

= Uncanny Tales (Canadian pulp magazine) =

Uncanny Tales was a Canadian science fiction pulp magazine edited by Melvin R. Colby that ran from November 1940 to September 1943 . It was created in response to the wartime reduction of imports on British and American science @-@ fiction pulp magazines . Initially it contained stories only from Canadian authors , with much of its contents supplied by Thomas P. Kelley , but within a few issues Colby began to obtain reprint rights to American stories from Donald A. Wollheim and Sam Moskowitz . Paper shortages eventually forced the magazine to shut down , and it is now extremely rare .

= = Publication history and contents = =

By the end of the 1930s the science fiction magazine field was booming , with multiple new magazines launched in a short period . Most of the publishers also printed versions of their magazines for the Canadian market , but with the outbreak of World War II , paper shortages and import restrictions reduced the availability of these magazines in Canada . Uncanny Tales was begun in response to these conditions ; the editor was Melvin R. Colby , and the first issue was dated November 1940 .

The first issue was digest @-@ sized , and was printed in green ink . Colby initially focused on weird fiction , with Thomas P. Kelley , a Canadian writer whose work had appeared in Weird Tales , a prolific contributor . For the first four issues the format remained unchanged , and almost all the stories were by Kelley or other Canadian writers . Colby subsequently began to obtain reprint rights to U.S. stories from both Donald A. Wollheim and Sam Moskowitz , though Wollheim 's and Moskowitz 's accounts of the events differ . In Wollheim 's account , he happened to meet Colby early in 1941 in New York ; Wollheim had been editing Cosmic Stories and Stirring Science Stories but both magazines had ceased publication at the time of the meeting . Colby , who worked for a Toronto newspaper , told Wollheim that he was editing Uncanny Tales to make extra money , and asked if Wollheim knew where he might be able to obtain stories at a low word rate . Since Stirring and Cosmic had never been distributed in Canada , Wollheim was able to offer him Canadian rights to the stories in those magazines , and Colby agreed to pay a quarter of a cent per word . According to Moskowitz , Wollheim heard rumors of the new magazine , perhaps via Nils Frome , a Canadian fan whom he knew . Wollheim obtained more details from Chester Cuthbert , a Canadian author he was in correspondence with , and contacted Colby to arrange reprints of stories from Stirring and Cosmic . Moskowitz had also heard of Uncanny Tales and wrote to him separately , arranging reprints at a tenth of a cent per word . He sent Colby several stories , which were duly printed , but subsequent correspondence with Colby failed to elicit payment , and eventually Colby stopped responding to his letters . The manuscripts were never returned . A few months later , Moskowitz spoke to John B. Michel ? an author associated with Wollheim 's group of writers ? and found out that a long @-@ standing feud between Wollheim and Moskowitz was at least partly responsible for his problems . Wollheim and many of the group of writers he represented held very left @-@ wing political positions ; Moskowitz was strongly opposed , and Michel told Moskowitz that Colby was politically left @-@ wing and had been put off by indications from Moskowitz that he was anti @-@ communist . However , the main reason that Colby stopped responding , according to Michel , was that once Wollheim found out that Moskowitz was also supplying stories , he offered Colby further material for free on condition that Colby stopped accepting Moskowitz 's submissions .

The sixth issue saw a story by Wollheim appear , and in the seventh issue there were three by Wollheim and one by Robert W. Lowndes . In total , 37 stories from Uncanny Tales have been identified as reprints from either Stirring or Cosmic . There were also a handful of new stories from the same group of authors , including three by Wollheim and two by Lowndes , one of which , " Lure of the Lily " , had been rejected by Wollheim for the American magazines for being too risqué . The stories supplied by Sam Moskowitz included Moskowitz 's own " The Way Back " (reprinted from Comet) , which appeared in the February 1942 issue ; Stanton Coblenz 's novel After 12 @,@ 000 Years , and James Taurasi 's story " Magician of Space " , which was not a reprint . Canadian

writers continued to appear in the magazine , including C.V. Tench , who had sold a story to the very first issue of Astounding Stories in January 1930 . The stories of Canadian origin were generally unmemorable , and in some cases the stories may have been plagiarized or rewritten versions of other works .

Paper shortages caused by the war forced the magazine to a bimonthly schedule in 1942 , and only four more issues appeared . The last issue was dated September ? October 1943 . Over the lifetime of the magazine its focus shifted from weird fiction to include both science fiction and fantasy . The magazine is now hard to find and complete runs are very rare .

= = Bibliographic details = =

Uncanny Tales was published by Adam Publishing Co. of Toronto for the first 17 issues , and by Norman Book Co. of Toronto for the last four issues . The publisher may have been owned by Valentine , of the Toronto publishers Valentine , Koniac and Chamberlain . The editor , who was not credited in the magazine , was Melvin R. Colby . The first four issues were digest @-@ sized and 64 pages long ; the format then switched to a large pulp size with 96 pages for all the remaining issues except the last , which had 128 pages . The price was 15 cents throughout except for the last issue , which was 25 cents . There was no volume numbering . A complete index by Dennis Lien of the contents of all issues can be found in issue 9 of Megavore , a science fiction and fantasy bibliography magazine .

In the early 1950s an anthology titled Brief Fantastic Tales appeared from Studio Publications in Toronto ; it consisted mostly of reprints from Uncanny Tales .