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CELEPHAIS

Greetings. Once more a deadline approaches - approaches? it's here - and I feel I should say a few words to keep a couple of fannish customs going - reporting on my last trip - I hope that is latest, not really last - and to keep unbroken the publishing of Celephais in FAPA for the last 25 mailings. I think this is the third oldest unbroken publishing string in FAPA now. The FA, Horizons, and then Celephais. And, when you come down to it, as a title, Celephais is about of age; without checking the file, it must be about 20 years old. Now that I've checked the file, I find the first issue appeared in March 44, so I was a year off.

Anyway, I've been travelling again.

In spite of what you may have gained from the preceding issues of Celephais, I didn't take a real vacation this last summer - I took a week between a meeting in San Francisco and the Chicon, for a short stop at home, but no extended time off. So, I found myself in the unusual position of having to use up a couple of weeks of leave - or lose it. So, I decided to take my "summer" vacation over Christmas, and make a real trip out of it - cover the West Coast from bottom to top, with most of the time at home, especially the Christmas week with my mother. I'd originally planned to make the Ecomomou blizzard party for New Years, but couldn't get away from the office in time to make that practical. [A good thing, really, as Phyllis had to call it off at the last minute.] I kept getting things that had to be done before I left, papers to review, a deadline to finish so that the girls would have work while I was away, etc. But, finally, I took the bull by the horns, went out to Silver Spring, and ordered my tickets at the B&O. This was about Thanksgiving. I was planning to leave on Dec 14, so this gave plenty of time - I thought. Came the 1st - no word. Came the 7th - no word as yet, so I stopped to see what gave. Everything was in shape, except no word from the GN on the trip back from Seattle. The last day for holding the reservations was the 11th. No word on the 11th, so I stopped in. The agent handling the matter was off that evening. No one knew just what was what. Called him the next day and found that everything was ok. The GN had come through at the last minute, he'd written up the tickets, thus saving the space, and I could pick them up. Which I did.

The 14th I managed to get everything cleared up at the office by noon, and headed home, to start packing, finish Christmas wrapping, cards, etc, and catch the train at 5. About 2:30, my roommate's brother, wife and small child arrived, on their way to New Jersey from South Carolina. They were planning to stop over for the night, as we knew, but weren't due in until later. This created a bit of confusion, but I managed to get away on time, left the car in the station parking lot for Joe to pick up - his two cars were both in a non-servicable state - and started west. We had had snow earlier in the week, and there was still some on the ground in dirty piles in DC. The further west we went, the more snow I could see along the tracks. Riding the B&O dome on the Capitol Limited is interesting, even at night. They have arranged spotlights that illuminate the line to the right of the track (they are mainly a double track line) and thus you can see the ghostly countryside. In winter, with snow coating most of the trees and lying on the ground, this effect is intensified, especially in the mountains. Going through the mountains

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there were only a few houses visible in the distance, their lights showing as tiny glimmers in the night as the train rushed by. A few had Christmas decorations on, but going through the West Virginia hills, there was apparently little spare money for such evidences of happiness. An occasional car would be standing at a crossing, with lights shining on the passing coaches. It gave one the feeling, as he sat in the darkened dome, with only a few other hardy passengers deserting the lighted attractions of the lounge car or the diner for the cool, dark silence of the dome, that he was a disembodied soul rushing through the night from nowhere to nowhere, passing through a world out of normal space-time. [I really felt this intensely a year ago, while going through the Blue Mountains of eastern Oregon very early in the morning. This is a stretch which is usually traversed by night, but we were a couple of hours late, and I got up very early - even before the diner opened - and spent the morning twilight hours in the dome. It had freshly snowed, and everything was crisp and white. The train was winding its way down towards the Columbia River area, and not working up grade; the line ran through an area without major highways or cities. It was slightly misty, and the usual light train noises were muffled and dampened. The mist also acted as a diffuser, giving a uniform, unaccented light, with no shadows. In the half-light of daybreak, the effect was eerie. No one else was in the dome; no one seemed to be stirring below in the accommodations. I seemed to be in a world all of my own, a world with no form or shape, without boundaries. Only the immediate trackside, the cars ahead of mine, and the occasional red signal were part of my reality; all else had that unearthly half-seen, half-realized quality of some dreams. And not in technicolor; all was in shades of grey. It was awful (in the true sense) and beautiful. I want to do it again.]

Finally, I went to bed and slept wonderfully. I've finally figured out the best berths in a car - at least for me. I find that the ends of the car are the best. You get more wheel noise (which lulls me to sleep) and more bounce up and down, but less side swing. On a curve, the berth will lean, but not swing from one side to the other, as the center of the car swings over the inside rail of the curve. On a winding road - and the B&O through the hills winds - I find the swinging keeps me awake; the tilting doesn't. This trip I was lucky, and had space in the car ends each time.

The next morning found us going through the Indiana flats, with sparse snow on the fields. The nearer to Chicago, the deeper it seemed to get. However, I didn't see the deep snow that was reported the week before. Chicago was warmer than I had expected - warmer than Washington had been when I left (15°). I did some book shopping - especially in my specialized field, railroads at Owen Davies - and had lunch in Marshall Fields - a good place for a quick lunch, except just before Christmas. The place was jammed, and I didn't have the courage to tackle some of the sections I'd been interested in. Then, I located a stamp store, and spent a couple of pleasant hours buying the place out. Then, it was approaching train time and the rush hour, so I strolled over to Dearborn Station.

I'd decided to try a different route this time, as I was going down to LA first, and was taking the Santa Fe Super Chief. During the winter this is usually combined with the El Capitan, the coach train - they both carry No 17/18 - but the Christmas rush had started and the Pullmans were going as a solid section. For some reason, it was the second section; the coaches were carrying the green. We were due out at 6:30 - and didn't make it. The Texas Chief, leaving at 6, was 30 min late, and stabbed us. We got out at 7. That didn't bother me, as I expected the time to be made up.

I had dinner - the Fred Harvey service, but minus the Harvey Girls - which wasn't bad (good, in fact) and spent some time in the dome. Someone had goofed, though, in making up the train, and the dome car was backwards. The seats had been

reversed, so that they faced forward, but the steps down lead directly into the main lounge, with bright lights. This meant that the riders in the dome were always looking forward over bright lights; this prevented developing good night vision, and the outside was merely a black mass. I was disappointed, and went to bed reasonably early. We hit Kansas City about 2:30 am, and were really stabbed by both the Texas Chief and first 17. We were about 2 hours late leaving KC, I learned later, and were able to make up very little of it.

The next day we rode through the flat Kansas lands all morning, gradually climbing, until at La Junta, Colorado we were up 4000 feet. From here we climbed slowly to Trinidad, and then started up to Raton pass at about 7500 feet. This was slow going, about 20mph, with four units on the front end, and only 12 cars. The next 5 hours were over the New Mexico roller-coaster, dropping down to 5800, then back up, through Las Vegas, to Glorietta at 7400, and then sliding down to Albuquerque at only 4900. We were over two hours late into Albuquerque, but they had held the connecting El Paso train, which made some people feel rather good. They had had to take this route to get there; the Rock Island had been booked solid. The trip over Raton was nice - but almost as barren as the UP over Sherman. Little in the way of anything but rocks - lots of those, tho - until beyond the summit. There were plenty of rocks, and the line had to weave around and through, rather than just charging up as the UP does.

Albuquerque lacked snow - as did the whole Raton pass route - and was rather mild. At least, I went out in only a sport coat, and strolled around for several minutes at 6 pm on Dec 16. I didn't stop long enough to be enticed into one of the Indian shops, fortunately.

From here we went on towards Gallup, finally crossing the Continental Divide at 7250 in the dark. This is one of the higher rail crossings; the further north, the lower the divide seems to be. Of course, some of those lines have other higher passes to cross, but the divide is higher in the south - except for things like Marshall and Tennessee passes in Colorado.

Again I hit the hay early, getting up reasonably fresh and early to watch the approach into LA. We had made some time through Arizona, arriving only about 90 min late in LA. I must say that the rail approach to LA is not really interesting. Once you get past the Mojave, things are just blah; the actual line in, through Pomona and Pasadena, seems to follow either city streets or the back yards of the cities. I saw more laundry and tool sheds that morning.

Los Angeles was its usual self. Need I say More? I checked bags, carried my coat - it had rained that morning and forecast was for more - and headed downtown. First stop was a stamp store. When I left there several hours later, with a lot of want list numbers crossed off, I grabbed some soup in Bullock's soup bar, and then called John Trimble. He was surprised that I was already in - and more so when I told him when I had arrived - and immediately dashed out of the office to pick me up. I waited on the Bullock corner for some minutes, and finally spotted his VW heading towards me.

Following some mystic route through the streets, which seemed to me to be heading east - at least there was the station I had come in to - we picked up my bag, and headed for Long Beach. First there was this Freeway. I'm glad it wasn't rush hour. As it was, I think I'll stick to the madness of our traffic circles. Maybe it is just the familiar evil, but.... At last we escaped onto mere streets. We drove this way, that way, and around those corners. When John stopped and there we were. I really don't remember too much about the front of the house - someone more familiar with it can describe it - but I did like the inside arrangement very much. It divides up nicely into family rooms, master bedroom upstairs, and guest rooms/storage rooms/work rooms in the front. And the pool.... There would be some advantages to living in LA area - if the area is big enough. The cats were there, but no Bjo.

It turned out this absence was only temporary. A car soon turned up with Bjo and Fred Patten; Fred had merely taken Bjo shopping for food or something. Fred was a welcome new friend on this trip - at least, I don't think I met him in LA before. Anyway, this time I got to know him, and feel I've met another nice friend. Shortly thereafter All Lewis [not the one who is rescuing camels in the Libyan desert or some such odd thing for the Coast Guard to be doing, but the other one] and Ron Elik dropped in and shortly thereafter, in some strange way, dinner appeared on the table. I probably didn't know what was going on behind my back because I was talking to Al about convention - Discon [have you joined?] - plans and news, and to Ron about the special issue of Shaggy - I've got to get going on that article as soon as this gets off the press. More talk, after - and during - dinner. Forry dropped in later and was promptly catnapped; he was so occupied with cats that he didn't have a chance to move from his chair. It had been quite a while since I'd had a chance to say more than a few words with 4e - 1946, to be exact - and I got carried away with the "do you remember..." bit; the others bore with me nobly. [one of the advantages of being the out-of-town stranger in a strange land.] Finally the working people departed, leaving Fred, Bjo, and I to talk about art show, costume ball, fans, art show, cats, fans, books, detective stories, until the wee hours of the morning. Finally Bjo joined John, who had gone to bed, like a sensible person, about midnight; and Fred (who stayed over) and I dozed down on the beds in the spare room and back room.

When I travel, I can go without sleep for some time, and on short rations for a lot longer, especially if I've had a chance to stock up before hand, and so I was up to see John off in the early hours of the morning. Later, when Fred and Bjo had returned to life, we had brunch, and went bookshopping. Fred knows some of the better places, and has a car; the latter is essential if you want to cover any ground at all in the area in one day. First we went to the Long Beach Acres of Books.

This is a sort of standard book shop, second hand type, when you enter, with shelves of books scattered around, and narrow aisles. Tables of books, stacks of books, shelves along the walls. All normal. Until you get to the back, where the counters are. Behind these are shelves of books - history, language, literature, economics, science, and other assorted non-fiction - arranged on shelves to the ceiling, with only narrow aisles. The stock here was about twice that of the front part. I started looking for the detective stories, and didn't find them - although I did find a naval section that had me drooling, even without the 1919 Jane's - and then I spied a small door at the rear of the store. It didn't say "Keep Out" (or "drink Me", either) and so I looked through. Beyond was another building, bigger than the first, a great barn of a place, with more shelves of books and narrow aisles. The space was bigger than the other store. This was the fiction. I was so astonished that I almost forgot what I was looking for. I found the detective stories, and picked up one - Yardley's (American Black Chamber) one fiction - a spy story - and then located a group of boys' books. Anyone looking for the series books of the 1900-1930 vintage would go wild here. Shelves of such things as "Boy Scouts with the Allies in Flanders", "Over the Ocean to Paris" [Ted Scott], "Don Sturdy in the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes", "The Boy Patrol On Guard", "Pee Wee Harris and the Talking Egg" etc. I did find several of the Roy J. Snell books I'm after - and more I didn't have room for.

Quite a place - and I want to go back.

Then on to LA proper. Out to Hollywood for lunch, to Cherokee Books, where I picked up three Talbot Mundy magazine items at cheap prices, and a couple of others whose names I can't remember, but which I know the location of. Al Lewis came by then, also bookshopping. One disappointment - one of the magazine stores down further was closed that day - all we could do was look in the window. With some time still left; we dropped by Forry's, where I had a chance to look over the collection, carefully avoiding getting the choice items damp, and have a chat again.

Finally, it was late, and I had to get down to the station to recheck my stuff. Al drove us down, Fred deciding it might be well if he did show up at home once in a while. John appeared on his way from work, and Bjo changed cars again, I said goodbys and thanks and the other usual commonplace expressions that really don't convey the thanks and appreciation and enjoyment and other such feelings. So, let it be recorded here that I had a wonderful time, enjoyed myself, and appreciate the efforts of John and Bjo and Fred and Al and Ron and Forry - and the cats! - who made it possible.

At the last moment, before leaving, I'd been able to change reservations, or so I hoped, and was able to go up to San Francisco on the Wed Coast Daylight, rather than the Lark. So, I'd written Burb and arranged, hopefully, for an evening visit there. About 6 pm, Burb and Gregg Calkins drove up and picked me up at the station, then down somewhere in LA to pick up Isabel, who was on jury duty that week - and apparently may still be - and then out to So Pioneer Blvd. Shortly after we got there Lee Jacobs and Elmer Perdue dropped in - and in true Burbee fashion, stayed to dinner. Meanwhile I was sampling Burbee home brew. I found it very good, but much lighter and with a greater head than the Busby type. In my travel state, I didn't dare drink too much of it, or I would probably never have made the train, but I enjoyed it. I like good beer. Even the kind made from roots and nuts and such. Isabel made a few mystic passes, while Burb and I and Gregg were drinking and discussing FAPA and stuff, and produced something she said wasn't much - not what she would like to fix. Merely cold ham in nice thick slices, beans (yum), and something else, plus gobs of fresh bread and butter. I'm afraid I disappointed her, as I couldn't eat half of what she expected. My excuse is that I just can't eat that much, no matter how good it is, any more. I've been losing weight slowly, just by eating less, and I find I can't eat the big meals I once could. Just no room. I'm not sorry, really.

After dinner the inevitable poker game started. I watched. I'm not a poker player, and the versions used were new to me. I think I figured out most of them. It was fun sitting there and watching Elmer and Lee and Gregg and Burb tossing money around like it was nothing but money. Next time, maybe, when I'm flush and don't have to worry about the rest of the trip, I might be willing to sit in.

At least I had fun watching. Finally, the visitors left, after Gregg gave an inspired (?) rendition (rendering?) on the player piano, probably arousing the neighbors. After a little chit-chat, we all went to bed. Isabel complained that she couldn't stay up talking as she usually did because she had to leave with Burb to get to court on time. So, by 1:30 all was quiet. And, I'm supposed to remark that I slept in Elinor Busby's bed at Burbs. Or, strictly, in Johnny Burbee's bed, which Elinor had used in her visit. [Put that cleaver down, Buz.]

So, bright and early - or at least early - we had coffee and such in the kitchen, and then off to the station, which was on the way to drop Isabel off. This time I was on the freeways in rush hour. Maybe if I knew exactly where I was going, it wouldn't be too bad. But I'd certainly want to do some dry runs in slack periods first. Burb knows his way around, obviously, and we made the station in good time. Once more the ritual thanks - so trite, and yet so meaningful. So, I'll repeat them here - thanks for a relaxing, enjoyable evening, one I'm hoping to duplicate in the future.

This trip wasn't exactly a new line for me, as I'd ridden it before, but by night on the Lark. This was my first chance to see the coast by daylight on the Daylight. My greatest regret is that I didn't take it 20 years ago, when the motive power were/was the magnificent GS 4-8-4 Daylights of the 4500 series. Those were wonderful engines, especially the later ones, sheathed in the semi-streamlined hoods and painted the brilliant orange "Daylight" livery. Or, if the consist was heavy, maybe a 4100 cab forward would be used, or as a helper over the mountains.

Unfortunately, those days are gone forever, and now the throb of a four unit Diesel bounces back from the canyon walls instead of the bark of the 4-8-4's exhaust or the double beat of the articulateds.

This time I splurged on a parlor seat, since I had a first class ticket for the whole trip, and the extra few cents over the seat reservation charge gave me a nice single seat that swiveled around, had plenty of room for my legs, and didn't have anyone beside me blowing smoke in my face. The parlor car was the last on the train, and thus there were no crowds tramping from diner to lounge to coach seat.

We left on time, but were stabbed by the eastbound Lark (on the SoPac, you go "east" from San Francisco to Portland, Ogden, or Los Angeles; all trains into San Francisco are "west") before we reached Glendale. Things got foggy here, and I began to wonder about the trip. All through the San Fernando valley it was foggy, with only patches of clear here and there. Finally we were over the Santa Monica Mts and to Ventura, on the coast. It was foggy - not a heavy fog, but a thick haze. The sun was trying to break through, from behind the mountains, and the occasional rifts produced a wonderful effect on the water. I think this is the first time I've ever seen the ocean the way I hear it in parts of La Mer. It didn't look like the ocean, except right on the edge of the beach, where the lazy combers finally rolled up and over, crashing down on the remnants of the earlier breakers trickling back, and running up in white-edged layers of foam, crossing, mingling, and cancelling each other.

The ocean further out was smooth, as the water goes, but each little wave or trough was catching the sun and standing out as a brilliant point of light, moving, shifting, flickering on and off, and yet never entirely disappearing. The path of a direct ray of sunlight would be a dazzling white, while around it would be the more subdued tinkling sparkles, forming a background for the dazzled eyes. And over all of this, there was a misty haze, not strong, but just enough to subdue and blend each part into a harmonious whole.

It was fascinating.

Gradually, as the sun rose higher, and the morning fog/mist/haze burned off, the ocean took on the usual aspect, with the long, slow swells rolling majestically in from the far western seas, at first a mere undulation of the surface, then, as the sands below sloped up, the rolling became disturbed, grew more pronounced, and finally was forced into full breakers, pounding the beach sands. It was a quiet day, with little wind, and the breakers were cresting quietly, with little spray and no flung spume. I can imagine this trip would be a real experience in a storm, for the line runs right along the water's edge, in places only a few feet above the sands. Something to look forward to. But, in December, all was quiet, and I found the simple swells and quiet breakers relaxing. After the hurry and bustle of everyday work/life, such a calm but certain movement, no hurry, no trivial movements, just the steady, ceaseless, unhurried but powerful assault of the sea against its eternal enemy, the land. It makes all the petty troubles of man seem so unimportant. I find I unwind and am ready for work with a clearer mind and a renewed interest.

About noon we passed Vandenberg AFB, with several interesting looking objects standing up in the distance with all sorts of structures around. Unfortunately, there was no stop, and we went on, leaving the scene behind before I had a chance to see much.

At last we crossed the Santa Maria river at Pismo, and turned inland to San Luis Obispo. From here we went over the Santa Lucia Mountains into the Salinas Valley. The mountains aren't high, but rather rugged, making for some interesting railroad construction. The mountains themselves disappointed me; after the Cascades, the Sierras along the American River to Truckee, or the Siskiyou's, they seemed barren, with only a little scrub oak or pine, and some clumps of grass.

We wound down the Salinas Valley, reaching the coast again at Castroville. This was only a short glimpse, for we immediately wound our way up and over the hills into the Santa Clara Valley and San Jose, "down the peninsula" from San Francisco. Here we were in fog, becoming heavy as twilight fell. As we skirted the west side of the Bay, we could barely see the street lights; cars were creeping along, neon signs were casting a rosey glow in the haze. I have little remembrance of the actual entrance to San Francisco - the only way I could tell we had reached the South San Francisco tunnels was the change in the sound of the train. And then suddenly we were pulling into Third and Townsend, and I was back in San Francisco.

San Francisco didn't seem too foggy - no more than I had expected from the past. The cab had no trouble getting to the hotel, and the lights seemed as bright as normal. But, while the bellboy was checking the bath towels the phone rang - good desk work, to have me on the board that quick - and there was Bill Donaho. (And the bellman never did get a tip; I was so busy talking I didn't notice him leaving.) He'd planned a get-to-gether, at his place, but in view of the fog - dare I say no-view? - he'd cancelled it, and suggested any who could drop in on me at the hotel. So, I dashed out for food, came back, shortly thereafter the phone rang several times, people came up, and finally there were Bill, Al haLevy, a displaced Marylander, George Spencer, and Karen Anderson. I don't think I've forgotten anyone. We talked for a while, con and con and apa and con, and then decided to go out for a drink. (The hotel I've been using in San Francisco is built on ground leased from the Methodist church, so I understand, and the lease doesn't permit them to serve alcohol. So, either you send out for a bottle - the bellhops will accomodate for a price - or go out. It does make a quieter hotel, tho.) We wandered up to Geary and found a small bar, with a quiet piano, and a small back room-type area with chairs and such. Here we sat and drank and talked. Finally Al and then George and Bill had to leave, but Karen and I kept on talking and sipping for hours. At last, we had to break it up, since we both had to get up at some hour of the morning. But while it lasted, it was wonderful, with the talk skipping around and over and under various serious and not so serious topics - cons and books and people and sf and fantasy and people and cons and people and.... Just like a con in miniature. One of the high spots of the trip, Karen, and thanks.

You know, I feel sort of like a god, with those people turning out, driving miles through the fog, just to see me. Or, a god isn't the sense; I really feel grateful that they would think of doing it, and I do appreciate it. This is one of the times I like being a fan.

Anyway, it broke up too early, when ever it broke up.

The next day it was still foggy. Ben Stark had called the night before, and suggested I drop over to his place, where he was nursing the tail-end of a cold. So I took the bay bus - weep for the yellow Key articulateds! - and transferred to a local that wound up and up and around and around the Berkeley hills. Finally, the driver let me off and pointed out Armore Rd, disappearing off into the fog down the hill. So, I trudged along, and along, and along. Finally I saw a familiar place, and found Ben reading a book - of all things to be doing. We gabbed for a while on con business, present and future, and then went down to the Stark basement. This makes the new Ackerman garage - which I had seen in LA, and which doesn't compare with the old one with its interesting piles of stuff everywhere - look like a small closet. The whole basement is filled with shelves, filled with books. There are shelves of magazines, but they are overshadowed by the books. New and used, old and recent. Fortunately, I was short on funds, and so escaped with my briefcase unfilled. But I did drool. I drooled so, that Ben fed me lunch before driving me down to the bay bus. I just wish I had had more time.

I had time to kill before leaving for Oregon, so I wandered into a couple of magazine stores on Third St on the way to the depot. I'd thought LA had the most open magazine stores, but these were better - worse - than any there. Imported and

domestic items, pictures and more pictures, color and black and white, slides, and the whole range of reading material, to the very edge of the outright obscene. It was interesting to observe the customers, though; well dressed older men and jd type youngsters side by side, avidly devouring the material.

Finally I reached the station.

San Francisco was still fog-bound, and there was an unusual crowd waiting for the bus connection to Oakland. I caught the third bus, and there were at least two more following. This was the thursday before Christmas, and everyone was trying to get home; school was out at most colleges, and there were also a large group of service men.

Over in Oakland we waited on the station platform. The train was late - they were adding extra cars, I understood - and so we waited, with a cool breeze keeping people moving around. Finally, about a half hour late, the train pulled in from the yards down by the old ferry terminal - a long train, extending almost to the end of the station platform, way beyond the shelter provided by the old Interurban Electric elevated station. Four units were hooked on - two A and two B - in place of the usual three.

At Martinez we were delayed still longer waiting for the Daylight connection which was running heavy, and late. The whole area was fogged in badly; for once I couldn't see anything of the bay shore as we wound through Richmond and Crockett. I didn't see the connection pull in from the south until it was alongside and the usual bustle of changing trains was taking place.

There was more delay at Davis, where the Sahsta-Cascade line turns off from the old Overland route; we were waiting for the bus connection from Sacramento. The fog was so bad even the bus was late. By that time I was in the diner, where things were really busy. I shared a seat with a man and his two young sons; across the aisle his wife and three daughters, one at the self-conscious stage, the others younger, were seated. Sharing a table with young - elementary school age - children can be something of an adventure; the usual effect is at least noisy. This family was the wonderful exception. The children were quiet and well mannered - and yet full of questions, talkative (but not all at the same time), spirited. It was such a wonderful surprise that I felt compelled to congratulate the father as they were leaving on his nice family. He seemed surprised - as if all families should be the same way - and pleased.

The club car was so packed with people waiting to get into the diner that I didn't feel like stopping for even a single drink; I went back and read for a while, and then hit the sack.

The next morning we were due in Salem at 7:20. So, I decided to get up at about Eugene, around 6. When I woke up at 6, we were still coming down the Salt Creek line in the Cascades; it was raining, and the trees were visible only as darker shadows in the general dawn gloom. At 7:30 we were in Eugene. I'd planned breakfast at home, so didn't bother with the diner, but just spent some time in the lounge. Finally, at 9, we pulled up in Salem, in the rain. The coach passengers got out, the baggage was unloaded, and the train moved ahead again, spotting the Pullmans at the station. I clambered out, grabbed my bags and tipped the porter, and walked up to where Mother was waiting.

I was home for Christmas.

And was immediately - after breakfast - put to work helping mother and a friend of hers across the hall arrange for an open house - two apartments - for the rest of the tenants that afternoon. And, of course, I had to be at hand, to be "shown off" to the tenants. One of them was the society editor of the afternoon paper, who was requested not to write up the party, in spite of the names attending. She got revenge - for the first time I made the society page, as visiting for the Christmas season. Complete with title, too. (For once that came in handy; it sounds so much more impressive than plain Mr!)

I did very little while at home. I visited with friends, played a little bridge, ate, read, but did little traveling. It was cold - not like DC, but for Oregon/Salem it was cold - or wet. So, I did some walking through the state capitol grounds, and the parks, noting the havoc wrought by the Columbus Day storm - Salem was hit very hard, with almost 50% of the phones and power out, some for over a week, trees toppled like papermatches, roofs blown off, signs blowin down, etc. In the city park they were still cutting up the fallen trees; pulling stumps, etc. Many of the big firs and oaks were four and five feet through, and had been uprooted bodily. I visited Willamette Univ, and got a tour of the new addition to the science building - the science building that was new when I was a senior - I helped move into it - and which was supposed to be adequate for years. Now, in only 20 years, they are about doubling the space, and no other department is moving in. And they still won't have enough space for everything they need. No, the total enrollment hasn't gone up that much; it is about 130 % of what it was when I was there, but there are more students taking science and math.

Finally it was the new year - 1963. On Wed, the 2nd, I left for Portland, Seattle, and the east. I'd planned to take the same train I'd come in on - the 7:22 am Cascade for Portland. We called up on the rainy morning, and found it was late - about 8. So, at 7:30 we got a cab - Mother and I - and rode the five minutes to the station. There we waited - it was reported later and later. Finally, about 8, it was reported out of Alb any, 25 miles away. About 20 minutes later, the signal in the yard to the south winked on as green, changed to yellow, and in the distance I could hear the whistle for the Turner road grade crossing. At last it came into view and I said goodbye to Mother, climbed aboard, found a seat, and started back to work.

It had almost stopped raining when we snaked over the railroad bridge over the Willamette and into the old Portland Station. I checked my bags - those bags spent most of the time in check lockers, I think - and walked up town to look up a couple of book stores. They were pretty disappointing; the only items I found were some recent SP Employee Time Tables for the Shasta, Portland, and Western Divisions. It was time for lunch, so I grabbed a bite and then went back to catch the 1:30 train for Seattle. We spent four hours running through the green Washington countryside in rain - drizzle or hard - and finally pulled into Seattle. I walked out of the train platform into the waiting room, and there was Buz, waiting for me. This time I didn't check the bags.

A short drive out to Chez Busby, where Buz handed me a glass of homebrew as soon as I had said hello to Elinor, Lisa, and Knobby. We sat, talked, and drank, ate, talked, drank; talked; and finally went to bed. Buz had decided to take the next day off, even if it was payday - it seems some people in the government get paid on Thursday - so we got up fairly late, talked, drank beer, drove down to pick up Buz' check, did a little paper-back looking, back home to talk and drink, and then, after dinner, out to Wally Weber's for a Nameless meeting. Which was more talk and drinking and talking. Topics ranged from cons to the breakdown of law and order in the United States. I think Heinlein must have been there in spirit. Finally, talked out, we went back to 2852 14th West, where I said goodbye to Buz; poor fellow, he had to go to work the next day.

I didn't roll out until after Buz was off to work; Elinor and I continued to talk until about 10, when she dropped me off at the station - check bags - and then drove me back to the book-hunting area. The midst of traffic isn't a real good place to say thanks, but I tried; I did have a wonderful time.

Very little success in book hunting; I did find a place that had lots of piano rolls and records, tho. [Not a rag among them that I could see, Burb.] After a light lunch I strolled down to the station, arriving just before checkin time. Finally, the gates opened, and I found my space on the Empire Builder.

Long time readers of this magazine will note something new in this Seattle visit; or rather something missing. This time there was no heroic rush as part of the grand game of "Get Bill Evans to the Train". I'll admit it did take some of the flavor away from the visit, but this one was a little longer than the previous, and I guess that added benefit will well counterbalance the excitement of the previous trips. And that home-brew is wonderful stuff, Buz.

Safely aboard the train, I stowed my stuff, and walked up to the dome. I always like to watch the train leave Seattle, as it slowly pokes its nose into the tunnel just beyond the station, and then runs along the waterfront and the Sound edge to Everett, where it turns inland for the Cascades and the Tunnel. The Sound was quiet, foggy, and dreary. Occasionally a ray would light up the water, but in general it was uninspiring. As we turned inland it began to get dark; combined with the fog this soon blotted out the landscape. I could catch glimpses of snow as we climbed up the western slopes of the Cascades, but only in the higher parts was it at all deep. The eastern slopes were likewise almost bare, but cold. This trip back was noteworthy for the lack of snow; around Glacier there was a fair amount, but further east it was open and bare, until we reached Minnesota and Illinois. This was before the real January snows, obviously. It was cold enough for ice fishing, but not real, midwestern cold.

I arrived in Chicago on Sunday, changed stations, and waited for the Capitol to leave. There wasn't time to go anywhere; downtown was closed up. Nothing but boredom. And then Monday, with the train winding again through the West Virginia hills; with more snow than when I went out, and into Silver Spring. Finally getting a cab, which slithered over the slush and ice and snow to Mt Rainier, I was back. I grabbed a shower, glanced over the mail, and headed for work. There I found my desk - just. Since then, I've been uncovering the stuff dumped on it, fighting a deadline that was moved up a month, a report of some 1000 references, and otherwise trying to do some work.

Plus keeping up with Discon doings - joined yet?

Which means there won't be any mailing comments this mailing from me. I've read the mailing, liked it, especially the monumental work of Ron, had things to say, and won't say them. They weren't that important, anyway.

Bill

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"The only ethical principle which has made science possible is that the truth shall be told all the time. If we do not penalize false statements made in error, we open up the way for false statements by intention. And a false statement of fact, made deliberately, is the most serious crime a scientist can commit."

===== "recognize the source, anyone? Elinor? Phyllis? Chuck Hansen?" =====