

## INTRODUCTION

John Carr

### Acknowledgements

*I would like to thank Jerry Pournelle for allowing me to use some of his personal reminiscences of H. Beam Piper and for allowing me to study the Piper notes and letters in his possession. I would also like to thank Charlie Brown for allowing me the use of his letters, Fred Pohl for his reminiscences, and Piper researchers William J. Denholm III, Richard A. Moore, and Paul Dellinger, for their encouragement and support.*

SCENE: The Beckman Auditorium, Pasadena, California; the California Institute of Technology—a cement circus tent the size of a zeppelin hanger. In the first two rows of the balcony; A. E. Van Vogt, Theodore Sturgeon, Jack Williamson, Larry Niven, Greg Bear and Astrid Anderson, Dr. Donald Kingsbury, Harlan Ellison, Gregory Benford, and others of the SF clan, including your intrepid reporter. All guests of NASA and Jerry Pournelle, our gracious host for the weekend. On stage: Ray Bradbury, sf poet laureate and Martian Chronicalist; Carl Sagan, Mr. Cosmos: Walter Sullivan, Science Editor of the *New York Times* since 1966; Dr. Philip Morrison, Institute Professor of Physics at M.I.T.—first scientist to call upon the professional community to begin a serious search for extraterrestrial signals; and lastly, Dr. Bruce Murray, Director of J.P.L. and creator

of Purple Physics.

TOPIC: SATURN AND THE MIND OF MAN: Fourth in a series of symposiums on man and the planets.

Dr. Murray, his short cropped silver hair gleaming in the spots, looking like a California-tanned version of one of the original astronauts ten years later, hunches forward: "Saturn, our first look at this most magnificent planet, and we are there! This first glimpse at the *terra incognita* of Saturn will remain one of the finer moments throughout the time of man."

Great stuff, but what does it have to do with Beam Piper?

He wasn't there; and he should have been.

In my study of the life of H. Beam Piper, I ran head-on into a number of perplexing questions: Why, despite numerous reprintings, have Piper's books been ignored by academic critics and scholars? How is it that the man who created one of science fictions most detailed future histories received the following note in Peter Nicholls' *The Science Fiction Encyclopedia*: "Many of his (Piper's) novels and stories . . . are set in a common future history, but are insufficiently connected to be regarded as a coherent series."? (This last comment is mere sloppy scholarship, as I shall show in the essay on the Federation.) And why is Piper, who published most of his best fiction in *Astounding/Analog*, seldom mentioned as one of the great Campbell writers although he always places in the top ten in the readers polls?

The answers to these questions are bound within the Gordian knot of Piper's character, the low stature of science fiction and sf writers in general during the fifties and early sixties, Piper's premature death, and the subsequent unavailability of most of his work.

Horace Beam Piper was born in 1904, the son of a Protestant minister. He had no formal education and at age eighteen went to work as a laborer for the Pennsylvania Railroad's Altoona yards. Throughout his life he was a reticent and guarded man and as a result we know little about his early years. He was largely self-educated; he obtained a deep knowledge of science and history: "without subjecting myself to the ridiculous misery of four years in the uncomfortable confines of a raccoon coat."

While still working for the Pennsy Railroad, he sold his first story to John W. Campbell at *Astounding Science Fiction*. "Time and Time Again" appeared in the April 1947 issue and was the first of many time travel tales. Like the themes of nuclear war and the lost Martian races, time travel was a theme that would appear in many guises. In a moment of guarded confidence, Piper once admitted to Jerry Pournelle that "He Walked Around the Horses"—another time travel tale—was a true story. "I know," said Piper, "I was born on another time line." Even now Jerry can only say, "Beam looked me right in the eye when he said it. And if there was a twinkle in his eye, I couldn't find it." Jerry's still not sure whether he believes it, but he's almost certain Beam did. This would certainly go a long way toward explaining Piper's fascination with time travel, his Paratime stories, and his interest in the time theories of John Dunne, which dealt with parallel worlds coexisting in time and space. Although on the other hand it raises some questions that are far beyond the scope of this short study.

In a self-revealing quote from *Murder in the Gun Room* (Piper's only published mystery novel) a character describes his own writing:

Science fiction. I do a lot of stories for the pulps. . . *Space-Trails*, and *Other Worlds*, and *Wonder*

*Stories*; mags like that. Most of it's standardized formula stuff; what's known in the trade as space-operas. My best stuff goes to *Astonishing*. Parenthetically, you mustn't judge any of these magazines by their names. It seems to be a convention to use hyperbolic names for science-fiction magazines; a heritage from what might be called an earlier and ruder day. What I do for *Astonishing* is really hard work, and I enjoy it. I'm working now on one of them, based on J. W. Dunne's time-theories, if you know what they are.

What was H. Beam Piper like? He was a lean man of medium height, with dark hair and a thin moustache. He was almost never seen without his pipe. A thin patrician nose bridged two flint-hard eyes which would occasionally twinkle as though listening to the punch line of some inner joke on the human condition. Jerry Pournelle describes him as a courtly gentleman of the old school; and even Jerry admits that Piper did not suffer fools gladly. He was soft-spoken and spent most of his time at sf conventions by himself, not even fraternizing much with the other writers.

I recently received a letter from Paul Dellinger, an old time fan, who had the following remembrance of H. Beam Piper. "My most vivid recollection of him (Piper) was his recalling attendance at a movie which sounded, from his description, like THEM. Anyway, he said about the time the giant insects appeared he stalked out in disgust. Another man who exited at the same time struck up a conversation with him, including the question of whether Piper had ever read any science-fiction. "Hell," Piper said, "I WRITE the stuff!" This is a remembrance from Mr. Dellinger's first sf con in Washington D.C. in 1963, not long after the publication of *Little Fuzzy*.

That Piper was a hard working and conscientious man,

there can be little doubt. From 1946 to 1956 he was a part-time writer and was published in *Astounding*, *Future Science Fiction*, *Space Stories*, and *Amazing Science Fiction*. All during this time he supported his elderly mother and continued to work for the Pennsy Railroad; it wasn't until 1956—after the death of his mother—that he was able to retire. Several years later he married a French woman whom he viewed with some ambivalence. He once confided to Jerry Pournelle that “she only married me to get an expensive Paris vacation.” A letter to Charlie Brown, dated July 2, 1963:

I am now in the process of being divorced, if my future-ex-wife can ever get her French lawyers to get all the red-tape untangled. I suspect that she just doesn't know who to bribe. We are writing to each other again, in a very cordial and friendly manner. She reports that our red dachshund, Verkan Vall, of whom she retained custody when we split up, was in a movie, along with Brigitte Bardot and Jean Gabin, a couple of years ago.

Piper was also very fond of guns and had quite a respectable gun collection, one that would be valued in six or seven figures today.

John H. Costello described it for the fanzine *Renaissance*:

His collection of more than 100 antique and modern weapons, ranging from a 450-year old French sword and a 400-year old Spanish poniard with a gold inlaid blade, to a small brass cannon once mounted on a pioneer's blockhouse during the Indian fighting and a nine-millimeter pistol of the type used by German SS troops in World War II formed the background of his non-science fiction mystery, *Murder in the Gunroom*, published by Knopf in 1953.

While it's hard to judge the emotional effects of Piper's failed marriage, it is certain that the French honeymoon and subsequent divorce left him financially destitute. It was during this period that he wrote the *Fuzzy* novels, *Cosmic Computer*, *Space Viking*, and the “Lord Kalvan of Otherwhen” stories. It is a sad irony that while at the height of his writing prowess, he saw himself as a failure. When Ken White, his long-time agent, died, Piper was reduced to shooting pigeons from his hotel window to supplement his meager diet. White, who had kept all his clients' records inside his head, left Piper's business concerns in such a state of disarray that Piper was unaware of several sales to John W. Campbell. And when the third *Fuzzy* novel, *Fuzzies and Other People*, was rejected by Avon as being too dependent upon the other books in the series, he felt his career had come to an end. (The third *Fuzzy* novel has since become lost and is the property of the Piper estate now owned by Ace Books. Anyone aiding in its recovery will be amply rewarded.)

A solitary man to the end, Piper did not tell his friends of his financial predicament. Instead he took a way out that could only be reasonable to a man who abhorred state handouts and was determined not to burden his friends and family. On Monday, November 9th, 1964, H. Beam Piper shut off all the utilities to his apartment in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, put painter's drop-cloths over the walls and floor, and took his own life with a handgun from his collection.

In his suicide note, he gave an explanation that is pure Piper: “I don't like to leave messes when I go away, but if I could have cleaned up any of this mess, I wouldn't be going away. H. Beam Piper.”

After ten years of neglect—from 1965 to 1976—due in large part to the problems of ownership and control of his

estate, Piper's books have begun to fill the racks again in various Ace editions. The first to see print were the classic Fuzzy novels (often selling for \$10 to \$20 in their original Avon printings): *Little Fuzzy* and *Fuzzy Sapiens*, originally known as *The Other Human Race*. They have remained almost constantly in print ever since. These were followed by new editions of *Cosmic Computer* (Piper's title; the old Ace edition titled it *Junkyard Planet*), *Lord Kalvan of Otherwhen*, *Space Viking*, *Four-Day Planet/Planet for Texans*. With several more short story collections to come, the next few years should see the publication of almost the entire Piper cannon.

With the availability of Piper's short stories, many of which have been out of print since the forties and fifties, we should see a reevaluation of Piper's work and stature within the sf field. Had Piper lived to enjoy the sf boom of the late sixties and mid-seventies there is little doubt that he would be a major figure, standing among writers of *As-tounding's* silver years such as Harry Harrison, Jerry Pournelle, Gordon Dickson, and Poul Anderson. In a recent poll of *Analog* readers' favorite writers, Piper placed well within the top ten—without having appeared there in 14 years.

While it is our loss that we will never know Beam Piper as a man, or read what he might have written had his life not come to such an abrupt end, it is our consolation that we can come to know and treasure him through his novels and stories.

I can still remember reading *Lord Kalvan of Otherwhen* and *Space Viking*, both good action-adventure novels, in the late sixties. But my real appreciation of H. Beam Piper

didn't start until I went to work for Jerry Pournelle as his editorial assistant and researcher in 1977. Jerry had signed a contract several years before to do a sequel to *Space Viking* called *Return of Space Viking*, based on a rough outline and some notes Jerry had taken during talks with Beam. There had been some talk of a collaboration, and they continued to work on the project through their correspondence and late-night convention talks.

The project, of course, was shelved after Piper's tragic death. Jerry thought very little about it until the mid-seventies, when Roger Elwood, who had just become series editor of Laser Books, began to badger him about writing for the Laser line. Jerry eventually responded with several proposals, two of which eventually became the Laser Books titled *Birth of Fire* and *West of Honor*. The third of these proposed books, *Exiles to Glory*, was never released because of the internal problems which eventually brought an end to Laser Books. Of the four books Jerry proposed, only *Return of Space Viking* was never written, for several good reasons. While on casual inspection *Space Viking* may look like just another space opera, in reality it is one of the most complex and historically developed books in the science fiction field. As Jerry told me then, "It just seemed easier to write a new book from scratch than to spend several years doing the research necessary to do justice to Beam's *Viking* book."

So naturally my first research assignment was to take extensive notes on all the planets, history, characters, artifacts, and personal and political relationships contained in *Space Viking*. I thought it would be a piece of cake; after all, hadn't I done post-graduate work in history? My surprise! There aren't more than one or two pages in *Space Viking* that don't have some kind of historical or planetary reference, some which run for pages. On the first reading

I picked up only the obvious; it took two more readings and several hundred note cards before I was finished.

But, of course, I wasn't done; now that I had discovered the fascinating and intricate tapestry of Beam's History of the Future I had to know it all. This meant reading everything he ever wrote as well as making elaborate charts and chronologies, and spending hours talking with Jerry about the historical events and models Piper used. Then, using Beam's correspondence and Jerry's notes, I tried with Jerry to plot the uncharted areas of the TerroHuman Future History.

Slowly and steadily we began to fill in large chunks of the missing territory. We began to gather steam as more and more of his conversations with Piper began to return to Jerry. Piper's original plan had been to write at least one novel per century of his future history; accordingly he had file folders for each century containing all the pertinent historical data and characters. Even had he lived his full life span it is doubtful that he would have ever finished this monumental task, for there is evidence that the TerroHuman Future History (to simplify matters, we will call it TFH) was to continue for over six thousand years. It is hard to believe that even Beam could have written another fifty to sixty books in the twenty years he might have been expected to live—although it would have been nice to see him try. But he had already admitted the futility of this plan to Jerry during one of their discussions on the popularity of the Fuzzy novels—a popularity which forced him to write two sequels, only one of which was published, in the Seventh Century Atomic Era.

While my research on *Space Viking* was completed some time back, my interest in Piper, his works, and personality has continued to grow. I have managed to obtain

copies of every story he ever published, many of which have been out of print for over thirty years. One result of this mild obsession with Piper—in addition to this essay—was a rather long article for "The Bulletin of the Science Fiction Writers of America" on the "TerroHuman Future History of H. Beam Piper".

As for *Return of Space Viking*, Jerry Pournelle is still working on that book. Jerry thrives on having four or five simultaneous projects competing for his attention: witness, three columns, several ongoing anthologies, at least two collaborations with Larry Niven always in the works, plus several independent sf novels and his new mystery series, and the new non-fiction book he just decided to do last week. During the sixties when he was working with NASA Jerry grew to like, make that love, the constructive chaos of the space program. However, *Return of Space Viking* is now somewhere near the top of that list and should be completed within the next year or two.

H. Beam Piper had a lifelong love affair with history. Off and on during the last few years of his life he was working on a major work he called in one letter *Only the Arquebus*, a historical novel about Gonzalo de Córdoba and the Italian Wars of the early sixteenth century. Unfortunately it is not known whether Piper ever finished *Only the Arquebus*, and as far as I know no trace of it has been found among his effects. Jerry Pournelle still remembers many an evening spent with Piper discussing historical figures and events and how they might apply to the future. Piper had many a keen insight into the past and often expressed a longing that he had been alive in the simpler days of the Christian Era, when Clausewitzian politics and nuclear war were a faraway nightmare.

In a number of his works Piper created major characters

who are historians or study history as a hobby. In "The Edge of the Knife," a story about a college history professor who can sometimes see into the future, the professor says, "History follows certain patterns. I'm not a Toynbee, but any historian can see that certain forces generally tend to produce similar effects." Piper set forth a great number of his views concerning history in his works. In *Space Viking* we learn from Otto Harkaman, a Space Viking captain whose hobby is the study of history, "I study history. You know, it's odd; practically everything that's happened on any of the inhabited planets had happened on Terra before the first spaceship." Vilfredo Pareto, a famous mid-twentieth century Italian sociologist, once made a very similar statement; almost every known form of government or political-science possibility existed at one time or another among the Italian city-states of the Renaissance.

Piper also used past events as plot models and for inspiration for future history. In *Uller Uprising*, the first published work in Piper's TFH, he used the Sepoy Mutiny, a revolt started in British-held India when Bengalese soldiers were issued cartridges coated with what they believed to be the fat of cows (sacred to Hindus) and pigs (sacred to Moslems), as the basis for his plot. This is confirmed by Piper in "The Edge of the Knife," an interesting story that fits sideways into his future history, where the history professor who sees into the future compares a planetary rebellion in the Fourth Century A.E. (the Uller Uprising) to the Sepoy Mutiny. He also compares the early expansion of the Federation to the Spanish conquest of the New World.

Another historical analog used by Piper was the war in the Pacific during World War II. In *Cosmic Computer* the planet Poictesme, the former headquarters of the Third

Terran Force during the System States War, has become in the post-war period a deserted backwater. Most of those remaining on Poictesme earn their living by salvaging old army vehicles and stores—a way of life that still continues on one or two Pacific atolls. The survivors have created a belief-system around Merlin, the legendary computer that was reputed to have won the war for the Federation, reminiscent of the Cargo Cults much in vogue among Pacific Islanders after the parachute drops of W.W.II.

Piper also paid great attention to historical detail, more so than any other major sf writer since Olaf Stapledon. In *Space Viking* he gives the names of over fifty-five planets and goes into some historical, sociological, and political detail on about twenty of them. This detail ranges from a short clause to pages of exposition concerning Federation history, past wars, and historical figures, and comments on their political and sociological foibles.

Piper himself had a cyclical view of human history, one based on his study of history and certainly influenced by Arnold Toynbee, the English historian whose *A Study of History* had a great impact on the historical consciousness of the mid-twentieth century. Piper's TerroHuman Future History, which covers the fall of the Federation, the Sword-Worlds, and at least four Galactic Empires, has much of the depth of Toynbee's major study of human civilizations. Furthermore, it can easily be shown that Piper's civilizations pass through many of the same phases, the *universal state*, the *time of troubles*, and the *interregnum*, that Toynbee used to describe past civilizations.

Where Piper and Toynbee diverge is on Toynbee's belief that psychic forces determine the course of history. In *The Study of History* Toynbee says, "The Human protagonist in the divine drama not only serves God by enabling

him to renew His creation but also serves his fellow man by pointing the way for others to follow" Piper, although—or maybe because—he was the son of a minister, was a confirmed agnostic. Although fascinated by psychic research, and a believer in reincarnation, he was outwardly antagonistic towards organized religion, be it Buddhism or Christianity. There is no analogy in Piper's work to the early Christian Church, which Toynbee saw as the womb of western culture after the Fall of Rome. Throughout Piper's history, religion is played down or is the butt of satire, as in *Space Viking*, where he gives the following description of the pious Gilgameshers: "Their society seemed to be a loose theo-socialism, and their religion an absurd potpourri of most of the major monotheisms of the Federation period, plus doctrinal and ritualistic innovations of their own."

It is clear from his conception of history and his TerroHuman Future History that Piper believed no human civilization would ever be more than a short stanza before the next verse of human history. Lucas Trask, near the end of *Space Viking*, says, "It may just be that there is something fundamentally unworkable about government itself. As long as *Homo sapiens terra* is a wild animal, which he always has been and always will be until he evolves into something different in a million years or so, maybe a workable system of government is a political science impossibility . . ." This is a political reality which Piper accepts as neither good nor bad—just a law like the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

We find Piper's use of historical models, fine historical detail, and political philosophy throughout his TerroHuman Future History—a history which spans thousands of years across the First and Second Federation, the System States Alliance, the Interstellar Wars, the Neo-Barbar-

ian Age, the Sword-World Conquests, the formation of the League of Civilized Worlds, the Mardukan Empire, the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Galactic Empires; just the first of which is described as containing 3,365 worlds, 1.5 trillion people, and 15 intelligent races. But, of the whole TerroHuman Future History, it is the early Federation that receives most of Piper's attention, contains the most novels and stores, is the focus of this collection, and is what we shall turn our attention to next.

The Terran Federation included an area of over two hundred billion cubic light years and held over five million planets that could sustain life in a natural or artificial environment. Although internal evidence leaves us to suspect that only one thousand or more of these worlds were inhabited by man during the Federation, there were new worlds being colonized up until the time of the System States War in the late ninth century A.E., when the Federation began to turn back into itself. The language of the Federation was the universal Lingua Terra, an English-Spanish-Afrikaani-Portugese mixture of old Terran tongues. Time is kept according to Galactic Standard, based on earth time in seconds, minutes, and hours.

By the First Century, A.E. *homo sapiens* has become racially homogeneous; in *Four-Day Planet*, Piper states, "The amount of intermarriage that's gone on since the First Century, [had made] any resemblance between people's names and their appearances purely coincidental." Lingua Terra was also universal; by the seventeenth century, A.E. it was "spoken, in one form or another, by every descendant of the race that had gone out from the Sol System in the Third Century." Once could assume that by the time of *Space Viking* all racial differences had been lost, although there is some mention of new species differentiation. On Agni, a hot-star planet mentioned in *Space*

*Viking*, the inhabitants were said to be tough for Neo-Barbarians, and to have very dark skin.

Where are the American-Sino-Soviet superpowers in Piper's history of the future? And what has happened to the cultural domination of North America and Europe?

To understand the answer to this question we have to go back to Piper's early short stories and novelettes, many of which are not in his TFH. Throughout his body of work, Piper shows a fondness for certain themes: nuclear war, lost Martian races, the cyclical nature of civilization, the threat of barbarism from within and without, the citizen patriot, parallel time lines, etc.. In the stories published in the early fifties (and in some of his letters, too) it is the threat of a global nuclear holocaust that is clearly on his mind—as it was on the mind of any sane person in that era of nuclear brinkmanship.

One of the most important of these stories is "Flight From Tomorrow," *Future Science Fiction*, Sept.–Oct. 1950, the first story using Atomic Era dating and one in which he explores the concept of rising and ebbing civilizations on earth. There are some glaring inconsistencies with later stories, which makes "Flight From Tomorrow" impossible to place in the TFH, and the central idea—that man could adapt to radiation—is false, although that wasn't quite so obvious at the time the story was written. It is certainly one of the more curious tales in the Piper canon, and is a springboard for many of the ideas which we find in later future history stories.

The next story of interest is "Time and Time Again," Piper's first published story. In this one we find mention of a Third World War, one that takes place in 1975 (only one year before the date given to that war in the TFH). The next tale, "Day of the Morn", could almost be called a part of the TFH; Piper is clearly working out some of the back-

ground he used in later TFH stories. However, there is no internal evidence that could allow us to legitimately place it in the history.

It isn't until we get to *Uller Uprising* that we have the first true story of the TerroHuman Future History. *Uller Uprising* has an interesting history of its own; it first appeared as a Twayne Triplet (a series of three novels along a similar theme published in one large book by Twayne) in 1952—a very rare item—and was later published in 1953 in *Space Science Fiction*; it is somewhat unusual for a book to be serialized after its initial book publication! The Twayne version, about 20,000 words longer, is by far the more interesting of the two. (Ace Books may publish *Uller Uprising* in its original form in the future.) Since all the stories in the Twayne book were based on a science essay by Dr. John D. Clark, we find that many so-called Piperisms, *Niflheim*, for example, come right out of Dr. Clark's essay! Piper, in a letter to Charlie Brown dated June 6, 1964, had the following to say about *Uller Uprising*: "I'm glad to hear that the paperback *Junkyard Planet* (*The Cosmic Computer*, for Christ's sake!)—parenthesis Piper's—is selling well. I will probably be reaping the harvest in six months or so; they got the rights on it from Putnam's, and Putnam's will pay me. A paperback *Uller Uprising* I have been thinking about for some time; some day something will get done on it."

But while *Uller Uprising* is a treasure trove of information on the Fourth Century A.E., it tells very little about the early Federation. Instead we have to go to "The Edge of the Knife," the story published in *Amazing Stories* that I mentioned earlier—about the history prof who sees into the future (Beam's TerroHuman Future History, that is). The professor's foresight is phenomenal, from the Third World War to the Third Imperium, and he stores his data

in file folders much as Beam did. However, this story is most valuable for data on the early Federation.

In "Edge of the Knife":

He sighed and sat down at Marjorie's typewriter and began transcribing his notes. Assassination of Khalid ib'n Hussein, the pro-Western leader of the newly formed Islamic Caliphate; period of anarchy in the Middle East; interfactional power-struggles; Turkish intervention. He wondered how long that would last; Khalid's son, Tallal ib'n Khalid, was at school in England when his father was—would be—killed. He would return, and eventually take his father's place, in time to bring the Caliphate into the Terran Federation when the general war came. There were some notes on that already; the war would result from an attempt by the Indian Communists to seize East Pakistan. The trouble was that he so seldom "remembered" an exact date.

Later in "Edge of the Knife":

There would be an Eastern (Axis) inspired uprising in Azerbaijan by the middle of the next year; before autumn, the Indian Communists would make their fatal attempt to seize East Pakistan. The Thirty Days' War would be the immediate result. By that time, the Lunar Base would be completed and ready; the enemy missiles would be aimed primarily at the rocketports from which it was supplied. Delivered without warning, it should have succeeded—except that every rocketport had its secret duplicate and triplicate. That was Operation Triple Cross; no wonder Major Cutler had been so startled at the words, last evening. The enemy would be utterly overwhelmed under the rain of missiles from across space, but until the moon rockets began to fall, the United States would suffer grievously.

The end result, according to Piper, is World War III—the nightmare we all dread come true. The new order is

the Pan-Federation, otherwise known as the First Federation, formed after the Thirty Days War. According to a security officer who talks to our time-seeing historian: "It's all pretty hush-hush, but this term Terran Federation [is] for a proposed organization to take the place of the U.N. if that organization breaks up . . ."

In "The Mercenaries" mention is made of the same Islamic Caliphate and a Fourth Komintern, which clearly puts this story, which first appeared in *Analog* in 1962, into the TFH cannon. Caliphate is spelled with a "K" in "The Mercenaries" but this could easily be a stylistic difference in copy-editing between the two houses. Certainly by 1962 everything Piper was writing was either part of the future history or a Lord Kalvan story (In the introduction to "When in the Course" we show that the Lord Kalvan stories are really offshoots of the TFH; so it could well be said that nothing Piper wrote after the fifties was not part of his future history.)

But what is this about a First and Second Federation? In *Space Viking I* I found this note: "[Terra even] had anti-technological movements after Venus seceded from the First Federation, before the Second Federation was organized." Some scholars have tried to argue that this sentence proves that Pipers TFH is nothing but a copy of Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy, but I believe that's bunk. There is sufficient evidence to show that Piper was not re-writing Asimov and that instead of appearing after the System States War (as his critics claim); the Second Federation appeared during the Second Century A.E. before the real push toward interstellar colonization came in The Third Century A.E. In "Omnilingual" there is mention made of the Thirty Days War—which clearly makes that story part of the TFH cannon—and of a Pan-Federation Telecast System. (Pan-Federation is a term used only in early TFH stories mentioning the Federation, and I believe

it is translatable as First Federation.) Then, in *Uller Uprising*, there is talk of a "revolt of the colonies on Mars and Venus"—certainly the same revolt mentioned in *Space Viking*—which means the revolt had to take place sometime earlier than the Fourth Century A.E., the time of *Uller Uprising*. And in "The Edge of the Knife" Piper states, "the world of 2050—2070 . . . [was a] completely unified world, abolition of all national states under a single world sovereignty, colonies on Mars and Venus." This, I think we can safely say, is Piper's Second Federation, since the First began in 31 A.E.

There is little mention of what happened on earth after the Third Global War, although by reading "The Return" (by H. Beam Piper and John J. McGuire) we see a very convincing portrait of a far-future earth devastated by a long-ago nuclear war. Nature in "The Return" has run riot and the human survivors are slowly beginning to rebuild civilization again. There are some interesting parallels here with the far-far-future earth described in "The Keeper," which does belong in the TFH—but I will save those for my introduction to *Empire*, the next Piper collection due from Ace.

So how did Terran civilization rebuild itself after the Third World War? Certainly by 54 A.E. (1996 A.D.) civilization had reasserted itself sufficiently enough to mount a major archeological expedition to Mars, as described in "Omnilingual." Piper's own definition of *Lingua Terra*—if you remember, a combination of English (probably Australian) and Spanish (South American) and Afrikaans (South African) and Portugese (Brazilian)—provides us with the major loci of early Federation civilization, especially since all are in the Southern Hemisphere. In *Four-Day Planet* two major papers are named, the *La Presna*

from Buenos Aires and the *Melbourne Times*, "formerly *London Times*, when there was still a London." From this and other evidence, it is apparent that South America and Australia were the cradles of First Federation culture and technology.

As we mentioned earlier, the government of the First Federation was based on the Corporate State—quite distinct from the Second Federation. For by the time of the Second Federation, the Federation government most closely approaches that of Georgian England—a representative government with colonies and member states—rather than a monarchy. We also have chartered companies (remember the British East India Company) like the Chartered Zarathustran Company, which tried to enslave the Fuzzies. Also many of the planets had appointed colonial governors, who could only be overthrown by direct military intervention, and who governed through and with the consent of a legislature.

What about the expansion of the Federation (as Piper did, we will now drop the needless appellation "Second") into intergalactic space?

Again in "The Edge of the Knife" we find the answer: "And when Mars and Venus are colonized, there will be the same historic situations, at least in general shape, as arose when the European powers were colonizing the New Worlds or, for that matter, when the Greek city-states were throwing out colonies across the Aegean." Later in that story he compares the early Federation with the Spanish Conquest. And, as we discussed earlier, we have events like the Uller Uprising and the Loki Enslavement which sound like events from our own past.

Since most of these stories, with the exception of "Graveyard of Dreams," are concerned with man's con-

quest of new worlds, I will leave it up to you to draw further conclusions about the Federation's subjugation of space as you enjoy the following yarns.

John Carr

Introduction to "Omnilingual"

In *The Science Fiction Encyclopedia* John Clute, British sf scholar noted for his reviews in the English journal *Foundation*, states that "Omnilingual" is probably H. Beam Piper's best short story. It may be one of Piper's best known and most anthologized, but I'm not certain it is his best as there are several other very good stories just in this collection alone. I'm sure you will have your own favorite. "Omnilingual" is however a powerful story about unlocking the key to an ancient and unknown civilization and, even if the Viking landers have made Beam's Mars somewhat suspect, no one can fault his anthropology and cryptography.

"Omnilingual" takes place in 54 A.E. and is the first story in Piper's *Terra Human Future History* to take place after the founding of the First Federation. In this story Piper shows another of his unrecognized strengths: the creation of a strong central woman character, long before it became politically expedient.

Introduction to "Naudsonce"

"Naudsonce" takes place almost six centuries after "Omni-lingual," sometime in the Seventh Century A.E. The Federation is still expanding, although Terra's bureaucracy is more and more making its weight felt. "But if he failed, he was through . . . When he got back to Terra, he would be promoted to some home office position at slightly higher base pay but without the three hundred per cent extraterrestrial bonus, and he would vegetate there till he retired." No longer is exploration enough incentive to get people out of their safe sinecures; although there will always be those few who decry the safe harbor. . . .

This is another anthropological detective story and while the solution is just as snappy, the ethical outcome is no longer quite so clear.

## NAUDSONCE

The sun warmed Mark Howell's back pleasantly. Underfoot, the mosslike stuff was soft and yielding, and there was a fragrance in the air unlike anything he had ever smelled. He was going to like this planet; he knew it. The question was, how would it, and its people, like him? He watched the little figures advancing across the fields from the mound, with the village out of sight on the other end of it and the combat-car circling lazily on contragravity above.

Major Luis Gofredo, the Marine officer, spoke without lowering his binoculars:

"They have a tubular thing about twelve feet long; six of them are carrying it on poles, three to a side, and a couple more are walking behind it. Mark, do you think it could be a cannon?"

So far, he didn't know enough to have an opinion, and said so, adding:

"What I saw of the village in the screen from the car, it looked pretty primitive. Of course, gunpowder's one of those things a primitive people could discover by accident, if the ingredients were available."

"We won't take any chances, then."

"You think they're hostile? I was hoping they were coming out to parley with us."

That was Paul Meillard. He had a right to be anxious; his whole future in the Colonial Office would be made or ruined by what was going to happen here.

ever it is. They'd just sit in a circle around it till they starved to death, and when the power-unit gave out, the record-player would be surrounded by a ring of skeletons. We'll just have to keep on playing it for them ourselves. Terrans' Burden."

"That'll give us a sanction over them," Gofredo observed. "Extra *thugg-thugg* if they're very good; shut it off on them if they act nasty. And find out what Lillian has in her voice that the rest of us don't have, and make a good loud recording of that, and stash it away along with the rest of the heavy-weapons ammunition. You know, you're not going to have any trouble at all, when we go down-country to talk to the king or whatever. This is better than fire-water ever was."

"We must never misuse our advantage, Luis," Meillard said seriously. "We must use it only for their good."

He really meant it. Only—You had to know some general history to study technological history, and it seemed to him that that pious assertion had been made a few times before. Some of the others who had made it had really meant it, too, but that had made little difference in the long run.

Fayon and Anna were talking enthusiastically about the work ahead of them.

"I don't know where your subject ends and mine begins," Anna was saying. "We'll just have to handle it between us. What are we going to call it? We certainly can't call it hearing."

"Nonauditory sonic sense is the only thing I can think of," Fayon said. "And that's such a clumsy term."

"Mark; you thought of it first," Anna said. "What do you think?"

"Nonauditory sonic sense. It isn't any worse than Domesticated Type C, and that got cut down to size. *Naud-sonce*."

#### Introduction to "Oomphel in the Sky"

"*Oomphel in the Sky*" takes place in the early Ninth Century A.E. on the planet Kwann where the Terrans are having trouble with the local natives, the Kwannons. In this story we find a classic Piper conflict: inefficient government vs. efficient private enterprise. Terra is a hotbed of Neo-Marxist liberalism and we get the idea that it is beginning to fall into decadence, and that in large part the colonial spirit of the outer worlds is all that is keeping the Federation alive and functioning.

In this story we see the first appearance of Captain Foxx Travis, a young army officer who will become the Napoleon of this far future earth during the System States War.

### Introduction to "Graveyard of Dreams"

When I first heard of this particular story, Bill Tuning and several other people told me, don't bother it's just the short version of COSMIC COMPUTER. But I traced down a copy anyway; for one, as a collector I'm a completist, and for another, "Graveyard of Dreams" occupies a very interesting place in the Piper cannon. It and COSMIC COMPUTER are the last two tales of the Terran Federation. And what if it contained some vital piece of information not in the novel . . . afterall, there are some very fundamental differences between the novel version and serial version of ULLER UPRISING.

So I went down to Collector's Bookstore in Hollywood; if its an old pulp or movie poster you're looking for nine times out of ten they have it—if you can pay the price. The moment I got home I began to read . . . and eureka! Not only does Conn Maxwell, the young hero, end up with a different girl—Lynne Fawzi instead of Sylvie Jacquemont—but there is a gold mine of new information about the System States Alliance, the economic alliance that threatened the stability of the Federation.

Between "Graveyard of Dreams" and Space Viking, the next TerroHuman Future History story, there is a gap of some seven hundred to eight hundred years.

At the end of COSMIC COMPUTER we are left with the feeling that with the help of Merlin mankind might, if not change, avert this coming Age of Darkness. But in Space Viking, written either just before or just after Cosmic Computer, there is no mention of either Conn Maxwell's world Poitesme or Merlin; instead we have a galaxy of Space Vikings and Neo-barbarians . . . Someday we might discover a missing story that bridges these two novels, but until we do COSMIC COMPUTER and "Graveyard of Dreams" will stand as Piper's last statement on the grand Terran Federation.

### Graveyard of Dreams

Standing at the armorglass front of the observation deck and watching the mountains rise and grow on the horizon, Conn Maxwell gripped the metal hand-rail with painful intensity, as though trying to hold back the airship by force. Thirty minutes—twenty-six and a fraction of the Terran minutes he had become accustomed to—until he'd have to face it.

Then, realizing that he never, in his own thoughts, addressed himself as "sir," he turned.

"I beg your pardon?"

It was the first officer, wearing a Terran Federation Space Navy uniform of forty years, or about ten regulation-changes, ago. That was the sort of thing he had taken for granted before he had gone away. Now he was noticing it everywhere.

"Thirty minutes out of Litchfield, sir," the ship's officer repeated. "You'll go off by the midship gangway on the starboard side."

"Yes, I know. Thank you."

The first mate held out the clipboard he was carrying. "Would you mind checking over this, Mr. Maxwell? Your baggage list."

"Certainly." He glanced at the slip of paper. Valises, eighteen and twenty-five kilos, two; trunks, seventy-five and seventy kilos, two; microbook case, one-fifty kilos, one. The last item fanned up a little flicker of anger in him, not at any person, even himself, but at the situation in

Of all the stories in this collection, "When in the Course" is the only one that has never before been published! But even more important than that; it occupies a strange half state between Piper's two major series, the TerroHuman Future History and his Paratime time travel series. But I'll get back to that in a moment.

I wasn't even aware of "When in the Course's" existence until one day about two years ago, when Jerry excitedly called me into his office. Earlier that morning we had received a package with the morning mail from Ace Books; nothing unusual there. "John, look at this!" I hurried in. "Here are two unpublished Piper manuscripts that Jim Baen found among Beam's papers. Would you take a look at them for me?"

Would I? Right then it would have taken a spaceship full of Slan to stop me. Midway through the third page I realized that I had "read this story before." Yes, it was in Analog: "Gunpowder God." But not quite; where was Lord Kalvan? The story, a chartered company come to claim a new world, was set in Beam's TerroHuman Future History: it took place on legendary Freya, a world mentioned throughout the early TFH stories—as far back as ULLER UPRISING—as a place where the women were even more beautiful than those of earth. Obviously, it had to be an old story, or one that Beam had carried in his head for years. But there is no denying it; except for the last half it is the story of Lord Kalvan of Otherwhen—except he's not in it and these Federation people are!

After a good deal of thought, it is my contention that Piper wrote "When in the Course," submitted it to John W. Campbell—who probably had fits over the central idea of parallel evolution, as any good biologist would (which means Beam probably had another ace up his sleeve as he did nothing by accident; but what?)—and therefore Campbell suggested some changes, as he was wont to do. "Beam, the story's good; why don't you set it in that Paratime series we used to run awhile back?" I have talked with both Perry Chapdelaine and George Hay, editors of the forthcoming John W. Campbell letters collection, and—when things get cleared up—they have promised me copies of the Piper/Campbell correspondence for a book on Piper I intend to do called *The Piper Papers*. But until then, if I can find the correspondence to explain what happened, this will have to remain H. Beam Piper's most unusual story.

## WHEN IN THE COURSE— H. Beam Piper

She closed her mind to the voices around her and stared at the map spread on the table between the two great candlesticks, trying to imagine herself high above everything, looking down like a bird. Here was Tarr-Hostigos, only a little mark of gold on the parchment, but she could see it all in imagination—the outer walls around the great enclosure with the sheds and stables against them; the citadel, and the inner bailey; the keep, and the watchtower, jutting up from the point of the ridge. And here, below, was the Darro, and she could see it glinting in the sunlight as it rushed south to join the Athan, and here was the town of Hostigos, and the bridge and the town-hall and the temple of Dralm, and, beyond, the farmlands and the squares of fields and the dark woods and the little villages. Oh, it must be wonderful to be a bird and fly above everything, and look down; ever since she had been a baby, she had dreamed . . .

A voice, harsher than the others, brought her back to the present she had been trying to flee.

"King Kaiphranos won't intervene? What's a king for, but to keep the peace? Great Dralm, is all Hos-Harphax afraid of Gormoth of Nostor?"

She looked from one to another of them, almost as though she were a stranger who had wandered unknowing into this windowless candlelit room. Phosg, the Speaker for the Peasants, at the foot of the table, uncon-