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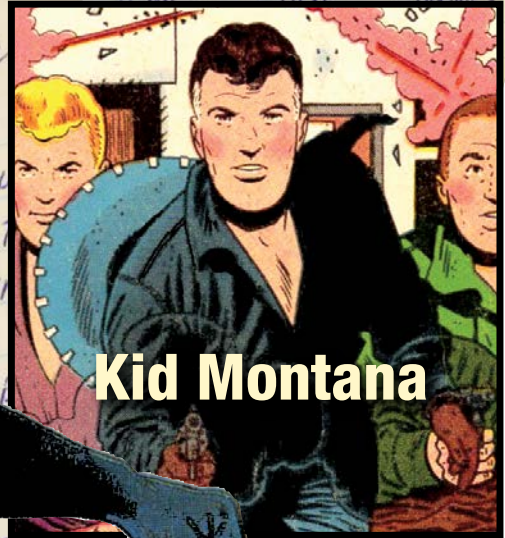
# Alter Ego™



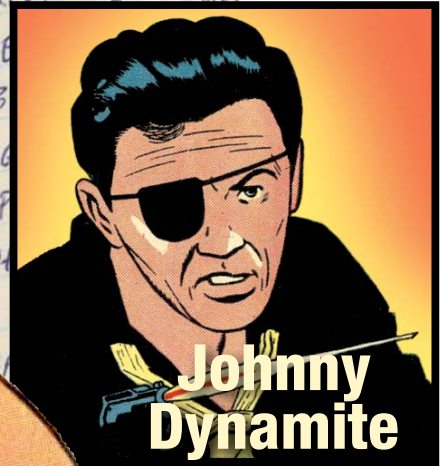
**PETE MORISI**

REVEALS THE SECRET ORIGINS OF...

**PETER CANNON...**  
**THUNDERBOLT**



**Kid Montana**



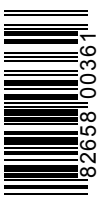
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This issue is dedicated to the memory of  
**Pete Morisi, Glen Johnson,  
Jay Scott Pike, & Pat Lupoff**



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P.C. Hamerlinck presents Bill Schelly's 2002 interview with writing great William  
Woolfolk.

**On Our Cover:** "Comic Crypt" editor **Michael T. Gilbert** put together this monumental  
montage of three of **Pete Morisi's** best-known artistic creations: *Kid Montana*, detective *Johnny  
Dynamite*, and *Peter Cannon*... *Thunderbolt*. (The latter figure, as demonstrated on p. 17 of this  
issue, is a creative swipe of a Jack Kirby pose.) In the background are reproduced two of Morisi's  
letters to comics fan *Glen Johnson*. Thanks to sons *Russ* and *Val Morisi* for the cover photo. [*Peter  
Cannon*... *Thunderbolt* TM & © Estate of Pete Morisi; other characters TM & © the respective  
trademark & copyright holders.]

**Above:** A dramatic panel by **Pete Morisi** from *Comic Media's Danger* #8 (March 1954), from  
the "Duke Douglas" story subtly titled "Kill! Kill! Kill!" Scripter unknown. This yarn and several  
others drawn by Morisi, Don Heck, et al., starring the private detective, were reprinted in *France*  
in the 2015 *Boardman one-shot Duke Douglas*. Thanks to *Michaël Dewally*. [© the respective  
copyright holders.]



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FIRST PRINTING.





# In Praise Of PAM

by Michael T. Gilbert

## Part 5

## Pete Morisi... Thunderbolt!

**E**ver since Pete Morisi was a kid, he had two loves: comicbooks and the law. He wound up making careers of both.

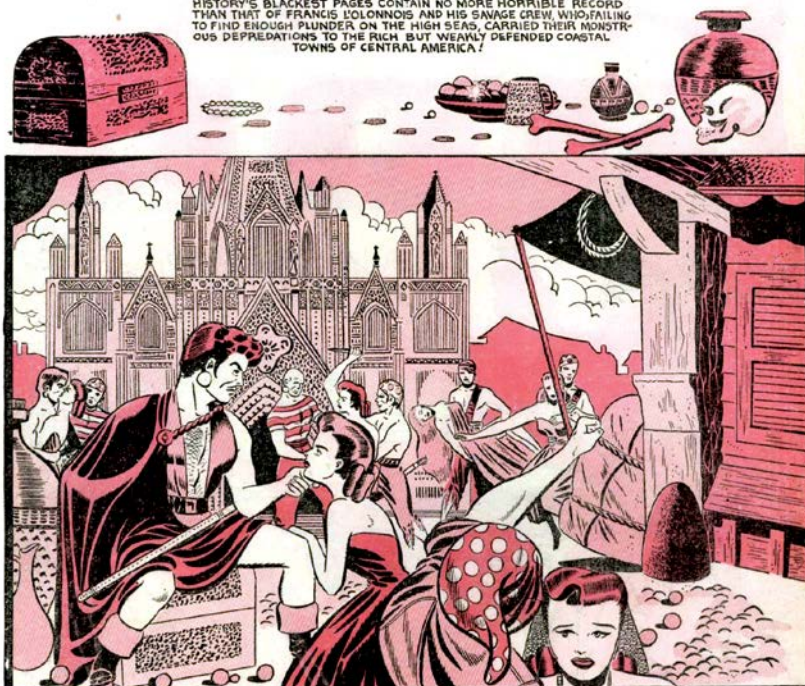
In an interview with Glen D. Johnson in *Comic Book Artist* #9 (Aug. 2000), Pete talked about getting bit by the comicbook bug after seeing his first "Superman" story in *Action Comics*: "I was ten years old in 1938 and the thought that a man could fly, leap over tall buildings, and have bullets bounce off his chest fascinated me. I wanted to be a part of a business that could capture my imagination like that. *I had to be part of it.*"

When he was a young fan, Jack Kirby especially intrigued Pete. "I liked Blue Bolt, but it was the Kirby art that drew my attention to the strip. I knew, even then, that I was seeing something special.



## L'OLONNOIS THE CRUEL!

HISTORY'S BLACKEST PAGES CONTAIN NO MORE HORRIBLE RECORD THAN THAT OF FRANCIS L'OLONNOIS AND HIS SAVAGE CREW, WHO, FAILING TO FIND ENOUGH PLUNDER ON THE HIGH SEAS, CARRIED THEIR MONSTROUS DEPREDEATIONS TO THE RICH BUT WEAKLY DEFENDED COASTAL TOWNS OF CENTRAL AMERICA!



### Morisi: First Blood!

"L'Olonnois the Cruel" was the first story Pete wrote and drew. It appeared, in "two colors" (out of a possible four) in Fox Comics' *Captain Kidd* #25 (Aug. 1949). [© the respective copyright holders.]

### Cops & Robbers!

(Above:) Young Pete Morisi playing policeman in the early 1930s. Policeman Pete would eventually be the proud owner of a *real* gun and *real* handcuffs. [© 2019 Estate of Pete Morisi.]

I've been a fan ever since. To me, Captain America will always be Kirby's most interesting art."

Pete also marveled over the bravura visuals of Lou Fine, Will Eisner, and Reed Crandall. He remained, at heart, a fan all his life.

### Starting Out!

Pete, a Brooklyn boy, was born on January 7, 1928. Raised in the Park Slope neighborhood, he studied at Manhattan's School of Industrial Art and the Cartoonists and Illustrators School, and then got his first gig assisting on *The Saint* and *Dickie Dare* comic strips.

His comicbook career began at bottom-tier Fox Publications in 1948, but it was temporarily derailed when Uncle Sam drafted him that year. However, Morisi managed to squeeze in scripts for Fox's romance and crime comics, as well as writing and drawing his first one-man story (in 1949), "L'Olonnois the Cruel," also for Fox.



That same year, Pete married his high school sweetheart, Louise Massie. It would prove to be an enduring marriage.

Pete finished his military obligations and returned to NY in 1950. He then began working for various publishers, including Timely (Marvel), St. John, Quality, Harvey, Gleason, Fiction House, Nesbit, and Comic Media. These books included *Murder Incorporated* for Fox, *Arizona Kid* and *Strange Tales* for Timely. But he made his first real mark at Comic Media, writing and drawing “Johnny Dynamite,” a harder-than-nails private eye inspired by Mickey Spillane’s Mike Hammer.

Pete’s vicious anti-hero proved to be his signature character in the 1950s. “Johnny Dynamite” stories appeared in seven issues of Comic Media’s *Dynamite Comics* before the company went belly-up in 1954. But Johnny wasn’t through yet. In fact, he may have been partly responsible for introducing Pete to his most important client.

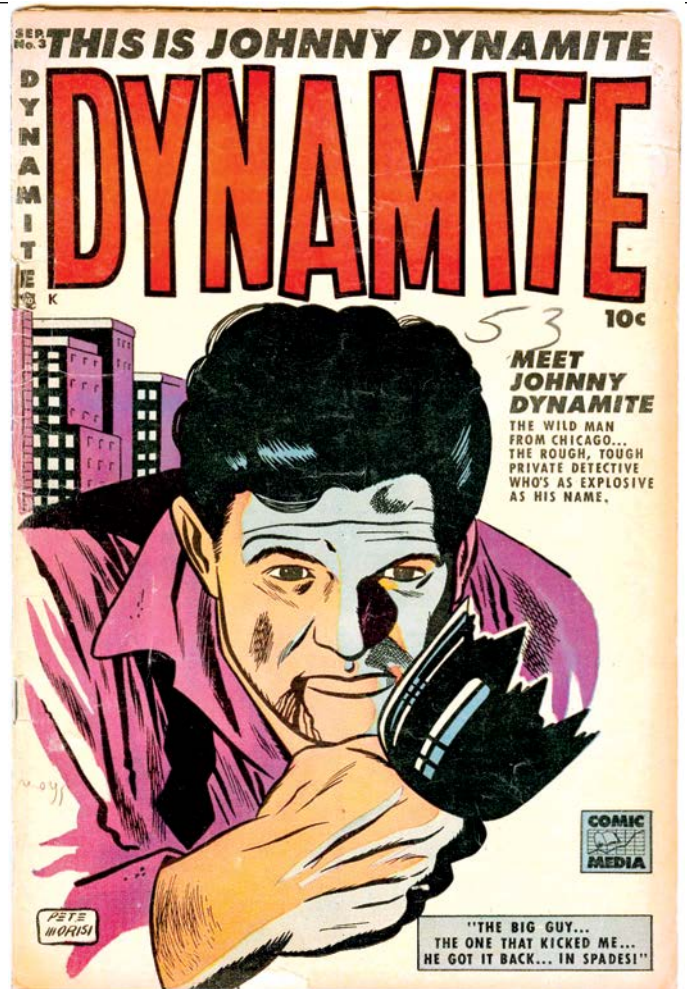
## The Charlton Years!

When Comic Media folded, they sold some of their titles and inventory to Charlton—*Dynamite Comics* among them. *Dynamite Comics* was renamed *Johnny Dynamite* after its title character. Continuing Comic Media’s numbering, Charlton’s first issue was #10 (June 1955) and featured Pete’s story “Vengeance Be Mine!”

Technically, another of Pete’s stories, “That Wreck, the Hesperus!” (in Charlton’s *Danger and Adventure* #23, April 1955) had appeared a couple of months earlier, marking PAM’s first Charlton appearance. But it was merely a reprint from Fox’s *Feature Presentations Magazine* #6, cover-dated June 1950.

While that first Charlton “Johnny Dynamite” tale was likely a Comic Media inventory story, it showed what a more mature Pete Morisi could do. The boys from Derby, Connecticut, must have liked what they saw, and Pete found himself working almost exclusively for Charlton for the next 20 years. That was fortunate, as most of his other clients (Lev Gleason, St. John, Quality, and Fiction House) soon went the way of Comic Media. Which brings us to the next phase of Pete’s career.

After marrying in 1949, Pete and Louise had three sons—Steve in 1950, Russ in 1953, and Val in 1954. And this became something of a problem for Pete. By the mid-’50s, the comicbook field was (you know the drill!) drowning in the wake of a tsunami of bad



### Explosive!

Pete drew this striking cover for Comic Media’s *Johnny Dynamite* #3 (Sept. 1953). Guess he didn’t need an eyepatch yet. [© the respective copyright holders.]

publicity. With a growing family to support, Pete decided to leave comics behind... sort of.

## Livin’ The Dream!

Pete joined the City of New York Police Department in 1956 in order to provide a steady income for his family. It was also his opportunity to fulfill another longtime dream. He was finally a cop!

Police work suited Pete. He enjoyed it, and after hours he even had time for his cartooning. However, his boss told him in no uncertain terms that he had to keep his other job under wraps. “Don’t let anyone know you’re moonlighting, Morisi!” he said. Or words to that effect. Pete got the message.

He began signing his name with his first and last initials only. And when *Thunderbolt* started in 1966, Pete added his middle initial, and Pete Anthony Morisi became the mysterious PAM.

Pete spent the next two decades drawing and sometimes writing stories for Charlton. Westerns were a specialty, and he was one of the best. Kid Montana, Lash LaRue, Masked Raider, Billy the Kid, and other Charlton cowboys all benefited from the Morisi touch. However, there was one genre he loathed.

Pete hated love comics! Unfortunately, he did them too well for his own good. Despite his objections, Morisi’s editors insisted on



The Morisi, The Merrier

(Left to right:) Pete Morisi, sons Steve, Russ, Val, and wife Louise in 1974. Pip the pooch looks a tad camera-shy! [© 2019 Estate of Pete Morisi.]



assigning him stories for *Career Girl Romances*, *Just Married*, and other mushy stuff. Pete compensated by illustrating manly war yarns for *Navy Tales* and *Battlefield Action*, and a ton of mystery and science-fiction stories for Charlton spook books, including *The Many Ghosts of Doctor Graves*, *Ghostly Tales*, *Ghostly Haunts*, *Ghost Manor*, and *Haunted*. Later he also did work for *Flash Gordon* and *Vengeance Squad*.

## His One True Love!

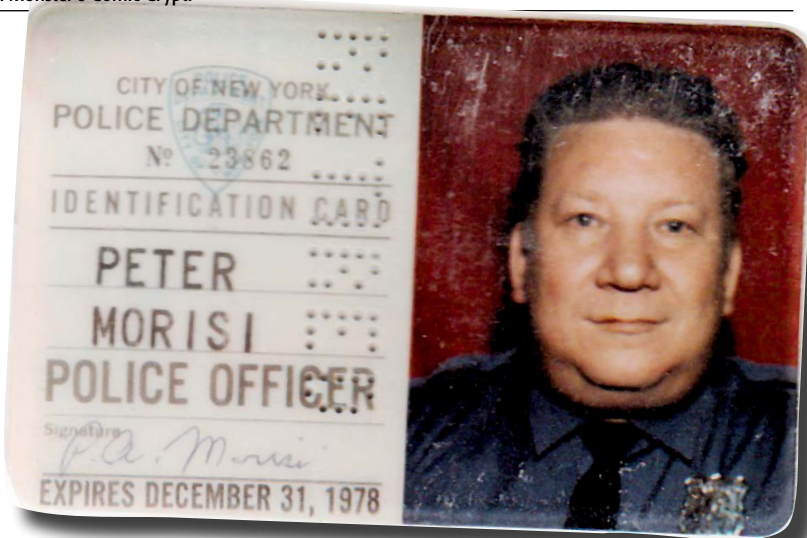
But super-heroes were his one true love. Pete was a “long-underwear” fan since he was a kid. He also knew the backstories of his favorite comics and their creators. Pete would have been right at home writing for *Alter Ego*.

Oddly enough, though he loved the genre, PAM had never really drawn any super-hero strips. Perhaps editors felt his static style was too understated for such an overblown genre. As a fan of Golden Age comics, he tried—unsuccessfully—to acquire the rights to a number of abandoned properties, chief among them the original Lev Gleason Daredevil. Other defunct heroes he considered buying included Plastic Man, Captain Marvel, and The Flame. None worked out.



**Pete's Other True Loves!**

Lovely Louise and the Morisi boys at Pebble Beach, circa 1960. [ © 2019 Estate of Pete Morisi.]



**Pete Morisi's 1970s Police ID.**

Finally, in 1965, he took matters in his own hands and created his own action hero, “Peter Cannon... Thunderbolt”! T-Bolt was inspired by two of his favorite Golden Age heroes. T-Bolt's uniform was a variation of the two-color Lev Gleason Daredevil costume (designed by Jack Binder and Jack Cole in the 1940s), while memories of Bill Everett's Amazing-Man contributed to Thunderbolt's origin. Both heroes were raised by Tibetan monks and trained to reach the absolute peak of man's physical and mental perfection. Take *that*, Batman!

*Thunderbolt* became a minor cult classic, but Pete's own agonizing perfectionism worked against him as he missed deadline after deadline. The fact that he was also a full-time cop didn't help any. When Pat Boyette and Denny O'Neil took over the title, the loss of his hero devastated Pete.

But it didn't really matter. Only two issues after he left, Charlton canceled their entire Action Hero line, and *Thunderbolt* with it. But Pete kept working, primarily on shorter stories for Charlton's Western and mystery titles.

## Charlton And Beyond!

Pete gave DC a try in 1973, at the suggestion of his old editor, Dick Giordano. However PAM found he preferred Charlton's more “laissez-faire” attitude. PAM described his feelings in *Charlton Spotlight* #9 (Winter 2015):

“Charlton always left me alone. ‘Do it your way’ was the standard phrase from editors Pat Masulli, Dick Giordano, and Sal Gentile. Add panels, drop panels, change the story, re-write the endings, we trust you. Quite a compliment, and a situation I never took advantage of, by hacking out a job. My ‘rush’ jobs were due to deadlines, not intent.”

After completing only one story for DC, PAM returned to Charlton. In the early-'70s Gray Morrow tried to get PAM to work for Red Circle Comics (an Archie imprint he was editing), but the line folded before Pete could do anything for them. He considered working for Marvel, Warren, and others, but ultimately opted to stay put at Charlton.

Charlton had its faults. The pay was among the industries' worst, printing was lousy, and their scripts were often bad. But Pete had plenty of work, and felt comfortable there. “Better the devil you know,” and all that. Yet Morisi was still restless, creatively.



# Thunderbolt... The Charlton Years!

## Chapter 1

**A**s I've related before: Years ago, I received an unexpected package containing hundreds of letters from Golden and Silver Age cartoonist Pete Anthony Morisi (aka PAM). The sender, Glen D. Johnson, explained that he and Pete had been pen pals for three decades until Pete's death in 2003. Glen had saved all of Pete's letters, and suggested that *Alter Ego* might want to publish them.

While I was intrigued by this treasure trove of comics history, the sheer volume of letters intimidated me. After copying them, I returned Glen's originals and put my copies aside for later. "Later" turned out to be more than a decade later. Oy!



**Boy Oh Boy, It's Roy!**

Glen D. Johnson with Roy Rogers in 1991. Rogers passed away in 1998.  
[© 2019 Glen D. Johnson.]



### The New Kid In Town

The intro page to *Peter Cannon...Thunderbolt* #1, announcing Charlton's newest hero. The indicia reads "Jan. 1966," but comics were generally post-dated at least two months, so fans probably got their first glimpse of T-Bolt around November 1965. [© Peter Cannon, Thunderbolt TM & © Estate of Pete Morisi; other heroes TM & © DC Comics.]

I came across them again last year, and casually started reading the earliest ones, from 1964. I was instantly hooked. Pete's letters were a combination of chatty inside info about the comics scene of the '60s (from the point of view of a cartoonist working in the trenches)—and his uncensored opinions of his editors and co-workers at Charlton (a company he worked for almost exclusively in the '60s and '70s).

From then on I set to work, organizing and editing the best letters into a series of articles I called "The PAM Papers," of which this is Part 5. Part 4's letters hinted at Pete's upcoming Charlton hero. This time we're focusing on the creation and evolution of his signature character, "Peter Cannon... Thunderbolt!" Morisi's correspondence affords us a rare first-hand glimpse into the birth and development of an unusual Silver Age hero. Our first letters begin before January 1966, the cover date of *Peter Cannon... Thunderbolt* #1.

While it's unlikely that Glen's letters survived, Pete's replies are generally self-explanatory. However, I've written additional comments when needed, and also edited PAM's letters for space and clarity.

We begin with Pete joking about his mysterious PAM pseudonym. In the mid-'50s the comicbook field was imploding in the wake of a spate of bad publicity. Pete, worried about supporting his family, got a job as a police officer while continuing to draw comics on the side. Fearing that the boys in blue would frown on his comicbook work, Peter A. Morisi became the mysterious "PAM."

By the mid-'60s, comics fans began asking who PAM really was. In this instance Glen spotted an early comics story signed "PM" (leaving out the "A"), and asked Pete if he thought the artist was actually Charlton artist and editor Pat Masulli, based on their similar initials. Of course, any older fan who'd seen PAM's work a decade earlier, when he'd been signing his full name, wouldn't have been fooled. Glen wasn't taken in, and was well aware that Pete was both "PM" and "PAM." He was just having fun teasing Morisi, who responded in kind.

Pete's letter begins with a tongue-in-cheek reference to fans who mistakenly credited stories he had illustrated to either Massulli or George Tuska (whose style PAM consciously emulated). At the



T-Bolt's? I have a few early Flames, but none of them explain the origin.

Uh-huh, I saw the Tuska Eerie (or was it Creepy?)—I agree, I expected more. Rocky's stuff was great. [MTG NOTE: Charlton artist *Rocke Mastroserio*.] Jay Taycee has to be the old EC artist Johnny Craig. [Manny] Stallman did work for the old Stan Lee mags, plus (I think) for DC. At one time he was on the order of a Jack Kirby.

I'm having trouble meeting the generous deadline Charlton gives me. I doubt if I can even approach the Warren mags... or Stan's stuff for that matter. No time at all!

I don't want to mix T-Bolt with Blue Beetle, or any other hero, if I can help it. Everybody's doing it, and I don't want to join the club if I can avoid it. Besides, Dick says he might re-vamp B.B., and give him limited powers, etc., so he'll have special plans for that strip.

That's it, Pete.

MTG: Glen got a bit of a scoop, as the super-powered version of Blue Beetle (by Gill, Tallarico, and Fraccio) was soon replaced by Steve Ditko's updated, more human model.

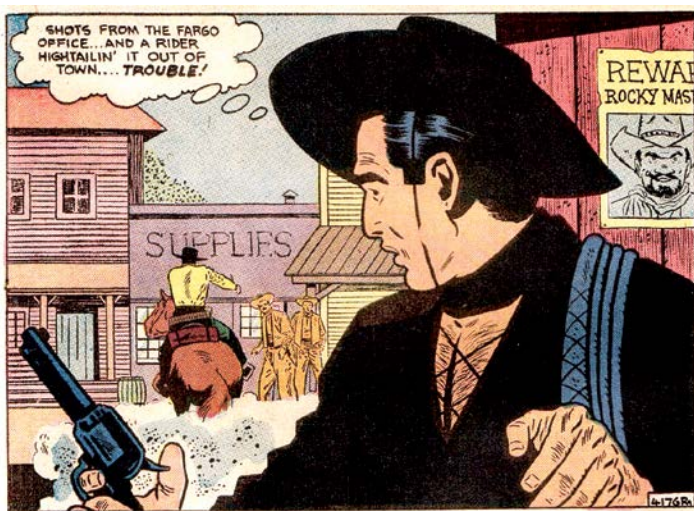
PAM asked about the origin of Fox's "The Flame," after Glen noted its similarity to T-Bolt in a previous letter. The Flame's origin had young Gary Preston raised by Tibetan lamas after his father (a missionary ministering to the Chinese) perished in a flood. The holy men then raised and trained him in their mystical ways. Preston learned to control fire, becoming a super-hero in the process.

T-Bolt's origin paralleled that. As a boy, Peter Cannon was also raised and trained by Tibetan monks, and learned to perform superhuman feats by harnessing his mental abilities. Still, if T-Bolt had similarities to The Flame, so did many comicbook magicians from Mr. Mystic and Amazing-Man to Dr. Strange.

## Chapter 2

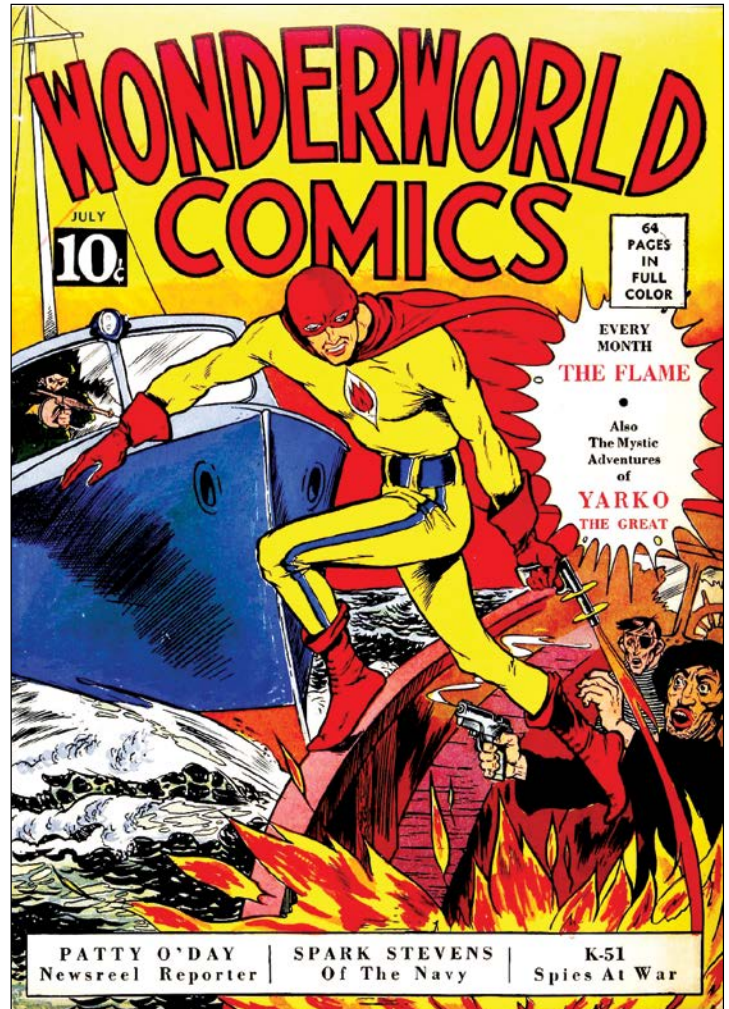
### *Deadline Woes!*

In this chapter Pete struggles with demanding deadlines and that lousy Comics Code!



#### Big Bad Rocky Mastroserio!

Pete poked fun at his pal cartoonist *Rocke Mastroserio* in this panel from *Lash LaRue Western* #69 (Sept. 1958). PAM specialized in Westerns before he created T-Bolt. [TM & © the respective trademark & copyright holders.]



#### ...Like Moths Around A "Flame"

The premier appearance of Fox's "The Flame," from *Wonderworld Comics* #3 (July 1939). Art credited to Will Eisner and Lou Fine. Glen Johnson noted some similarities to T-Bolt's origin. [TM & © the respective trademark & copyright holders.]

(Undated, around April 1966)

Dear Glen—

I haven't forgotten you, but up until a few hours ago, I've been on T-Bolt #4, without let up. When I get so far behind on a thing, all contact with family and friends stops until I catch up. [MTG NOTE: *Pete crossed out the following sentence:*] Forgive the mistakes. I haven't slept in 48 hours.

Here's some "possible" changes with Charlton—the lead stories may be shortened by a couple of pages, and some advertising dropped so that the "fillers" can be a full 10 pages in their own right. This could be a very good thing. Judomaster may have Sgt. Steel as a filler, and Blue Beetle and Son of Vulcan may be updated and changed and used as fillers. Also, Dick hinted that Ditko may take on the Blue Boy. The above is in the "maybe" stage of planning, so I wouldn't print it if I were you.

T-Bolt #4 will have a letter page. Sorry to cut this short, but rush jobs (T-Bolt) knock me out. Gotta Sleep!

Pete

MTG: Hopefully Glen reported PAM's scoop, as Ditko did indeed revamp the Beetle for *Blue Beetle* #1 (June 1967).



(Undated, late 1966)  
Dear Glen—

I'll answer this letter quick, but you can expect a delay on the next one... I'm already behind on #5.

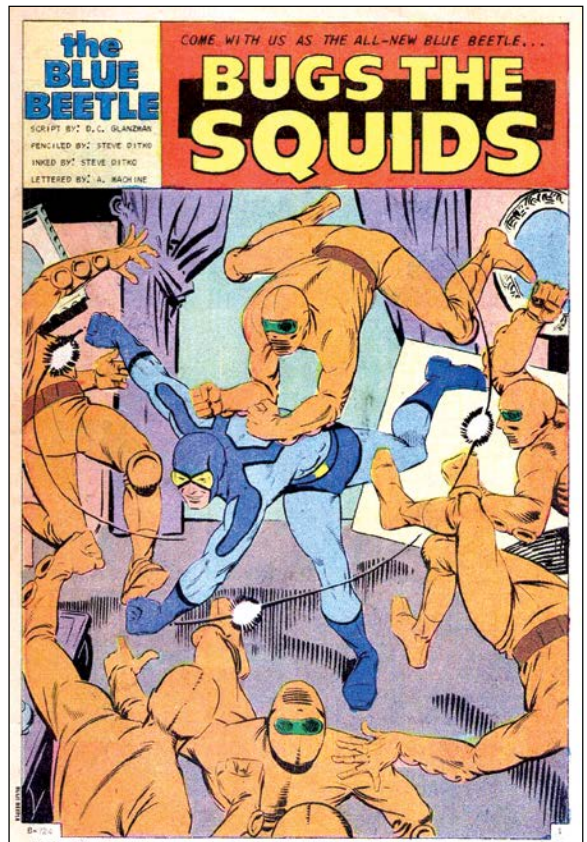
Many thanks for The Flame thing. It does resemble T-Bolt at that. Actually, I'm glad I didn't know the Flame's origin, or T-Bolt would have either been a closer copy, or I would have gone off in a different direction altogether.

I had great hopes for The Tong—but ran into trouble.

#1 Couldn't get any good information on the Tong Wars that existed in this country.

#2 Dick [Giordano] said "No Dice" on hatchet men and axes. That lousy Code.

#3 NO TIME... had to rush the art... and couldn't really develop the character the way I wanted to.



### Beetle-Mania!

(Left:) *Blue Beetle*, Vol. 2, #5 (March 1965), drawn by Bill Fraccio and Tony Tallarico. Script by Joe Gill.  
(Right:) Steve Ditko's brilliant revamp of the series. From *Blue Beetle* #1 (June 1967). Script by D.C. Glanzman, probably from a Ditko plot. [Blue Beetle TM & © DC Comics.]



### Back To The Drawing Board!

Pete at work, surrounded by original art from his collection. Say, aren't those an Alex Raymond *Rip Kirby* and an Alfred Andriola *Kerry Drake* in the background? On his board is Pete's splash for a new "T-Bolt" origin story for DC's *Secret Origins*, drawn in 1988 but not published until 2012. [© 2019 Estate of Pete Morisi.]

Sonofagun, you're pretty sharp, Glen, as I recall (issue 3 page 16, panel 6) was a Kirby swipe. I'll have to watch it in the future, with fans like you around.

Getting back to The Flame, I tried to buy that title from Charlton (before I started T-Bolt) and the deal was almost set, until the lawyers looked into the ownership rights. Then the roof fell in. Charlton doesn't have a clear-cut ownership to the thing. There's another party involved who claims partial rights to it. For me to buy it would mean lawyers, lawyers, and more lawyers, so I forgot about it. Too bad, I would have enjoyed doing it.

I haven't read [Russ] Manning's review—but I agree with him already. Feiffer didn't really do a good job on that book. Too sketchy. He spent a lot of time on unimportant things, and too little time on the things that mattered. Also,



someone else do it. But he said, “No, if you stop doing it, I’m dropping the book.” So I’ll keep doing it and try to pick up speed... someplace.

As I mentioned before, I really sweat over my stories.

Now as for giving Peter a “problem,” I just don’t know. I realize that Marvel thrives on that gimmick... but DC does OK without it. So does The Spirit, Fighting American, etc. In any event, Dick said no. The fan mail likes T-Bolt the way he is (and this includes the most “adult” mail that Charlton has ever gotten). It’s starting to click, keep your fingers crossed. If T-Bolt can get enough exposure on the stands... we’re in!

T-Bolt will stay at 15 pages until I can catch up, then it’s back to 18 pages. I guess The Sentinels will pick up the other pages.

I don’t mean to make Tabu a ‘funny-man’... I just like a little sneaky humor in the strip now and then. And keeping his turban on—under all conditions—makes the reader (I hope!) smile a little. Naturally, I intend to keep his style of talking in the strip, and add to it if I can. Peter, as I mentioned, will get a girlfriend eventually.

Guess that’s it. Thanks for pushing T-Bolt!

Truly—Pete

**MTG:** Morisi’s statement about “picking up speed... someplace” was whistling in the dark. Writing and drawing 15 pages in a little over a week would be kid stuff for a speed demon like Mike Sekowsky or Jack Davis, but not Pete. Glen offered to help him get ahead by scripting a “T-Bolt” story, but PAM politely declined.

It’s worth noting that PAM drew 20-page “T-Bolt” stories for the first four issues. Then the story-count dropped to 18 pages with number five. Three 15-page issues followed (with a “Sentinels” backup filling out the books), before reverting back to 18 pages for the final three issues (only one by Pete). Despite editor Giordano’s best efforts to accommodate him, Pete kept getting further behind.

(Undated, 1966)

Dear Glen—

I have a collection of old books and originals, but the books are in bad shape. (As a kid, I didn’t have room for books, so... I tore out the stories I liked and threw out a lot of “now valuable” stuff).

No covered legs for T-Bolt... at least for a while. Dick likes it just the way it is. T-Bolt #5 pits Peter Cannon against the Hooded One, the Mongol bandits, the Pygmy warriors, and prehistoric monsters, all in one issue (whew)! The plot is a simple one, but I want to get your “un-informed” reaction.

I wasn’t happy with T-Bolt #4, as I told you; I had a few good hatchet fights in mind. Dick said “no”... and then “deadline time” was against me. Don’t know if I mentioned the following in my last letter... I was kind of punchy when I wrote it, but...

The powers will be changed on Capt. Atom and the Blue Beetle.

The B.B. will now have a “beetle-shaped” super car.



### *I Want My Mummy!*

T-Bolt gets “wrapped up” battling the Mummy in his 6th case. From *Peter Cannon... Thunderbolt*, Vol. 3, #55 (Dec. 1966). [Page TM & © DC Comics; hero TM & © Estate of Pete Morisi.]

There’ll be a companion feature to T-Bolt... “The Sentinels”... or something—pretty bad from what I’ve seen (folk singers who come on like the Fantastic Four). Ugh!

The Fightin’ Five will have a girl with them. That’s about all I can think of... wasn’t crazy about the Daredevil origin (R. Durell didn’t give any credit to Jack Cole, who really put life and action into the strip. Biro only refined it, then let it die by featuring the Little Wise Guys). (They were good enough for a strip of their own... but so was Daredevil). That’s it for now.

See ya, Pete



(Undated, 1966)

Dear Glen—

Ogden Whitney had a funny kind of career! In the beginning he was extra good, then, for quite a few years—he was great! Then all of a sudden, when he seemed to be at his very peak, he stopped turning out the good, well-drawn stuff and took the simple line approach to things! I never cared for the line stuff, but his Skyman and his earlier stuff was great!

Truly, Pete Morisi

(Undated, late 1966)

Dear Glen—

I once wrote to you and mentioned that Ogden Whitney was a much better artist than what he's been turning out lately... and even NoMan is far from his best.

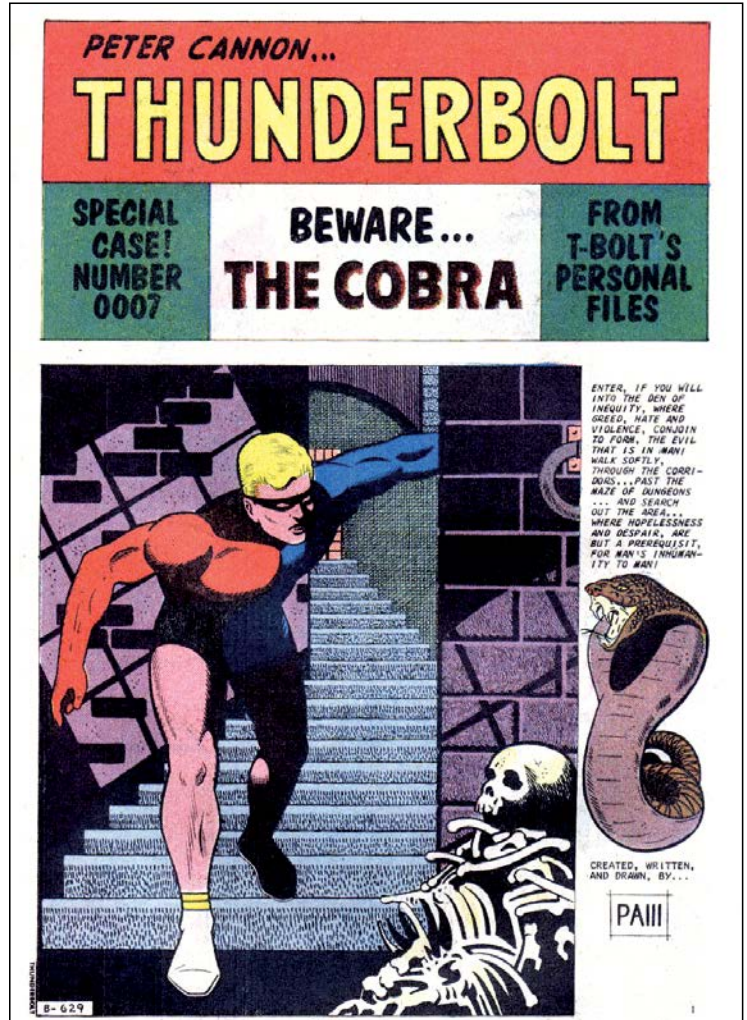
As for T-Bolt #7 (story is done, just starting on the art) the title is "Beware... The Cobra," about a villain who uses a special cobra-venom formula that turns men into slaves. Pretty good story I think... but I'll wait for your comments on that.

I don't believe in "speed-lines" or even sound effects—they're not "true to life"—and I refuse to use them... unless of course an editor insists. Some fans have mentioned that my art suffers because of that... while others claim that it "makes" the whole thing seem real. I guess it's a toss-up as to who's right.

I used to change a lot of balloon conversation in the past, when the lettering was done last—now the lettering is done first—so I have to be certain that whatever I write... is right.

**Pete Swipes Pete!**

We've flipped this early T-Bolt sketch by Pete in order to show the similarity to PAM's cover to *Thunderbolt* V3#55 (Dec. 1966), the 6th issue. Pete wasn't crazy about it at first, but it grew on him. Note the holster in the earlier version. [Cover TM & © DC Comics; Peter Cannon... Thunderbolt TM & © Estate of Pete Morisi.]

**Beware... The Cobra!**

(Above:) PAM's splash for *Thunderbolt* V3#56 (Feb. 1967). This was story #7. [Page TM & © DC Comics; Peter Cannon... Thunderbolt TM & © Estate of Pete Morisi.]

While we're on the subject, Charlton has a new lettering typewriter—and T-Bolt #7 is set for it! Don't flip... it looks pretty good.

Sorry for this quickie... but I gotta rush.

Pete

(Undated, late 1966)

Dear Glen—

Glad you liked the Mummy thing [MTG NOTE: story #6]... although I didn't care for the coloring or print job, I think the book as a whole stands up pretty well.

The cover was a swipe of the sketch I sent you, which in





fond memories of the old Charlton heroes. T-Bolt was one of those heroes.

Or so DC thought.

In reality, a couple of years earlier Pete had finally convinced Charlton to let him acquire the rights to T-Bolt. Surprisingly, they let him have it for free. The date of the transfer was Dec. 28, 1981. From then on, Pete retained rights to his characters, though not to the original stories he had done for Charlton in the 1960s. Charlton sold those to DC, which may explain why the latter apparently thought they owned the character.

This complicated things for Giordano, who had plans for a new maxi-series featuring the Charlton heroes. He wanted Thunderbolt as part of that team. As a longtime Morisi fan, he also hoped that DC would publish a new "Thunderbolt" series by PAM.

So he approached Pete and offered to have DC license T-Bolt from him. They agreed to pay Morisi \$5000 up front, plus a percentage of sales. Smooth sailing, right? Not so fast!

Behind the scenes, DC's marketing department pressured Giordano to use younger creators for the series, feeling that Pete's style was too "old-fashioned" for the current comics marketplace. They didn't think Pete was good enough to draw his own character!

Dick Giordano described the problem in a 2004 e-mail to Pete's son Val Morisi. Val had recently read a heartfelt PAM memorial by cartoonist Fred Hembeck. In it, Hembeck mentioned the unpublished "T-Bolt" story Pete did for DC's *Secret Origins* in the late '80s. Val was intrigued, and, at Fred's suggestion, contacted Dick Giordano about ownership rights to the story. Dick's e-mail response was dated Feb 12, 2004, just months after Pete had passed away.

Dear Val,

I was saddened by the news of your father's death. I always enjoyed talking with him AND enjoyed his work. He will be missed! Peter and I went back a long way... to the 60s when I was the Editor-in-Chief at Charlton Comics and your father was the creator of Peter Cannon, Thunderbolt. We worked very closely together in those days but mostly over the phone and thru the mails (FedEx hadn't been "invented" yet). He was still working for the NYPD at that point and we had to go to some lengths to conceal the fact that he was moonlighting.

In 1967 I moved over to DC and your father continued to work for Charlton. That gig didn't last long for



**Bah, Hembeck!**

T-Bolt... Hembeck style! Adorable, no? [Art © Fred Hembeck; Peter Cannon... Thunderbolt TM & © Estate of Pete Morisi.]



#### Watch Out For The Charlton Action Heroes!

Watchmen artist Dave Gibbons drew the cover to DC's aborted *Comics Cavalcade Weekly* (initially titled *Blockbuster Weekly*). The series was advertised but never published. This prospective cover was beautifully colored in 2013 by Scott Dutton. [TM & © DC Comics.]

me and I left the DC editorial position in late '69 and went freelance. Flashing forward to 1980 (and to the best of my recollection there was little or no contact between your father and myself during that period) and I returned to DC in an editorial position and shortly after, being promoted to a position of authority. DC bought all the Charlton properties that were created on my watch for me to reissue as DC properties. Thunderbolt was not among them.

Your father, very wisely, negotiated a reversion of the property to his name with Charlton and therefore he owned Peter Cannon, Thunderbolt. I wanted very much to work with Pete and publish Thunderbolt again and so I commissioned Pete to write and draw a new Thunderbolt story for DC. Alas, when it was done, DC's marketing department decided that the material was too dated and the project was shelved. I'm fairly certain that Pete was paid in full for his work but that he was asked to sign a contract prohibiting him from publishing THAT story elsewhere. Later, we paid Pete (on a first-copy royalty basis, as I recall) to allow us to publish an "updated" version of Thunderbolt produced by other creators.





# Kid Stuff?

## Part X Of Comics Writer JOHN BROOME's 1998 Memoir

**A/E EDITOR'S NOTE:** Irving Bernard (John) Broome (1913-1999) became a writer of comicbooks and pulp-magazine stories in the 1940s, and reached his apex as the major author of stories of the resuscitated "Flash" and "Green Lantern" between 1956 and the late 1960s, before mostly winding down his career as a writer. His short 1998 memoir *My Life in Little Pieces: An Offbeat Auto-bio* has been serialized in most issues of A/E beginning in #149, by permission of his daughter, Ricky Terry Brisacque, as retyped by Brian K. Morris. This issue, after an anecdote involving one of his fellow DC scribes, Dave Vern (real name: David V. Reed), he relates a tale of his childhood....

### Another Vern Yarn

(or Once More Into the Vernacular, Dear Friends)

Note: At one point in his career, friend Dave had accounted for several first-rate science-fiction stories, but afterward he was reduced to trying to write comics, for which he had no particular bent. Ergo, the following:

We were sitting in Julie Schwartz's DC office one afternoon, just the two of us, when suddenly Dave says in ruminative fashion, "You know what 'squinkers' are?"

I suspect some kind of trap and so remain silent, for of course I know that squinkers are scripts for comics stories (as I've mentioned) but, as I sense, Dave has something else in mind.

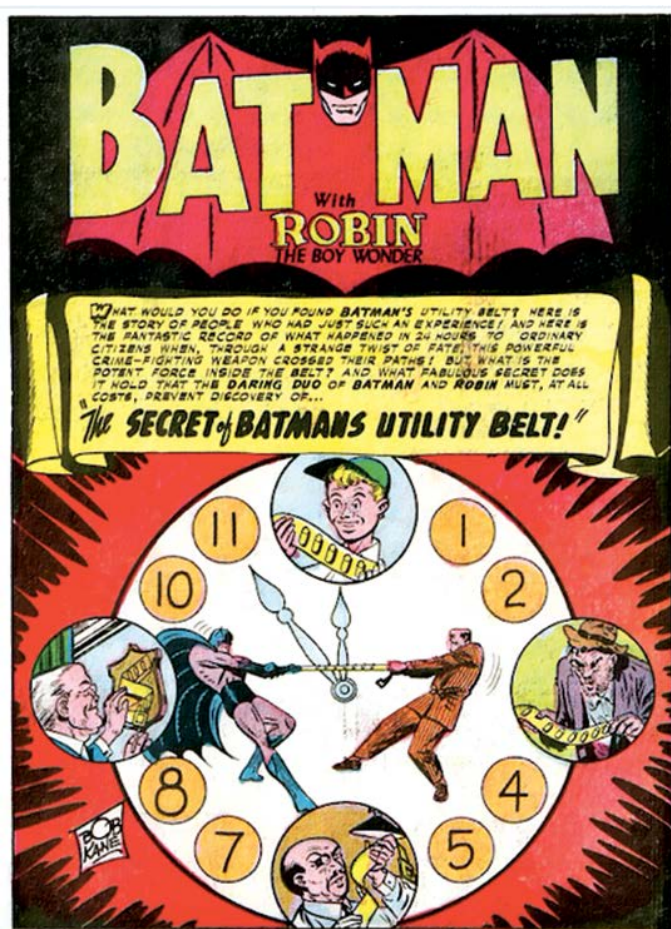
"Squinkers," he says in his best deadly manner, emphasizing each word with guitar-string clarity and resonance, "are the second-lowest form of public writing. And do you know what the lowest form of public writing is?"

I stay stony and, knowing Dave, refuse to take the bait, but of course that doesn't slow him down in the least.

"Writing on s\*\*\*house walls!" he chortles with venomous glee. Obviously, he never did make a good comics writer.

### Sagawa and Dominique

A French friend, Dominique Palmé, once spent a week alone with Sagawa, the Japanese girl-eater, in an isolated cottage in the massif of central France. To be sure, this was some time before Sagawa killed, cut up, refrigerated, and ate parts of the Dutch girl who was teaching him French in Paris, and Dominique was unaware of her danger. Later, when she told us about the experience, wide-eyed, innocent Dominique made it clear he hadn't touched her at all, and I concluded, justifiably I think, that the reason she had been so lucky was that, as far as Sagawa was concerned, she was simply not to his taste.



John Broome

(top left) at the 1998 San Diego Comic-Con, from the Hey Kids Comics website—juxtaposed with the "Batman" splash from *Detective Comics* #185 (July 1952), with pencils by Dick Sprang & inks by Charles Paris. So why'd we reprint this particular page? Because supplier Jim Kealy noted that the Grand Comics Database credits this tale scriptwise to John Broome (albeit with a question mark), while other sources suggest it's the work of his fellow comics writer David V. Reed, whom John refers to as "David Vern." This way, we've got both bases covered! For a photo of Reed/Vern, see the previous issue of A/E. [Page TM & © DC Comics.]

### Oofty-Goofty and Others

The child was always running, running. Before this, they began putting up the boardwalk in Coney Island where he lived. First, they put up only this one narrow track as long as the island, almost over the sand alongside the ocean. It stayed like that a long time before they put anything else up and the kids from our block were always running on it, up and down it, till after dark every day in our game of ring-a-levio. If you could get away and not be tagged, you had a chance to sneak back to the base and dodge in





### Johnny B. Osgood

John Broome writes of childhood chums who sported fanciful nicknames like "Oofy-Goofty" and "Morris the Lefty"—but Mr. B. himself, in later years, assumed aliases from time to time. In early "Captain Comet" yarns he was "Edgar Ray Merritt," while this story from *Strange Adventures* #9 (June 1951) saw his first use of the pen name "John Osgood." Given his background as a science-fiction fan (and later agent), editor Julius Schwartz was apparently happier to see writers' names adorn the epics in his SF comics *Strange Adventures* and *Mystery in Space* than he was those of artists—who in this case were Bob Oksner & Joe Geilla. Thanks to Jim Kealy. [TM & © DC Comics.]

and free your teammates who were like in prison there. Then you were all home free. Home Free!

Did Oofy-Goofty play ring-a-levio with us? Maybe not. He was a couple of years older and at that age, around 12, the difference was like, say, a different generation. No, Oofy-Goofty was not our pal. What he was, he was our idol, the neighborhood daredevil, the first to stick his foot under the wheels of passing cars, or running the breakwater rocks that stuck out into the ocean at 36th Street all the way to the end without slipping, without going down on his hands and knees, leaping, twisting in the air, flying, catapulting himself along, balancing on the slanty sides of the rocks and on their pointy edges. Oh, there wasn't anything he couldn't do, that short, husky, hook-nosed hero of ours! (In our affection and awe, we also nicknamed him Eaglebeak on account of his poor nose that looked so broken, but where the name Oofy-Goofty came from, the child never knew.)

*The stars, our night shadows, move with us  
When we move*

*Yet truly keep their lawful places:  
Our playmates too grow old as we do  
Yet shadow us forever young.*

Kurtz the dude, the dandy, with his starched shirts and a crease in his pants (already longies at 12 or 13)... Fried... was he always dressed in khaki?... not well-built, slouched around, but somehow always coming first in the street races among us smaller kids... Izzie Kriss... O Subtle One, O Serpent!... and Morris the Lefty, the punchball whiz with his educated slapping technique guaranteed to get him on base... it's hard to think they must be all codgers now (if not gone altogether)... that only wraiths in the mind of the old man who was the child are still crouching down, shooting black or red checkers (one side waxed hard for slipperiness) or Orange Whistle bottle caps at the cracklines in the sidewalk, or spinning green, blue, or milky immies or big glassy bolsters at the scooped out holes in the dirt patch alongside, or pitching coins or Passover nuts to get nearest the curb, or most unbelievable of all that no one on that block on 36th Street between Railroad and Mermaid Avenues is flipping tickets any more, the tickets we hoarded all winter to bring out when the "ticket season," by some mysterious signal, started again one special day in spring, our precious tickets with pictures in faded colors of baseball players, Zach Wheat, Burleigh Grimes, Lee "Specs" Meadows... Immortal names!

And immortal games—punchball, association (touch football), one-o-cat (using two pieces of sawed-off broomstick, the shorter piece, the "cat," sharpened to a point at one end and perched on the rim of a sewer cover, would fly up at the sharp downward rap of the longer piece and then quickly whacked hard would go sailing off, twirling in the air as it flew, twirling prettily in the air as it flew...).

We littler kids didn't usually get a game in these street games, on account of too many bigger kids, but we never gave up trying. "Choose me in! Choose me in!" We'd be hopping around the two leaders choosing up sides before the game, pestering them, yanking at them, imploring them while they'd be picking out their teammates carefully, ignoring us.

I know it's details that count in a piece of I-writing like this, but with a certain culminating event presently in the offing I find, alas, that I have no details to offer, only conjectures. I *think* Abe Kurtz was already going to high school at this time and that he'd already made the track team there as a freshman. But not sure across the piled-on lustres, just think.

And while I'm at it, just when was it actually that Oofy-Goofty took off on that round-the-country tour with that troupe of vaudeville acrobats he'd been working out with summers on "Muscle Beach," a few blocks down along the hot amber-tinted sands from 36th Street? It could have been this very year, or possibly the one after—certainly it was a good many years before Oofy, bless him, set out on a much more serious adventure, going off to fight Franco in Spain, an act that hardly surprised us Oofy-Goofty watchers, maybe scattered by then, but still on duty, for that's the kind of a guy we knew our Eaglebeak to be, and we knew instinctively that time had no power to change him.

Simply put, this was the kind of a guy who couldn't stand to see anybody around him mistreated. I remember when some older boys would grab one of us kids and start to cockalize us—they'd hold us down on the empty corner lot, open our pants, and play with our tiny peckers, pinch and flick till we screamed—when this happened, if Oofy-Goofty was near, he'd always try to interfere. "Aw, cut it out, guys!" and do his best to free the victim. That's how he was and I guess we honored him as much for his outreaching





# My Day In Prison With *Daredevil*

More Than You're Likely To Want  
To Know About Ye Editor's Cameo  
On The Marvel/Netflix Series

by Roy Thomas

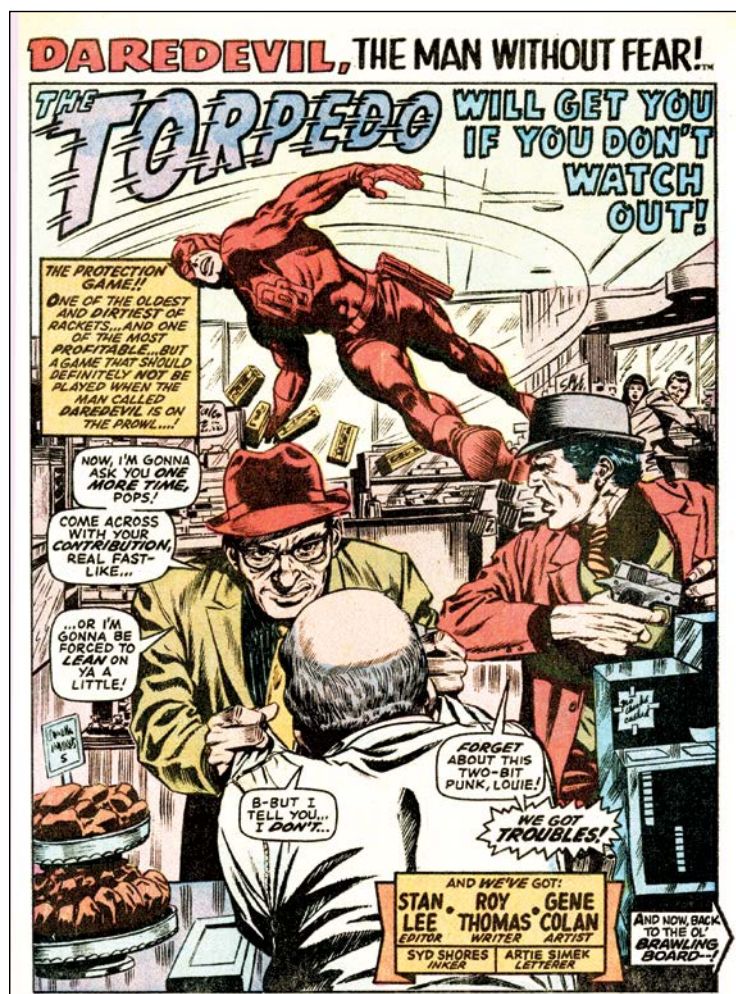
**AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION:** The following piece was written for the Roy Thomas Appreciation Boards, operated on Facebook by my manager and pal John Cimino. (I myself don't do Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, or much of anything else except telephone, USPS, and e-mail.) It began as my attempt, initiated only a day or so after the actual filming occurred on January 12, 2018, to write down everything I could recall about the experience, along with a bit of context. After the article was up on the Boards, it occurred to me that, as what is sometimes nowadays referred to as a "print freak," I wouldn't feel the process was truly complete until it had appeared in *Alter Ego*... with a bit of editing to bring it up to date. So here's the article, without further ado... and remember, you don't have to read it if you don't want to. Hopefully, there's plenty of other material in this issue to make it worth your ten bucks or whatever....

**N**o sense denying it: I really wanted to do a Marvel movie cameo.

Of course, I never thought there was much chance of my actually getting to *do* one, back during the days when it was almost solely Stan Lee making those fleeting but eagerly anticipated appearances. When Chris Claremont popped up in an *X-Men* movie, then two, I didn't much mind, since Chris had been so integral to the success of the revived *X-Men* comic in the 1970s and beyond. But then, when other writers and artists also started showing up in the Marvel films, or at least were being scheduled to do so—well, it wasn't that I begrudged *any* of those creators their time onscreen. Far from it. Each one of them deserved it. Still, I have to admit, I couldn't see why they were being invited to do cameos and I wasn't. Maybe I'd missed my only shot when I became "just" a name on a 1940s wartime bandstand in *Avengers: Age of Ultron*? (Not that that hadn't been and isn't still much-appreciated! Thanks again, Joss Whedon!)

Anyway, whatever my feelings, I still wasn't inclined to be pushy about a possible cameo. I mentioned it once in an e-mail to someone at Marvel and then forgot about it. Well, almost.

So, if you happened to spot me in prison garb in the fourth



## Charlie Cox & Roy Thomas

(That's from left to right at the top of this page, just in case you couldn't tell.) This pic of the *Daredevil* star as Matt Murdock and of Ye Ed as an incarcerated, orange-jumpsuited felon was taken soon after the latter's arrival in the one-time prison where the visitors'-room scene was to be shot. Photo probably by Brian Overton.

Seen above is the Gene Colan splash for *Daredevil* #59 (Dec. 1969), as written by RT and inked by Syd Shores. The scripter feels both story and villain were only so-so, but Colan's art was superb, as always. Thanks to Barry Pearl for the scan. [TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.]



episode of season 3 of Marvel/Netflix's *Daredevil*... well, you can blame it on John Cimino.

As a friend and associate for the past few years, John's been running the "Roy Thomas Appreciation Boards" on Facebook—which he inaugurated and named. (Me, I've never been on Facebook in my life, though my wife Dann has to go on occasionally in connection with her job teaching economics at a local tech college.) Of late, John has also arranged for me to attend a number of comics conventions at a fee that's made it worthwhile for Dann and me to overcome our reluctance to travel in these days of arrogant airlines and the long shadow of terrorists. And somewhere along the line, John decided—even though I told him to forget it, it was never gonna happen—that he was going to "get" me a cameo.

And he did... or, at least, he played a crucial part in my doing one. Not in a theatrical movie, as it turned out, but in a Marvel/Netflix episode, which actually was just fine by me. I won't go into the machinations of how it happened—let's just say that in the end the Marvel folks were very accommodating and enthusiastic about it. I particularly have to thank Marvel's Joe Quesada and David Bogart for setting things up.

I was given the choice of doing said cameo either in the third season of *Daredevil* or the second of *The Punisher* or maybe the third of *Jessica Jones*. Sure, *Iron Fist* or *Luke Cage* or *The Defenders* (all since canceled, alas) would've all been more logical, due to my part in the co-creation of those three concepts; but the first-named trio of shows were scheduled to be filmed first, and I saw no reason to worry overmuch about which series it was. After all, I had been the second regular scribe of *Daredevil* back in 1969-70, succeeding Stan (Wally Wood had dialogued one issue, or I'd have been the series' second writer, period) from #51-70 and then again in #72, a spell of just a bit under two years as chronicler of the Man without Fear. My villainous additions to DD's rogues gallery were hardly my proudest hour—the likes of Stunt-Master, The Torpedo, Crime-Wave, and somebody called Kragg—though I've always felt that Death's-Head, Brother Brimstone, and (as it turned out) infamous *DD* informant Turk Barrett weren't bad additions to the canon; and I think I did reasonably well by pre-established bad-guys like Mr. Fear, The Stilt-Man, and a couple of others.

Anyway, I had been an early co-conspirator on Gene Colan's long and fabled run on *Daredevil*—so I immediately opted for *DD* over the other two. I was given the choice of my cameo taking place in either of two scenes scheduled to be filmed in January 2018 for season 3, episode 4: either as a well-dressed patron in a Manhattan bar (I got the impression it might involve The Kingpin—they mostly insist on just calling him Wilson Fisk, but to me he's The Kingpin), or else as a prison inmate in another sequence, which I assumed would also involve The Kingpin, and which was to be shot in a building that had once been an actual prison. I opted for the latter, mostly because the projected time frame for its filming was "sometime between Jan. 8 and Jan. 18," while the earlier scene might've required me to be flying on or around New Year's Day, 2018—not the greatest time to be at an airport. Actually, I lucked out in more ways than one: NYC was the victim of a horrendous snowstorm during the earlier period.

As it turned out, the cameo would require me to arrive in NYC on Thursday, January 11, for a shooting on

Friday, January 12; I'd be able to fly back home the next morning. Dann and I were planning to buy an extra ticket so she could come along, but in the end she decided to stay home on our South Carolina "farm," since it was such a short trip and she'd have had nothing to do but sit around watching a TV monitor for several hours. Also, she was recovering from the really bad flu strain that was then going around... maybe it was even a touch of pneumonia... which, as it turned out, would hang on into March before she felt really good again.

Getting to New York City was definitely *not* half the fun, to paraphrase an old airlines ad from back in the days when air travel was a less horrific experience than it often is now.

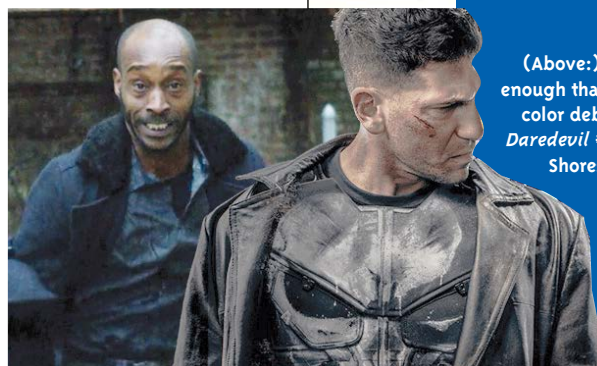
Negative events started piling up even pre-airport. Two days before departure, I had to drive our nearly 15-year-old three-legged



### The Young Turk

(Above:) Turk Barrett, who didn't stick around long enough that issue to acquire a last name, made his four-color debut getting creamed by the Black Panther in *Daredevil* #69 (Oct. 1970), courtesy of Thomas, Colan, & Shores—and, in this issue of *A/E*, Barry Pearl. [TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.]

(Left:) Turk and The Punisher—portrayed by Rob Morgan and Jon Bernthal, respectively. Morgan has appeared as Turk in episodes of Marvel/Netflix's *Daredevil*, *Luke Cage*, *The Defenders*, *The Punisher*, and *Iron Fist*. [TM & © the respective trademark & copyright holders.]





# BART BUSH, Then And Now

## Down Memory Lane With The Co-Founder Of OAF (The Oklahoma Alliance Of Fans)

### Part 1: Bart Bush, Then

#### Introduction

**H**aving grown up in Pittsburgh, I was largely unaware of developments in Oklahoma fandom, except insofar as they fed into the nascent Southwesterncons that were featured in issues of the Texas Trio's Star-Studded Comics. It wasn't until I began researching my 1995 book *The Golden Age of Comic Fandom* that I discovered the impact Oklahoma fans had made on fandom in the region, including putting on several Multicons that were every bit as good as those by their Texas neighbors.

Bart Bush was a co-founder of fandom in the Sooner state, and one of its key movers and shakers. Typical of his group, his interests were heavily into comics but extended into all the related areas of fantasy literature and film fandom of the day, a "fan for all seasons." He published the organization's fanzine for much of its long run, and was on the con committee of all four Oklahoma Multicons (which will be discussed in Part 2). Today, I can't think of anyone more into Golden Age comic books than Bart. I first met him when I was a guest of OAFcon in Norman, Oklahoma, in 2008, and am proud to now be an official OAF. Bart and I became fast friends, and I'm delighted to introduce him to those of you who don't know him yet, through this interview, which was (at Bart's request) conducted via e-mail in the last days of December 2018. —Bill Schelly.

**BILL SCHELLY:** According to my notes, you were born and grew up in the town of Ponca City, Oklahoma. Is Bart Bush your full name?

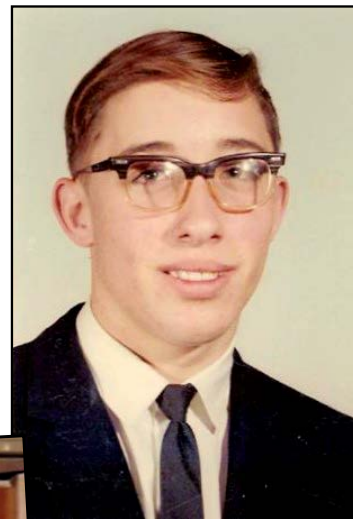
**BART BUSH:** No, my full name is James Bart Bush. I was born in 1951.

**BILL:** What was the town like?

**BART:** Ponca City is a town in northwest Oklahoma about 15 miles from the Kansas border. It was an oil and farming area, home of Continental Oil/Conoco since the 1920s. The population was around 20,000. Closest major city would be either Tulsa or Oklahoma City, both about two hours away. So it was pretty isolated except for other small towns nearby.

**BILL:** Where did you buy your comicbooks?

**BART:** We had plenty of drug stores that carried comicbooks, [also] grocery stores, and one newsstand and paperback store. The closest shopping center to my home was within a half a mile. The strip contained a grocery store, TG&Y, and a drug store, all which carried comics and magazines. The easy access to my favorite comics was just a brief walk away starting in 1959 when I was eight years old!



**Bart Bush**

in his high school photo in 1968—and holding a re-creation of the cover of the 1940s *Dick Tracy* jigsaw puzzle. Bart: "Fan artist Ralph Muccie painted this for me in 1968. My comic book spinner rack can be seen in my closet." All photos with this interview are courtesy of Bart Bush.



**BILL:** I take it your parents weren't anti-comicbooks?

**BART:** My folks were both readers. My mother liked true-crime magazines *Official Detective*, *True Detective*, etc. My dad read science-fiction, was a big fan of Burroughs, and read most everything paperback during the early 1960s. So the family Sunday night outing would be to go to the downtown newsstand and get reading material. My hands were always full of the comics and monster magazines, which my dad also read afterwards, which was probably why I was able to get as many at one time as I did—15 to 20 at a time.

**BILL:** What did your father do for a living?

**BART:** He was an ophthalmologist, whose office was one block away from the newsstand where I got my comics. That made it convenient to get a ride home with a load of comics! In the early-1960s pre-Marvel days, unbeknownst to me, Dad would stock his waiting room with *my* comics. I only discovered this one day on a visit and saw a stack of my comics on a table. I scooped them up and took them home. From that point on, I selected only the funny ones for him to take. So was the fate of the early Dell and Harvey comics in my collection.

**BILL:** What were your favorites?

**BART:** This was the early 1960s, so Harvey and DC were my favorites, and I didn't miss many of them. The Harvey style really appealed to me, and those square-bound giants became a must-have. I was fortunate to purchase new comics like *Flash* #105, *Brave & Bold* #28-30, and everything that came afterwards that





### Back In A Flash

The pre-teen Bart, when he was primarily a fan of DC and Harvey Comics. Seen here is the Carmine Infantino/Murphy Anderson cover of *The Flash* #105 (Feb.-March 1959), the first issue after the title began regular publication—and picked up the numbering from the Golden Age *Flash Comics* discontinued ten years earlier. [Flash cover TM & © DC Comics.]



built on the DC Silver Age legends: *Atom*, *Hawkman*, *Green Lantern*, *Action*.... I bought 'em all. Comics like the *Secret Origins*, *Superman* and *Batman Annuals* were must-buys, as they made us kids feel special, getting to read the classic stories. How else could you get them? And the reprints of the covers gave you a glimpse of this incredibly long history of these characters. How could you not want more? I had to keep buying and reading. And I did, every chance I could.

**BILL:** Did you “play super-hero” as a kid?

**BART:** Absolutely. I used a cape my Grandma made me, I jumped around and acted stupid, pretending I was the kid of steel—throwing cardboard boxes and playfully fighting younger kids in the back yard. Comicbook action and thoughts always were part of my growing up years.

**BILL:** What was your first Marvel comicbook?

**BART:** In late June 1963, I bought *Amazing Spider-Man* #4 on a whim. I wasn't familiar with Marvel Comics, had not seen *The Fantastic Four* or *The Hulk*, so this

was something new for me. When I got home, I read it—then read it again. In its own special way, it grabbed me, the idea of a teenage boy who was a hero, but insecure and unsure. Great costume and interesting art. Two days later, our family took a summer vacation, driving to Florida. At a shopping center along the way, I found new Marvels: *X-Men* #1, *Avengers* #1, *FF Annual* #1, *Strange Tales Annual* #2, *Amazing Spider-Man* #5, *Fantastic Four* #19—all at the same time.

**BILL:** I'm getting a tremendous nostalgia rush as I picture that newsstand with all those key Marvels.

**BART:** It was an incredible mind-blowing group of comicbooks! I read them over and over during that long car ride. As soon as I got home, I was off on my bike to find these other comics shown in the ads, featuring Ant-Man, Thor, Iron Man, Sgt. Fury... even Patsy Walker!! Oh my ghod, I had to have them all! If they were Marvels, then they were going to be great! I became a Marvel devotee that summer of '63, and never missed any issues after that.

**BILL:** What about the monster mags? Were you an avid reader of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*?

**BART:** I started buying *Famous Monsters* with issue #11 (April 1961) with the Gorgo cover. I had been a weekly follower of Saturday night monster films (*Shock Theatre*) so I immediately became absorbed into monster fandom, ordering some fanzines such as *Candlelight Room* and *Gore Creatures*, and stuff from Captain Company like monster masks. I had the Shock Monster and the Frankenstein masks, both of which over the years literally melted away into a glob of rubber! The Monster stuff was fun. I hosted neighborhood kid Spook Houses and I used that Magnajector advertised in *FM* to cast still pictures from the mag on a bedsheet hung on the wall. I draped bed sheets and blankets over the bed posts, covering the side-by-side single beds, and played a record at 16 rpm to sound creepy. I had kids crawl under and between the beds and I dangled string over them as they crawled, made spooky sounds, and reached out and grabbed them as they blindly



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Basil Gogol's cover for *Famous Monsters of Filmland* #11 (April 1961), the first issue bought by Bart Bush—and the “Magnajector” ad from *FMoF* #12. [TM & © New Comic Company.]



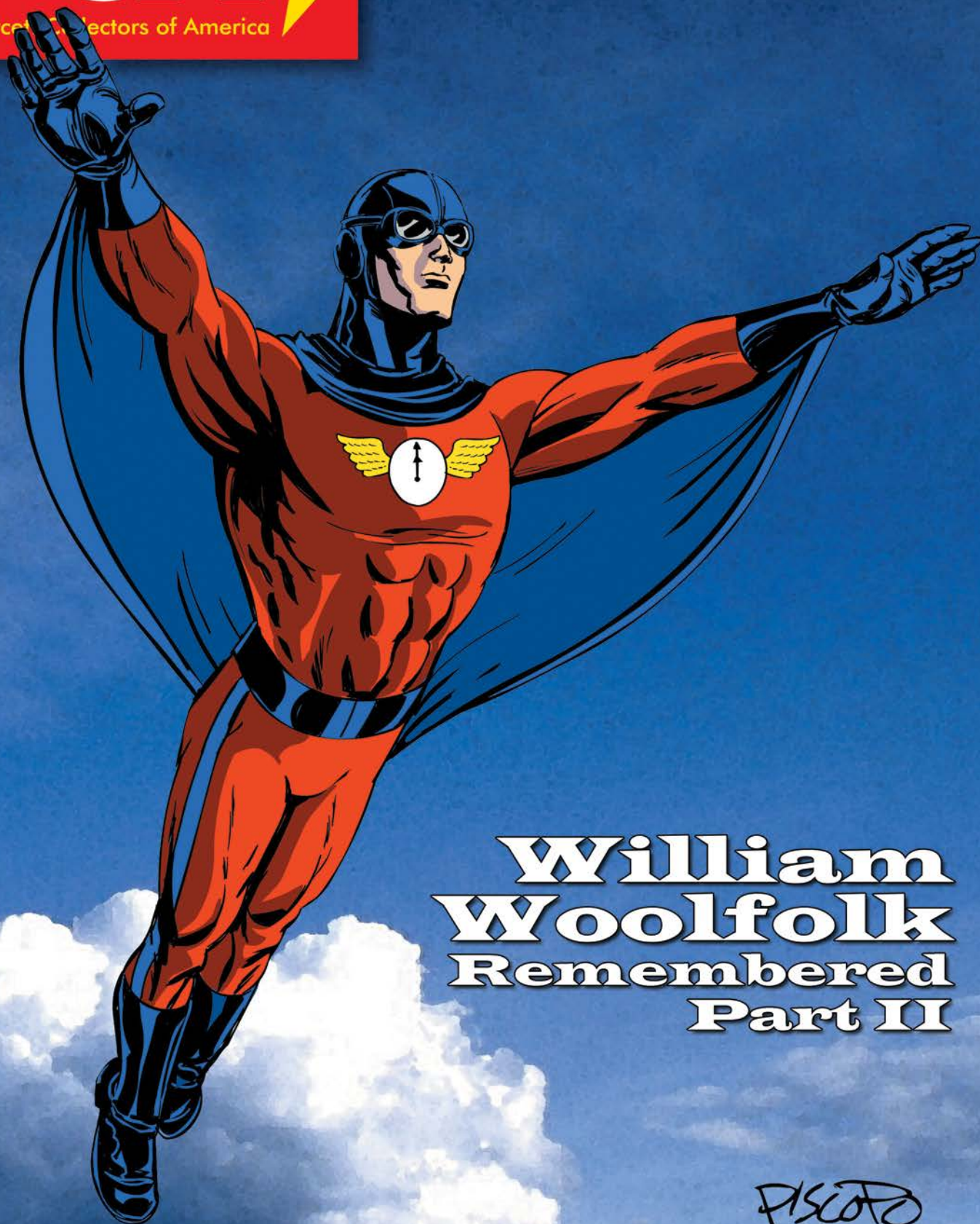
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Fawcett Collectors of America

#218

July 2019



# William Woolfolk Remembered Part II

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# WILLIAM WOOLFOLK

## Remembered— Part II



William Woolfolk

as pictured on the back cover of his 1975 novel *The President's Doctor*, from Playboy Press—and the splash page of the Woolfolk-scripted lead story in *The Marvel Family* #9 (March '47), ; art by the Beck-Costanza Studio. [Shazam heroes TM & © DC Comics]

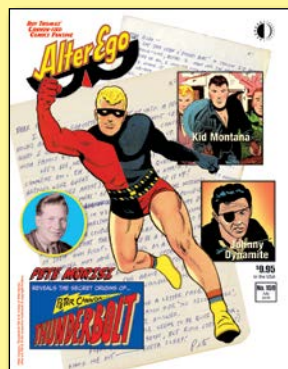
**INTRODUCTION:** Magazine writer. Publisher. Emmy-nominated television writer/story editor. Best-selling novelist. All of these titles describe William Woolfolk (1917-2003), whose versatile pen proved successful in varying fields throughout his career. But ultimately, it is his comicbook stories for which Woolfolk is best remembered, with the man himself later admitting that "Comics have outlasted all my writing efforts in other media." He was one of the highest-paid and most sought-after writers during the Golden Age of Comics, producing scripts for Fawcett, MLJ (Archie), Quality, Timely (Marvel), National (DC), Will Eisner's *The Spirit*, and others. For more on William Woolfolk, seek out his essay "Looking Backward — From My Upside Down Point of View" (A/E V3#6), my interview with Woolfolk entitled "The Human Side of the Golden Age" (A/E #24), and last issue's extended Part I of "William Woolfolk Remembered" (A/E #158). For this issue's second part of our Woolfolk commemoration, we present an interview with the writer conducted by our colleague, Bill Schelly.—P.C. Hamerlinck.

## William Woolfolk

### Interviewed By Bill Schelly

### - June 29, 2002

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you know, I self-published a  
e Life and Times of Otto  
revised and expanded version  
of a Comic Book and Science  
At the time, Woolfolk was one of  
round. I believe I got his address  
im about Otto Binder, I still  
as is obvious from some of my  
aging conversationalist with  
emory. How lucky I was able  
year later. Although I used a  
recently realized that it was a  
eparate interview. I'm delighted  
in FCA.

e background information on you  
Otto Binder ... a little bit of what

gan when I met Otto.



SCHELLY: [laughs] Well, let's start with when and where you were born.

WOOLFOLK: That's gotta come out, huh?

SCHELLY: Yeah, afraid so.

WOOLFOLK: Aw, s\*\*t. [laughs] June 29, 1917, when dinosaurs still walked the Earth. I was born in a town called Center Moriches, Long Island, and I left there at the age of three months, as soon as I found out where I was. My family insisted on coming with me. [laughs]