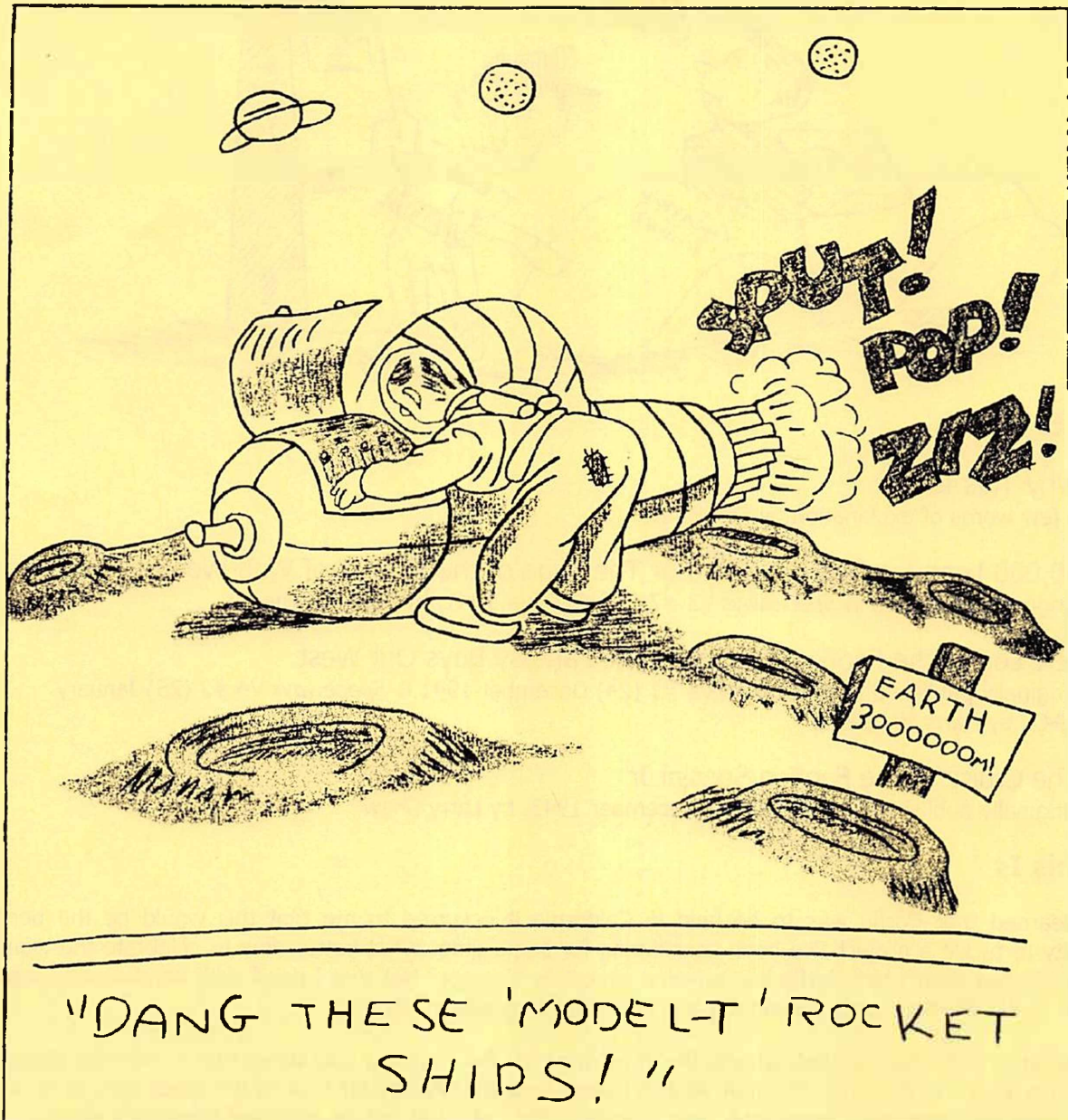
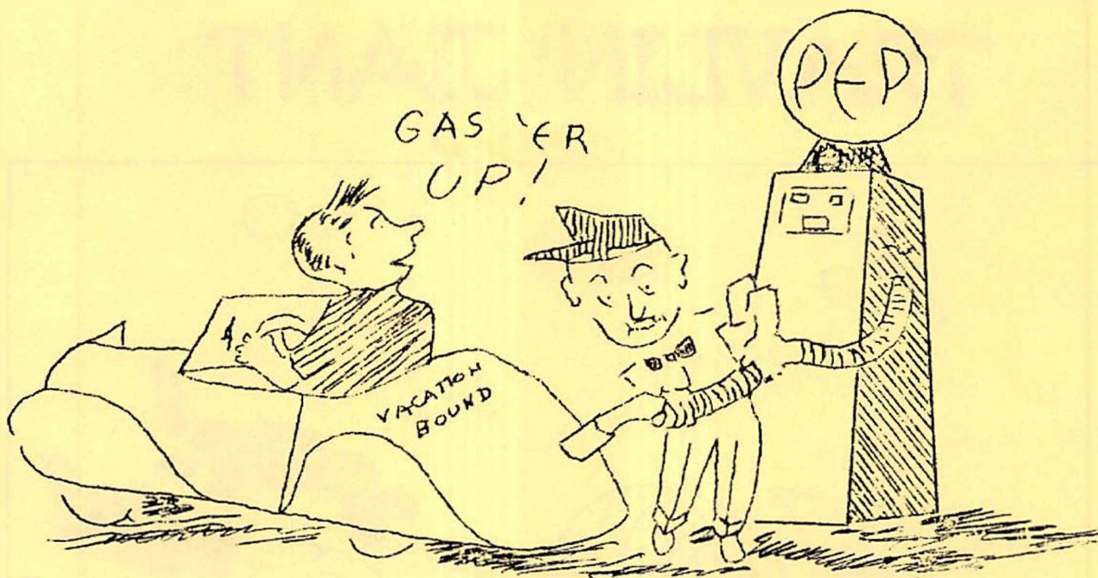


# TRAVLIN' JIANT



*Danny Daimwood*

The Adventures of Art Widner in Frontierland



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A few words of explanation by Kim Huett

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Originally published in *Spaceways* V3 #7 (23) October 1941, by Harry Warner Jr

### The Log of the FooFoo Special or The Fantasy Boys Out West

Originally published in *Spaceways* V4 #1 (24) December 1941 & *Spaceways* V4 #2 (25) January 1942, by Harry Warner Jr

### The Cruise of the FooFoo Special Jr

Originally published in *Fan Booklet*, December 1943, by Larry Shaw

## Why This Is

When I learned that Corflu was to be held in California it occurred to me that this would be the perfect opportunity to tackle a project I've been considering for some time. What better time to celebrate the wonder that is Art Widner than when Corflu has traveled almost to his door? Not that I need such an excuse to reprint the cream of Art Widner's early travel tales but I do like the synchronicity of it.

Harry Warner Jr once claimed that Art was the 'most-traveled fan counting only travel that is done for pleasure' and I see no reason to disagree with him. As this collection demonstrates Art took to the roads very early in his fannish career and completed some truly epic journeys. Not only that but he recorded them with such an eye for detail that I suspect they make even more interesting reading today than when originally published for the way they shine a light on on the forgotten roads of America in the 1940s.

This version of the collection has been kept to a minimum because Randy Byers has graciously promised to handle the the printing and distribution and so I don't want to make the job any more difficult for him than it need be. Hopefully, not too long after E Corflu Vitus has been and gone there will be a PDF version with a vast array of supplementary material. For now though everything but this page and the cover is composed of entirely of Art Widner's own golden words. The cover is by Danny Daimwood and was stolen from an early Forry Ackerman fanzine and the sole piece of interior art you saw on the contents page appeared in *Spaceways* V4 #1 and was, I suspect, drawn by Art himself. This version of *Travlin' Jiant* was put together by Kim Huett with the help of Randy Byers. I hope some of you enjoy it.



# 20,000 Leagues Over the Road

## or

### The Saga of the Skylark of Woo-Woo

Now that that gallant metal steed rolls close to the rim of Eternity with her Bergenholms dragging and her bare Delameters hanging out, it seems only fitting and proper that the Mightiest machine of Massachusetts, the faithful Old Dobbin of Route 3, should have a glowing epitaph; a respectful In Memoriam, so that she will still be remembered and revered even when she is on her way to Japan to now down eventually a few score innocent Chinese. And what could be more appropriate than a recounting of her incredible exploits? (Quiet, you in the balcony, I'll tell it anyway!) So – the following tale is dedicated to the grandest old bucket of bolts that ever rolled off an assembly line...

When the Skylark of Foo was ten years old it developed a weak bladder, and was inclined to dribble a trail of rusty H<sub>2</sub>O along the road which necessitated stopping at a filling station every five miles. I was debating on whether to buy a new radiator or another car when word of a "wonderful 1928 Dodge for only \$25" reached my ears.

Forthwith, the five-gallon water can was filled up for emergencies, and I was off on a 30-mile jaunt to investigate. I looked at the Dodge, listened to the engine, felt the tires and hose connections, smelled the exhaust, and generally took it in with all five senses except taste, and found the machine was good. So then I tried to beat the owner down to \$20, which was all the cash I could scare up. No soap. So we finally gave him the twenty and a promise of the other fin the following week, which (for benefit of the cynics) he duly received.

Problem no. 1 – how to get it home without plates? With the help of a friend to drive one car, the next night we took the back plate for the SoF, put it on the front of the WoW, and so home – practically bumper to bumper – assiduously avoiding all populated areas where disagreeable people, such as cops, abound.

After the first few days' worry that everyone usually has over the acquisition of a new hunk of wheeled property – wondering if one has picked a lemon – Widner smiled, and mumbled in his beard, "Now for the Chicon".

Then came a period of phenagling to get a week away from the filling station. It is practically unheard of for a service station man to take a day off, let alone a whole week! (Oil Co., who read this will no doubt collapse of apoplexy.) But fortunately we were blessed with a kind-hearted employer and an accommodating partner, and it was fixed up barely in time.

Came the fateful Wednesday Morn, the 29th of August, and I was up at 6AM, opened up the station, and worked until noon. Then home for a last minute clean-up, throwing odds'n'ends in a small suitcase, and I was off to pick up Jack Bell and Earl Singleton.

Landing at the MIT Grad House we found Singleton in a dither, wondering if we were coming and how many wardrobes he should take. (Jim Avery had backed out at the last minute.) We finally cut Earl down to a large – very large – suitcase, and an extra suit which he wore.

Finally, at 5PM, we pointed the Skylark's nose towards the sinking sun while some of Earl's friends held 'er back while we got in, and then we were off...

Yeah, off our nuts when we got caught in a small capillary of Boston's circulatory system, which chose that moment to develop a severe case of hardening of the arteries, which are at best somewhat unreliable affairs. We spent a cursing hour and a half in the tapioca pudding that passed for traffic before we were finally spewed out of the left ventricle of the city and started rolling on the six lane Worcester turnpike.

We sang "We're off To See the Chicon" with much gusto and abandon but very little harmony. After that we fell silent for some distance, probably thinking of the awesome 1000 miles ahead us in an old '28 jalopy. At least I

did, never having gone more than 500 miles in a straight line since I was knee-high to a Martian skwlrpf-bug.

But then monotony began to take hold as we droned along mile after mile, and Earl suggested playing the mathematical game of "Fours". This was new to Jack and me so Earl explained that the idea was to express all the whole numbers (starting with 1 to as high as you can go) with four fours. This looked easy for a while –  $1=44/44$ ;  $2=4,4/4,4$ ;  $3=4+4+4/4$ ; etc, – until we began to get into the teens, then I began to have trouble keeping my mind on the figures and the road at the same time. I discretely chose the road and so fell far behind until Jack and Earl got to 33, when I slowly began to creep up and finally tied them, but everybody was stumped there so we gave it up and stopped for supper.

The inner man satisfied, we also satisfied the inner Skylark with a little go-juice, and were happily surprised to find it was doing better than 20 miles per gallon, and using no oil at all. Starting off again the Skylark seemed to have developed diabetes of the blowhole. Worriedly lifting the hood, I sniggered in relief as I discovered 'twas only a disconnected spark plug wire.

Shortly after came the encounter with John Law, which we will skip, as it has been treated with in Bell's Via Jalopy article in Fanfare. Skip we also details of the swing session that took us off our route into an American Legion convention in Schenectady, and the horrors of limping along on a soft spare, searching for an air hose at 3AM, and also the Geneva episode in the morning.

Twenty-seven hours after leaving Boston we passed through Cleveland, too tired and weary to give a damn about Miske or anything but a bath and bed. We found these at dusk on the western side of Cleveland and tumbled in.

Although I had done all the driving except a 50-mile stretch by Singleton, I was up first, "bright and early" at 10AM. The other guys were still dead to the world.

On our way again, we were reminded of the Wizard of Oz by the many miles of brick road stretching through Ohio. Although the others saw only the dusty roads, torn up stretches, and countless black barns advertising Mail Pouch chewin' terbacky, I thought the name "Beautiful Ohio" was well applied, and looked even better than Massachusetts!

Crossing Indiana's straight, flat roads was rather monotonous, so we took to playing another game of Earl's called Stinky Pinky. The idea was to define vaguely two rhyming words of the same number of syllables. The two words were supposed to be related to each other, although like as not the "relation" was about fifth cousin on Aunt Susie's side. Sample: "An overjoyed father" would be "stinky pinky" until someone guessed "Happy Pappy" and then it was the guesser's turn to think up a stinker like "unenslaved honey gatherer"; "stink pink"; "free bee"! But Singleton (it being his game of course) won the prize (a nut that had worked loose from somewhere in the Skylark's interior) with a Stinkety Pinkety!, "The White House", which turned out to be "President's Residence". Jack and I were overcome by this wowser and we sort of lost heart, but it was time to stop for gas and a stretch anyway.

We cheered when we found out from the attendant that it was only "Ninety Miles to Chicahuh"! Another mild diversion was Singleton's discovering at long last his beloved Dr. Pepper. He had mystified us all the way from western New York by mumbling about "Dr. Pepper" before we found that it is a soft drink similar to coke (only worse – but then, I don't like coke either) unobtainable back East. Jack and I applauded as Earl gulped down the contents of the bottle with an elegant flourish, and the attendant gazed at us queerly as if wondering whether to call the men in the white coats or not.

The rest of the way was without particular incident, except that the nearer we came to Chicago, the more anxious I was to get there. And though I had promised to keep the Skylark under 45 mph so we would have something left in which to get home, we were soon flying along at 55 – 60, or even faster than the speedy western traffic.



We dropped Bell off at Hammond. Indiana (just short of the line), at a friend's, and that was the last we saw of him for four days. It seems he got invited aboard yacht, and the champagne etc. was so good that he just stayed and stayed. He intended to come to the EE Smith banquet, but he and his friend forgot the name of the Chicagoan, and wandered around all evening trying every hotel in Chicago but the right one.

After Earl and I left him at Hammond, we reared along an exceptionally straight road, which crossed a million railroad tracks in its 10 or 15 miles, and zipped into southern Chicago, where we promptly became lost for a half hour.

Shortly after 7PM we warped the Skylark into a berth opposite the Y hotel, where the car curled up and went sound asleep with a tired sigh.

(Our impressions of the Chicon itself were supposed to appear in Le Zombie, but it looks as if they never will. And after Tucker begged me on bended knee for them. I just wrote him about them and my "den" article, and he said, "What article?". Such is the life of a fan...)

Julius Unger and Robert Madle were stranded in Chicago with no means of returning, so we took them along, hoping it wouldn't prove too uncomfortable for five, as three had been crowded enough.

We finally got going after a long wait for Singleton, during which 4e, Morojo, Madle, Unger, Freehafer and I stood around in the Y lobby, and I restlessly shifted my packet of originals from one hand to the other, finally putting them down so 4e could coin the word Denvention and write it down to see how it looked. We all approved, and Morojo thought up the slogan C U N Denver. Finally Earl arrived, and everybody shook hands and said so long to everybody else about five times each, except Wiggins who had come along in the interim. He almost shook hands twice with me, but caught himself just in time.

We cruised along making good time through the traffic, until we reached Nemesis, South Chicago, where we very easily became lost again. After wandering for 45 minutes or so, we found the main highway again. Came a weird rumbling noise from the stern and an unevenness in our gait. We told Madle to stop dragging his feet, but that didn't do any good. I got out and inspected the tires. They looked OK but I was suspicious of the new one that had twice gone flat after we had sideswiped a curbing in Schenectady. I felt around back of it, and – Sacre Bleu! – there was a bubble on the side and bottom as big as a grapefruit! I just stood there and voiced my opinion of everyone connected with the tire, from the President of the Company down to the last twerp that had "fixed" it. 'Twas a wonder said tire did not melt and run down into a puddle. Julie, who is a truck driver, said I did a very artistic job.

We pulled into a nearby garage and changed to the raggedy old spare that had been thrown in free with the car because the owner didn't know what else to do with it. However, FooFoo was on our side, and old "Raggedy Ann" took us the whole thousand miles home, and is still the spare, waiting for another thousand-mile emergency.

That done we fortified with hamburgers all around, and set out once more. We stopped in Hammond for Bell, but he had enough on the trip out, and had decided to stay over a few extra days and take the stratoliner home. He graciously handed me a sawbuck without even being asked – and thus we were able to eat on the way home.

Julie Unger wanted to see Dr. CL Barrett, who is a very good friend of his, so somewhere in the middle of Indiana we left route 6 and headed south through Ft. Wayne, hoping to make Bellefontaine, Ohio, by midnight.

We underestimated the distance somehow and 'twas 3AM before we pulled into Bellefontaine. Too late then to get even a doctor or even a fan out of bed, so we decided to grab a few hours shuteye in the car.

6AM, and after some breakfast, Julie was clamouring to meet the Doc. We located his place on Macdriver St., but he was out at his country house which we found after a half hours search.

The Doc was not as affable as might be expected, due to being aroused at 7AM, and also because he was nursing a heavy cold, and three storks were calculated to arrive in that vicinity in the next 24 hours. However, after a bit of fresh air showing us his flower garden he warmed up considerably. Next, we looked over his collection, which is one of the best in fandom.

He possesses that rarity of rarities, a complete set of Weird Tales, and is looking only a few isolated copies to make complete sets of all the scientific fiction magazines. He also has a book collection bigger than Jack Bell's, which is somewhere up in the 15 hundreds.

Dr. Barrett is one of those all-embracing collectors, avidly gathering in anything that is even faintly tinged with stf or fantasy. This includes borderline stuff like Doc Savage, Operator 5, O'Leary's War Birds, etc. He even started in on the comic books when they first appeared, but when their numbers rose over threescore he had to admit he had finally met his Waterloo. Something of the sort must have also happened to his fanzine collecting as I believe he has stopped now, although he was getting them all when we were there. He also has quite a few volumes on erotica and allied subjects that would probably make Shroyer swoon with delight. I perused a couple and found them highly interesting.

We spent a couple of hours looking over the Doc's stuff and putting over a couple of deals, (Madle traded an ancient Thrill Book for something, Unger made a sale of some rare books, and when I commentated on Gibbon's Red Napoleon which I had read, the doctor presented it to me and I promised to send him a stack of Operator 5 which I had bought from the stands in 1935 and never even glanced through.)

Then we were outside in the warm morning sun, jabbering away at a great clip as we subconsciously realized we would soon be leaving, and wanting to squeeze in everything possible we had to talk about. All of us were coming down with heavy colds from close confinement and improper diet, so Barrett gave us some pink pills, bid us bon voyage, and the Skylark once more pushed off into the narrow seas of macadam and concrete.

Arriving in Wheeling, West Virginia, late in the afternoon, we debated the advisability of dipping into Maryland for a chat with Harry Warner Jr, and upon consulting the road map found it was even slightly shorter to Philly that way than going north through Pittsburg, and we could also avoid the big city.

Darkness caught the Skylark bravely staggering up and down the Alleghenies, but we were elated at making good time to Cumberland and winning a race with a monstrous Greyhound bus also on its way from Chi to Big Town. We had a few anxious moments when we pulled over the biggest hill where a sign read: "Three Miles To Bottom; Use Second Gear", and I said to hell with it. Down we shot, with Julie clutching the dashboard, and me hanging on to the wheel like grim death to a door post. Singleton and Madle in the rear snoozed away like babes, amidst a crazily shifting cargo of suitcases, magazines, oil cans, original paintings, and whatnot. Just when I was beginning to wonder if we would ever reach the bottom, and more immediately, if we were going to make the next curve, and if the brakes were going to burn out – along came the Greyhound right on our tail, its air brakes hissing, and headlights glaring balefully in our rear window. My sleep-starved mind likened it immediately to a great dragon whom our passage had disturbed, and it seemed like it was about to climb up and lie down on our spare tire.

Thinking that the bottom would be along any time now, and we could climb away from the menace. I edged the Skylark along a little faster – 50, 55, 60 – bounced around a hairpin turn, the dragon was cropping up again – 60, 65 – up and over a "Thank you ma'am", and we almost took off. . .roller coasters are tame. . .the dragon's glaring on the back seat again. . .65, 70. . .at Last! . .another mountain! We rocketed down the last grade with the dragon hissing close behind. The speedometer showed its limit 75, I heard a "ping!", it dropped back to zero, and we hurtled upward, gravity pushing us back in our seats. The dragon vanished from the mirror, and I turned to the business of keeping up headway as long as possible before the shift into second gear.

Pulling into Cumberland, the consensus was optimistic that we would make Hagerstown before midnight, and refused to heed Earl's suggestion to phone ahead so Harry would know we were coming. But we reckoned



without fifty miles of torn up road and bigger and better mountains. And then a bare piece of wiring necessitated a fidgeting wait while an indifferent, lackadaisical garage man fixed a huge truck tire. I could cheerfully have stuffed him under the hood when he finally got around to peering half-heartedly into the Skylark's innards. With dependable lights again we pushed on, but it was midnight and some sixty miles yet remained to Hagerstown.

We roared in from the west, as the mountains became smaller and smaller, snarling through the quiet, clean, moonwashed, 2AM streets of Spaceways' home port, until we sighted a splash of light from an all-night restaurant.

Singleton and Madle awoke, and we all trooped in for coffee or milk and sinkers. Earl phoned the Warner residence and raised Harry's mother, who was evidently not taken with the idea of traveling fans at that ungodly hour, and told us that Harry was ill and she deemed it not advisable to awaken and excite him, but would we come around in the morning? I don't know what Earl told her but the next thing I remember, I was sitting on a bench in a hotel lobby while the boys peppered me with demands for a decision on whether we were to push on or wait and see Harry in the morning.

I was so tired that I couldn't even open my mouth to say yes or no. I just sat there and looked stupid. Finally I yawned, slumped over on the hard bench, and immediately went to sleep. But such bliss was not for me. The boys finally shook some semblance of awareness into me and I finally guessed we'd better go along since Julie and I both had to be back to work the following day. But I refused to drive any more, crawled into the back seat, made a nest in the suitcases, and went out like a light. Earl took over the wheel and the Skylark once more shuddered into movement.

After the first two or three dead hours I slept but fitfully as Singleton had devised a new game of naming all the stories of certain sf authors, each having a turn naming a story until someone was stuck. Interspersed with the game was a loud argument on who knew their sf better, collectors or fans. Bob and Earl were badgering Julie about the worthlessness of collectors and dealers in general, and Unger in particular, until that worthy would become excited and answer back. This went on all night, and exhausted as I was I could not repress a faint grin, as, when I wakened from time to time from a particularly sharp bump or shifting suitcase, the argument seemed to be waxing hotter and heavier than the last time.

Dawn, and the argument petered out with the last star while we stopped for gas and a stretch. Madle and I dozed the rest of the way into Philly, and Bob finally dozed good and hard, with the result that we could get practically no directions from him as to how to reach his house. After going about five miles in the wrong direction we asked a cop and then woke Bob up and gave him hell.

At a traffic light Earl became slightly woozy after driving all night, and, being under the impression the light had changed to green after standing still about a minute, he started up regardless of the rest of the traffic and ran full tilt into the rear end of a Model A. Fortunately both cars were over ten years old, and therefore not prone to having their fenders curl up and drop off at the slightest provocation. So there was no damage to worry about.

Finally, we arrived at 333 Belgrade, just another door in a wall, (I should think Philadelphians would be scared to leave their dwellings if it weren't for numbers, for they would surely never find their way back again), where a bunch of unshaven tramps were cordially taken in, allowed to clean up, and fed a heavenly breakfast of ham and eggs, and plenty of them, by the kindly Mrs Madle. It was deeply appreciated. Not everyone would be such generous hosts to complete strangers.

After completing an inspection of Bob's collection and advance pages of Fantascience Digest (incidentally, the last one to appear) we climbed back into the now gray-with-travel Skylark, and headed northward.

The voyage to Jersey City where we dropped Julie was uneventful, except that Earl thought he had spotted the Futurians' car, but that was very doubtful as they probably came home via route 6 while we were on route 1. Julie invited for a big feed at his house, but much to our regret we had to push on in order to get home for a

sleep.

After a prolonged, gabby goodbye, Earl and I tried to locate the Pulaski Skyway once more but we were unsuccessful, and beat our way up the western side of the Hudson on ordinary macadam streets.

We crossed the wondrous Washington Bridge, and then, on the Merritt Parkway, we bowled along at a good clip, passing through New Haven at 5PM. Here we argued on whether to visit La Kuslan or not, but decided in favor of getting home to a good sleep, and besides, our appearance was not highly presentable.

The Connecticut hills, which I had previously thought pretty good size, seemed as nothing after the Alleghenies and Skaneateles. We zipped over them with the greatest of ease, making Providence shortly after dark. Then the last leg of the journey to Cambridge which almost ended in disaster.

The closer to home we got the faster I drove, and coming down a good sized hill I failed to notice a red light on an intersection just halfway down. Neither did a '40 Chevvy coming from the right. Both of us were doing a good 50 at least and saw the other at the last moment and slammed on our brakes. Fortunately both sets were in good shape, and we screeched to a nose-to-nose stop, separated by a scant two feet.

Henry Peter Earl Singleton was so tired and dragged out when we got to the door of the MIT Grad House that he merely stumbled and mumbled his way out of the car, gathered his possessions and fled for Apt. 505 with hardly a word.

After the distance we had covered it seemed as though I had no sooner taken a deep breath and propped my eyes open once more, than I had accomplished the thirty-mile jaunt to Bryantville.

Original paintings, suitcase and everything were forgotten as I fell upstairs, somehow got my clothes off, and slid into bed where I died for twelve hours. The Skylark had come home!

Since this has been written the inevitable has happened. With the Denvention in mind a snappy, black-with-red-wheels V8 has come into my possession, and the Skylark has departed for jalopy heaven, where all drivers are at least 60 years old, never go over 25 MPH, and religiously change oil, grease, and polish their charges at the proper times.

But she went out with her boots on. The car came from the junkyard and hauled my father's Oldsmobile away, and returned for the bodacious Dodge. And glory of glories! – after entering the yard the tow car refused to budge. So the chain was hooked to the Skylark's rear and off she went with windshield wiper up and radiator cap held high, towing the tow-car! A more fitting end I could not have imagined. Well done good and faithful servant!



# The Log of the FooFoo Special or The Fantasy Boys Out West

I could never feel the same about an automobile as I did about The Skylark of Woo-Woo, so I cannot dedicate this article to its successor. The Foo-Foo Special is just another car.

Instead, this article is dedicated to one of my companions on the Denver expedition. A swell guy; one that I am proud to know.

Altho the hardships we endured were entirely new to him he went thru it all uncomplainingly and with good humor. The easiest guy to get along with that I ever met, but never a yes-man in any sense of the word. A wicked hand with the roadmap, his aid was invaluable in getting thru large cities with a minimum of effort and lost time.

And so I deem it only fitting and proper that I dedicate this account of our Denveride:

To Milty

.....

June 29th -- Up betimes, and in my haste did shake hands with my mother, pat my father on the back, and kiss the cat goodbye.

Then I did start the engine of our noble craft and dashed to the Towne of Whitman for first passenger John Bell.

Because of recently installed new Bergenholmes we could not attain a speed of more than 40 mph without endangering the motor.

New York was reached without incident, and we circled around Riverside Drive and environs for 15 minutes before locating L. S. de Camp's address.

We were cordially welcomed in and had the pleasure of meeting Mr Isaac "Nightfall" Asimov, better known in the fan underworld as I, Asimov. It was most difficult to break away after an hour or so of typical de Camp conversation. We were initiated into many of the mysteries of fonetix, naval equipment and tactics, and yhos became even more of an admirer of his host when LS presented him with two steins of his favorite brew. In fact, we were just getting warmed up when Time decided we had better leave for Futurian Embassy and then Philly.

Outside of de Camp's we had been unable to find a parking space other than a 90 degree hill and all the gas had drained back from the carburetor. No start. Widner hunted a garage, stood around waiting for someone to appear, and was mistaken for the attendant by five other customers who wanted their cars out, and snappy too. Working in a service station for a year must have given him a certain look. He politely told them to go to Hell, and snappy too.

With Unger aboard conversation assumed a machine-gun quality, started by Julie and adopted in self-defense by the other two. So we ran off our route for three or four miles into the wilds of Moskoville.

We arrived in Philly just in time to witness Bob Madle and Johnny Baltadonis finish off a game of darts and a large pitcher of beer. Several more pitchers were obtained and a bull session ensued, lasting until 1AM.

Yr correspondent spent a restless night pushing Unger back to his side of the bed (never sleep with a married

man), listening to milkmen's horses (noisy beasts), and a rousing family brawl a few doors away, complete with breaking windows (no extra charge).

June 30th — Up betimes, and did reach Washington by 11:30AM. I sneaked up on Milty Rothman (sitting on his front porch, diligently scrutinizing roadmaps) and fondly imagined I scared him most to death by pinching his ankle and making mit de bow-wow. At least he jumped.

After a short period of befuddlement we headed for the last known habitation of zombie Singleton, and found that he had moved to the other side of the town. The first house had a big sign in front of it with red letters, proclaiming: "EARL SINGLETON SLEPT HERE". We decided the place to which he had moved was too much out of our way, and headed for Hagerstown.

On the way we dropped in on del Rey and Speer. It was incredibly hot. We asked Speer for a drop of mortal beer. No got. We did get a lecture on the evils of intemperance. So we went for a soft drink, and the sly Speer led us back towards the city for at least 50 miles before coming to his favorite soda joint. Juffus decided to go on a bender to celebrate our arrival. He disgustingly swizzled two grape sodas and went around hiccuping and leering at pretty (and otherwise) women.

But that was not the greatest of his sins. The shameless hypocrite had gone to church when he should have met us at Milty's, and what's worse he stayed for the second show. Finally he got around to leading us out of town in the Spirit of FooFoo, pausing only to recite the Constitution in sign language at every intersection. As we reached the main route he bestowed upon us the blessing of FooFoo, and we did precede with lightened hearts, knowing we could not fail.

At the Warner domicile there was much talk whilst we (Harry) finished mimeographing our (Widner) Denvention publication, consisting of E.E. Smith's Chicon speech. As soon as the ice cream and cake were passed out we scrambled. Seriously tho, we enjoyed meeting Harry's folks. They seemed genuinely interested in fans and fandom, which is a rather rare case where fans' relatives are concerned.

It was dark and raining when we headed west again. As we went along it rained harder while we struggled to get the windshield closed. No close. So we stuffed three tons of kleenex in the crack that was left, and everybody was happy except Bell who had to blow his nose on the oil rag.

We holed up just short of Uniontown, Penna. There we gratefully cleaned up and after taking a shower I posed for Milty and John a la Gypsy Rose Lee to suit the finest of aesthetic tastes.

June 31st — On to Uniontown in the morn, and did discover a leaky water pump and weak fan belt. Did replace same with new ones, and also changed oil and had our vehicle greased, which made the kitty mew piteously.

At Brownsville we did stop so Milty could buy himself a cushion. Widner and Bell did go along to help in the selection and lend moral support. (Oh, the hell with this Pepystuff!) Julius Unger (no "did") asked Widner to purchase socks for him. Whereupon, in order to teach the lazy galoot a lesson, we listened for the loudest pair in town, then walked to the store and bought them. They were a gorgeous xanthous hue intermingled with lapis-lazuli and a delicate touch of garnet and emerald.

We sweated and coked our way to Zanesville, Ohio, with much filling of the overheated radiator. There we had it drained and flushed while we invaded a local grocery for cold provisions so that we wouldn't have to stop again until supper. We emerged eating watermelon and absorbing more cokes, and promptly emitting them from our pores.

As we rolled along towards Columbus Milty received one of his biggest shocks. Everybody had finished eating but Widner wanted another sandwich. Milty made him one. Widner wanted mustard. Milty complained that the device for transferring mustard from bottle to sandwich had become not. Widner was not to be denied. "Ya got fingers, ainch?" he queried bluntly.



"Yes," said Milty, unable to believe the implied connection.

Widner insisted he have mustard despite an eloquent address from Milty on the evils of consuming said condiment. Milty looked at the mustard and then at the sandwich, trying desperately to figure some way out.

It wasn't so much getting his hands dirty as it was violating all rules and regulations of table manners. It was completely outside his sphere of ethics. So anti-Postish as to be almost revolting.

Finally he sighed, dipped just one finger into the mustard, sloshed some on the ham, and presented it to Widner, who gobbled it avidly.

Milty said it was a far, far worse thing than he had ever done. . .

The 96 heat abated as we crossed into Indiana with the setting sun and a rip-roaring game of stinky-pinky with no holds barred. In Richmond I sent an apologetic telegram to Rocklynne for not coming when we had planned, and promising to see the Cinci gang on the way home.

Most of the night was spent on the desolate routes trying to make up for lost time by not sleeping. We got beautifully turned around near West Lafayette, or what some jerk said was West Lafayette. At one point, with detours pointing in all directions, we actually had to get out and get our bearings by the stars. If it had been cloudy we would probably still be wandering around in South Overshoe somewhere. After traveling in a straight line for some time we came to – Lafayette! Keeping west we came to West Lafayette! Horrors! "All Roads. . ." Continuing, we came to the state border and breathed a sigh of relief. The spell was broken. The only way we could figure it out was that WL must've been U-shaped, extending on both sides of Lafayette proper, or else the goon who directed us didn't know his elbow from a hole in the ground.

July 1st – Dawn found us gazing awestruck at a peculiar cloud formation over the map-flat surface of Illinois. The cloud, which had been rolled up into the shape of a gigantic tube extending from horizon to horizon, made us feel like we were in the future, standing beneath the pneumatic Chi-New Orleans transportation tube, or as Milty and Jack suggested, Skylark III itself.

At 7:30AM we arrived in Tuckertown, and with no trouble at all found the abode of the sly Celestial, and were welcomed in royally, altho Widner spoiled the effect by crawling in on his hands and knees. Everybody knew everybody else but were all re-introduced by their newly acquired (en route) nicknames – "Moneybags" Unger, "Pretty Boy" Madle, "Sourpuss" Bell, "Tree Toad" Rothman, and "The Thing" Widner.

While Widner slept Pretty Boy and Tree Toad registered for the draft, and PB had his picture in the paper with his head chopped off, and his name mentioned with a plug for the Denvention.

Tucker has told the story of our visit so we push on (see Tucker's *Visiting Firemen Department*).

Sunset found us looking contemptuously at Old Man River himself. It was the first time any of us had seen the Mississippi, and we were disappointed until we remembered that we couldn't expect it to be much that far north.

We pierced the heart of Iowa – Centerville, the home town of Henry Aldrich – before we decided to bivouac. Madle and I thot we would try it in the car while the others used a hotel. Bob may have done all right in the rear, but you try sleeping on two bucket seats like I did, and I'll guarantee you seventeen new kinks in your orbit by morning.

July 2nd – Iowa presented a rather pleasing daytime aspect. One in particular noticed the absence of billboards, and the presence of numerous hollyhocks covering culvert posts, or any other bit of roadside construction that might be deemed unattractive and small enough to hide thusly.

This day was the most auspicious of the trip as far as covering distance is concerned. We made 550 miles in spite of numerous stops to fill the beleaguered radiator. If we went over fifty the thermometer hurriedly went upstairs. We blamed it on the increasing altitude (about five feet per mile) which wasn't observable, the heat of the day, clogged radiator, and whatnot. But none of these seemed like a big enough reason for the extraordinary heat increase over a certain speed. Having worked in a service station, and knowing a little about cars, I should have tumbled, but didn't.

We steamed into Deebeethompstontown (alias Lincoln Nebraska) about time for lunch. The Sage of Salt Creek had already left for Denver, and we tried to locate a more obscure fan, Dale Wissert, whom Don had mentioned to me, but no soap. He was at the movies.

A lively altercation was held, between Pretty Boy and myself on one side and the rest of the party on the other, over whether we should eat in a likely looking beeparlor or elsewhere. PB and I finally went in the beep joint and had ourselves a fairly decent fried chicken dinner and were served by an extremely friendly waitress who looked something like Ginger Rogers, so we called her Ginger. We became so engrossed in throwing the bull with said waitress that we were about half an hour late when we returned to the car, and so found three pairs of disapproving eyebrows regarding us. We felt smugly Bacchanalian.

Perhaps an explanation of this "beep" business is due to the uninformed. In many of the western cities and towns a rather silly law has been passed forbidding any establishment to advertise the sale of any alcoholic beverages. Some places get around it by saying "We sell it but can't say so", or "You want it? We have it", but most of them are considerably less imaginative (and also thrifty, not wishing to buy expensive neon or signs or to pay for altering the old ones) so merely black out the tail of the "R" in "BEER", thus making it "BEEP". These signs amused us no end thruout the trip, and we called it "beep" exclusively from the first sign on.

In case anybody should ride up in a golden space ship and ask you, Nebraska is fah-lat! It is so flat that it is the nearest thing to two dimensions that science can obtain. Driving across it – the mostest thing it ain't nothin' else but, is boring. Two incidents, besides the numberless stops for water, were all that marked our passage.

First was the discovery and a picture of what is undoubtedly the smallest place in the USA in point of population. Out there they have signs announcing the name of each town and the population. We passed many of them with only 100 or so, and a couple down in the two figure class. The record, I think, was something like 73 when we came to the sign indicating that here was Red Willow.

I stopped the car and we all gaped. Then Bell took a picture of it with the rest of us behind it. There is undeniable proof. Reads the sign: "Red Willow, pop. 9". Yes, I said nine, N-I-N-E. There was a farmhouse way off in the distance, and we assumed that that was where the nine people were. Maybe it meant nine prairie, I dunno.

The other incident was running into a ring-tail, double-barreled, rootin' tootin' high-falutin', whamzowie of a western thunderstorm. We ran into it head-on and we thru it in ten minutes or so, but while it lasted – wow!

The rain came down as if somebody had ripped a hole in the bottom of Lake Superior and held it over us. The lightning jabbed itself into the ground like gigantic white-hot forks being stuck into beefsteak, and less than a second later thunder would come with a long, drawn-out "c-r-r-r-ackkk!" that made me think of a second Grand Canyon being formed in one swell foop. If an ordinary thunderstorm is Wagnerian, that one was positively Stravinskyan!

Soon after, our tires chuckled liquidly on the wet streets of Benkleman, not far from the Kansas border. The sidewalks were neatly rolled up, and carefully stacked by the fire house, but we finally persuaded a fifteenth rate, one-arm joint to drag some cold cuts and potato salad from the refrigerator. The nearest place of any size was in Colorado, so we decided to bed down in Benkleman's only hotel.

Milty and I slept together, and the railroad tracks ran almost underneath our window. This we thot no harm,



since what would be coming thru that sleepy little town at that hour? How wrong we were! Around 3AM a streamliner came thru doing about 100 per.

About three miles away the thing started blowing an impossibly loud electric blast horn, and from there it got louder and louder. An ordinary locomotive steam whistle is a nice, quiet, genteel affair in comparison. As it passed by our window with a roar and a rattle, and a bawling like a million stampeding cattle, Milty and I quivered in terror and rose two feet in the air, still in our reclining positions, bedsheets and all. If we could only repeat this remarkable feat of levitation we could clean up in the entertainment field. We were certain that the monster was going to climb in the window and go to bed with us.

July 3rd – Off early we came within one mile of the Kansas border, so we took a short detour to add one more state to our list.

The morning dragged along with the endless flatness. I know it's foolish, but I sort of expected that when we crossed the border of Colorado we would immediately tilt up at a 45 degree angle, and proceed thru snowcapped peaks to Denver. So when the flatness merely continued I was kinda disappointed. Milty must have had the same thots for he started looking on the map for the first mountain we should come to.

Fremont Butte, he said, off to our right. We looked and looked and after a while we saw it. Pooey! Just a little pile of weathered sandstone or something. Very unimpressive.

Then early in the afternoon we spotted them. At first we took no notice, mistaking them for low flying cloud banks. Then Milty cried "Mountains!" We saw. Oh. Ah. Oh. Ah. For several miles we gaped with our mouths open as we drew nearer and nearer to that incredible escarpment. Then facetious remarks set in to cover up our feelings of smallness.

An hour later we were in Denver and the radiator was in bad shape. It boiled almost constantly, fresh water or none. We tried to get it fixed in a couple of places that were all too busy and couldn't do anything over the holiday. So we said the hell with it and went to the Shirley-Savoy. I later found a place that said they would fix it and left it there. . .

As did my previous article, this sequel shall not deal with the convention itself, since plenty has been written about it already, and plenty more is to come.

July 7th – We packed and signed out, and then found that plutocrat Bell was again returning east via the stratosphere. Well, that gives us a little more room, thot I, but I reckoned without the personality of Pretty Boy Madle. As soon as found out there was an empty place he immediately spoke up for his bosom buddy of the convention, previously unknown Rusty Barron. No one had any objection so we said good-bye and so long and C U N L A to all the fans assembled in the lobby, picked up Rusty, and took off for the Rockies.

But heat-em-up trouble was not yet over. Once again we were in the red on the thermometer and I thot it was the other water pump gone glooey. After much trouble, and much more heat, we got up in the altitudes where it was so cool that we didn't heat up even tho we lost a lot of water.

The awesomeness and grandeur of the Rocky Mountains has been described many times and many times better than I could do it. I refer you to travel folders etc. I only wish to say that I marveled and marveled, and would have deemed the whole trip worth while just for them, even if there were no convention.

Oddly enough no one had popping ears, bloody noses, or even difficulty in breathing, as described by 4e in his account of a mountain sojourn. Of course violent exertion was out of the question, as we soon learned, and Pretty Boy seemed even dopier than usual. When we glimpsed our first patch of snow nothing would do but that we must get out and race to it for a snowball fight.

Rusty, Milty, and I were the hardy souls who didn't have enough energy to make a snowball after we got there.

We concluded that 100 yards full speed up the side of a mountain at ten thousand feet was a job best left to John Carter. We did have a half-hearted snowfight later on at Berthoud pass.

Time and space seemed to pass swiftly although scarcely noticed. In what seemed like no time at all we were swooping down a cloudy trail, then thru an impressively deep, winding, narrow gorge, finally to shoot out onto the plains once more an hour or so before sunset. Good time was made, and the mountains were lost to sight before dark.

We had invitations from Rocklynne and Chauvenet to stop in Ohio and Virginia respectively, so we had to make time to take in Virginia and still get back on time for work. We decided to get a night's sleep in Ft. Morgan, and then really go to town, or thru towns.

July 8th – We did. In spite of 100 degree in the shade and no shade, and filling the radiator every 10 or 15 miles, we made the outskirts of Lincoln by dusk. I was so disgusted I was ready to bite anybody who even so much as said "Boo". In addition to all this, something went wrong with the gas gauge, and we pulled in to fill up again to check on it.

The attendant was a garrulous old geezer, and about three sheets in the wind to boot. He paid no attention when I told him it might need only a couple. The tank gurgled a warning, but he stood with his eyes glued in seeming fascination on the dial of the pump, swaying slightly. The gas started to run over. "Hold it!" I yelled. The dope pointed affably to the dial and said, "Got to make an even two gallons." I blew up.

"Two gallons be damned!" I roared in a voice that was heard over in Missouri. From there I made a detailed, decidedly uncomplimentary analysis of his immediate and remote ancestry, with a full character and personality chart thrown in. I was hoping he'd make a pass at me so I could have the pleasure of stuffing him in the water bucket.

I was still mumbling in my beard – yes, I actually raised a neat, black, Pharaoh-type goatee on the trip – when we reached the center of Lincoln. The fact that the radiator was so hot that no amount of water did any good – it just boiled away immediately – didn't improve my temper any.

I made up my mind to get it fixed once and for all, no matter what it cost. We looked up the Ford-Lincoln dealer, but the regular mechanic was off duty and his relief couldn't fix anything more complicated than an empty gas tank.

We finally went to a recommended place, and boy did we take a sticking! The goon there suggested the only thing left to do would be to steam out the radiator to the tune of three dollars and fifty cents. We couldn't think of any way to get out of it so we said (gulp) okay and sauntered off to find sleeping quarters.

After considering how the steam job and a night's rest was going to maltreat the feline, we shamelessly decided that the best idea was to try to mooch a flop from the genial Thompson. I was the goat who had to do the calling up and hinting around. However Deeby was wonderfully hospitable, scratching around and somehow finding five bunks for us. We owe a real debt of gratitude to the Sage-Basilisk.

But after explicit directions over the phone, I proceeded to get the boys tangled up in the maze of non-continuous U Street and we picked 'em up and laid 'em down for a weary two miles before we arrived.

July 9th – In the morning we accompanied Deeby to his job at the municipal recreation center. We looked longingly at the cool, green swimming pool with temperature gaining a degree a minute, and even thought of taking a dip, but time would not permit.

Twenty-five miles later the thermometer was again bulging at the top and hollering for mercy. The cursing that came forth at this phenomenon must have caused Mr. Steamjob's ears to break out in large and painful blisters away back in Lincoln. I heartily hope they did. In fact I hope they dropped off altogether!



So to a Ford dealer in Nebraska City we went. He took one look in the radiator and we finally found out the real cause of all our troubles. Hallelujah! It was merely a busted head gasket. But when he got the cylinder head off – oi veh! – to a dog it shouldn't happen, even a brown one, with black spots yet. So much heating had gone before that the head was cracked and had to be replaced. Total bill – \$7.50. Ooooh, ouch! This was just about the kitty's last meow, but at least the car was fixed okay and we really began to roll.

Since we were going to Cinci, we turned south thru St. Joe, Mo., and crossed the upper part of that state instead of Iowa. Incidentally, we wished we had come that way on the outward trip, for gas is cheaper there than anywhere except Washington, D.C. Just after dark we crossed the Mississippi at Mark Twain's boyhood home, Hannibal.

As we struck into the wilds of Illinois, another rip-snorter of an electrical disturbance loomed up ahead of us, but it was traveling in our direction at practically the same speed, and we didn't catch it until after we had passed thru Shroyer's home town of Decatur. But then – goshwowboyoboy, did we catch it! It was just as bad as the previous one mentioned, and it was miles greater in extent.

I had been driving continuously for about eighteen hours and my eyes felt like two burned holes in a blanket. And when the rain blurred the windshield in driving sheets, and the lightning seemed to come from ever point of the compass, lighting everything in single tremendous flares, as if a gigantic welding torch was being turned on and off just above the roof of the car – my tortured optics rebelled. Tears flooded down my face and my lids absolutely refused to stay open more than a few seconds at a time. So I was forced to pull off the road and quit. After dozing a quarter of an hour I tried again, but when we caught up with the storm once more it was no use. The others awakened at the second stop and after some consultation I moved over and Rusty took over the wheel. After a few moments, satisfied that he was a competent driver, I went out like a light and did not waken until the gray of early morning showed us to be in Indianapolis.

July 10th – When we stopped for gas we had a bad turn. The tank appeared to be leaking – dribbling away on the ground at a great rate from between one of the seams.

We were completely baffled at this turn of events. The only thing we could do was to drive on a bit and repeat observations. This we did, consuming a bit of breakfast meanwhile. Said breakfast consisted of milk or coffee and a doughnut, for we were all harboring our practically non-existent resources.

When we finished we again inspected the gas tank and everything seemed all X. We concluded that the attendant must have overflowed the tank a trifle, and some gas had evidently dribbled down the outside of the fill pipe to the tank, collected, and dripped off a small projection. So – only 100 miles to Cincinnati! It took us about three hours to get there and about an hour to find Tarr's place – he wasn't home – then Ross Rocklynne's.

Ross was the only one home and he welcomed us in royally – and at last we had a chance to compare the much discussed resemblance between him and Rusty. For a while we sat around looking stupid from fatigue as Ross plied us with questions about the Denvention and received unintelligible replies filtered thru iced tea and bananas, which was all that happened to be in the larder.

Seeing how bedraggled we were Ross suggested we take a bath sort of to revive ourselves before we went to see Charlie Tanner. One by one we trooped into the Rocklynne bathroom and duly deposited five rings in the tub. That helped a bit, but we were still tired and hungry and asked for the nearest good restaurant, but Ross insisted we have supper there when the rest of the family came home. You see, Ross is an author, and the others work for a living.

Off we went, and after what seemed to be interminable twistings and turnings, we finally emerged from a woody hillside to arrive at the hospital where "Tunithak" is giving the old TB bug a terrific beating. He was pickled tink to see us and got a great kick out of the story of our trip and the Denvention.

In the middle of all the hilarity and Chicon reminiscences the hospital smell, lack of food, etc, became too much for Milty, and he slid down the side of the wall like an old dishrag. I had never seen a faint before and I was afraid for a moment that only four fans were going to leave Cincinnati. I had visions of a shallow grave and a rude cross, carved: "Here lies Milty, scientifiction's first martyr. Perished bravely of starvation on the Widner Expeditionary Force of '41." To steal a phrase from Schmarje: "Gad!"

But Ross grabbed a passing nurse, who shoved some smelly salts under the Tree Toad's beezers, and he was okay in a few minutes.

All too soon Charlie's stern-faced nurse came and forcibly ejected us, and back we went to the Rocklynne roost. By that time his brother, sister and mother were home and we were introduced all around. Once more we tried to leave, but Ross told us if we didn't stay for supper we could never darken his bathtub again. That quip stayed us and shortly the feed bag was put on. Our last good meal had been somewhere in Missouri, more than twenty-four hours ago, but we still couldn't make away with the bounty that was placed before us; one of those picnic suppers that make a full-fledged banquet look like small potatoes. A dozen different kinds of cold cuts, potato salad, lettuce, tomatoes, gallons of iced tea, varieties of cake and cookies – I can't remember half of it, but there was such a profusion of good things to eat that we half-starved galoots didn't know where to begin.

According to Mrs. Swisher, I am the eatingest fan there is, and I tried to get around just a little of everything, but had to give it up with several species of comestibles still unsampled, and my belt unloosed to the last notch.

Things were just getting cleaned up, and Milty and Clyde (Ross' big brother) were taking turns on the piano when the CSFL started to arrive. First there was Director Dale Tarr, the Kay Benton, and after that I lost track, but about five or six more came in, including a couple of fellows from across the river in Kentucky, making seven states represented at the gathering, including Washington, D.C. We gabbed and gabbed and every once in a while our little band would gather near the door and make a rush for it, but we were always grabbed and hauled back to gab some more. After playing cat-and-mouse with us for hours, we were finally allowed to get back in the car after nightfall, and after another half-hour of parting quips and instructions on how not to lose our way, we departed and promptly became lost.

We found our route shortly tho, and spent some time discussing the marvelousness of fan hospitality. It's really unbelievable.

We left about midnite, crossing the river into West Virginia, where we promptly paid exorbitant prices for gas. Then we ran into incredibly long stretches of torn-up highway and a true confession period set in as we ambled along about 25. Milty ended it by shocking us.

July 11th – Dawn found us in the midst of the mountains. Morning mist obscured everything and it was particularly incongruous to be traveling thru the wildest country we had yet seen, and then suddenly came upon a gigantic steel mill roaring away full blast, there in the midst of the wilderness.

As the sun burned the mist away, the night chill that had kept me awake passed, and I became woozier and woozier, finally surrendering the wheel to Moneybags and climbing into the back seat, where I immediately became wide awake and wrestled with Bob and Rusty for a half-hour.

We pulled into Tallwood Plantation late in the afternoon and Russell popped out of the shrubbery with two beautiful collies to greet us.

With the exception of Milty, who had been there before, we all gawked about with our mouths open and our bare faces hanging out, taking in our first view of a really truly southern plantation "just like you see in the movies".



We were placed in the "cottage", which turned out to be a young mansion of eight or ten enormous rooms, where we cleaned up, and then went to the "house".

Egad. We saw only the ground floor, but that was almost enough in which to get lost. We played ping-pong on the back veranda until supper was ready. To my chagrin Russell beat me three out of four, but I had a lack-of-practice alibi to fall back on, which leaves me still convinced I am the better player in the long run. My beard was universally censured altho everybody was too polite to say anything. I can't understand it. It was such a nice beard. . .

Supper. Yum. Baked Virginia ham, yams, and home grown, extra succulent corn-on-the-cob. Mah mouf air dribblin' lak a houn' dawg roun' a sassenger mill, right now, just thinkin' about it.

More p-p after supper with Nancy Chauvenet and I teaming up against Russ and Milty, whilst and Bob strained their alleged brains over a game of chess. Moneybags snoozed. Then a gabfest in Russ' room and a look-see at his collection, then off to bed early in the "cottage".

July 12th – We were up at nine, had a scrumptious breakfast, and after a pix taking session, bid good-bye to Russ and Nancy, who were heading for Ventnor City, New Jersey that afternoon, where Russ intended to take in a chess tournament. He had just won the championship of the southern states, a feat of which he is justly proud.

When we went to load up our weary metal steed once more great was our surprise to find it all dusted and cleaned out, looking as chipper as the day we started. This southern hospitality is all the legends say of it and more.

We made Washington around three o'clock, and had a chance to see more of the sights than when we had come thru before. No stop were made but we rubbered at the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Capitol Building, and beautiful edifices, as Milty became tourist guide and explained all satisfactorily.

A few hours later Philly crept up and gradually surrounded us like a colossal, dirty amoeba, and we dropped Milty at his parents' home. After raiding the Rothman ice box, we went to the Madle abode for a repeat performance. Bob proudly displayed a dozen pieces of mail, accumulated during his absence, and was roundly jeered as a has-been by Julie and me, who knew we would have a small mountain to cope with when we returned. Bob's parents wanted us to stay but we decided to push on. Rusty was to stay permanently and find a job in Philly.

The FooFoo Special seemed strangely light and peppy with the back seat empty and half the luggage gone. We zipped over the ninety miles between Philly and New York in exactly two hours and reached Brooklyn a half-hour later. Julie woke up his wife and he and I had a snack before I was bedded down on the living room couch and they retired.

July 13th – In spite of my request to get me up early they let me sleep until ten, for which I was duly grateful. After careful instruction on how to solve the labyrinth of Brooklyn I was on my way, and for a wonder found my way to the Merritt parkway without a hitch.

About noontime I stopped at a filling station and phoned Trudy Kuslan that I would shortly drop in on her, and not to be startled at my appearance. Brother Lou was there, with whom I exchanged greetings, and he decided to put off his departure for college until I arrived.

A half-hour later I was in West Haven, and when Trudy saw me she let out a squawk of anguish and nearly swooned in spite of my warning. Lou stayed long enough to persuade her to speak to me, and then was off in the Empress of FooFoo.

She finally got use to the chin whiskers, and we gabbed all afternoon and evening in between listening to

Gilbert & Sullivan (not Joe & Walt) (ik!) and classical (ah!) recordings. The Kuslans are greatly attached to the music and lyrics of G & S and all visitors are tied in their chairs and forced to listen to whole performances of The Mikado, H.M.S. Pinafore, and whatnot. I agreed to listen peaceably, and so was not confined.

I left about eleven and reached home at dawn. At two in the afternoon I was dragged out of the hay bodily, and gently persuaded by mother, with the aid of an iron frying pan, to shave off "that horrible looking spinach", and pointed in the general direction of Proctor & Gamble's laboratory.

[illegible]



## The Cruise of the FooFoo Special Jr

The saddest words of tongue or pen are these: "I might've thumbed."

On Fri morn, the 3rd of July, I finished working the "graveyard shift" from midnight to 8AM. After a number of last minute preparations, I finally set out at 10:20AM, with the mileage on the shiny new speedometer of my Raleigh three-speed bicycle reading 83.9.

"Junior", the former property of one Louis Russell Chauvenet, behaved well, and I averaged 15 mph without effort in spite of working (well, staying awake then) all the previous nite.

When I hit US #1 the relation of road surface to pedaling effort immediately became apparent. I had been satisfied with my progress on macadam and crushed rock, but when the wheels touched the smooth concrete I seemed to shoot ahead as if I had been given a tangible push. I sailed along about 20 mph for a few miles until the novelty wore off, then settled back to a little over 15. I also tried to catch a lumbering truck a quarter of a mile ahead as I entered the main road, but a sustained spurt of 25 and slightly better failed to do it, so I gave up that idea.

Further on, the driver stopped for lunch and started again just after I passed. A steep hill loomed ahead, and I hurried a bit to get part way up, then loafed until the truck crawled up beside me. I grabbed the back and got myself a free lift.

At the summit I perceived there was another hill ahead, so I decided to stay with the truck. The driver started pouring it on, in order to make the next one in high, or a reasonable accurate fascimile. A slight downgrade and a long level stretch saw us making 40 per. I was enjoying myself, watching the scenery whiz by, until I happened to glance at my speedometer. Egad! I couldn't have released my grip more quickly had I discovered I was holding the southeast tentacle of an octopus.

Things started to happen. I only had one hand on the handlebars for a moment, and just then I came out from behind the shelter of the truck and the wind hit me.

I weewawed all over that road for about 15 seconds like a tank with a full crew, a nest full of hornets, and a stuck hatch, before I regained full control. 'Stoo bad none of fandom's camera fiends were there to click the expression on my face. I must have had my mouth open and my eyes buggin' out like a tromped-on toad-frog.

I made a resolution not to hitch on the back of any more trucks, and besides no more came along at propitious moments.

After much sweating up hill and down dale, but not yet really fatigued, I came to a large area of smoky haze; and upon entering same I found that it was Providence.

As I vibrated across a cobblestoned bridge I saw a tall church steeple thrusting up darkly on a hill in the distance. It looked forbidding and unnatural, and I thot it must have been the one Lovecraft wrote about in The Haunter of the Dark.

I day-dreamed a bit over the pleasure that might have been mine to find College Street and spend an hour or two in the company of "The Last Gentleman". I kicked at a mongrel yapping and snapping at my ankles and thot of what a strange world it was where Lovecrafts die and Kummings go on living - - and what is worse, writing.

Cities are a tedious bore on a bicycle, and I was glad to find RI #3 and leave the sprawling warrens behind. I was also glad to stop and rest in the suburb of Cranston to scribble a few postcards and absorb my first liquid since leaving home. I was dry. When I started to drink the lemonade went "Sssssssss!" he hissed.

Here I began to realize the enormity of my bone-headedness in taking along a Boy Scout knapsack full of ten or fifteen pounds of clothes. The straps chafed my shoulders, a slight wrinkle in the canvas busily occupied itself with trying to wear a hole in my back, and its weight pulled up the sleeves of my polo shirt, so that I got a wicked three-inch band of sunburn on my upper arms.

Shortly after I passed Zilch's garage. I had always thot that Zilch was as mythical as Milquetoast, Throttlebottom, or Pinchpenny, but it appears to be the goods. I wonder if I would have dared make inquiries if I had thot of it at the time.

As I pushed southward, not so enthusiastically now, the sun came out, and my troubles began. My rear tire had taken a severe wallop someplace and, unbeknownst to me, developed a slow leak. It probably went down to about 20 lbs, where it stayed because the hole was too small to let that low pressure thru.

When I began to walk up hills no steeper than those I had previously made in second with ease I thot I was just getting tired and became quite disgusted with myself. The hills got bigger and the tire got flatter, and I was forced to rest every five or ten miles. After 25 miles or so of this agony I finally discovered my Nemesis.

After I had pumped it up I kicked myself across the road and back for not thinking of checking the tires before. The sun was getting low and I still had 20 miles to make New London, my goal for the day. The tire started to leak faster, but now I was on my guard and managed to keep up fair pressure with the help of an occasional filling station.

Still, progress was slowed, and the last faint light had disappeared from the sky when I worked up over a hill and breathed a sigh of relief to behold the lights of New London beneath me.

NL is a dimout area, and I had a thrilling ride down an extremely steep and lengthy hill guided only by the taillight of a car in front of me and my own feeble spotlight. Roller coasters are tame in comparison, and I suppose I shouldn't have taken such a risk; but after the laboring up I had done, I hated like the devil to cut into my hard-won advantage by putting on the brakes.

I didn't realize how bushed I was until I got off and applied for a room at the YMCA. I was ready to drop, but I was also hungry and uncomfortably sweaty and dirty. I managed to summon enuf energy to go downstairs for a shower.

I think that shower will always rank high among the most pleasant memories of my lifetime. The hot water soothed both my mind and body into a blissful state of half-consciousness. I stayed under it for at least a half-hour before I could rouse myself enuf to consider the duties of soaping and scrubbing. No better nepenthe for my case could have been concocted by Maal Dweb himself.

With 50% of my strength returned, I bethot myself of food. Leaving the locker room, I spied a scale. "Hmm, betcha I lost five pounds today." I had weighed 182 the day before.

I surrendered a bas-relief of Honest Abe and watched the pointer bounce around. Gulp! I staggered downstairs muttering to myself. The pointer had indicated 172! I checked with another scale and it proved correct.

Jeepers! A pound for every ten miles! It's a good thing I wasn't going to the Pacificon via bike. At that rate, according to my carefully checked and rechecked figures, I would have disappeared completely at 1820 miles, or just this side of Dallas, Tex. . .

In the morning I was furnished with an excellent illustration of how a fantasy fictional mummy feels when revived after being dead for two or three milleniums.

On the road again I loosened up a bit, but I still knew I had been somewhere. The tire was completely flat when I started, and it soon lost the air I pumped into it. Nothing to do but fix it.



I buzzed along fairly well for a while after with my mind free (not having to worry about the tire) until I ran into a stiff southeast breeze which came in off the sound and slowed me down to a loafing 10 mph. This was annoying as I had expected to make good time on the level.

The going got tougher and tougher, and I was soon walking on all but the slightest grades. The tire was all fixed, I told myself, so it must be that the breeze and the grind itself was wearing me out. About ten miles from West haven I felt the breeze slack off as I coasted down a long hill. But still I didn't gain speed. I lackadaisically rolled along at a mere 20. It couldn't be the tire so soon again, but it was.

I pulled into a garage and inspected the casing. Yup, there was another break thru which daylight could be seen. Ho hum. . .

Wearily I alighted at 170 Washington Ave, around 1:30, having taken eight hours to cover a measly 50 miles.

But Trudy was home, and so was Lou, and the Kuslan hospitality was up to the mark. Nice cold beer was administrated to the sufferer and followed up with a good square meal.

We talked of rocket ships and women's slacks and cabbage-headed fans with wings, and all too soon it was four o'clock and I had to mount my metal steed once more.

Plenty tired was I, and the pain of that little strip of sunburn was becoming unbearable, especially when the sun shone on it. I suddenly thot of the old polo shirt I had been using for a rag, and I tore off the crummy sleeves. But how to affix them to my own sleeves? My kingdom for a safety pin! Finally I contrived the makeshift business of rolling up my pants legs and using the discarded clips to put around my arms. They grasped the raw flesh a little too tightly to suite me, but at least it was better than having it cooked some more.

One break was the light traffic due to gas rationing. Where I stopped for a drink the woman told me that last year on the Fourth of July 48,000 cars had passed thru the toll gates of the Merritt Parkway, but this year it had dwindled to a mere 8,000.

I could believe it too after the startling number of forlorn, boarded-up filling stations and roadside lunchrooms I has passed. In the open country only Howard Johnson and the Greyhound Post Houses appeared to survive; and even those looked rather futile, with less than a dozen cars in their parking lots, where before they had clustered like flies around a lump of sugar.

The road stretched ahead monotonously. I neither knew nor cared where I would spend the night, but leaned heavily on the handlebars and moved my feet mechanically, my mind in a trance-like condition. Twilight found me wavering into Norwalk, and brought me to a smart-looking YMCA building with a diner beside it, and somehow I made the effort necessary to stop.

A shower helped some, but it didn't feel like the one of the previous nite. It was sort of a trickly affair in a small closet, and I couldn't really deluge myself as before.

As the kinks worked their way out of my muscles in a grey, foggy dawn, I ruminated ruefully on the excellent quality of my hindsight, wondering how I could have been so stupid as to take that thrice-cursed knapsack along and why I hadn't stripped the bike of half the useless gadgets it sported. Oh well.

However, I did better than I had expected to and arrived at the Whitestone Bridge connecting the Bronx with Flushing about noontime. Another hour would see my journeys end. As I started to pedal down the complicated twists and turns leading to the bridge entrance I stopped in consternation.

There was a sign that read: NO TRUCKS, TRAILERS, PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLES, KIDDIE KARS, HORSES, PONIES, GOATS, LAME TURTLES, HOMELESS SNAILS, or AGED AND INFIRM BEDBUGS ALLOWED ON THIS BRIDGE.

Nuts. (Actually and literally I was not so concise or euphemistic about expressing my opinion of the bridge managers, but "nuts" will have to suffice in this account until people become more broad-minded.)

So, putting a hex on the sign which turned all the letters into Sanskrit, I disgustedly set out for Triboro Bridge, ten miles further on.

All went well until I grabbed a truck at a stoplite. The next stoplite chanced to be a pedestrian operated affair which the yap wanting to cross the street chose to operate and step off the curb when we were ten feet away. The truck stopped very well; in fact I congratulated the driver on his brakes as I picked myself up off the sidewalk and the bike from underneath the truck. My ankle is still a bit sore from where it knocked down a mailbox.

After this I made a resolution not to hang on the back of any more trucks. Besides, no more came along at the right moment.

Triboro Bridge, with a heavy headwind blowing along it, seemed to stretch out to eternity on the level and uphill side. Downhill, it was much too short. It was the same way coming back. Damned clever these New Yorkers.

Ah. Brooklyn, here I come. (It says in the script.) My map had blown away when I was when I was hanging onto the truck, and I thot I could procure another one easily. But gas stations were sparse, and all closed. I followed my nose.

Finally I blundered on one that was open. Ah, I thot, this beautiful map of New York showing me every street will solve my difficulties pronto. Besides, the attendant gave me explicit directions which I followed faithfully. Sure enuf, a few minutes later I cam out on Grand Avenue, which was where I innocently believed I wanted to go.

The only trouble was that it was Grand Ave in Queens instead of Brooklyn. On its ten mile cobblestone length I jolted out what few brains had not been fried searching for my number, until I returned to Queens Boulevard which I left an hour before. One less inhibition and I would have sat down on the curbstone and blubbered.

After this I rode along with a glassy stare, making resolutions at every intersection not to try any more short cuts. Besides, there weren't any.

I must give my aunt credit for being a woman with iron nerves. I know very well that even if he did have a bicycle and was expected, I would not have admitted the purple-faced, drooling madman that was I. I would have shrieked bloody murder and called for the squirrel squad but immediately.

Under her kindly ministrations it was only 36 hours before I was nursed back to a semblance of sanity. That is, I could feed myself, tie my shoelaces, and answer simple questions. However, it was decided that I should wait a bit longer before being trusted to the subway system, so my cousin brought me over to Manhattan in his car and gently deposited me on the doorstep of the Electrical Testing Labs.

Contrary to popular belief H.C. Koenig (pronounced KAY-nig) is not a giant, red-eyed mongoose who crouches, snarling, over a mountainous pile of lurid stf pulps, subsisting entirely on a diet of hisses. (Take your pick of the antecedents, Heck; I have a large stock.) Hiss Catcher is a blond, slender, affable guy who doesn't look that old, but must be, because he has adolescent chillun and has been reading and collecting fantasy since way back when. He has also worked at the ETL long enuf to be important enuf to be able to take half an afternoon off to talk to wandering jerks like me and show them all over the joint. If I could remember half of what he showed me and explained to me I would be rather smart.

We discussed Smith, and Weinbaum, and Jenkins, and the FAPA, and Wollheim, etc, while a thunder squall boomed about the canyon without. When the dripping sun came out I was solicitously tucked into a crosstown



bus with directions for Campbell's office that even I could understand and given a copy of THE NEW ADAM to keep me amused.

It did.

I was informed by Mr. Weinbaum that lead left out in the weather for long periods becomes slightly radioactive; in fact, the whole story more or less hinged on that alleged 'fact'. It didn't seem quite reasonable to me so I asked Campbell to check up on it.

JWC said it was just the opposite and supplied one of his delightful anecdotes to prove it. He seems to have an inexhaustible supply of information on every subject. Altho it is alleged that only one man has ever read the Encyclopedia Britannica from cover to cover, I wouldn't be surprised to find that JWC has not only also read it, but memorized it as well.

He told of the ancient cathedrals in Europe that have lead roofs which have been exposed for centuries to the elements. In the summer the lead expands, and in the winter it contracts. It is so heavy that in each case the action is downward, so that pretty soon the lead is sticking out around the edges like unfinished pie crust. This used to be trimmed off and put back on the top.

Mined lead invariably contains minute quantities of radium or other radioactive elements and so is not much used in making delicate instruments such as Geiger Counters which are extremely sensitive to anything of that nature. But the lead trimmed from the church roofs is completely 'dead'. Not a spark of anything radioactive remains. So the church officials have been selling their trimmings to the scientists for \$15 per pound and putting nice fresh, newly-mined lead back on top at \$8 per pound, and everybody is happy. Heheh.

I also like the way he illustrates his speech with his hands. No, not the ordinary vague, waving motions that most people use, but a 100% efficient auxiliary to his tongue. He makes you see what he's talking about. JWC would make an excellent teacher, I think.

I had arrived late so there wasn't much time to talk before Campbell closed his desk and departed for his New Jersey home.

Once again I entrusted myself to the underground labyrinths of the city, and behold, I was soon "home" with no trouble at all!

New Yorkers don't appreciate their subway the way they should. At least not until they've come to Boston. I was perpetually amazed at the distances one could cover in a short time, and for a nickel too. In Boston it takes two hours to cover 20 miles, and it seems like you have to shell out a dime every time you turn around. Wonderful place New York. . .

That evening I went out to see Julie Unger. I got on the surface trolley instead of the elevated however, and was several blocks past my stop before I realized it. This boner cost me a half hour of wasted time, as I was hoping to reach Dahill Rd before the blackout went into effect.

There were a half dozen people in the car, and the usual banalities were exchanged when lites in the neighborhood did not go out promptly. 'Twas sort of peaceful to sit there in the cool dark and watch the busy fireflies that were the airaid wardens come and go, and leave more complete blackness behind them.

On the sidewalk near us an arw flagged a big car to a halt and commanded them to shut off their lights. Evidently they were bigwigs of some sort because they protested, altho they had no authority to be around and about in the blackout. The trolley operator became quite incensed. "Ought to have a coupla bombs fall on 'em," he growled.

The car continued to argue with the arw. "Let's boo d' bums," suggested the trolley operator. So we booed

d'bums. They shut up. "Thanx," said the arw and went off to become another firefly in the distance. . .

So when the lights came on again I went back and found Julie's place, and we gabbed quite a bit, and I tried to convince him he should put something better in the FAPA, but I didn't succeed, and then I looked at my watch which said ten minutes of eleven and his wife yawned and I said I better get going and they said wait a minute and have some cantaloupe and ice cream and I had some and we talked some more and I looked at my watch again and it still said ten minutes of eleven and I said gosh and Julie went and looked at the bedroom clock which said 1:30 AM. So Julie went to the trolley stop with me and we missed one and made arrangements to meet at Doc Lowndes' office the next day at lunch time.

But he didn't show up because he got a job and had to go right to work, so I had lunch with Doc and Scott Feldman and a guy who worked withem but wasn't a fan. After we drove the waitress crazy with double talk we went back to the office, and I looked over the covers for the next Future and Science Fiction Quarterly, and Doc gave me Joe Gilbert's story about Joe Destiny or somebody so I would keep quiet and he could get some work done. I was telling him just why Joe's story was lousy when damon knight came in.

I observed to my sorrow that the demon has become completely Futurianized. Not that that is such a horrible fate in itself, but I liked him better as a guy from Hood River than a guy from New York. I mean I still liked him fine, but I wish he hadn't changed so much.

Anyhow, damon got some money that was due him, and I went along when he left. He went up to Central Park for damon's daily exercise, viz; rowing about the lake for an hour to build himself up. As we got into the boat a young lady of approximately two tons got into another boat nearby, presumably to build herself down. Ah, life-I thot.

So we rode around and exchanged stories, a few of which were clean, and played TSOHG, which is GHOST played the hard way, especially when you run up against something like ostoomyelitis, with which I stuck the demon. Then we went downtown and played stinky pinky on the bus. D is quite brilliant at the game.

That nite I met some friends of my cousin who were stf readers, and we played Monopoly and discussed stories. The fellow likes UNKNOWN best while his wife prefers FFM. I have sent them a copy of Fanfare, but I doubt if they are fan material. But what a cutthroat game of Monopoly they play! I've never seen the like. I was figuratively dressed in a barrel before I knew what was going on. Well, maybe nexttime I'll be better prepared.

The next day Doc and I were suppose to meet a gang at a sea food place uptown, which we did. I think damon came along too. We went up to Norton's office, but nobody seemed to be around except Norton and Dorothy Les Tina who reads manuscripts or something for Popular Pubs. So the four of us went to the sea food joint, hoping the others would show. They did.

Fred Pohl arrived soonly, and then Will Peacock, new ed of PLANET STORIES, and a couple of other fans who didn't have much to say. There was quite a bit of interesting chatter while various crustaceans and cephalopods (all dead, of course) disappear down various gullets. I was quite happy with my honey dew melon and ice cream.

Doc, late in getting back to his office, got foozled on the train changes somewhere and left us precipitately to find the right subway. Damon shrugged, so I shrugged, and he got off at 42nd St, and I did too, and then we parted as he had to see somebody not connected with stf. He suggested I drop around the Foundation (the latest Futurianest) that evening.

So I walked up to Broadway and had my shoes shined and thot of the legend that sooner or later everybody in the world passes by that spot. I waited a while, thinking I might see Hitler and have the pleasure of knocking his mouth around so 'twould look like the side entrance to something but no luck.

So I went back to Fifth Avenue and decided to ride on a double decker bus and look down at the world. So we



chugged along to 34th St, and there was the Empire State Building looking down on me. Such a state of affairs could not be tolerated, and wasn't it a vacation, a gala affair? All right. So I opened my wallet, shoed out the moths, planked down a dollar ten, and went up.

From stories I had heard I didn't expect my stomach to arrive at the 86th floor for about five seconds after I did, but the elevator ride was rather prosaic except for the rapidly changing air pressure. Swallowing fixed that easily however. Then another elevator took us up another 16 floors, and there we were.

I went outside and walked "nonchalantly" (it says in the script) over to the edge and looked out. \* Gulp \* Surprising enuf, the vertigo I usually get in high paces didn't bother me. It's so doggone high that the instincts just don't grasp it for a minute, and by that time you are so interested instincts don't count.

There they were, the whole five boroughs, laid out like a map. I strolled around and rubbered at all four points of the compass, long and leisurely. Put a dime in a telescope and went on a tour of the city without the bother.

Then I went down and back to see Doc, who was about ready to go home. I asked who'd be at the Foundation that nite and whatime should I show up. So he invited me to have supper with him.

"What'll we have?" he asked as we got on the bus. I suggested a good feed of chili might be in order. I vetoed the suggestion of a mex restaurant, so we made it ourselves.

That was the best chili I've had yet. Just as I wanted it. To the traditional basis of hamburger and red beans we added large white onions, a can of mushrooms, fine noodles in place of tomatoes, and sliced green peppers. I drool at the memories.

The chili powder seemed not quite strong enuf, so when Bob Studley conveniently dropped in we sent him out for some tabasco sauce. He watched us, fascinated, and finally broke down and asked to sit in. He got a plate and all went well until the time came to apply the tabasco.

Doc suggested he touch his tongue to a little on the back of his hand to see how much he could stand. He couldn't stand much. The two old gourmets laughed at his misery and dug in for a second big helping.

Replete, we sat around waiting, and Doc separated Bob from some loose folding money via the sale of some original Boks and stuff. Incidentally, those of you who have met Bob will recognize the likeness on the Summer '42 SFQ cover, for which Bob posed.

Damon came in after a while and we played TSOHG and "S T F period", which is like GHOST only the words have to have some connection with stf or fantasy. Then we played poker all evening like mad for ten cents worth of chips apiece. I forget who won but Doc got the "lallapalooza". Futurian house rules on poker are quaint and charming. I like them. Studley had to go out and get the beer, and then we all joined in a "Praise Fantasia" session which degenerated into a goofy whistling contest, with everybody trying to show off his musical knowledge by whistling different "tunes" from the production all at the same time. Studley whistled so earnestly that he grunted at the same time, which annoyed damon.

Then a guy named Charley came in, who is sort of a semi-fan, and I don't know if he is a Futurian. So we blabbed away the night until Johnny Michel came home about 3AM and kicked us all out. Studley and I walked down to Penn Station and saw a small fire on the way.

I slept thru until the afternoon next day and then went over to Doc's office again to see if Scott Feldman had arranged anything with Hy Tiger, who was stationed at MacMitchell Field. He had. I looked over the proofs of SFQ which had just arrived, and Doc gave me the plot for a sequel to his "Quarry", which had proved unexpectedly popular. Hope I can do justice to it.

Before returning to Brooklyn I popped over to the Munsey offices to see if Mary Gnaedinger had returned from

her vacation, but no luck.

After supper I hied me out to the wilds of Brownsville to see Scott and Hy. They were there and an enjoyable evening of gabbing was spent, and Hy, to celebrate his army pay rise, bought Tom Collinses for us.

We sauntered and dilly-dallied on our way back to the subway line, swapping stories and general gab as fast as we could. I was particularly reluctant to part as I thot of the long ride to start on the morrow and the return to humdrumity at the end of that ride.

I was up bright and early that Friday and on my way about 7AM. A motorist at a red light seemed thunderstruck to think I had come from around Boston on "That thing". He sat there looking at me sort of dreamy-eyed and was roundly honked at for holding up the line when the light turned green.

The eighty mile journey to New Haven was made without incident in eight hours, and I was only moderately tired when I arrived. Lou Kuslan rode me over to the city and I tried to get a room at the Y hotel, but no soap. So Lou climbed in his car, and rather than go thru the bother of fitting the bike into the rumble seat again, I wheeled off downtown to find lodging, with the promise to meet Lou and Paul Spencer at the corner of Church and Something Streets as soon as I got cleaned up.

I finally found a cheap hotel which wasn't bad at all, except that it looked cheap. Incidentally, here's a note for financially embarrassed fans travelling to and from conventions, or just travelling. The hotel in New Haven is one of a chain called the Milner Hotels, which have rooms for \$1 per nite, or \$1.50 with bath. They have hotels in practically every big city in the US.

I obtained a dollar room in a hurry and went up. But the door was a pretty sad sort of a door and it wouldn't close and lock after I got it open – and I couldn't find the community bathroom after searching thru a labyrinth of narrow zigzag corridors for fifteen minutes. So I went down, paid 50¢ more, and got a room with a bath. This was much nicer since I had no bathrobe and didn't care to go wandering thru a mile and three furlongs of enigmatic doors, any one of which at any moment might disgorge a horde of finicky females who would shriek bloody murder or something and have me arrested for being clad only in a towel. It never occurred to me to undress in the bathroom, simply because I have never done that.

So anyway, what with the delay in getting a room, soaking overlong in the hot shower, and rummaging around in my knapsack for a clean pair of sox, which seemed to take fiendish delight in playing hide-and-seek with me (I refused to dump the whole contents out on the bed as being unsportsmanlike), I was an hour late and then some to meet Lou and Paul. In fact, Lou was just setting off into the beginning drizzle in search of me when I arrived.

Paul Spencer turned out to be a very pleasant chap, slight of build and light of hair and knowing lots and lots about science fiction and all sorts of interesting side-trax therefrom, as you no doubt agree after reading his entertaining article in Spaceways. We landed in a restaurant and spent the evening there after ravenously consuming a good-sized supper. Finally, about 10PM, we essayed forth into what was by then a very thick drizzle. Just about one thickness short of a good soaking rain. We ducked under awnings until we reached the college magazine store. This place, I am confident, had a current copy of every magazine then being published. There were also some inexpensive edition books with several fantasy titles. Lou bot one, and I guess Paul bot one, but I can't remember what.

I gave the clerk instructions to call me at five, but I never heard the bell, or else the so-and-so forgot. I didn't like his looks anyway, so I prefer to believe the latter.

It didn't make any difference tho, because the drizzle was now so thick that the atmosphere was 90% water, and I might just as well have headed for home via Long Island Sound. After breakfast it still continued with no signs of letup, so I bot the current issue of Weird Tales, the best I could find in the limited stock of a nearby cigar store. I settled in an easy chair and finished half of it by noon, interspersed with many glances out of the



window. Finally, I could stand the inaction no longer since I had to be home the following day, and I easily persuaded myself that the rain had let up a bit.

I rode a couple of blocks and easily persuaded myself that it was raining harder than ever, and took shelter in a garage. I read a couple more stories. Keller and Lovecraft had written them and they were fairly good. I started out again and was forced to ride a couple of miles before I could find shelter again. I read some more. Finally it did let up a little. I sallied forth and made the city limits, where it promptly clattered up and sluiced down again. I waited in a gas station, consumed most of their soft drinks, finished the WT, and fidgeted. I fidgeted until three o'clock and finally determined to try for New London come hell or high water.

Indecisiveness, useless irritability at the inevitable and unjustifiable timidity put aside, I found that it wasn't very bad after all; in fact I even enjoyed it a little. What the heck, I was warm enuf, so why should I worry about a little nice clean H<sub>2</sub>O? The rain stopped by four and the sky was clear by five. I splurged \$1.25 for an enormous fried chicken supper at a classy roadside eatery. I also enjoyed the malapropos effect of my very presence. To say I contrasted with my surroundings is putting it mildly. The waitress was at first icily efficient, but later, observing I made no attempt to secrete the silverware and napkins in my knapsack, must've swung over to the theory that I was an eccentric playboy or something, for she thawed out considerably and gave me all sorts of attention toward the end of the meal.

I whizzed along at a good clip after this and was well on my way to make New London before sunset and some to spare when I discovered I had left my knapsack ten miles back at a soft drink stand. (!!!#\*!!!@####!!) So there was an extra twenty miles to do. I was ready to chew up the handlebars and gum the rubber grips for dessert. To punish myself for this colossal blunder I pelted the whole twenty just about as hard as I could, covering it in an hour and five minutes, so that I reached N.L. at 9:30PM, which wasn't so bad after all. Even at that I was quite chipper compared to my condition there on the way down. I had a sandwich and a glass of beer, which unaccountably made my legs feel like lead.

But I really slept. I felt so good in the cool dawn I thot I must've slept 14 hours in seven. I maintained a steady 10 mph even in the face of climbing the hills in southern Rhode Island. Finally, a good steep one piled on top of two others, each about a third of a mile long, forced me to get off and push; and the push gave me the idea that breakfast at the summit diner might be a very good idea. There were half a dozen trucks there which had passed me at varying distances back along the line, and all the drivers expressed admiration at my arrival so soon. They were very friendly, and listened well to the account of my exploits, trials, tribulations, and the extolling of the virtues of the FooFoo Special Jr. The biggest one offered me fifty bucks for my steed when I got to Providence where he lived, but I refused.

Then, either thru admiration, just plain generosity, or the desire to talk me into selling, he offered to tie the bike onto his truck and take me to Providence. I accepted with great rejoicing and was exceedingly glad. We had difficulty in selecting a suitable place where the bike might ride without damage, and finally the quietest one spoke up and said there was just enuf space for my bike between his tailboard and his load of blueberries. I asked where he was going.

To Boston!!! Hallelujah!!! He would pass within ten miles of Quincy! Offer #1 was politely but hurriedly declined, and FSJr was securely tied in place. Eighty miles! Eighty luxurious miles I rode in the hot, bouncing, swaying cabin of the truck, and I loved it. No pedals to push, no worrying about my ragged tires, nothing to do but sit and arrive rapidly home.

Which I did at 11:30AM, surprising my wife no end.

