Reserve. Labrot and Graham is unique among bourbon distillers for using only pot stills; all the others use continuous stills. Scotch malt whiskey distillers also use pot stills, which contributes to the character of fine malt whiskeys; it will be interesting to see the effect of pot stills on bourbon. But, as far as I have been able to determine, this pot still bourbon is not available yet; it is still being aged in Labrot and Graham's stone warehouses. What, then, is the 'Labrot and Graham Woodford Reserve' bourbon that is widely available? At present, that whiskey is blended from carefully selected barrels of Old Forester-recipe bourbon from the Early Times distillery. I have heard that Labrot and Graham are making their

bourbon from the same mashbill (72% corn, 18% rye, 10% malted barley).

Maker's Mark, which produces only whiskey bottled under its own name.

Wild Turkey, which, in addition to its eponymous products, makes several premium bourbons: Rare Breed (bottled at cask strength), Kentucky Legend, Kentucky Spirit, and Russell's Reserve, the other bourbon named after a living man (Wild Turkey master distiller James Russell).

Seagram's. This distillery is in Indiana, and the only bourbon it produces, Sam Cougar, is only available in Asia and Australia. It also produces various whiskeys that go into Seagram's popular Seven Crown blended whiskey.

Jack Daniel's, in Tennessee, produces primarily its wildly popular Old No. 7 brand. It also makes Gentleman Jack, which gets its remarkable smoothness from being charcoal filtered a second time prior to bottling. (Other whiskeys that are charcoal filtered, including the more common Jack Daniel's, are filtered between distillation and barreling.) Green labeled Jack Daniel's is the company's original whiskey, as made since 1884; the better-known black labeled version was launched to commemorate the death of the original Jack Daniel. Jack died in 1911 from complications from a broken toe; he broke it kicking a safe he couldn't get to open. The black labeled Jack Daniel's is a year or two older than the green labeled version (four years for green vs. five or six years for black).

George Dickel, also in Tennessee, makes two versions of its own brand: the black-labeled No. 8, and the tan-labeled No. 12. The latter is older (eight years).



*The author with an array of favorite spirits.*

Any or all of the above distilleries may produce other bourbons; I have listed the most common. It is also

possible to find whiskey from other distilleries: I believe some of the older Hirsch or Van Winkle whiskeys may come from the closed Michter distillery in Pennsylvania, and I've seen a whiskey called Virginia Gentleman, which I understand is at least partly produced in Virginia, although according to one source the initial production is at a Kentucky distillery.

I have seen reviewers wax rhapsodic about bourbons I considered vile, so I hesitate to make definitive statements about the quality of one bourbon over another, but I will recommend a few personal favorites. In a blind side-by-side comparison recently, I picked Maker's Mark as the best of a dozen respectable bourbons. Weller Special Reserve also finished high, so I guess I have a taste for wheated bourbons. George Dickel No. 12 is easily one of the most complex whiskeys I have tasted, with flavor elements I have not tasted anywhere else, although I actually enjoy some of the others more. You can never go wrong with a Wild Turkey product. I've also been impressed with Elmer T. Lee; in the blind side-by-side comparison, my father picked it over all the others. Gentleman Jack is a classic—more civilized than its ubiquitous sibling. Finally, I must recommend Booker's. It's bottled at cask strength, which at Jim Beam means around 125 proof. That will clear out your sinuses! But with that extreme potency comes extreme flavor: it is a huge whiskey, and even a sip explodes in the mouth.

Those are all sippin' whiskeys. Bourbon, unlike single malt Scotch, is often used as a mixer. For mixing up highballs, Manhattans, sours or mint juleps, I recommend regular Old Fitzgerald (with wheat) or Old Forester (with rye); each has a high flavor-to-value ratio.

*. . . perhaps a taste of sour-mash rye whiskey, which Hilyer often described as 'Nectar of the Gods'? — Night Lamp*

It is no accident that I took the title for this series of articles from the foregoing quote, because, like Hilyer Fath, I do not believe that any example of the distiller's art surpasses sour mash rye whiskey. Although it languishes in obscurity, rye is one of the most flavorful of whiskeys, and fully capable of holding its own with the great single malts and bourbons.

In the old days (i.e., pre-Prohibition) rye was the predominant style of whiskey in America, produced in quantity in Pennsylvania and Maryland. But rye suffered the same fate as heavy dark beers due to the change in American tastes that occurred in the middle of the twentieth century. It may have had to do with Prohibition, but I don't know if that was the sole cause. In any event, public tastes moved towards both lighter bodied and flavored beers and spirits. This phenomenon, culminating in the widespread popularity of light beer and vodka, affected bourbon as well, but inasmuch as rye is more strongly flavored than bourbon it was an earlier casualty. In the past couple years, however, I have seen signs that, just as is happening with beer, heavier and

more flavorful spirits are beginning a renaissance. So, I have hope that rye will once again come to prominence.

In the meantime, however, only four distilleries produce rye today, and only three produce straight rye whiskey as it is generally understood. It can be difficult to find in the U.S., and impossible to find in other markets. It is indeed a shame. In comparison with bourbon, rye is both sweeter and spicier, more strongly flavored, and with all the complexity and depth of great whiskeys of any style.

Jim Beam makes two rye whiskeys, and they are both marvellous. Jim Beam Straight Rye Whiskey comes in the standard square Jim Beam bottle, but with a bright yellow label instead of the white or black of their bourbon. It is made from a mashbill of 51% rye, with the rest corn and malt. A bottle is visible in one of the photos from GM2 that appeared in the last issue. It is pleasant, flavorful, easy to drink, and inexpensive. Beam's other rye brand is Old Overholt. This is an old brand name, originally produced by a now-defunct Pennsylvania distiller. Old Overholt is made from a mashbill of more rye, and has some different flavor characteristics.

Wild Turkey makes a rye. It is more subtly flavored than the Beam ryes (at least to my taste), a circumstance all the more surprising since it is bottled at 101 proof as opposed to 80 proof for the Beam products. But, the subtle flavor in no way provides less complexity than other ryes or other Wild Turkey products.

Finally, Heaven Hill makes several ryes. The only one I've been able to find is Rittenhouse Rye. It is very distinctive; its taste is much fruitier than other ryes. It, like the Beam products, is also a great bargain.

Those are the three distilleries producing straight rye whiskey today. However, several bottlers have brought out very old ryes, bottled from stocks found in warehouses from distilleries no longer in production. I have found and tasted five: Sazerac 18 year old, Van Winkle Family Reserve 13 year old, Hirsch 13 year old, Old Rip Van Winkle 12 year old, and Michter's 10 year old.

First, be warned: the Van Winkle Family Reserve and the Hirsch are, apparently, the same whiskey with different labels on the bottle. (I don't know if this is also true of their old bourbons, but the ryes are indistinguishable.) That whiskey, by whatever name, is probably my favorite of the older ryes. All have interesting elements and complexities, but for my money I don't think they show significantly greater depth or merit than the younger ryes. My experience is that rye whiskey matures early, and I believe that these ancient ryes spent a little too much time in the barrel. They are all palatable, even good, but the wood is starting to assert itself, and none is (again, to my taste) sufficiently better than the younger ryes to justify costing two to four times as much. When they're gone, I don't intend to replace them.

The quick maturation of rye whiskey is particularly evident in the products of the fourth distillery producing rye whiskey: the Anchor Distillery of San Francisco. The Anchor Distillery is associated with the Anchor Brewery, makers of Anchor Steam Beer. The goal of Fritz Maytag, the owner of the distillery, was to make whiskey the way it was made back in colonial times. (George Washington himself was a rye distiller.) So, he uses a small pot still, and starts with a mashbill of 100% *malted* rye. Some of the product is then aged in new (uncharred) oak barrels, and bottled—at cask strength, around 125 proof—at an age of about one year.

The result is Old Potrero Single Malt Whiskey. (It's called that because under U.S. law it can't be called 'rye' because it was aged in uncharred barrels.) Any other whiskey bottled at one year would in all likelihood be rotgut, but the Old Potrero has finesse and smoothness one would expect in a much, much older whiskey. On top of that it has the amazing malted rye flavor and aroma. Simply put, Old Potrero is the most amazing whiskey I have ever tried. It is unbelievable that a style like this was allowed to die out.

Anchor also bottles Old Potrero Straight Rye, which is the same 100% malted rye whiskey, but aged in charred casks for three years. Although this is called 'straight rye', this 100% malted rye whiskey is so different from the 51% unmalted rye whiskeys discussed above that it really cannot be included in the same category. The charred oak adds some mellowness and it is a little smoother, but the malted rye flavor of the one-year-old is still there. The result is even better than the one-year-old.

Old Potrero is not cheap—last time I looked it was running about \$100 a bottle for the three year old. I have, however, found a Canadian whiskey made with malted rye that has some of the same flavor characteristics. It's called Lot No. 40, and while it is not cheap either, it's not as dear as Old Potrero. It may provide some idea of the difference malting the rye makes. If you like Lot No. 40, you will love Old Potrero.

I hope that you have found this series of articles interesting and informative. I would like to once again thank Koen Vyverman for locating many of the quotes from Vance's work that punctuate the articles. Thanks also to everyone who brought a bottle of whiskey to GM2!

For those interested in learning more about whiskey, I highly recommend the works of whiskey writer Jim Murray. In preparing these articles I often consulted his books, including *The Complete Guide to Whiskey* (Triumph 1997), *Classic Bourbon, Tennessee & Rye Whiskey* (Prion 1998), and *Classic Blended Scotch* (Prion 1999). Also, regarding Scotch malt whiskey, I recommend the website [www.maltwhiskey.com](http://www.maltwhiskey.com) It contains a plethora of information, tasting notes and recommendations. Cheers!

## Missing Columbia

by Bob Lacovara

*Bob Lacovara, Effectuator of the Vance Integral Edition, doffs his Sea-Dragon Conquerer mask and cape during the day, and, donning the demure Moon Moth, appears in his alter ego as a Principle Member of Technical Staff at the Charles Stark Draper Laboratory, Cambridge, MA and Houston, Texas. He models control systems on the Space Station and Space Shuttle, analyses orbital maneuvers, and spends some time verifying that non-US components of the Station meet NASA safety standards. He holds a Ph.D. in computer science, a degree of Engineer in electrical engineering, and two other engineering degrees: with these, and \$2.00, he may ride the subway. For relaxation, he teaches reading to impoverished children in the ghetto while squeezing lumps of coal into diamond to ameliorate the plight of stranded gray whales covered with crude oil from leaking supertankers in the Gulf of Mexico. Despite this, he is considered by some to be incorrigibly frivolous.*

"Things of flame, and things with wings;  
All the others suffer stings."

From *The Law of Stolen Flight* in *Bones of the Moon*  
by Jonathan Carroll.

Anyone who has ever spent much time in my company knows that, eventually, I may become bored with the conversation, and that I have an almost infallible means to re-direct the topic. I begin to talk about the Shuttle, or the astronauts I know, or just a variety of trivia concerning NASA. In fact, I probably go on about it far too much. It's not that I have a large role in manned space flight—I don't—but I'm always amused at the amount of attention the topic gathers. So, in partial recompense for my often light-hearted chat about manned space, let me offer a few serious observations.

What is it, I wonder, which is so intriguing about a spaceflight? I suppose that the VIE volunteers that I meet, or the people who I encounter on my travels all tend to think of spaceflight as exotic and glamorous. Exotic, to be sure. Glamorous: well, for some. Dangerous, as we have seen in the last weeks.

Make no mistake: the Space Shuttle is a complex, finicky, and *very expensive* vehicle. Moreover, I have never met anyone who worked on it, from astronauts down to paper pushers such as myself, who didn't recognize the very real possibility that an accident was in our future, and kept that in mind in their work. Risky: it has to be that way. The energies involved in boosting a vehicle of that size and weight to orbit, and the difficulty of dissipating those energies during the return from orbit, strained the limits of engineering when the vehicle was designed. And maintaining the vehicle strains the processes and systems which are in place to re-process the Shuttle after every landing.

(This isn't a place to count the cost, but just so you are on the same page as I am, let me give you a feeling for what a Shuttle costs: about as much as a modern aircraft carrier, and all of its aircraft. Perhaps \$4 billion.

But like another fine vehicle, a Volvo, the acquisition cost is low compared to maintenance: a launch costs about \$250 to \$500 million.)

On Saturday, the first of February of this year, a friend on the phone woke me up to tell me that many things had gone wrong all at once, and that seven good people, and the Shuttle *Columbia*, were now gone. The feeling I had was almost indescribable, except to say, a feeling of dire illness. I had no responsibility for that flight, but others of my tribe had, and something we had done, or decided, or failed to do may have killed our friends, and destroyed our beautiful vehicle.

Now, in some sense, the loss of seven individuals is a small thing compared to the senseless loss of life which occurs on American highways, or in American violent crimes. But in this case, these were seven people whose purposes that day were neither senseless nor personal, but lofty and honorable. Their purpose was, by and large, the pursuit of scientific knowledge, a thing which is good in itself. And further, this knowledge was sought not specifically for some company or individual, but for all mankind. As a result, the tragedy of their death transcends even the terrible loss which their families suffer and cannot ever completely recover from: it is a loss suffered by all of us, everywhere.

Perhaps you are thinking, "for all mankind" is just a phrase, an elocution used to dress up a motive beyond its real import. This is not the case. The science performed on the Shuttle was in fact for the betterment of all of us, just as the knowledge gained by American deep space probes and planetary landers was gained for all of us: for all mankind.

But even more than the loss of these seekers of knowledge, there is an even larger symbolic loss. The astronauts who risk their lives during the violence of launch, in a high-radiation environment for two weeks or so on-orbit, or months on the Space Station, and during the literally fire-strewn return to Earth bear wings for all of us, each and every one of us. With the astronauts rides an ancient dream of mankind, to fly beyond constraints and boundaries, to seek, and seek further, to transcend the mortal chains of gravity . . .

When an astronaut dies, some of our wings die with them.

I mourn the loss of *Columbia* as well. Oh, yes, yes, yes, it was just an assembly of aluminum and exotic metals, computers, rubber, insulation . . . but oh, so, so, so much more. A Shuttle is the absolute height of the engineer's craft, a beautiful concoction of equations and metal, the embodiment of dreams and longing, of dreams made flesh . . . now, *Columbia* is a memory, and millions of pieces of metal and fabric strewn over Texas. Do you not know that a spacecraft has a heart and soul? Any aircraft does. You think not? Ask a pilot.

And something with a heart and soul has tears, as well: the rain of debris, falling for hours to Earth, coming home at last.

Well, whatever you might think of America and its space program, I can promise you this. We will bind our wounds, and turn our considerable resources to the task of determining just what happened to Shuttle *Columbia*. And we will find out, very likely, and if we do, it will not happen again.

We will remember, from time to time, the X-15 astronauts, and the Russian cosmonauts, *Apollo 1's* crew, *Challenger's* crew and *Columbia's*, all gone before us. And *Columbia's* sisters, *Atlantis*, *Discovery*, and *Endeavor* will fly, better and more safely, and carry our Wings aloft.



## Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,

I'm sorry I'm late but I've only just latched onto the VIE and I've been ploughing through back issues of COSMOPOLIS until I ran out of HTML and found I can't download Acrobat Reader to read PDF files.

Do you think that the Net could be an Institute invention designed to keep humanity on its toes?

May I start on a slightly jarring, perhaps acerbic note? I find the adulatory tone adopted whenever Jack Vance is mentioned to be slightly creepy. Is there the nucleus of a cult forming? Shall we find ourselves barricaded into some compound ready to die by cluthe if the Marshals from the USLS (UnSullied Library Shelves) break through the doors?

Why don't people like Jack Vance? Personally, I can't understand it, but he must be slightly daunting to readers who don't have a good grasp of English. I'm like most of the other correspondents who just fall into a Jack Vance story and don't come up for air till the last word.

My theory is that we fans have the 'Vance Gene' which predisposes us to appreciate wonderful works of literature. How many Vance fans like Lewis Carroll? Most of us appear to be in scientific or methodologically grounded disciplines. It's no good handing a Vance book to someone without the Vance Gene. They just don't get it. They can't see in that part of the spectrum. If someone wants to borrow from my collection I loan them *Hellstrom's Hive* by Frank Herbert; one of my favourite books. I invariably get it returned politely and unread. I'm no fool! I would never hand them a Jack Vance book in case I didn't get it back and most people know how hard they are to replace.

So, where are all the hard-to-get Jack Vance books? I think they're lying around unread in the collections of



the gene-deficient population. Or, they may have migrated to Ireley where, I suspect, lays the copy of *Lurulu* I ordered from Amazon languishing over the eight months I tried to get it out of them—unsuccessfully.

I could never do editing; have you seen the length of this diatribe!

But, I'll do anything to help, e.g. lick stamps, serve Earl Grey tea in exquisite translucent English Bone China cups and hand out plates of wafer-thin cucumber sandwiches with the crusts cut off (after Sloppy Joe's Olde Worlde Tea Shoppe on Miminy Piminy Boulevard, Gladstone City, Lord Bulwer-Lytton's World, Rigel Concourse).

You know, the run-of-the mill stuff.

VIE au pouvoir!

*Len Appleby*



To the Editor,

With all my respects about the human being (can I say sentient being? I'm not sure . . .) who's named Paul Rhoads, I must say that he certainly speaks about things which he doesn't know . . . I'm certainly a great French fan of 'sci-fi and fantasy literature' since I was 10 years old, particularly Jack Vance, Lovecraft, Simak, Howard, Tolkien and others . . . Now I am 38 and I continue to play RPGs with as much pleasure as 24 years ago!

I think RPGs are very good for imagination and education of young generations! It's an opportunity to give the youngest the love of reading. Sorry for my English but I try my best to explain my feelings about Paul Rhoads' stupid comments about roleplaying in general and DERPG in particular! I'm proud to be a roleplayer and a great reader!

Mister Rhoads, you should 'tourner sept fois votre langue dans votre bouche avant de parler'!\*

*Rafaël Verbièse*

\*I don't know the English equivalent of the expression!



## Closing Words

Thanks to proofreaders Linda Escher, Rob Friefeld, and Jim Pattison.

COSMOPOLIS Submissions: when preparing articles for COSMOPOLIS, please refrain from fancy formatting. Send plain text. For COSMOPOLIS 36, please submit articles and Letters to the Editor to Derek Benson: [benson@online.no](mailto:benson@online.no) Deadline for submissions is February 25.

*Derek W. Benson, Editor*

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