

= Wonder Stories =

Wonder Stories was an early American science fiction magazine which was published under several titles from 1929 to 1955 . It was founded by Hugo Gernsback in 1929 after he had lost control of his first science fiction magazine , Amazing Stories , when his media company Experimenter Publishing went bankrupt . Within a few months of the bankruptcy , Gernsback launched three new magazines : Air Wonder Stories , Science Wonder Stories and Science Wonder Quarterly .

Air Wonder Stories and Science Wonder Stories were merged in 1930 as Wonder Stories , and the quarterly was renamed Wonder Stories Quarterly . The magazines were not financially successful , and in 1936 Gernsback sold Wonder Stories to Ned Pines at Beacon Publications , where , retitled Thrilling Wonder Stories , it continued for nearly 20 years . The last issue was dated Winter 1955 , and the title was then merged with Startling Stories , another of Pines ' science fiction magazines . Startling itself lasted only to the end of 1955 before finally succumbing to the decline of the pulp magazine industry .

The editors under Gernsback 's ownership were David Lasser , who worked hard to improve the quality of the fiction , and , from mid @-@ 1933 , Charles Hornig . Both Lasser and Hornig published some well @-@ received fiction , such as Stanley Weinbaum 's " A Martian Odyssey " , but Hornig 's efforts in particular were overshadowed by the success of Astounding Stories , which had become the leading magazine in the new field of science fiction . Under its new title , Thrilling Wonder Stories was initially unable to improve its quality . For a period in the early 1940s it was aimed at younger readers , with a juvenile editorial tone and covers that depicted beautiful women in implausibly revealing spacesuits . Later editors began to improve the fiction , and by the end of the 1940s , in the opinion of science fiction historian Mike Ashley , the magazine briefly rivaled Astounding .

= = Publication history = =

By the end of the 19th century , stories centered on scientific inventions and set in the future , in the tradition of Jules Verne , were appearing regularly in popular fiction magazines . Magazines such as Munsey 's Magazine and The Argosy , launched in 1889 and 1896 respectively , carried a few science fiction stories each year . Some upmarket " slicks " such as McClure 's , which paid well and were aimed at a more literary audience , also carried scientific stories , but by the early years of the 20th century , science fiction (though it was not yet called that) was appearing more often in the pulp magazines than in the slicks . The first science fiction magazine , Amazing Stories , was launched in 1926 by Hugo Gernsback at the height of the pulp magazine era . It helped to form science fiction as a separately marketed genre , and by the end of the 1930s a " Golden Age of Science Fiction " had begun , inaugurated by the efforts of John W. Campbell , the editor of Astounding Science Fiction . Wonder Stories was launched in the pulp era , not long after Amazing Stories , and lasted through the Golden Age and well into the 1950s .

= = = Gernsback era = = =

Gernsback 's new magazine , Amazing Stories , was successful , but Gernsback lost control of the publisher when it went bankrupt in February 1929 . By April he had formed a new company , Gernsback Publications Incorporated , and created two subsidiaries : Techni @-@ Craft Publishing Corporation and Stellar Publishing Corporation . Gernsback sent out letters advertising his plans for new magazines ; the mailing lists he used almost certainly were compiled from the subscription lists of Amazing Stories . This would have been illegal , as the lists were owned by Irving Trust , the receiver of the bankruptcy . Gernsback denied using the lists under oath , but historians have generally agreed that he must have done so . The letters also asked potential subscribers to decide the name of the new magazine ; they voted for " Science Wonder Stories " , which became the name of one of Gernsback 's new magazines .

Gernsback 's recovery from the bankruptcy judgment was remarkably quick . By early June he had

launched three new magazines , two of which published science fiction . The June 1929 issue of Science Wonder Stories appeared on newsstands on 5 May 1929 , and was followed on 5 June by the July 1929 issue of Air Wonder Stories . Both magazines were monthly , with Gernsback as editor @-@ in @-@ chief and David Lasser as editor . Lasser had no prior editing experience and knew little about science fiction , but his recently acquired degree from MIT convinced Gernsback to hire him .

Gernsback claimed that science fiction was educational . He repeatedly made this assertion in Amazing Stories , and continued to do so in his editorials for the new magazines , stating , for example , that " teachers encourage the reading of this fiction because they know that it gives the pupil a fundamental knowledge of science and aviation . " He also recruited a panel of " nationally known educators [who] pass upon the scientific principles of all stories " . Science fiction historian Everett Bleiler describes this as " fakery , pure and simple " , asserting that there is no evidence that the men on the panel ? some of whom , such as Lee De Forest , were well @-@ known scientists ? had any editorial influence . However , Donald Menzel , the astrophysicist on the panel , has said that Gernsback sent him manuscripts and made changes to stories as a result of Menzel 's commentary .

In 1930 , Gernsback decided to merge Science Wonder Stories and Air Wonder Stories into Wonder Stories . The reason for the merger is unknown , although it may have been that he needed the space in the printing schedule for his new Aviation Mechanics magazine . Bleiler has suggested that the merger was caused by poor sales and a consequent need to downsize . In addition , Air Wonder Stories was probably focused on too specialized a niche to succeed . In an editorial just before Science Wonder Stories changed its name , Gernsback commented that the word " Science " in the title " has tended to retard the progress of the magazine , because many people had the impression that it is a sort of scientific periodical rather than a fiction magazine " . Ironically , the inclusion of " science " in the title was the reason that science fiction writer Isaac Asimov began reading the magazine ; when he saw the August 1929 issue he obtained permission to read it from his father on the grounds that it was clearly educational . Concerns about the marketability of titles seem to have surfaced in the last two issues of Science Wonder , which had the word " Science " printed in a color that made it difficult to read . On the top of the cover appeared the words " Mystery @-@ Adventure @-@ Romance " , the last of which was a surprising way to advertise a science fiction magazine .

The first issue of the merged magazine appeared in June 1930 , still on a monthly schedule , with Lasser as editor . The volume numbering continued that of Science Wonder Stories , therefore Wonder Stories is sometimes regarded as a retitling of Science Wonder Stories . Gernsback had also produced a companion magazine for Science Wonder Stories , titled Science Wonder Quarterly , the first issue of which was published in the fall of 1929 . Three issues were produced under this title , but after the merger Gernsback changed the companion magazine 's title to Wonder Stories Quarterly , and produced a further eleven issues under that title .

In July 1933 , Gernsback dismissed Lasser as editor . Lasser had become active in promoting workers ' rights and was spending less time on his editorial duties . According to Lasser , Gernsback told him " if you like working with the unemployed so much , I suggest you go and join them " . It is likely that cost @-@ cutting was also a consideration , as Lasser was paid \$ 65 per week , a substantial salary in those days . Soon after Lasser was let go , Gernsback received a fanzine , The Fantasy Fan , from a reader , Charles Hornig . Gernsback called Hornig to his office to interview him for the position of editor ; Hornig turned out to be only 17 , but Gernsback asked him to proofread a manuscript and decided that the results were satisfactory . Hornig was hired at an initial salary of \$ 20 per week . That same year , Gernsback dissolved Stellar Publications and created Continental Publications as the new publisher for Wonder Stories . The schedule stuttered for the first time , missing the July and September 1933 issues ; the recent bankruptcy of the company 's distributor , Eastern Distributing Corporation , may have been partly responsible for this disruption . The first issue with Continental on the masthead , and the first listing Hornig as editor , was November 1933 .

Wonder Stories had a circulation of about 25 @,@ 000 in 1934 , comparable to that of Amazing

Stories , which had declined from an early peak of about 100 @, @ 000 . Gernsback considered issuing a reprint magazine in 1934 , Wonder Stories Reprint Annual , but it never appeared . That year he experimented with other fiction magazines ? Pirate Stories and High Seas Adventures ? but neither was successful . Wonder Stories was also failing , and in November 1935 it started publishing bimonthly instead of monthly . Gernsback had a reputation for paying slowly and was therefore unpopular with many authors ; by 1936 he was even failing to pay Laurence Manning , one of his most reliable authors . Staff were sometimes asked to delay cashing their paychecks for weeks at a time . Gernsback felt the blame lay with dealers who were returning magazine covers as unsold copies , and then selling the stripped copies at a reduced rate . To bypass the dealers , he made a plea in the March 1936 issue to his readers , asking them to subscribe , and proposing to distribute Wonder Stories solely by subscription . There was little response , and Gernsback decided to sell . He made a deal with Ned Pines of Beacon Magazines and on 21 February 1936 Wonder Stories was sold .

= = = Thrilling Wonder Stories = = =

Pines ' magazines included several with " Thrilling " in the title , such as Thrilling Detective and Thrilling Love Stories . These were run by Leo Margulies , who had hired Mort Weisinger (among others) as the workload increased in the early 1930s . Weisinger was already an active science fiction fan , and when Wonder Stories was acquired , Margulies involved him in the editorial work . Margulies ' group worked as a team , with Margulies listed as editor @-@ in @-@ chief on the magazines and having final say . However , since Weisinger knew science fiction well , Weisinger was quickly given more leeway , and bibliographers generally list Weisinger as the editor for this period of the magazine 's history .

The title was changed to Thrilling Wonder Stories to match the rest of the " Thrilling " line . The first issue appeared in August 1936 ? four months after the last Gernsback Wonder Stories appeared . Wonder Stories had been monthly until the last few Gernsback issues ; Thrilling Wonder was launched on a bimonthly schedule . In February 1938 Weisinger asked for reader feedback regarding the idea of a companion magazine ; the response was positive , and in January 1939 the first issue of Startling Stories appeared , alternating months with Thrilling Wonder . A year later Thrilling Wonder went monthly ; this lasted fewer than eighteen months , and the bimonthly schedule resumed after April 1941 . Weisinger left that summer and was replaced at both Startling and Thrilling Wonder by Oscar J. Friend , a pulp writer with more experience in Westerns than science fiction , though he had published a novel , The Kid from Mars , in Startling Stories just the year before . In mid @-@ 1943 both magazines went to a quarterly schedule , and at the end of 1944 Friend was replaced in his turn by Sam Merwin , Jr . . The quarterly schedule lasted until well after World War II ended : Thrilling Wonder returned to a bimonthly schedule with the December 1946 issue and again alternated with Startling which went bimonthly in January 1947 . Merwin left in 1951 in order to become a freelance editor , and was replaced by Samuel Mines , who had worked for Ned Pines since 1942 .

The Thrilling Wonder logo , a winged man against the background of a glass mountain was taken from the Noel Loomis story , " The Glass Mountain . "

By the summer of 1949 Street & Smith , one of the largest pulp publishers , had shut down every one of their pulps . This format was dying out , though it took several more years before the pulps completely disappeared from the newsstands . Both Thrilling Wonder and Startling went quarterly in 1954 , and at the end of that year Mines left . The magazines did not survive him for long ; only two more issues of Thrilling Wonder appeared , both edited by Alexander Samalman . After the beginning of 1955 , Thrilling Wonder was merged with Startling , which itself ceased publication at the end of 1955 .

After the demise of Thrilling Wonder Stories the old Wonder Stories title was revived for two issues , published in 1957 and 1963 . These were both edited by Jim Hendryx Jr . They were numbered vol . 45 , no . 1 and 2 , continuing the volume numbering of Thrilling Wonder . Both were selections from past issues of Thrilling Wonder ; the second one convinced Ned Pines , the publisher who had

bought Wonder Stories from Gernsback in 1936 and who still owned the rights to the stories , to start a reprint magazine called Treasury of Great Science Fiction Stories in 1964 ; a companion , Treasury of Great Western Stories , was added the next year .

In 2007 , Winston Engle published a new magazine in book format , titled Thrilling Wonder Stories , with a cover date of Summer 2007 . Engle commented that it was " not a pastiche or nostalgia exercise as much as modern SF with the entertainment , inspirational value , and excitement of the golden age " . A second volume appeared in 2009 .

= = = If--- ! : a picture feature = = =

Six months after the debut of Thrilling Wonder Stories , its June 1937 issue contained a picture feature by Jack Binder entitled If--- ! . Binder 's earlier training as a fine artist helped him create detailed renderings of space ships , lost cities , future cities , landscapes , indigenous peoples , and even ancient Atlantins . If--- ! ' s pen and ink drawings are hand @-@ lettered and rendered in black and white . These one @-@ to @-@ two page studies presented readers with possible outcomes to early 20th @-@ century scientific quandaries . These included :

IF Another Ice Age Grips the Earth ! (June 1937) ? Binder 's first picture feature is tucked in between " The Chessboard of Mars " by Eando Binder and J. Harvey Haggard 's " Renegade : The Ways of the Ether are Strange When a Spaceman Seeks to Betray . " Ice Age offered renderings of glaciated cities , infra @-@ red ray guns , and a floating city alongside underground habitations ? " the safest and most practicable retreat ! " for chilly humans . It ends with the announcement : " Next Issue : If Atomic Power were Harnessed ! "

IF the Oceans Dried ! (April 1938) ? Sailing vessels are museum pieces enshrined in huge bubble cases since the ocean floor is now home to meandering train tracks . All manner of minerals are mined to the benefit of mankind and the lost city of Atlantis (if real) is exposed . All ocean life becomes extinct and the earth 's climate undergoes dramatic , yet positive , change .

IF Science Reached the Earth 's Core (Oct. 1938) ? Neutronium allows humans to penetrate to the earth 's core , which is not molten , but a gravity @-@ free haven where " vacationers enjoy the thrill of being weightless . " If--- ! is credited with the first use of the phrase " zero @-@ gravity , " a science fiction mainstay , where " Space Travel is solved . Starting at the zero @-@ gravity of Earth 's core , accumulative acceleration is easily built up in a four @-@ thousand @-@ mile tube . The ship 's reach Earth 's surface where gravitation ! | is strongest with an appreciable velocity that makes the take @-@ off a simple process of continuation ! "

IF Earth 's Axis Shifted (April 1940) ? An astronomical telescope points towards the night sky revealing that the planets have aligned and caused the earth 's axis to shift . Tidal waves sweep cities away . North America in now a tropic zone , while Siberia is balmy and Antarctica swarms with immigrants wanting to harvest the now accessible coal and metal . " Next Issue : IF the World were Ruled by Intelligent Robots ! "

= = Contents and reception = =

When Air Wonder Stories was launched in the middle of 1929 there were already pulp magazines such as Sky Birds and Flying Aces which focused on aerial adventures . Gernsback 's first editorial dismissed these as being of the " purely ' Wild West ' -world war adventure @-@ sky busting type " . By contrast , Gernsback said he planned to fill Air Wonder solely with " flying stories of the future , strictly along scientific @-@ mechanical @-@ technical lines , full of adventure , exploration and achievement . " Non @-@ fiction material on aviation was printed , including quizzes , short popular articles , and book reviews . The letters column made it clear that the readership comprised more science fiction fans than aviation fans , and Gernsback later commented that the overlap with Science Wonder readers was 90 % (a figure that presumably referred only to the subscription base , not to newsstand sales) .

Gernsback frequently ran reader contests , one of which , announced in the February 1930 issue of Air Wonder Stories , asked for a slogan for the magazine . John Wyndham , later to become famous

as the author of *The Day of the Triffids* , won with " *Future Flying Fiction* " , submitted under his real name of John Beynon Harris . Later that year a contest in *Science Wonder Quarterly* asked readers for an answer to the question " *What I Have Done to Spread Science Fiction* " . The winner was Raymond Palmer who later became editor of Gernsback 's original magazine , *Amazing Stories* . He won the contest for his role in founding a " *Science Correspondence Club* " .

Science Wonder 's first issue included the first part of a serial , *The Reign of the Ray* , by Fletcher Pratt and Irwin Lester , and short stories by Stanton Coblenz and David H. Keller . *Air Wonder* began with a reprinted serial , Victor MacClure 's *Ark of the Covenant* . Writers who first appeared in the pages of these magazines include Neil R. Jones , Ed Earl Repp , Raymond Z. Gallun and Lloyd Eshbach . The quality of published science fiction at the time was generally low , and Lasser was keen to improve it . On 11 May 1931 he wrote to his regular contributors to tell them that their science fiction stories " should deal realistically with the effect upon people , individually and in groups , of a scientific invention or discovery In other words , allow yourself one fundamental assumption ? that a certain machine or discovery is possible ? and then show what would be its logical and dramatic consequences upon the world ; also what would be the effect upon the group of characters that you pick to carry your theme . "

= = = After the merger = = =

Lasser provided ideas to his authors and commented on their drafts , attempting to improve both the level of scientific literacy and the quality of the writing . Some of his correspondence has survived , including an exchange with Jack Williamson , whom Lasser commissioned in early 1932 to write a story based on a plot provided by a reader ? the winning entry in one of the magazine 's competitions . Lasser emphasized to Williamson the importance of scientific plausibility , citing as an example a moment in the story where the earthmen have to decipher a written Martian language : " You must be sure and make it convincing how they did it ; for they have absolutely no method of approach to a written language of another world . " On one occasion Lasser 's work with his authors extended to collaboration : " *The Time Projector* " , a story which appeared in the July 1931 issue of *Wonder Stories* , was credited to David H. Keller and David Lasser . Both Lasser and , later , Hornig , were given almost complete editorial freedom by Gernsback , who reserved only the right to give final approval to the contents . This was in contrast to the more detailed control Gernsback had exerted over the content of *Amazing Stories* in the first years of its existence . Science fiction historian Sam Moskowitz has suggested that the reason was the poor financial state of *Wonder Stories* ? Gernsback perhaps avoided corresponding with authors as he owed many of them money .

Lasser allowed the letter column to become a free discussion of ideas and values , and published stories dealing with topics such as the relationship between the sexes . One such story , Thomas S. Gardner 's " *The Last Woman* " , portrayed a future in which men , having evolved beyond the need for love , keep the last woman in a museum . In " *The Venus Adventurer* " , an early story by John Wyndham , a spaceman corrupts the innocent natives of Venus . Lasser avoided printing space opera , and several stories from *Wonder* in the early 1930s were more realistic than most contemporary space fiction . Examples include Edmond Hamilton 's " *A Conquest of Space* " , P. Schuyler Miller 's " *The Forgotten Man of Space* " , and several stories by Frank K. Kelly , including " *The Moon Tragedy* " .

Lasser was one of the founders of the American Rocket Society which , under its initial name of the " *Interplanetary Society* " , announced its existence in the pages of the June 1930 *Wonder Stories* . Several of *Wonder* 's writers were also members of the *Interplanetary Society* , and perhaps as a consequence of the relationship *Wonder Stories Quarterly* began to focus increasingly on fiction with interplanetary settings . A survey of the last eight issues of *Wonder Stories Quarterly* by Bleiler found almost two @-@ thirds of the stories were interplanetary adventures , while only a third of the stories in the corresponding issues of *Wonder Stories* could be so described . *Wonder Stories Quarterly* added a banner reading " *Interplanetary Number* " to the cover of the Winter 1931 issue , and retained it , as " *Interplanetary Stories* " , for subsequent issues . Lasser and Gernsback were

also briefly involved with the fledgling Technocracy movement . Gernsback published two issues of Technocracy Review , which Lasser edited , commissioning stories based on technocratic ideas from Nat Schachner . These appeared in Wonder Stories during 1933 , culminating in a novel , The Revolt of the Scientists .

Reviews of fiction and popular science books were published , and there was a science column which endeavored to answer readers ' questions . These features were at first of good quality , but deteriorated after Lasser 's departure , although it is not certain that Lasser wrote the content of either one . An influential non @-@ fiction initiative was the creation of the Science Fiction League , an organization that brought together local science fiction fan clubs across the country . Gernsback took the opportunity to sell items such as buttons and insignia , and it was undoubtedly a profitable enterprise for him as well as a good source of publicity . It was ultimately more important in becoming one of the foundations of science fiction fandom .

= = = Hornig = = =

When Hornig took over from Lasser at the end of 1933 he attempted to continue and expand Lasser 's approach . Hornig introduced a " New Policy " in the January 1934 issue , emphasizing originality and barring stories that merely reworked well @-@ worn ideas . He asked for stories that included good science , although " not enough to become boring to those readers who are not primarily interested in the technicalities of the science " . However , Astounding was moving into the lead position in the science fiction magazine field at this time , and Hornig had difficulty in competing . His rates of payment were lower than Astounding 's one cent per word ; sometimes his writers were paid very late , or not at all . Despite these handicaps , Hornig managed to find some good material , including Stanley G. Weinbaum 's " A Martian Odyssey " , which appeared in the July 1934 Wonder and has been frequently reprinted .

In the December 1934 ? January 1935 issue of Hornig 's fanzine , Fantasy Magazine , he took the unusual step of listing several stories that he had rejected as lacking novelty , but which had subsequently appeared in print in other magazines . The list includes several by successful writers of the day , such as Raymond Z. Gallun and Miles Breuer . The most prominent story named is Triplanetary by E. E. Smith , which appeared in Amazing .

Both Lasser and Hornig printed fiction translated from French and German writers , including Otfried von Hanstein and Otto Willi Gail . With the rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany in the 1930s a few readers (including Donald Wollheim) wrote letters complaining about the inclusion of German stories . The editorial response was a strong defense of the translations ; Gernsback argued that events in Germany were irrelevant to the business of selecting fiction .

The covers for almost every issue of Air Wonder , Science Wonder , Wonder Stories and Wonder Stories Quarterly were painted by Frank R. Paul , who had followed Gernsback from Amazing Stories . The only exception was a cover image composed of colored dots , which appeared on the November 1932 issue .

= = = Weisinger and Friend = = =

When the magazine moved to Beacon Publications , as Thrilling Wonder , the fiction began to focus more on action than on ideas . The covers , often by Earle K. Bergey , typically depicted bizarre aliens and damsels in distress . In 1939 , a reader , Martin Alger , coined the phrase " bug @-@ eyed monster " to describe one such cover ; the phrase subsequently entered the dictionary as a word for an alien . Several well @-@ known writers contributed , including Ray Cummings , and John W. Campbell , whose " Brain @-@ Stealers of Mars " series began in Thrilling Wonder in the December 1936 issue . A comic @-@ strip began in August 1936 , the first issue of the Beacon Publications version . It was illustrated and possibly written by Max Plaisted . The strip , titled " Zarnak " , was not a success , and was cancelled after eight issues .

Weisinger 's successor , Friend , gave the magazine a significantly more juvenile feel . He used the alias " Sergeant Saturn " and was generally condescending to the readers ; this may not have been

his fault as Margulies , who was still the editorial director , probably wanted him to attract a younger readership . Under Friend 's direction , Earle K. Bergey transformed the look of Thrilling Wonder Stories by foregrounding human figures in space , focusing on the anatomy of women in implausibly revealing spacesuits and his trademark " brass brassières " .

= = = Merwin and Mines = = =

Merwin , who took over with the Winter 1945 issue , adopted a more mature approach than Friend 's . He obtained fiction from writers who had previously been publishing mainly in John Campbell 's Astounding . The Summer 1945 issue of Thrilling Wonder included Jack Vance 's first published story , " The World Thinker " . Merwin also published several stories by Ray Bradbury , some of which were later included in Bradbury 's collection The Martian Chronicles . Other well @-@ known writers that Merwin was able to attract included Theodore Sturgeon , A.E. van Vogt , and Robert A. Heinlein . Thrilling Wonder often published intelligent , thoughtful stories , some of which Campbell would have been unlikely to accept at Astounding : he did not like to publish stories that showed the negative consequences of scientific advances such as nuclear power . In the opinion of science fiction historian Mike Ashley , during the late 1940s Thrilling Wonder became a serious rival to Astounding 's long domination of the field . However , this is not a universal opinion , as the magazine is elsewhere described during Merwin 's tenure as " evidently secondary to Startling " .

Samuel Mines took over from Merwin at the end of 1951 , both at Startling Stories and Thrilling Wonder . He argued against restrictions in science fiction themes , and in 1952 published Philip José Farmer 's " The Lovers " , a ground @-@ breaking story about inter @-@ species sex , in Startling . He followed this in 1953 with another taboo @-@ breaking story from Farmer , " Mother " , in Thrilling Wonder , in which a spaceman makes his home in an alien womb . In the December 1952 Thrilling Wonder , Mines published Edmond Hamilton 's " What 's It Like Out There ? " , a downbeat story about the realities of space exploration that had been considered too bleak for publication when it had originally been written in the 1930s . Sherwood Springer 's " No Land of Nod " , in the same issue , dealt with incest between a father and his daughter in a world in which they are the only two survivors . These stories were all well received by the readership .

= = = Influence on the field = = =

For a few years , Lasser was the dominant force in science fiction . Under him , Wonder Stories was the best of the science fiction magazines of the early 1930s , and the most successful of all Gernsback 's forays into the field . Lasser shaped a new generation of writers , who in many cases had no prior writing experience of any kind ; Wonder Stories was part of a " forcing ground " , according to Isaac Asimov , where young writers learned their trade . The magazine was less constrained by pulp convention than its competitors , and published some novels such as Eric Temple Bell 's The Time Stream and Festus Pragnell 's The Green Man of Graypec , which were not in the mainstream of development of the science fiction genre .

As Thrilling Wonder the magazine was much less influential . Until the mid @-@ 1940s it was focused on younger readers , and by the time Merwin and Mines introduced a more adult approach , Astounding Science Fiction had taken over as the unquestioned leader of the field . Thrilling Wonder could not compete with John Campbell and the Golden Age of science fiction that he brought into being , but it did periodically publish good stories . In the end it was unable to escape its roots in the pulp industry , and died in the carnage that swept away every remaining pulp magazine in the 1950s .

= = Publication details = =

The editorial duties at Wonder Stories and its related magazines were not always performed by the person who bore the title of " editor " in the magazine 's masthead . From the beginning until the sale to Beacon Publications , Gernsback was listed as editor @-@ in @-@ chief ; Lasser was

variously listed as " literary editor " and " managing editor " , while Hornig was always listed as " managing editor " . Similarly , under Beacon Publications , the nominal editor (initially Leo Margulies) was not always the one to work on the magazine . The following list shows who actually performed the editorial duties . More details are given in the publishing history section , above , which focuses on when the editors involved actually obtained control of the magazine contents , instead of when their names appeared on the masthead .

Air Wonder Stories

David Lasser (July 1929 ? May 1930)

Science Wonder Stories

David Lasser (June 1929 ? May 1930)

Science Wonder Quarterly

David Lasser (Fall 1929 ? Spring 1930)

Wonder Stories

David Lasser (June 1930 ? October 1933)

Charles Hornig (November 1933 ? March ? April 1936)

Wonder Stories Quarterly

David Lasser (Summer 1930 ? Winter 1933)

Thrilling Wonder Stories

Mort Weisinger (August 1936 ? April 1941)

Oscar Friend (August 1941 ? Fall 1944)

Sam Merwin (Winter 1945 ? October 1951)

Samuel Mines (December 1951 ? Summer 1954)

Alexander Samalman (Fall 1954 ? Winter 1955)

The publisher only changed once through the lifetime of the magazine , when Gernsback sold Wonder Stories in 1936 . However , Gernsback changed the name of his company from Stellar Publishing Corporation to Continental Publications , Incorporated , with effect from December 1933 . Thrilling Wonder 's publisher went by three names : Beacon Publications initially , then Better Publications from the August 1937 issue , and finally , starting with the Fall 1943 issue , Standard Magazines .

Gernsback experimented with the price and format , looking for a profitable combination . Both Air Wonder and Science Wonder were bedsheet @-@ sized (8 @.@ 5 x 11 @.@ 75 in , or 216 x 298 mm) and priced at 25 cents , as were the first issues of Wonder Stories . With the November 1930 issue Wonder Stories changed to pulp format , 6 @.@ 75 x 9 @.@ 9 in (171 x 251 mm) . It reverted to bedsheet after a year , and then in November 1933 became a pulp magazine for good . The pulp issues all had 144 pages ; the bedsheet issues generally had 96 pages , though five issues from November 1932 to March 1933 had only 64 pages . Those five issues coincided with a price cut to 15 cents , which was reversed with the April 1933 issue . Gernsback cut the price to 15 cents again from June 1935 until the sale to Beacon Publications in 1936 , though this time he did not reduce the page count . The short duration of these price cuts suggests Gernsback rapidly realized that the additional circulation they gained him cost too much in lost revenue . Under Beacon Publications Thrilling Wonder remained pulp @-@ sized throughout .

There were two British reprint editions of Thrilling Wonder . The earlier edition , from Atlas Publishing , produced three numbered issues from 1949 to 1950 , and a further seven from 1952 to 1953 . Another four issues appeared from Pemberton between 1953 and 1954 ; these were numbered from 101 to 104 . There were Canadian editions in 1945 ? 1946 and 1948 ? 1951 .