

July 10, 1961

Dear Joe & Robbie,

This is a letter of thanks, joyes, and sorrows. Thanks primarily for opening your house to poor wayfarers. It is something above and beyond the normal call, to have guest arrive in the middle of the night, and then sleep through your own departure for work.. Then get up and ravage the icebox and leave -- without giving in return to standard pay of the wonderer...a evening of news and gossip. (Songs too, but I fear only Virginia would dare admit to being able to sing.)

Which brings me to my sorrow.. No, not that I can't sing.. I'd rather be able to write--but I am sorry not to have seen more of you on our all to brief stay.. That was the chief sorrow of the trip -- the people I didn't get to talk to.. I'd especially wanted to spend time with you and the Grahams, but Honey and Rog were busy or tired all the time, and and I just didn't seem to be around much at the same time.. Or, if you were, there was the over shadowing problem of cars on the blink..

But despite it all, I had a very good time. I got to spend a good deal of time with Ed and Jessie Clinton, who are old and dear friends from down here.. I met (or re-met) the Rogers, and got to spend a good deal of time with Ernie.. something I rarely do at home. And travel was actually as pleasant as possible. Traffic was not bad either way, and we saw no accidents.. The burned out motor in the Microbus, and Steve's brush with the VW seem to be the only troubles any of the LA crew had, and there were a lot of them on the road.. But we are all looking forward to next year, when we don't have to travel.

I'm sorry too, that we weren't around long enough to be taken on the grand tour of your new home.. What I saw impressed me. I rather suspect you bought the place, largely because of that livingroom. It is a room that would be easy to fall in love with.. At least for some one with my taste in design.. And I have a strong leaning toward big fireplaces, high beamed ~~rooms~~ ~~at~~ ~~low~~ ~~modern~~ ~~comfortable~~ ~~cauch~~ ~~seem~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~the~~ ~~kind~~ ~~of~~ ~~warehouse~~ with a house that went with 10,000 acres of fine range land. But my taste are a reflection of love of the desert.. I'd rather live in the desert than the city, if it didn't mean giving up so many friends..... The Outlander Society once planed an imaginary retreat to which they would go, after the Big Bomb... If one had a good selection of friends with one, it could be a good life.. Though I'm such crab these days, I don't know if I could live with anyone..

Kitchen duties were preformed by the male half of your guest, (Your note will propably result in the title of John's conference account.) In doing the drying up I noticed something else with the pleased smile of one who finds some one else enjoying the same things.. Namely, the care you were giving your Gerber blade. Still in it's box.. I have a "Pixie" too, and went wild about it - as I have a small passion for knives.. But not having a house of my own, the only time I could use it was when we had stakes.. It accured to me that if I had a small case, just the size of the knife, I could carry it out to dinner. In older times a gentleman often carried his knife and fork with him.. So I sat down and wrote the Gerber company, suggesting just such an idea.. And low and behold I got a letter back from one of the young Gerbers, thanking me for my praise of the design of the knife, and for the suggesting.. But it seems they already had had the idea, and produced a leather sheath simular to one used for a hunting knife, that could be worn on the belt.. And out of appreciation for ~~my~~ letter, they sent me one. It is almost as good a design as the knife... My only problem is that it has lost its razor edge, and I'm afraid to try and reshapen it, for fear of damaging it..

Thanks too for G<sup>2</sup>. I'll be looking forward to the future, and will clonk down the clank, when the bell rings.. --It must be quite a start for your postman, to have fans move into his beat... --- As for the Kemp poll... I was not greatly impressed. And someone at LASFS--I think it was Steve Schultheis--pointed out something about this only child/first born bit.. A good many fans, especially of those that answered to poll, are about 30 years old.. And as Steve pointed out, 30 years ago, the average family was usually only one kid. The suggestion being that any group of people of about the same age will be largely first born/only children... My self, I have a step- sister, 11 years older than I. But I never lead a normal like..

To me, the poll was badly worded.. The first part was alright, but the second part wasn't thought out properly.. I found it hard to answer, and the part Earl copied--while it said something different than some others, was not the overall effect I wanted to have. -- But I couldn't see were my invirement lead me to an interest in science fiction.. It didn't even lead to the great interest in books that nearly all others fans lay clame to. I read very few books ~~before~~ before I became a fan.. I spent most of my time with radio, magazines, and toy armies..... I suppose having to rely on my self so much for intertainment, and thinking up adventures with great building detail, that I might have been a set up for the science-puzzle type stories.. But far from compeating with anyone, I've had most of my life eather worked out for me, or I fall into it. So, I don't fit your picture at all.. But I'm not normal.

I go along more with your views on Science Fiction. An old fan friend was through here last weekend, and I think he stated the case for the ones who read s-f for ideas.. He says he is reading other jurnals and magazines to find out what is comming. There aren't enough speculative idea stories these days.. The reason I would guess as being (a) the men with the knowledge and brains to come up with new ideas are doing them

in some business were they are better paid, and the results more assured, and (b) the really imaginative writers are writing for better paying fields.. With the exception of a few who just can't stop writing s-f, we have a crop of well meaning second raters who get their science and ideas from reading each other or from editorial handouts.. --- Another gripe is they have all but gone away with high adventure, or the Planet, TWS school. I doubt that I could read much of it now with out chocking-- but I loved it then.. And I think it is to bad that the recent young fans don't get a chance at this same type of adventure..

I hope you are right about the better stories, and better fans.. I'd like to see both.. A frightening number of fans(?) drift into LASFS who have read very little of the field, but know some one who is active.. Local clubs fall victims to this more than national fandom -- as few of these type write much. Still Joe, there are some publications going out as fanzines, that you and I would have been hard put to reconize as such, when we were starting... I don't say this is all together bad, as the wider our horizens the better...but it leaves a weaker binding force to hold us together.

---When I started this, I checked my file, and it hit me with a fanzine brown with age, which said something about a Fifth. This too, should be commented on, but on reading through it I don't find any little check marks, and the text stirs no memories of wit or wisdom I wanted to pass along to you. Because I can't work, and have lots of time --- I naturally never get anything done.. But I feel bad about getting fanzines and not writing letters of comment... So, as they come in, they get slipped into a box, right by my bed ..(It was the only vacant spot in my room, at the time.) There I work out a complex priority system, regarding the order they are to be answered.. (Monthlys over quarterlys, friends zines before strangers, etc. etc.) Your first zine maintained a balance about seven from the front. The fact that it didn't look like you were going to issue anything else, was against you... But now that you have joined the monthly's...you will get better treatment... Though, monthlys don't get answered every month... I'm not really a very active fan.

Though- at the moment I am being driven with my back to the wall.. I must get a letter to Art Rapp, on a new group we are forming..... Ackerman has requested I write a letter of comment to his SPACEMAN magazine, and I'm greatly in his debt. I've FAPA material to write up.. And request for material from Ed Cox, Marion Bradley, and John Trimble (--yes, and Ernie Wheatley)) All friends I can't say no too... My Father gets back from a vacation, and I have to pick him up at 5:30 tomorrow morning... --- I tell you, something wont get done...

But I had to write my thanks to you for room, board, and fanzines.. I admire them all, greatly..

With many thanks,