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L. Ron Hubbard was a hard-working science fiction writer and an extremely good one. During the early forties he was ranked with Robert A. Heinlein, A.E. Van Vogt, Theodore Sturgeon, Isaac Asimov, L. Sprague de Camp, Henry Kuttner and other moderns developed by John W. Campbell, Jr. for two great magazines, Astounding Science Fiction and Unknown. His novel The Final Blackout (Astounding Science Fiction, April to June 1940) is among the greatest future war novels ever written, and in characterization and sustained pace probably is the very best. Fear (Unknown, July, 1940) is a brilliant piece of stream-of-consciousness literary psychoanalysis; and To The Stars (Astounding Science Fiction, March and April, 1950) came close to being the classic story on the time-dilatation effect.

Hubbard did not start out as a science fiction writer. He began as a travel and aviation writer in 1930, then shifted into pulp fiction writing. One of his best early markets was Five Novels Monthly, published by Dell. For them he wrote air adventure stories like Hurting Winns, (November, 1934) coast guard stories like The Phantom Patrol, (January, 1935) and diving stories such as Twenty Fathoms Down, (September, 1934). Hubbard was one of the first writers to switch to an electric typewriter in order to keep pace with his own fertile imagination.

F. Orlin Tremaine had been editorial director of Astounding Stories and Astounding Science Fiction since late 1933. Around 1938 he persuaded L. Ron Hubbard, who had been doing work for some of Street & Smith's nonfantasy magazines, to try his hand at science fiction. He felt that Hubbard had a light, flippancy touch which would offset some of the weighty pieces the magazine had been featuring.

(from Samuel Moskowitz, Futures to Infinity, Pyramid Books, New York, 1970)