

THE ACOLYTE

AN AMATEUR MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND THE SUPERNATURAL
(An Outsider Publication)

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THIS ISSUE OF THE ACOLYTE IS DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF PAUL FREEHAFER

Cover:

Maliano

Stories:

MORTE JAMBE
SUMMER'S CLOUD
THE HARP
THE SMALL, DARK THING

T. Bruce Yerke	3
Anthony Boucher	8
Alan P. Roberts	11
Duane W. Rimel	20

Poems:

THE LITTLE ONES
LIGHT FANTASTIC
REGNAR LODBRUG'S EPICEDIUM
DARK GARDEN
SATAN'S HOLE

Duane W. Rimel	7
Arthur Kennedy	10
H. P. Lovecraft	14
Richard Ely Morse	19
Rita Barr	24

Articles and Features:

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING
CHECKLIST OF M. G. LEWIS
THE FAMILY TREE OF THE GODS
HOFFMANIA
4. The Gods of Bal-Arkoth
5. Unwanted Desire
LITTLE KNOWN FANTAISISTES
SHOP TALK
FANTASY FORUM
BACK COVER

The Editors	2
W. Paul Cook & R. H. Barlow	7
Clark Ashton Smith	9
R. A. Hoffman	
(facing)	10
(facing)	24
Harold Wakefield	13
E. Hoffman Price	16
The Readers	25
John Giunta	

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FRANCIS T. LANAY
SAMUEL D. RUSSELL

REGNAR LODBRUG'S EPICEDIUM

(An 8th Century Funeral Song....
Translated from Olaus Wormius)

by H. P. Lovecraft.

(Editors' note: This interesting item presents to Acolyte readers what was to us, at least, an entirely new facet of HPL's writings. Written about 1920, The Epicedium is probably one of the very earliest attempts by Lovecraft to "translate" a mythical manuscript, and is also notable for the first reference to the redoubtable Olaus Wormius, who later became renowned as a translator and publisher of the diabolic writings of the mad Arab, Abdul Alhazred. The various gaps in the poem are, we assume, deliberate; and probably are meant to convey the idea that only portions of so ancient and battered a vellum could be deciphered. So far as we know, Regnar Lodbrug's Epicedium is new to print. It appears here through the courtesy of R. H. Barlow and August Derleth. FTL-SDR.)

With our swords have we contended!
Come but new to Gothland's shore
For the killing of the serpent
We have gain'd from Thor ()
()
From this deed they call me man
Because I have transfix'd the adder:
Shaggy Breeches from that slaughter.
()
I have thrust a spear into the serpent
With metal brighter ()

With our swords have we contended!
But a youth was I when eastward
In the channel of Oreon
With our foeman's gore in torrents
We the () and wolves delighted;
And the yellow-footed buzzard.
There the harden'd steel resounded
On the high-wrought hostile helmets.
One vast wound was all the ocean
And the hungry raven waded
Searching for its carrion food
Deep in dead men's thick'ning blood.)

With our swords have we contended!
Ere two score of years we counted
High we bore our glist'ning lances
Wide we heard our fame and praises.
In the east before the harbour
(Barons eight we overcame;)
We the rav'ning eagle glutted;
Dripping wounds fill'd up the ocean.
Weary of the hopeless fray,
All the host dissolved away)

With our swords have we contended!
When the Vistula we enter'd
With our ships in battle order
We unto the hall of Woden
Sent the bold Helsingian foemen.
Then the sword-points bit in fury;
All the billows turn'd to life-blood
Earth with streaming gore was crimson'd;
Reeking sword with ringing note
Shields divided; armour smote. }

(With our swords have we contended!)
{None had fallen on that day
{Till on his ship Herauclus fell:
{Than him before no braver baron
Cleft the sea with ships of battle;
Never after him was chieftan
Lighter hearted in the fighting.

With our swords have we contended!
Now the host flung down their buckles;
Flying spears tore hero's bosoms
Swords on Scarfian rocks were striking.
Gory was his shield in slaughter
Till the royal Rofus perish'd.
Sweat from weary hands and pale
Trickled down the suits of mail. }

With our swords have we contended!
Copious booty had the ravens
Round about the Indirian islands,
In that single day of action
(One in many deaths was little.)
(The rising sun grew bright on spears)
In the forms of prostrate warrior-men.
Arrows from their bows ejected;
(Weapons roared on Lano's plain.
(Long the virgin mourned that slaughter.)