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To: Julie L. Sigall
Associate Register for Policy & International Affairs

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From: Paul Herman

Comment:

A few years back, I wanted to reprint some out-of-print works of Robert E. Howard. He was a pulp writer, and sold his stories outright to the magazines back in the 1920s and 30s. He killed himself at a relatively young age, no children, no siblings, no spouse. Several stories were renewed in the 1950s by a corporation that was a successor in interest to one of the magazine companies in the 1950's. That renewing corporation then ceased business in 1959. No transfer of title to anyone, and no information on who the principals of the company were, where they went, anything. The last shred of evidence was the New York Secretary of State, who said that their records showed that the corporation in question existed from 1939-1959, and had an address in NYC, a middle of the city address from 1959, that was it. No principals, no nothing. NYSoS stated they destroy all records 20 years after a corporation closes, they only keep a note of corp name, address, and start and end dates. Online searches as well as conversations with various folks in the field turned up nothing, no one knows who they were, or where they went. And that was in 1959. The works in question will not become PD until the 2020s.

This includes, of course, several of the original short stories of Conan the Barbarian, REH's most famous creation. Or I guess, Conan the Orphan, now.