

= Fantasy ( 1938 magazine ) =

Fantasy was a British pulp science fiction magazine which published three issues in 1938 and 1939 . The editor was T. Stanhope Sprigg ; when the war started , he enlisted in the RAF and the magazine was closed down . The publisher , George Newnes Ltd , paid respectable rates , and as a result Sprigg was able to obtain some good quality material , including stories by John Wyndham , Eric Frank Russell , and John Russell Fearn .

= = Publication history = =

The first U.S. science fiction ( sf ) magazine , Amazing Stories , was imported into the U.K. from its launch in 1926 , and other magazines from the U.S. market were also available in the U.K. from an early date . However , no British sf magazine was launched until 1934 , when Pearson 's launched Scoops , a weekly in tabloid format aimed at the juvenile market . Soon Haydn Dimmock , Scoops ' editor , began to receive more sophisticated stories , targeted at an adult audience ; he tried to change the magazine 's focus to include more mature fiction but within twenty issues falling sales led Pearson 's to kill the magazine . The failure of Scoops gave British publishers the impression that Britain could not support a science fiction publication .

Despite this failure , only a year later , Newnes . , the publisher of The Strand magazine , decided to launch a group of four genre pulp magazines , and to include a science fiction title in the group . The plan was the idea of T. Stanhope Sprigg , a young editor who had joined Newnes in 1934 . Sprigg had help from Walter Gillings , a British science fiction reader who had been active in fan circles since the early 1930s , in searching for good submissions , and was able to obtain stories from Eric Frank Russell and John Russell Fearn , but although the other three titles ? Air Stories , War Stories , and Western Stories ? were launched in 1935 and 1936 , the science fiction title was much delayed . Sprigg recalled later that Newnes issued a memo specifying the requirements for the stories ; it was " so restricting that it threw would @-@ be contributors into a complete tizzy " . The project was placed on hold after fifteen months .

Gillings subsequently persuaded The World 's Work , a subsidiary of William Heinemann , to launch a science fiction pulp magazine titled Tales of Wonder in 1937 . This was successful enough to convince Newnes to go ahead with the original plan , and Fantasy was launched in July 1938 , with an issue dated only with the year . Another issue appeared six months later and a third and final issue in June 1939 , again dated only with the year ; Sprigg enlisted as a pilot when World War II started , and although a fourth issue had been prepared , it was clear that paper rationing was coming , and Newnes decided to close down the magazine .

= = Contents and reception = =

The lead story for the first issue was " Menace of the Metal Men " , by A. Prestigiacomo ; this was a 1933 reprint from the British edition of Argosy , but the other stories in the issue were all new . Contributors included John Wyndham , Eric Frank Russell , and John Russell Fearn , and a couple of writers who were not known in the science fiction world but who had contributed to Newnes ' other magazines : J.E. Gurdon and Francis H. Sibson . There was an article on interplanetary travel by P.E. Cleator , which continued a series of articles he had published in Scoops . Newnes paid competitive rates for fiction , so they were able to attract good quality submissions , many of which were subsequently reprinted in the U.S. These included Wyndham 's " Beyond the Screen " ( described by sf historian and critic Sam Moskowitz as " an engrossing story " ) ; Halliday Sutherland 's " Valley of Doom " ; and Eric Frank Russell 's " Vampire from the Void " , which was reprinted in Fantastic in 1972 , having been submitted there by Russell 's agent as if it were a new story . When the editor , Ted White , was told that the story was over thirty years old , he initially denied that it was possible , but ultimately accepted that it was a reprint : science fiction historian Mike Ashley comments that this indicated Russell 's fiction " stood well the test of time " .

The main artist for Fantasy was Serge Drigin , a Russian @-@ born artist who worked for Pearson

's and had been responsible for all the covers for Scoops ; Drigin did interior artwork and all three covers . Though his work has been described as " crude " and " mediocre " , science fiction art historian Robert Weinberg regards the cover for the second issue , illustrating " Winged Terror " by G.R. Malloch , as " highly effective and easily the best thing he ever did " .

= = Bibliographic details = =

Fantasy was printed in pulp format , 128 pages , and priced at 1 / - . All three issues were edited by T. Stanhope Sprigg and published by Newnes . There was no volume numeration ; each issue was dated only with the year .