



MIMEO-CAN!

by Dale Tarr --

THE TINCAN WONDER

Last year, in Anderson, Indiana, all these years of yearning culminated in a state of mind for which there was only one cure. The cure was an idea, suddenly and fearfully conceived from out of nowhere. To my wife I said, "Why can't we wrap a stencil around a paint can and mimeograph?"

When I enlarged on the idea she couldn't see any reason why it wouldn't work so we went on a shopping trip. We got a package of stencils and some ink, some paper and thumb-tacks, some adhesive tape an inch wide, rented a typewriter, got an empty paint can -- gallon size -- from a neighbor, and finally, on my wife's suggestion when we couldn't get regular mimeo ink pads from a local supplier, a yard of out-ing flannel. We also had purchased two large sheets of thin cardboard from a stationer.

We went home and I cut the cardboard up in two strips the width of a stencil and long enough to go around the can. I bound it on with the adhesive tape and then, after cutting out a piece of flannel so that when folded it was a trifle less than the size of a stencil, I thumbtacked it to the cardboard. We got an issue of SFW together and stencilled it, then fastened the stencils over the ink pad with strips of the adhesive tape. I had put the ink on the pad with an ordinary paint brush putting it on smoothly and freely.

Then, graphing what was now the 'drum' I proceeded to roll it over the paper. Science Fiction World was truly born. The impressions were more legible than many a fanmag had managed on a machine.

Later on when we came back to Cincinnati I startled Charley Tanner by showing him 'mimeo-can' the poor publisher's pride and joy. Charley and I put out an issue, then, the one with his blueprint cover. Charley could write an appealing article on home blueprint.

That issue, with editorial mention of the duplication method evoked comment from all over fandom. Several felt thought that an article should be written giving details necessary to the construction for benefit of other aspiring publishers so on the next page will be listed the necessary essentials and precautions for the proper functioning of your own home-made mimeo-can.

Lord help the paper shortage!

First, publishers, get yourself a gallon can without dents or other such defects. You ought to be able to pick one of those up somewhere at no cost to yourself. Second, you'll need some not too thick cardboard, particularly avoiding the corrugated kind which will break instead of bending. It's obtainable at statioers for about fifteen cents a large size sheet. Common outing flannel costs about thirty some-odd cents a yard and supplies sufficient material in one yard for several inkpads.

Cut out a piece of flannel about the size of an 8½ by 11 sheet of paper and cut your cardboard up into a couple of strips as wide as a stencil and long enough to barely wrap around the can. Take a stapler and staple the piece of flannel to one strip of cardboard approximating the center, then staple the two sections of cardboard together. If one piece of cardboard was cut just a trifle longer than the other and used as the piece which held the flannel the two sections will lap around the can meeting evenly with a minimum of bulge.

Tape the ends of the cardboard together firmly and you now have your 'drum' made. Put the ink on with an ordinary paint brush about an inch wide. Don't be afraid to put on plenty of ink but put it on evenly so that as you make your run sections of the pad won't be running dry of ink. If you've got too much ink on you can run off on scrap or newspaper until duplication is satisfactory.

Try a stencil on your pad before you ink up and just above and below the ends of the stencil place horizontal strips of tape across the cardboard. These serve as an accurate placement for your stencil, helping to get it on straight and also serve as a base for the strips of tape to stick to when you are taping a stencil on for a run. Otherwise, if the tape is stuck to the bare cardboard and you have to raise the stencil to re-ink or something the tape pulls loose the outer covering of the cardboard and no longer sticks well.

You can make up a couple of cardboard sections with flannel stapled on, using different colored ink on each pad and by simply sliding one cardboard off the can and replacing it with the other, print in two different colors with a minimum of effort. When running copy never leave your drum standing on end because the ink will flow off the pad under the edge of the stencil and start smudging your paper. Let it lay on its side with a block to keep it from rolling. A small ballpoint stykus obtained from 19¢ up, is a handy tool to have around. If you have trouble writing because it tears the stencil lay a piece of cellophane on the stencil and use your stylus through the cellophane. Any questions you may have will be answered in the next issue of Science Fiction World -- "The Fan's Companion".