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ARTICLES

NUMBER
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106

IN MEMORIAM:



SPIRIT OF FOOFOO

When I lived at home and kept my diary by typewriter, it was my custom not to put therein the happenings of any vacation trip of more than a week's duration, but to write those up in a separate booklet. I'd blush to say, though, how many of these remain unfinished.

The principal article herein, and to some extent the others, is in the tradition of those special diaries. However, I have tried to keep my audience in mind, and not include material that will interest none of you.

-- Jack Speer

SPEER IN SEPTEMBER

WASHINGTON

September morn found me in a sad state. For some nites past I'd gotten little sleep, from last-minute work on the Fencyclopedia ms and other things, preparations for the trip, and insomnia while I debated a change in my future. And now, on this nite of 31 Aug - 1 Sep, I was up all nite working and packing.

Some time in the early morning hours I went out in the Spirit of FooFoo to round up a few more pasteboard boxes to put my stuff in. When everything was packed except last-minute necessities, I took a hot bath, and wrapped in my robe and dozed in a chair --I didn't dare go to bed, for I mite not waken till noon. After napping, I set myself to assembling the Sustaining Programs that had been run off the previous evening. That took longer than I calculated, and it was broad daylight before I got around to mimeographing Inspiration and assembling it. Some brief notes to Bronson and others, and then there was the last-minute packing to be accomplished. I think I undid and retied one of the boxes half a dozen times, either putting something in, or trying to find something I'd want to take with me in the brief case.

Then the job of rassling them out to the car, which in the case of some boxes was almost beyond my strength. At length my worldly goods were all aboard the redoubtable Spirit, and leaving the key on the hall table, getting into the driver's seat and hauling the bookcase up on the running board after closing the door, I drove one-armed thru some seven miles of morning traffic to the storage place, where most of the stuff was unloaded.

It was now long past the time when I was supposed to pick up my brother, but there remained some miscellaneous tasks, like getting breakfast (which I skipped) and mailing the Fencyclopedia manuscript. The latter job was complicated by the refusal of the employees at two different stations to register the package in its condition. Finally sent it simple first class, with a prayer to FooFoo. The noon whistles blew.

Jim had tired of waiting and departed his room, and I was to pick him up at the State Department at a certain time. I was late for that, but he was even later, so we called it even, and began our homeward trip. Not quite. Stopped for gasoline at DC prices and got air, oil, maps, and other things. I hadn't thot to get the car greased for its thousand-mile trip, but we couldn't bother with that now. However, it developed that he hadn't had time to get a check cashed, so we returned to downtown for that, and while there got a couple jugs of oil, the Spirit being an oil-eater.

So about 1500, only some six hours late, the Spirit's last trip began. Proceeding at a speed only slitley above the legal limit, we reached Charlottesville while there was still enuf lite for fotografs, and looked around the U Va campus and those wiggly walls which apocryphal legend says Jefferson laid out while drunk. Actually, the wiggles are to supply sidewise strength without a double layer of brick. The Navy trainees that had taken over about 50% of the school appeared to lead a hard life. Back at the street that runs along the west side of the campus, a side street was labeled Thomson Road, one-time haunt of the Chauvenet.

At Lynchburg we had supper, and there for the first time encountered "Pistol-Packin' Mama". From there it followed us all across the Southern piedmont, and on thru the deep South. I heard

it again at a rodeo in Oklahoma, and out across the desert it followed to the Pacific. And on my return to Washington, it turned up again in a truck stop. It was probably the most popular song in the country long before it made the Hit Parade.

We took turns driving, and the one being relieved had to sleep slouched up, the back seat being full of baggage and not available for sleeping. Despite being Morpheustarved, I found it hard to win my wooing of slumber, so talked with Jim instead, about how people and Anglo-Saxons lived in Latin America, and so on. After a while I became aware that he wanted to give some confidential accounts of his adventures fighting the Nazis in Chile, and it proved to be very interesting listening. After that we got off onto something else, to wit, our personal philosophies. I was surprised to find he'd adopted an unmateriastic metaphysic, and on the mere ground that they couldn't be disproved, had tentatively accepted such improbable ideas as the thesis that everything that happens is the best thing that could have happened. I was unable to get much reasoning behind these beliefs; he simply said that he had thought and studied and listened a great deal before arriving at them, and that they seemed to satisfy him. He had so far departed from his old mentor, Jefferson, as to place primary reliance, as a guide to conduct, on an "educated conscience", rather than on a romantic for that, and he raised protest against my free and easy use of categories and labels, thereby the more proving himself an intellectual descendant of Wordsworth and Whitman.

I drove a while, and he didn't get any sleep either. Shortly after he took over again, just outside Charlotte, sometime in the wee small hours, the Spirit began limping. We put on the spare and returned to Charlotte to have the flat fixed. In the early stages of the tire squeeze, just before the Spirittrip to Boskone II, I'd bot a pile of boots and tire reliner, none of which I'd ever used. Now, at last, one was used over a broken spot in the casing, which I pretended to forget when later quizzed about the car before selling it. While we were having the tire fixed, we talked to the proprietor of the station, who turned out to be a very enlightened man with an easy-going attitude. I was curious about what I'd read in school to the effect that there was a lot of industry, ever increasing, in the South. North Carolina, it appeared, is one of the centers of this New South. The station man told us a lot about industry and the men behind it in the country round about.

At this station

I penned a postcard addressed to Claude Degler:

1 Sep 43

Dear Mr Degler:

I have a Cosmic Mind.

Elmer Ortley

2241 Juniper

Charlotte N C

Didn't get around to mailing this till we were in upper Georgia, and two other cards I wrote at the same time I never used because I didn't want them coming too thickly from one place, and they quickly became out of date and place.

MOBILE

I dozed a little thru South Carolina's upland, the best part of the state, we guessed from the high-quality highway, and took the wheel again after some breakfast in Greenville. But I couldn't hold it. Driving quickly made me drowsy again, and since Jim was catching some sleep he doubtless needed, I pulled over on the shoulder

and draped myself on the steering wheel and went dead to the world.

Jim waking after awhile took the wheel and our march on Atlanta began--at right angles to the course that Sherman followed, however, and much faster than he did as long as Johnston opposed him. In that Southern capital, after noon, we looked up friends of Jim's, whose wedding I'd attended; and their Herculean baby. Talked about stuff and things for a couple hours or so, and among other things, I learned details on the race riot scare in Washington that hadn't come my way at the time it was on.

From Atlanta on it was a string of small towns, in which we occasionally stopped for drinks. In the night we came upon Mobile Bay, and across it saw the shipyards, lighted up like Christmas trees, standing out against the dimmed-out city. Mobile is a boom city indeed, having tripled its population, as compared to a mere 25% increase for Washington-on-Potomac, and finding a hotel vacancy at middle-class rates was no easy thing. We finally settled on one which looked okay from the lobby, but upstairs seemed to have been built under the French flag.

Next morning we called out to Brookley Field, and Lieutenant Colonel Speer, JAGD, came in and took us out. As he showed us thru the repair shops and the hangars, I became acutely conscious of my ignorance of B-27s, P-17s, and so on. I was even more acutely conscious of my nondescript dress (brown shoes, white trousers, green shirt sans tie, and faded yellowish straw) as we were introduced to his office force and brother officers. Thence over to Bachelor Officer Quarters, where he was temporarily staying, and the Officers' Club nearby. This club is a bleeding disgrace to a country at war. A new hardwood ballroom was being built, in a city where construction workers are critically short, and a swimming pool had been installed under guise of a "water reservoir". Expenses of the ballroom and other fancy stuff were paid by a roomful of slot machines which the officers played. After lunch there, we emptied Dad's room of his belongings, and returned to the city and the apartment he'd managed to get.

Our baggage was transferred from the Faithful Plymouth to the Pontiac, and some of the Colonel's stuff taken upstairs and left in the apartment. When all preparations were completed, there remained the sad task of selling the Spirit, since I didn't expect to be needing a car much longer. We took it to a reputable Plymouth dealer, and after driving it around the block and asking a little about it, he offered \$300, which was a hundred more than I'd been offered in Washington, and \$15 less than I originally paid for it (ofcourse, the purchasing power of \$300 isn't what it used to be), this being a boom center with a lot of loose money floating around. My relatives thot that a good offer, so I took it without shopping further. Thus ended the Spirit of FooFoo. Of course, the car will be bot and driven by someone else, but the Spirit has departed from its temporal body. It was largely on the sale of the car that I made the remainder of my trip, so this account is dedicated to that friend of many pleasant drives.

Now out along the beautiful Gulf coast of Mississippi we coursed, and to the north of Lake Pontchartrain under a nimbus sky. I have yet to pass thru lower Louisiana in clear weather. We passed Baton Rouge and I dropped into sleep, tho I have a hazy memory of waking enuf to seek the lites marking the outline of Huey Long's skyscraper capitol. We wanted to make Alexandria if possible, and I especially wanted to, in hope of contacting D B Thompson (I'd been unable to look for Lynn Bridges because I didn't know what part of Alabama Op Sibert is in), but just couldn't do it, and stopped at a tourist camp in a microscopic town some distance south of Alexandria. I just woke up long enuf to go to sleep again.

COMANCHE

We stopped in Alexandria for breakfast, then crossed Red River and drove thru upper Louisiana, "a fat, rich land", as Squire Speer called it, disputing politics and sociology along the way. I found myself again accused of engaging only in destructive criticism, which I'm sure must have been the result of the special company and conditions, rather than of any general characteristic in my nature.

We were in 100% Confederate territory now, Kirby Smith having never been beaten back from his line at Shreveport. Soon after was the Texas line, and immediately a general speeding up in traffic was evident. It may be true that Texas came into the war about the same time the United States did, but it was apparently on different conditions. Obviously, the speed limit enacted for vest-pocket eastern states like Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Florida, cannot apply to a country with distances like Texas's. And I doubt very much that the owners of cattle herds are bothering much about meat rationing regulations.

At Paris Tex we stopped while Dad called out to the Army camp to see if our younger brother was still there or had already headed homeward. Jim

"These Texas girls here will go out with you one nite, and then next nite they'll go out with some other guy."

and I waded thru the khaki-strewn streets (it was Saturday afternoon) to a place where we could get a good Western hamburger, the like of which there is not anywhere in the East. A soldier beside us was obviously from Brooklyn, and "Take me back to New York!" ran thru his talk. Incidentally, I learned a good method by which spies mite discover the number of troops in an Army camp: After getting across the conviction that we were from the War Department and the State Department Foreign Service, I casually asked the proportion of soldiers to the citizen population, and then found out the population of Paris. Fifth Columnists please give acknowledgment in using.

Private Speer was gone, so we headed on westward, then crossed Red River yet another time into the Outlaw State (much more appropriate and rememberable, I submit, than the official nickname). Thru very familiar countryside, in the very familiar condition of being burnt up with drouth, we came at last to the native town of two of us, and pulled up before the white house and the green lawn at sundown.

James Paul Speer III, also called double-Junior and James Fitzjames Fitzjames and other things, was asleep at our arrival, but James II woke him up, and I've seldom seen him more uninhibited than in his adoration of that kid. JIII was a great center of interest during our whole stay there, and Mother was much afraid he'd be spoiled when Jim took him back to his wife in Arizona.

The kid brother was out on a date, and didn't return till very late. We walked out to the minnow-lily pool in the west lawn, inspected the growing young pecan trees, and walked out thru the chicken yards, the flock now cared for by neighbors, to the west edge of the block, and presently returned for supper.

Next day being Sunday, we went to church of course, and shook everybody's hand and said hello and how are you, and inquired after absent ones.

In the afternoon we took some group fotografs, of the type that I don't care much about, but which have their function. Fitz-Fitz was put out in his play pen, and also mounted him in his walker, which he manages with much spirit and stupidity, constantly getting into impasses, and delighting in such adventures as rushing along the sidewalk where the lawn sprinkler showers it. At length he was put to sleep and left in the care of the

maid. We had considerable servant trouble during the some two weeks I was there, with keeping them, c'est a dire, considering the usual stable relationships of a small town. I protested at the violation of the ideal of a classless society, which having any servant implied, but it was true that there'd been maids when we were babies, and Jimmy certainly got more care than we did in those primitive days.

I had had a C ration for the Spirit, which was more than ample to get it to Mobile. Dad had blank forms for his trip, which had some official duties connected with it as an excuse for his getting away from the Field, plenty for his pleasure driving as well as official driving if he got a full tank on each form. So we took the usual Sunday afternoon drive, and incidentally drove Louis about halfway back to Paris, whence he expected to go the remainder of the way by black market travel bureau, which operated quite openly in Gainesville Tex and doubtless elsewhere. On the drive I learned something about the changes in community leadership that had taken place. A fairly wealthy lawyer had moved in to spend his retired years, but maintained some activity, and was doubtless grveled when the Council made him City Attorney only until Paul Speer should return to active practice. Some rivalry had developed between him and Cap Harley, who in the past had been in a fair way to own the town.

Back home again, I got Louis's bicycle out of the barn and rolled it down to the nearest of the four filling stations at the intersection, to have the tires pumped up. Despite an annoying slow leak which necessitated frequent airings, I used the bike quite a bit after that for getting around when the car wasn't available, and named it the Ghost of the Spirit of FooFoo. On the way down to the station, which is also the bus station, I met Joy, just returned from a bus trip somewhere. She was the first girl I ever went with much, but has since been married, divorced, and married again, husband in the armed forces, and she living once more with her parents on the corner south of us.

Grandmother probably came over this evening, as she often did while Mother was living there alone, and after supper was another period of talk. Late, after we'd all gone to bed, Martha and her husband arrived, having followed the Great Circle route down from Ft Dix N J and visited a kinsman of Hikka's en route. Someone remarked that heesh was glad that all six of our immediate family hadn't gotten together at one time (Louis being now gone), since such coincidence - it was remarkable that we had been able to gather from six directions at so nearly the same time - would have made him feel like it was the end of something or other.

First weekday in town, we went down and got bank statements, and I was surprised to find a half grand I didn't know I had. Thence I paid calls on some of the merchants along Main Street who were friends of the family, but soon Dad asked Jim and me to go with him out to the farms, and we couldn't very well refuse. Our mission was to get some people who'd take care of the pecan crops, and for this purpose we went into a particularly wild quadrant of the parched countryside that surrounded town, along section-line roads that were never meant for a Pontiac Torpedo, and were in particularly bad condition now, tho we encountered a grader and crew at one corner. We got a farmer, Dad talked to him a while, and then the four of us headed for the place on Mud Creek. After digging the car out of a ford of a dry creek bed, where the angle was a little too sharp for it, we drove on to the grove and walked over it, Dad calmly disregarding the certain recurrence of his hay fever. With much repetition, they agreed that there was a fair crop there, and made terms for the farmer to gather it and have George Butts market it, George being in charge of Dad's interest while he is away.

It was already past dinner time (I'm using the Oklahoma terms for the noon and evening meals), so we returned to town, but in the afternoon set out for Pipe Creek, now accompanied by Mother and Double-Junior. The latter has a curious way of giggling whenever he feels the car

start to move, or thinks it's about to. A child of this mobile age, he's traveled a good many thousand miles in his first year. At a very ramblédown house near Johnson's Corners, where several kids sat on the bed, which was out in the yard, and hound-dogs snuffled around, we inquired of the huswife and were referred to the town of Loco to find her husband. Thither we went and found him, and he agreed to look the place over.

I've lost the negative for the pic that goes here, but hope I can get one made

Upon our return, I rode the Ghost downtown and did some more visiting, with a more specific object in mind. In the past, when I'd asked myself where all these people in war boom centers were coming from, I'd guessed that they were from places like Comanche. Now, to my great surprise, I found that Comanche's population was up and there was scarcely a vacant house in town, and Jim Branch would build some more if he could get clearance from the OPM or somebody. The reason for the influx was the building of a new high-octane plant at the refinery north of town, tho its headquarters were in the county seat, Duncan. Estimates of the increase varied, but it was undeniable, and a reversal of the trend of the past twenty years. So the only answer for my question that I have now is that those workers come from somewhere else. A recent guess I heard was that they come from the farms of our section and small towns of other sections. It's just as well that agriculturists are getting out of the southwest, even tho we're trying to expand food production, for man-hours invested in agriculture in our section are much less productive than they are in the South, North Central, and Pacificcoast.

The womanpower situation was very bad, tho, as far as people I knew were concerned. Two girls (whom I will call Alpha and Beta, since a gentleman doesn't mention a lady-maiden's name in a place of low repute) whom I'd counted on for vacation society, had recently returned to their respective colleges for the pre-season rushing. That left practically nothing.

While we were sitting around in the front yard under the pecan tree, my cousin Norma came over, bringing a pie she'd baked. Her father, the only boy in my mother's large sibblinghood, had inherited his father's place in town, including a furniture store and other establishments that proved unprofitable in the past ten or twenty years. Norma steadied down a lot after she married, but she married poorly; we later learned that her husband was in the calaboose for disorderly drunkenness that afternoon. Our branch of the family goes up, theirs goes down.

I was still sitting outside when the expressman came with the boxes that I'd shipped late in August. I had him put them in the barn, to be attended to later. Stif stuff.

That evening I went to a revival meeting at the church. It was a typical Methodist revival, having money-raising for repairs as its primary objective, rather than the saving of souls, like some revivals we've had. In some ways, tho, it was like the pioneer meetings that I studied in my major. The revivalist, a regular minister from Waurika, inveighed against sin, in such forms as drinking, playing bridge for prizes, dancing in roadhouses (clutch-and-hug dancing Steinbeck called it; hugging set to music said an earlier revivalist at our church), and so on. But the most interesting thing for me was his manner of speaking. He and the young preacher now attached to our church had about the thickest Oklahoma accents I've ever heard, but this guy brot into focus another thing very characteristic of the speech of the common people: incessant repetition.

Anyway, there were no tearful calls for repentance-- anyway, it was scheduled for two weeks and just beginning. Afterwards, I wandered downtown and in one of the drug stores encountered Gamma and Delta. Well, Gamma is married, so forget her. We talked, had something to drink, and I rambled home again.

It was time to be going up to Duncan for various purposes. I had a cartridge of film to be developed, and while I was in Papa Cordell's place, (so-called because he fathered the Comanche photographic group) he sold me a very simple projector for kodachromes and a cartridge of kodachrome, which is almost unobtainable in Washington. I asked at the post office if any mail had been forwarded. Comanche has a post office too, but I preferred not to have any fan stuff turning up in our box there. All other business attended to, Jim and I applied for and got ration books 1 and 2, and left an application for 3, which came out soon after. I already had books 1 and 2, but had packed them with some stuff in Washington, not thinking of them, so averred to the girl that I had none. So legally I violated the law I guess, but used few coupons out of either book, so morally it's all right.

Another thing it was high time for was a visit to school. After calling at the office, I went down to the manual training department, now greatly expanded beyond its scope in my time (parents of children headed for college complain that the high school's just an industrial and agricultural training school) and headed by Tully Dunlap, old schoolmate. He's another who led a pretty wild life in school but has steadied down with a wife, and a baby on the way -- far different from the fellow I had a fight with my last year in high school, and very cordial. After spending a while with him, I went over to the fourth grade, where the teacher is Epsilon, who was on a number of debate trips with us. We discussed such things as the disappearance of debate, and she had me tell the class about OFEC, which I was planning to go overseas with.

Back home for more relaxed sitting around. On an excursion down to the corner guarding Jimmy on one of his rambles and putting him back on the sidewalk when he run off, I met Ditty. Last I saw of senior scientifictionist Louis Clark's brother was in Washington, when he was planning to go to Richmond to do carpentry. Now he was in a Navy uniform. I left him visiting with Joy, and about dusk pumped the Ghost around the northwestern part of town, which I hadn't been into since my return.

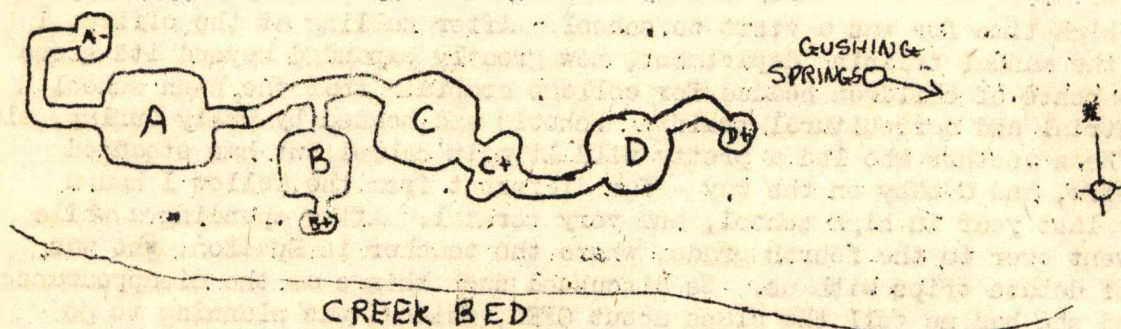
That evening we sat around in the living room, the Lieutenant and the Colonel comparing notes on the number of prostitutes in Paris and Algiers and such things, and all three of these widely-traveled men discussed conditions in the countries they'd seen and related anecdotes. We got off on the subject of America at war, and the Army men thoroly cussed out people in general for their poor attitude toward a war of vital importance, especially John L. Lewis. "Why do we have to go to Europe to find people that need to be shot?" asked Dad, who was a rabid interventionist in the days of the great debate, but now thinks we ought to leave those rotten Europeans to what they've brot on themselves, and concentrate on whipping the Japs and grabbing strategic territory wherever we can. Strange ideas, interesting to listen to. Re America at war, we two dirty civilians, Jim and I, reminded Dad of the Officers' Club at Brookley Field. He replied that he didn't like their building that club, and would rather be overseas than fiting the Battle of Mobile Bay.

Time was slipping by, and next day looked like one of the last chances I'd have, considering the schedule ahead, to work among my beloved papers. So I dressed as a mountain-climber or something, and climbed up in the loft, whither I'd transferred the survivors of the Wiederpapiereblitzkrieg that I told about some years ago. Couldn't quite decide what I wanted to do about the new arrivals, that the express man had brot, and while I let my subconscious mind work on that, I went walking along the opposite side of the creek valley.

Here was the site of the last cave we'd dug, and the only one that went into a perpendicular cliff face and had a dirt roof. Only one who knew it had been there could see the traces now. On a

little farther was the thicket with the low place where we'd started once to dig a cave for a patrol den; Mother told me that some of the new generation were working on a cave there now, but I didn't see much trace of it. Nearby was the site of Gushing Springs, a long-broken water pipe which often gave a nice spray and created fantastic ice formations, swell for fotograffing, in winter time. It's been repaired at last.

Beyond was the flat on which we built our great system of caves. It seems like we had always built caves, but I know there must have been a definite beginning, for I can remember when the only trenches were the traces of caves made by an older generation. Ours consisted of trenches, with deeper and wider places for rooms, covered over with boards, tin, and finally fresh dirt which in no way concealed the locations. The completed system ran like this:



Entrances finally were at A- and B+. The first part constructed was D and D+, and it was for them that we fot most of our battles. For mobs of bad boys from the other side of town were wont to come over, at nite or by day, to trample in our thin roofings, and pitched battles were fot. We usually had superior weapons --BB guns against niggersshooters (you call 'em slingshots, but they aren't)--and inferior numbers. The only one we lost was the last one, when our whole west lawn--then the garden--was full of toughies of high school age, throwing rocks, and some of our boys had to work, another had "gone home for his BB gun", and only Jim with his gun and Johnny Kelly with mine were holding off the hordes. Many wild tales were told of that battle, such as that someone had shown up with a blank cartridge pistol. I locate it temporally by the remark that the Sheriff and some assistants had come up in a New Ford (Model A) to break up the crowd. They must have arrived too late, tho, for I crawled into the cave--"forts" we called them--after being hit with a rock, and was there when the invaders swept over the land and trampled down the entrance. I emerged later thru a secret removable place in the ceiling. The war was the thing that kept us so interested in cave-building, tho; after it was over we built the system of caves, but didn't stay interested in it long, despite initiation plans and secret wall recesses where we hid candles and weapons. (Incidentally, the minus and plus signs may be an elaboration of mine which weren't used by the others.) The line between A and B indicates a place where the tunnel floor jumped to a higher level, and the uninitiate were supposed to think that the end of the system, as if they couldn't see diferent from above ground. C was the deepest of the rooms, and it was the one that Louis's gang fixed up for a while. He, Martha, and I, and a neighbor, also fixed a roof over B, but couldn't remain interested in it. So the rains descended and the weeds and briars grew, and in 1943 I forced a way thru them with difficulty and traced the old tunnels and rooms more by memory than by the recognizable depressions in the ground.

Curiously, upstream a little way, westward, we had built another cave in times covered by my diary--1937 or thereabouts. It was in the sand, and all trace was washed out, except that the cut of the creek was wider there than it had been before. We'd also built sand dams, which backed

the water up so far as to create frontier incidents at the path crossing upstream. The dams broke or were broken every nite, and repaired next day. The dry creek bed still showed the effects of our earth-moving.

I still had those collections to take care of. Feeling that the garage was a safer place for those I considered more irreplaceable, I shoved an old door and other boards together on the garage rafters and nailed steps up the inside of the wall to get to this platform, and with much complication of standing on shaky crates and looping cords around the rafters, wrestled the newly arrived stuff up there. Up in the loft I sorted some things out of there, including a Fantasy Magazine--all my fanzines were supposed to be in Washington--and went in to wash several millimeters of grime off my face and hands.

About this day the Duncan Banner carried mention of our family reunion, and the thing that Dad had probably remarked to them, that while the three in uniform seemed likely to fite out the war in the United States (Hillas was scheduled to teach at the Armored school, and Louis was now on his way to a college in Kentucky), the two lousy civilians, Jim and I, were planning to go overseas. Day or two later the local weekly came out with an account, containing somewhat more than the usual number of errors.

I stretched out on the sofa with Louis's hi school literature book--English lit. Was surprised at how advanced the contents were. They had a great deal of text, and editorial comments, such as my Senior class wasn't expected to be able to understand, much more like what we got in college. I liked the anthology very well, and it is now in my collection in Washington. One thing I didn't like was its reference to Gulliver's Travels as a satiric romance - you remember my argument that it was a classicism and not a romance.

At dusk I was astride the Ghost again, looking thru another section of town, and later took J3 for another short ride in the handlebar basket, much to his delite and his fond father's fears.

That evening's group in the livingroom saw my kodachromes projected on the wall. Most of them were still in strips rather than in slides, and I had to turn the projector frequently for the difference between long and tall pictures. Probably because of this, the bulb blew out before I was halfway thru.

I wandered downtown in the morning, dropping in here and there, and making a few purchases. The leisurely pace of life was a startling contrast to Washington. Even merchants who made quite a bit in a year had lots of time to sit and talk, only every now and then getting up to wait on someone. This, of course, is one reason for the generally lower cost and somewhat lower standard of living in such places--trade is always less. Tho the town has grown somewhat, everything still moves at a very slow rate. The war has made little impress on life. George Butts remarks on the dilemma of stocking up with ersatz goods when he's bound to get caught with them unsellable when normal production resumes, but he isn't vitally worried about it. For a very large class of people, life like this is the best kind to live. Gemuetlichkeit of a sort.

Jim and I went to Duncan in Hillas's car, Dad's not being available. I picked up my pictures and was able to get another bulb for the projector. Picked up mail which included Le Zombie. At Humpy's place we got some more good hamburgers, but upon emerging, found that the Lieutenant's Plymouth, a year older than the Spirit, had decided not to start. Showing unwonted mechanical aptitude, I laid bare the engine and pressed the thing that the starter was supposed to press, till the engine caught. But we swore we'd not borrow that car again. It was in bad condition all over; I'd never have undertaken

a 1500-mile trip in it.

In the afternoon I bicycled around some more, including the city hall on my circuit, but was disappointed in finding the library either closed or discontinued. I wanted to see what they had, and ask what was proscribed, for I've entertained the idea of contributing some copies of the Spoon River Anthology and perhaps Main Street to it. Thence I went to Mobley's, who are cousins of Dan McPhail, and endured a long account of how the Mobley kinsmen were doing in the Army and all the camps they'd been transferred to, in the hope of finding out McPhail's Oklahoma City address. Mrs. M. didn't know it, but said Miss M. would phone it to me. She didn't, and I was unable to get them on the phone.

Coasting down the hill from there, I encountered Ditty and his younger brother, in khaki, and Ditty and I called on Epsilon, who sat on her front porch nearby, and discussed old and new times.

As part of the excuse for his making the trip under orders rather than on furlough, the Colonel was supposed to pay a visit to the Oklahoma City Air Depot. Naturally, the whole family must go, but just at this time we were maidless. Finally someone suggested that Aunt Zaylon (sp?) might take care of Fitz-fitzjames for us, so an expedition drove to their farm on the edge of town. Uncle Herman got in pretty bad condition during the early '30's, drinking because working on the farm didn't bring in any money, but under Roosevelt he made a recovery and was now on a pretty good piece of land and doing all right. Then we heard that he'd had a foot crushed in working at the cotton gin. Compensation was small, and we expected the hospital expenses to ruin him permanently, but he's doing all right now, tho there are some kinds of work he can't do yet. Probably high wartime prices for crops are part of the reason. 'Jim and I are still convinced that the only kind of agriculture that's profitable with limited means over a period of years is cattle raising. They ought to turn the whole state back to that. We talked a while before getting down to business, and Aunt Zaylon gave me the address of the daughter that's my age, who's out at Paso Robles, for me to look up. Later I found that it isn't in the Los Angeles area. All three daughters married, certainly not above themselves, one at thirteen or thereabouts, and of course all three now have some serf-children. Since I will not mention them elsewhere, I mite add here that we have two other sets of cousins on that side, who are going up somewhat rather than down. Yes, Aunt Zaylon would take care of the baby.

That nite I showed more kodachromes till the bulb blew out again.

OKLAHOMA CITY

Usual and unusual delays kept us from leaving till nearly noon; Martha, Hillas, and the Plymouth had gone on ahead. We reached the capital in good time and after dinner set out on our separate ways. I was seeking several things: A bulb for the projector, stencils (I looked at some, but decided to buy in Washington), the Columbia Encyclopedia (for which Dad had given me the price at my birthday), and sundry office supplies. I also tried to contact Dan/McPhail by phoning the aircraft plant and the air depot, at one of which I thot he was working, but for reasons of security they couldn't give his address if he was working there.

Hillas having left on a visit to Tucson, we saw Martha off on the interurban to Norman to call on sorority sisters at Oklahoma University. I can't get over the mobility of people nowadays-- surely it will decrease after the war. Yet, they are traveling like this without use of the airplane; how will it be in the air age? The war of course has scattered families and friends widely, and has supplied easy money for travel by people who could

never travel before, but things may be much the same into the indefinite future. We were surprised at the rise of mobility in fandom in 1939; the same thing is now happening to the whole country.

I dragged the family to a theater where Tennessee Johnson was showing, and it was a swell picture --justification of Andrew Johnson-- but the other side of the double bill was a mediocre pic titled Alaska Highway which the other Speers found to be a stinker, and Dad with his hay fever didn't get along well with the theater climate.

Hm. Here's one of those back-notes that messes up my diary of the last decade so much. Seems like every evening is accounted for, yet sometime in that preceding week some of us had gone to the show in Comanche and seen a stinker with Garland and the same Van Heflin who shone as Andrew Johnson. "Another picture like that", verdicted the Foreign Service officer, and Judy Garland will be heard of no more.

Next morning I continued my quest of an airline ticket office, and finding one, bot a ticket from Ft Worth to Tucson for 17 Sep. They said they'd wire Ft Worth and let me know about the reservation.

Dad was going out to the Capitol and asked me to come along. After getting some repairs on the upholstery, we reached that domeless building surrounded by oil wells which has so often been erroneously sketched by artists as having a dome. I went across the way to the Historical Building and dived into the newspaper file room. Upon our return, Dad had finished his business and was ready to go. I finished mine, which included the dispatch of a card reading:-

10 Sep 43

Dear Mr Degler:

I have a Cosmic Mind.

Juanita Zilch

143 Center Street

Oklahoma City Okla

These cards were addressed to Newcastle, but, I found out, were forwarded to Co-ordinator Clod in Shangri-La.

Jim stayed behind to drive Martha home when she returned and the Plymouth had had some repairs. From Union, some miles to westward, we foned back to the hotel, leaving a message for Jim to look for the watch I'd left in our room. Malheureusement he found it not. T'was only a Waterberry type, but irreplaceable in these troublous times.

In the sand hills country between Chickasha and Rush Springs we bot a watermelon at a roadside stand for about a tenth of the cost in the East, and butchered it after supper.

COMANCHE

It was Saturday nite, and nigh the full moon; I could feel the werewolf blood stirring; but where was the necessary second element? I gave up and settled down to read some descriptions of Western regions in the National Geographic. Dad had neglected to get his copy of Life, and since they sold out very quickly, I was sent down to get one. Luckily, there were still some left. In the drug store I ran into Delta, and we drank something and watched the people come in, and I quizzed her about who had married whom. We brot Life back to Dad and went to the Saturday nite horse opera at the local picture-show. When we came out a torrent of rain was falling, the first respectable precipitation the area had had since spring.

At church Sunday morning I admired the pastor's accent some more and exchanged snorts etc with Martha as I had the Sunday before with Louis. In the exiting crowd afterward a Colombian soldier was presented to Jim, and they conversed spiritedly in espanol.

As we were finishing dinner, a sorority sister of Martha's came and soon after they departed for someplace in Texas. I can't attempt to trace the wanderings of my sister and brother-in-law. I'm sure you're not interested.

In the quiet afternoon I looked thru all Dad's large collection of National Geographics, taking out those that had articles on the country I'd pass thru. I didn't get to read nearly all of these, but some of those that I did read added to the value of my trip. And they helped me in planning my route to see as much as possible. In some cases, I noticed, the Society had construed the words "geographic knowledge" very broadly, and included an article on plastic products, and one on the solar system. The latter, in an issue a few months after Astounding began its astronomical color plates, had a number of very similar paintings of bodies in the solar system as seen from other extra-terrestrial bodies. This issue appeared a little while after the Wells/Welles Marscare, and in one passage they admitted the probability that non-passenger rockets could go beyond the Earth, and a little later said there probably was some kind of e-t life, on Mars for example, but when it asked itself if space-travel was possible for intelligent beings, the article answered flatly No, giving as about the only reason, the great difference in temperature between the Earth and space! One gets the impression that such declarations as this are intended to reassure the unintelligent for some fancied fear, rather than to present a serious argument.

Monday morning we went out to Loco again after visiting the Pipe Creek place. Roads to the latter were almost completely washed out. We walked some distance along the section line to the grove, then plunged into the pollen-laden weeds and briars. It was our land, ten acres to each of us children, but Jim and I, who were the ones along, must not have enuf love of the soil in our souls, for we couldn't understand the Squire's persistent interest in these when he'd once admitted to Jim that the pecan business had turned out to be a failure, and hay fever was giving him hell. In Loco the deal was closed for the fellow to disc the land to get some of the weeds and sprouts out of the way, and take care of the crop; whether he'll do it is problematical. Frankly, I don't believe in absentee landlordism.

After dinner I read a while, then biked up to the school again. Bergice nee Fleming, whose husband is in the Army of course and whose younger brother was taken prisoner at Wake, one of my favorite teachers, had a study period the last hour in the eighth grade, and we talked till long after closing time. The Comanche schools are moving ahead slowly, but so far they're still on the right track.

The Ghost next carried me to an old abandoned cotton gin near Cow Creek. Of five gins in town, three have burned or been abandoned. Presently a couple of kids showed up and the more talkative asked if I weren't Louis Speer's brother. I never had that there was much resemblance between me and Commoner Speer, but time and again on this visit I was called Louis and mistaken for him. I asked the kids if there were no clubs heading up in this abandoned gin, remarking, without taking a "When I was a boy" attitude, that we'd sure have made use of it. Yes, there had been, they answered. I further remarked that this would be a setup for a vigorous salvage committee of junior commandos, for hauling in scrap metal, but Comanche doesn't seem to be at war that way; it just has a store window full of fotos of local boys in the armed services. Uninteresting places like Comanche no doubt send extraordinarily large numbers to the forces, mostly volunteers.

One of these evenings we took care of some legal matters. The three of us who'd attained our majority--Louis wasn't there anyway, of course--signed away our share of one of the Florida groves that Dad's sister had intended to leave to him when death occurred elsewhere in the family, but hadn't gotten around to writing into her will; and other papers were taken care of. Dad asked if I wanted him to draw up a will for me, seeing as how I mite be going overseas shortly, but I figured the statutory provisions for intestate deaths were sufficient as long as I wasn't married or anything.

Grandmother Yates being over again this afternoon, Jim sat down before her with pencil and paper and quizzed her about our maternal ancestors. We'd never inquired much into that branch before, there being few records and apparently nothing outstanding to record. In Dad's family there were numerous old maids who kept the family records, and Jim began typing out a lengthy ms written by one of these, but finally Dad said he'd have one of his office clerks at Mobile do it.

Mother, Martha, Dad, Jim, and I sitting around talking was a situation in which I could talk freely about the uncomplimentary aspects of the South as compared to the East, North, and West. It began when Jim or I referred to the backwardness of the South and the Colonel bristled. Eventually we hauled out a World Almanac and looked up statistics such as the expenditures for education, but there were too many disturbing factors to prove anything rigorously by figures or logic, and none of the combatants changed beliefs; as for the ladies, I don't know.

Next morning our genealogical interest among other forces took us up to the store-room over Hillery's Hardware, where Dad had left his office safe and other things. We dug out some very ancient letters from the Florida-NorthCarolina branch, some nearly a century old. A particularly interesting one was from a Bristol in the Carolina backwoods to his son, who'd taken up farming at a place about a hundred miles away. The father hoped, without much hope, that he'd get to see his son again sometime, and wandered off into a dissertation that "Life is so uncertain and death is so certain that the best thing we can do is prepare for it." Most of the letter was talk about agriculture--what crops he'd planted in what fields, how the cattle were doing, what handcraft shops he'd set up on the farm, what he'd taken to market in South Carolina and what he'd gotten for it, and so on, but he

"I think old Zack Taylor will make the best president we've had since Washington."

took time to warn his son against those sneaky Democrats, who'd try to get away with anything. Jim would scarcely believe me that South Carolina had been a Whig stronghold. The script was somewhat archaic, with abbreviations that showed the lack of a typewriter's discipline, such as superscript d with a line under it

for the -ed ending; and I think it used the old sharp s that you see in the Declaration of Independence.

I still hadn't heard anything about my airline reservation, and Jim, who'd applied for a reservation without buying a ticket, was especially worried, calculating he'd need the hostess's help in taking Jimmy out to Arizona. So we put thru a call to Oklahoma City and then to Ft Worth, and they said things were full up, but they'd put us on the waiting list in case cancellations came in.

I got the family car to give the town and country a last good looking-over, and drove by Delta's to take her along for company. The hiway north to Duncan I'd seen plenty of, but we drove west a mile or two, past the now-abandoned golf course, and along the highway south, by the roadside park and the Indians' Cave and Clay Cliff, and east to the Lake. I'd looked at the lake before on a return from Loco, but drove around it this time. The silt has at last settled to the bottom, and it's a very beautiful sheet of dark blue, little lowered by drought and withdrawals. As City

Attorney, Dad had a lot to do with getting the land donated and the CWA, FEERA, and WPA allocations to build it, and as scouts we had watched the dam rise and then the water line. I'd thought I might find time to go fishing again, but didn't get around to it.

Downtown at the drug store, I heard that Jim wanted the car to take the baby's pen, bed, etc, up to Duncan to ship, so drove Delta home, made a date for the rodeo in Temple that nite, and went up with Jim. While there, he purchased a metal trunk at a price so exorbitant that Dad declared we'd go to Ft Sill next day and see what could be had at the QM commissary.

Hillas, who had attended the Field Artillery School there, went along, and since articles could be sold only to military personnel, he and Dad each bot a locker for us, wooden ones as functional as the one Jim had gotten, at about a fifth of the price (That's what we'll get when we have socialism, folks!). We had lunch at the Officers' Club, and after looking around the post awhile, returned to Duncan, where the--uh--people in the luggage and pawn shop refused to take back the metal trunk, so Dad kept the locker he'd bot. On the way down to Comanche, he drew a distinction between the figurative meaning of the word and the phrase that commonly denote illegitimacy.

This being the 15th of September, it was hi time I was filing my declaration of income. Didn't actually get it mailed till the 16th, but the Internal Revenue boys haven't come around yet, so I guess I was forgiven.

Returning from an errand downtown, I met a fellow in scout uniform with a Comanche community strip. What, was there still a troop here? Yes, there was. Had they found a scoutmaster yet? No, they hadn't.

I hope I can
get prints of
the pic to go
here

Sitting under that pecan tree again, we watched Jim trying to teach his little moron to walk. He was mortified at the memory of Herky in Atlanta; but on the other hand, Herky couldn't talk at all, and double-fitz could. Finally he took a few steps, and J'll let it go at that, wanting his wife to think she will have seen his first steps.

Dad gave Hillas his version of what our argument Monday nite had been about, but no hot dispute got going on that, so I withdrew to study the National Geographics. Returned when George Butts showed up with his wife, once a favorite school teacher of mine, now a pillar of the worse sort of Methodism. Mr Butts told interesting anecdotes on local characters, and presently left again.

Very belatedly I began packing in my locker the things I wanted to send to Washington, and in my gladstone and brief case that which I might need on the rest of my trip, but very quickly all were full, and I had only to worry about where to put the rest of my stuff.

The departure day, and much yet to be done. Early Dad and I drove up to return a borrowed walker to friends in Duncan; later Jim and I went up again, and I left instructions for my mail to be forwarded. We picked up the laundry in Duncan and the wash in Comanche --ah, practically one-day service was the standard thing; and in Washington they say blandly, "About two weeks". Last-minute packing and we took the lockers down to the depot in Comanche, mine to be held awhile and then shipped to Washington. And after that more things to do. George Butts agreed to put inside the house any boxes of stuff that I might send from Washington, since he has the keys, and I asked the telegraf man to repeat to Bronson in IA any telegram that might come, expecting there might be something from the Civil Service Commission or OFEC. The fone was taken out and the house locked up, since Mother was returning with Dad now that the baby would go elsewhere. And so about noon we took off, and began to remember things we'd forgotten to do. Martha and Hillas left by another route.

After lunch, I commenced an argument with my father on the relative merit of hymns like "When They Ring Those Golden Bells for You and Me" and the Harry Emerson Fessick type, "For the living of these days", etc. This train of talk was cut off, however, when we passed thru Decatur, the county seat of Wise. A signboard at the edge of town carried the famous frase which Ashley can tell you, and in smaller letters, the time and place of YMCA meetings.

The airport was this side of Ft Worth. We waited at the counter for some time while the girl foned around about our reservations, and finally told us that the planes for those days were booked up with priority passengers, but we could come down that nite and wait around for cancellations if we wished, which Jim decided to do. I got my ticket refunded, gave Jim any right to the reservation I'd applied for, and said I'd see him in Tucson if he got there in time.

First, however, all of us went to the hotel where Dad had a reservation, and after building a pen of luggage to contain 2Fitz, went down for supper. I read a couple of Edgar A Guest poems out of the paper for the disgust of my kinsmen. Maybe before, maybe after eating, Dad and I looked into the matter of my transportation westward. I'd wanted to go thru central New Mexico, but connections there from Ft Worth were bad, and finally I reluctantly gave in to his advice that I go by way of El Paso. At the downtown ticket office, I was lucky enuf to get a Pullman to the other side of Pecos. Mother and I sat up on the mezzanine talking till train time. There was a USO lounge nearby, and from time to time sailors would pass, singing "Bell-bottom Trousers", which bids fair to be the Mademoiselle from Armentieres of this war. Finally time came, and I said good-bye and took a cab.

EL PASO

It was my first encounter with Pullmans, but I managed pretty well. All next day we plowed thru the wastes of West Texas--"The utterest nuthin' that there is", Dad called it--and I gave some horse laughs to the history book that said the Great American Desert no longer exists. You could put half a dozen Eastern states out there and not find 'em for weeks. I occupied the time with reading and sometimes looking at the landscape, tho I'd seen it before on the Senior trip to Carlsbad.

At sundown we reached El Paso, and after having a taxi driver find me a hotel, I took off for Juarez, which is just across the river (In fact, part of it appears to be on this side of the river now, according to the map, due to changes in the channel, I suppose).

I had expected there to be some red tape about crossing the line. We were required to get all our paper money changed into \$2 bills, in order, I later learned, to thwart counterfeiting in Mexico, since they don't produce \$2 bills there. When I got to the international bridge, however, the border-guard just asked me to declare my citizenship, verbally, and waved me on, without looking to see what kind of money I had or anything. So I walked on, and for the first time left my native sovereignty.

The border was probably Juarez's biggest industry. At any rate, there were several blocks of shops and cabarets, and back on the native main street and around the square they were still catering to tourist trade. I bot a few things that are rather unobtainable in the States, including flashlite batteries, scotch tape, usw. After while I investigated a dinner of Mexican food in one of the better dine-and-dance places. Following this, I started walking eastward, looking for the edge of town. Didn't reach it, but I got a good cross-section of the residential district. I was surprised and pleased with the solid homes, the clean dirt streets, and the well-kept appearance of the people. I only hope North Africa is in half as good condition.

Next morning I went to Juarez again, this time taking my camera, but they made me check it at the border. Just before I checked it, I took a picture, and the cable, which must not be designed for an Argus, jammed in the mechanism. In trying to loosen it, I dropped a tiny screw, and despite the best efforts of myself and numerous bystanders, couldn't find it. It wasn't fatal, however.

In the Ciudad I went to the post office and bot a Mexican card, on which I wrote:

18 Sep 43

Dear Mr Degler:

I have a Cosmic Mind.

José Iturgo

The return address, on the other side of the card, was José Iturgo 313 Champá Juarez Chih. I also looked around for a watch, and found some as low as 25 dollars Mex (\$5 A.M.), but wasn't yet reconciled to paying that to replace a dollar watch, especially since I had an Elgin that only needed repairing (a matter of months).

After another ramble thru El Paso, I checked out and headed for the railroad station. There I joined a mob waiting at the proper gate, which continued to wait for several hours--the train we should have gotten on was full. Verily wartime is no time for pleasure tripping. I took time out to go back into the waiting room and with my wee penknife peel a couple of layers off the camera's face to release the jammed cable. Then return to waiting at the gate for Katy (it was Southern Pacific rather than MKT, but it makes a nice play on words). Ah, where was Spirit of FooFoo then? One blast upon its bugle-honk Were worth a thousand yen. After so long a time I didn't feel poetic or humorous or anything else; only fear of punishment kept me from wringing the necks of several squalling babies.

But all things must end, and at last we got passage for the West. I finished reading the current Astounding, and the soldier sitting next to me borrowed it to read a story. He picked, of all things, "Willie". I stretched out on an unused lunch counter and slept a while. Wakening, I struggled with unaccustomed idleness. Couldn't work on bringing my diary up to date because the train jiggled too much for writing permanently readable shorthand. I did finish the shorthand draft of my Hellenistic comedy of fandom, however. Then someone left a copy of Esquire lying on the counter and I looked thru it. Among other interesting material, there was an article "From Bazookas to the Moon", which seemed to me to give the rocket guns more importance in the war than they've thus far shown. The soldier finally borrowed the Astounding again, and I recommended Symbiotica. He was somewhat afraid of its length, but undertook it, and had almost finished it when we reached Tucson. Who knows? Maybe he'll buy that issue just to see how the story ends, and get started on the fatal road.

TUCSON

(Coincidence. As I type this, the radio is talking about war rockets. And just yesterday I was reading an article in the Reader's Digest which mentioned Buck Rogers and space rockets. We can expect a lot of allusions to s-f in connection with this weapon.)

I looked around in Tucson for a hotel room, but found absolutely none--one place said they mite have a cot for me. So I tramped with my gladstone, camera, and brief case to the block where the Don Martin Apartments were supposed to be located. To inquire my way, I entered an open door, but the hall was dark. Going upstairs toward a lighted doorway, I spotted a scalp-lock that I knew.

Mr.

Speer hadn't known I was coming. Jim had arrived but a few hours earlier--he'd been on that train that I couldn't get on in El Paso (airplane? he said; with priority passengers waiting?) I was introduced to Peggy's mother, who in addition to

a full-time job is helping take care of Peggy's apartment while she's fitting the tub--and they're having servant trouble, too. In the course of the evening, her younger sister came in from a party that was being held somewhere in the building, and presently, dressed in a Gibson Girl get-up, danced a can-can for us. (Throw in everything of scientific interest that you can, Speer; mention that her large chin area reminded you of Howard P. Lovecraft.)

I bunked in a cabana, light wood-frame-and-cloth enclosures on the garage roof that are used for sun-bathing during the day, and got better acquainted with the constellations that I'd been for a long time.

We aroused very late next morning, and then sat around idly, as befitted people on vacation. Someone had hung my blue suit, much wrinkled from being packed, in the bathroom, which later filled with steam when someone turned on the shower. When the film of droplets was brushed off the suit, all the wrinkles, except the regular creases, were gone. This process is described for the benefit of the fanation, and may be used without charge.

After a while, Jim harnessed up his Mercury, the same Panzerkampfwagen in which the Philadelphia Blitzkrieg was carried out, which they'd taken with them to Mexico City, but returned to Tucson when they were transferred to Chile. It still had an excellent motor. We went out to the Army field near town where his sister-in-law worked and got her and another girl who worked there, and drove out to the Saguaro National Monument, several miles of mountain foothills with forests of giant cactus scattered over them. I took some color pictures. The cactuses are striking sights, tho Jim said they paled beside the Organ Pipe cactuses on the border southward; many of them were so insect-eaten that their arms drooped considerable, but of course fotografs of such specimens are never published.

That afternoon I made an effort to hitchhike to Phoenix to make connections for the Grand Canyon, but most of the traffic seemed to be local. Two cars stopped, but neither was going far, so I gave up the effort when the Panzerkampfwagen returned to see how I had fared. If I'd kept my surplus C coupons instead of giving them to Dad, we mite have used them to get me to Phoenix, but lacking that, and seeing how bad the connections were all the way to Grand Canyon, I gave up the idea. Jim urged that the Canyon was sight more worth seeing than Sequoia etc, which I planned to try to visit, but I replied that it was obvious that God didn't want me to go to Grand Canyon this time.

There were still some things around Tucson worth seeing. They drove me out to the Mission of San Xavier del Bac, which our American Art class had studied for some two days. Seeing the whole thing, tho, it was less effective than selected fotos had been. A lot of it looked run-down, and more of it commercialized, and I was thoroly disgusted when I came into the main chapel. Catholic PAPAs are advised to hate me, for I've taken a definite dislike to their particular form of paganism. Out of pure spite I blew out one of the candles burning before something-or-other, and went so far in my desecration as to detach from the robes of one of the saint-dummies in niches along the wall, one of several safety pins strung with little lead or silver images of praying figures, or simply horrid little hobgoblins having no possible religious meaning except idolatry.

In an anteroom I took a copy of a free Catholic newspaper full of nonsense on current events, and featuring on the front page a cartoon attacking mercenary publishers who poisoned the minds of youth with literary trash, evil magazines, indecent literature, and above all, lurid "comic" books. The Mission stands in the middle of a rather well-watered piece of country, farmed mainly by ignorant Indians to whom Catholicism is well adapted. In this country, tho, the Panzerkampfwagen frightened an antelope into flite. And in the Saguaro that morning we'd seen a wild cat. The woolly West, no less.

That evening four of us went to a rather snazzy hotel for drinks and smorgasbord supper

(the Falks are of Swedish stock), and afterwards drove around in the fashionable suburbs. Even the biggest houses here are usually one-storeyed.

Next day being Monday, I got a ticket for Los Angeles, but the train didn't leave till evening. In the morning I annoyed Bratling for a while, who was walled in by chairs in the apartment around the corner, and later watched his parents coax him to walk, until his mother saw his first steps. Among the reading-matter available was a set of three rather small books entitled Present Tense, an anthology of writings indicating what may be the permanent values in American life. In the first volume, First Person Singular, was, among other things, Huxley's contribution to Fadiman's "I Believe" volume reprinted, "The Creed of an Agnostic", which reads like one long quoteworthy quote. In the third volume, Picture of a World, was the first act of R.U.R.

Jim and I drove out to the Field again, to get his next batch of inoculations against India diseases and pick up Peggy's sister, who was resigning that day to go to school again. Despite my War Department badge and everything, I wasn't permitted to go beyond the entrance gate, so after repairing my highway map with scotch tape I stretched out and drowsed with my hat over my face in a mañana attitude most unbecoming to the author of First Dissertation on Discipline.

We stopped for cokes at a hotel where reputedly the charge for ~~patients~~ is some \$25 per day. The cold drinks man beside the swimming pool in back filled three glasses with ice and then poured the contents of a Pepsi-Cola bottle into the three of them and charged 10¢ apiece. Nice work if you can get it. We drove on thru the Arizona University grounds, then Jim went home and we went to see the movie of Claudia. Fortunately I had read Et Dukkehjem and had seen Junior Miss, so was able to make seemingly educated remarks to my companion, who had done some specializing in dramatics.

The train-company on the last lap westward had most of them been riding together for several wearying chair-car days, and there was a lot of friendliness and informality among them. I noticed a group of service men gathered around a girl who was reading to them from an Army pamphlet on venereal disease, with many bursts of laughter. My neighbor was a volunteer from northern Alabama on his way to be a marine. I quizzed him about farming, local opinion on Eleanor Roosevelt, the best solution to the race problem, and so on.

LOS ANGELES

And so, about noon on Tuesday 21 Sep 43, I entered Shangri-La. A cab-driver took me to a hotel where I immediately got a room. LA must not be very bad off as concerns crowding, then. Got a haircut from scalpers who charged two or three dollars for it, and relieved my feelings by tearing down a filthy "patriotic" cartoon they had on the wall. Then I began to puzzle over the map and guide-book I'd bot as soon as I got off the train. It left much to be desired, the street maps of each of some half-hundred squares of town being placed on separate pages.

Eventually I found my way out to Bronsonville-on-Pacific and located the Spanish-adobe type bungalow with Bronson and several other names on the mailbox. No one answered to my knock, so after a time I went around to the back. Beverly Ann (she's a slan, so I don't have to refer to her by a Greek letter) had left the kitchen door unlocked, and I walked in in the approved fan fashion, entered the front room which was Phil's, and after reading some of his mail and looking over the layout, wrote a note and left it in his typewriter. Put another note in the mailbox directing attention to it, and proceeded to get lost in the transit system of Santa Monica and Venice. That I mite call on some of the other addresses in the Fantasy Amateur in that vicinity, but began to fear I wouldn't be at the hotel at some of the times I'd suggested Phil fene. Santa Monica was a beautiful residential district, and I found the climate quite satisfactory, and began to wonder if I mightn't

move out here if the foreign service fell thru. Once the bus route came along close by the ocean, but fog veiled it from sight. So at length I got back to downtown LA. I can't give the city much on its transit or street system, but it's excellent in other ways. By and large it's a new city; I understand that most of it has been built in the last twenty or thirty years; and it gets the benefit of some modern knowledge in how cities should be built--wide streets, and very few hideous buildings, nor any slums, so far as I saw. The street called Main Street seems to be somewhat older, and is lined with pawn shops, penny arcades, and movie houses which stoutly resolve that Youth Must Be Told.

Phil hadn't foned when I got to the hotel, but upon my return from supper (or dinner--as you will) there was a number for me to call back. Regret was later expressed that they answered my ring with a prosaic "Hello"; ordinarily, calls to the clubroom are answered with a Bob Hopeian "Los Angeles City Morgue; a tisket, a tasket, we'll put you in a casket", or something equally effective.

I must now apologize in advance for inaccuracies in my account of the adventures of the next three days. I took no notes, and didn't bother much with remembering who came in and who went out, or who was in a particular bunch. Moreover, my memory of the exact order in which things happened is likely to be cloudy two months after the event.

A delegation headed by Phil came down to the Rosslyn to guide me to the clubroom. I was loaded with camera, flash bulbs, and everything, except a flash gun. We went upstairs and got that, then ho for South Bixel. A mustache was there with Ackerman attached, Morajo was working on something, and perhaps Freehafer was present: these I had met before. 4e and I would have much to talk about later, but I couldn't think of anything appropriately witty for the re-meeting, and felt a little initial embarrassment or clumsiness. There were various other Angelenoes scattered about the room, tho this wasn't a meeting nite. Clod Degler came in pretty soon and helloed me heartily --we'd already met in New York. Various of us talked together, and discussed plans for the next few days, since I'd decided after the delay in Tucson not to attempt to see the Sequoias and would wait for the Thursday evening LASFS meeting. Then I was introduced to the new LA game of dodging Degler. Yerke led me outside, and by a devious route thru the apartment house next door, finally ending up at Mary's place, where several fen were drinking pop and waiting for the group to assemble.

We took a street car to Ackerman's old address, his grandmother's apartment, and Yerke had to continue home from there. The rest went up to the Ackerman place and were shown thru his collections. There is one room taken up entirely with books, and another with a bed in it, and more cases of books, pro mags, and some boxes of unassorted scrapbook stuff. The walls of both rooms are practically papered with stf originals, fotos of Simone Simon and other film ladies, and nudies in all stages of undress. After looking things over, our group scattered to wherever in the apartment individual interests lay. I was in the bibliothek for a while being awed by the dozens of fantatitles I'd never heard of and the multifarious editions of many. Ackerman revealed piano-playing ability I hadn't heard of before, and I came out to listen to some past popular songs that had fond associations. After while the piano was given over to Bronson and another moron who were happy playing chopsticks and nertz while we intellectuals, back in the book-board, got to talking about SDRussell's decimal classification of fantasy fiction and classification in general and the problem of defining fantasy and so on. Finally I suggested it was time we let a soldier get some sleep, but first asked him to pose for a foto, which didn't turn out very well. Then we had to see his garage before we left. It is filled with his duplicates of magazines that he has in his collections in the house. Some transactions were made, proceeds to go to bundles for Britain, and finally we took our leave.

It had been arranged that Mike Fern and I get together next morning and he guide me to Hollywood, which I must see. After a little trouble in which we must have crossed en route, we made contact, and headed generally westward. He had discovered a prospect in a letter dept of one of the pros, with an LA address, and we detoured to look him up. Wasn't in; we'd return in the afternoon. We didn't. I tried to engage Mike in conversation, but about all I could get was a monosyllabic affirmative. At the foot of the clog railway I tried to take a picture of it, and the cable jammed again. Having lost my wee penknife, bot another, and again took off several layers of Duquesne's faceplates, to fix it once again. We stopped by the LA Library, and in the directory room I looked up a couple of Washington addresses I wanted to write to.

We stopped by the clubroom, and I was persuaded to wait till evening to see Hollywood. Mike had already begun to help Mel Brown with the indexing of the Club library. There were several fellows in there at all times; often one or two mite even sleep there instead of going home. Mel had been temporarily laid off from work but wasn't allowed to get another job, and for various other reasons numerous LA4FSers were free for hobbying on certain days. Clod was there, busily working on Cosmic Circle pubs, wondering whether the fellows had tried to dodge him last nite, ktp. He brot an envelope of the current JAPA Mailing, and I looked thru it and read some of the things, then turned to one of the tripewriters and transcribed, with carbon copies, the drama I'd finished writing on the train.

Outside, returning from lunch, we had encountered Walt Daugherty with a car and a girl, and I learned he'd been divorced for more than a year. Daugherty came in later in the afternoon--haw, I guess that was next day.

I can't praise too hily the clubroom idea, of which LA's is an excellent example. Ten were coming in all during the day to type something, use the mimeo, read something, or just chat. The club room is of about the right size. It was formerly a beauty parlor, and rusty water can still be drawn from the hydrant in the room, but members generally go next door. Beside the fene (which Yerke covers in the fotograf) is a small window into a linen closet under the stairs in the apartment building. Up by the front door is a supply cabinet in which stencils hang to dry. Once or twice I helped Kepner (behind the mimeo in the pic) burn the waste paper, and noticed among it fragments of several New Testaments. 4SJ, I learned, gets all that he can of this when it's passed out to service men, then brings it to Society meetings and tears them up. The LASFS, I'm told, is now 100% atheistic, tho later I heard some speculation about Miss Bronson's beliefs.

So an idyllic afternoon passed away, and our augmented crowd went to the usual place to eat (where prices are higher than Degler will pay), and did our best to let people know that we were around, and give the waitress a nervous breakdown, but she's used to the imagi-natives now.

A party was organized to go out to Hollywood, and plans made for leaping aboard Freehafer's car and speeding away, which wasn't so thrilling when Degler didn't seem to notice we'd left. Paularis had little gasoline, so we took transit to Hollywood and Vine. Yerke guided the expedition, first to Grauman's, with all the star footprints, with variations, in the sidewalk. The supply, I was told, is so numerous now that most of the blocks are stored, and laid down in rotation, to be taken up after awhile to make room for others. Hwood Blvd was affected by dimout regulations, and Fassbeinder regretted

that I couldn't see it in all its glory. Walking down the street, we suddenly missed Freehafer and Russell, and found them in the nearest bookstore. Having gone in to get them, we couldn't get out for a while ourselves. I spent only about \$20 there - all for the Columbia Encyclopedia, which I ordered shipped to General Delivery, Washington. Little later the book-friends dived into another place, and thereafter someone held blinders on SDR when we passed a book store; and Bronson, every time we passed a store window with a cheesecake advertisement in it, would turn back shouting, "Becks!"

Yerke's home was at hand, and we turned our steps thither, passing the NBC studio where arrangements had once been made for Pacificon students to occupy a special section, and mention of their presence be made on the broadcast. Other lovely Pacificon plans too I heard while there. I got an entirely new angle on Yerke from knowing him in person. He's moderate and tolerant in his attitudes, with an ordinary sense of humor, quite different from the Fassbeinder of Technocracy days. It was illuminating to visit at his conservative middle-class home and notice the family feeling there. We sat around in the front room, and I brot up the question, "How old were you, the first thing you can remember?" Yerke remembered a scene identified as when he was barely two years old, thus beating the almost-3 memory that I'd recently established. Mrs Yerke served up a special concoction of sherbet and flavor and something, whose name I forget, while linguist Yerke led a discussion on language as an index of civilization, and other evidence, and concluded that there is something in the Negro's heredity which holds him back. After eating, we retired to Tubby's room to paw thru his books and stuff, and he dug up a letter I'd written about the time of Munich and read it too fast for anyone but me to understand, for which I was thankful.

Finally he shoed us out and the fen went their several ways, Freehafer staying with me to get me back to the Rosslyn. After two days in LA, I discovered that I had north and west mixed up, which is most confusing to one who knows a place by compass directions, as I do.

Arising very late the next day, I wrote some cards, looked into the matter of transportation to Frisco, and bought a watch. I should have known better than to buy from those Isaacites along Main Street. \$4.50 it was marked, tax putting it over \$5, and then I discovered later that it could only be wound up a few hours' worth, then the whole spring case slipped, so that the watch ran down every nite.

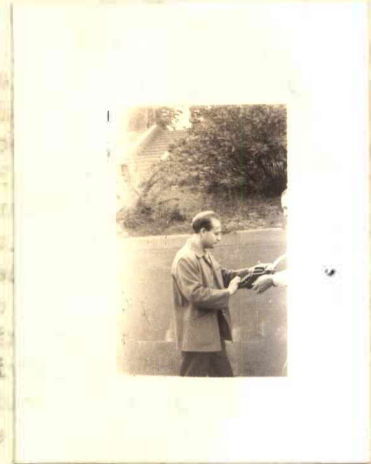
Didn't get to the clubroom long before dinner time. Some mail had come in, whether addressed to 637½ S Bixel, or brot by Meroje from Metro Station, I don't know. Among it was a card the LA boys had addressed to Degler, saying in large letters, "I have a Cosmic Mind!" signed Will Sykora. Gee, Degler said. He recalled other cards he'd received, from a fellow in North Carolina, and other people, that had said just the same thing, and nothing more. After I'd pointedly examined the postmark for a while, Clod got the idea, and said Gee, do you suppose Sykora's in Los Angeles now? I tried to sidetrack him then, but Superfan drove right on to the logical conclusion: Do you suppose this is just a gag somebody's pulled? But he didn't reach any decision on the matter. I wonder if the Angels carried out any of their other plans, about sending him cards with non-existent or hily inaccessible Los Angeles addresses on them.

Ven Herr Degler says ve iss der super race,
Ve go Heil! Heil! right in Herr Deg-
ler's face;
Ven Don Rogers says, "Ve own der world
und space!"
Ve go Heil! Heil! right in Herr Rogers'
face!

Enter Walt Daugherty.
"Heil!" "Heil!" "We'll have a heil of a good time."
The fone in the corner rings.
At first I think it's somebody pretending to be Sykora, from the conversation on

this end of the line." but it turns out to be John Cunningham, who's being transferred away. Does anyone want to talk to him? One-Face (who had to be in camp last nite, but is here for the Thursday nite meeting) and I line up. I learn that he's only going about fifty miles away. Can't come to the meeting, tonite. We have very little to say to each other; the boys had told me that he was in person totally unlike his style in print--shy, very little to say, apparently extreme introvert. Anybody else want to talk to him? No. Well, see you at the Pacificon. When I've hung up, Daugherty accusingly tells Phil, Bruce, and others that they ought to have talked to him. Defensively, "Fout. Have you ever had a letter from him?" "Sure; we've all seen letters from Cunningham. But you ought to have talked to him."

I had just begun to rehash the race issue with Morajo when the gang began to go out to eat. Secretaryerke had just gotten the minutes under way, and took the typewriter along, Walt assisting him. While we waited for our orders, he typed and I once again disassembled Duquesne to unjam the cable. At one of these supper sessions, I got a chance to look over the beginning of Yerke's report on the Cosmic Circle which he was working on at the time. Dogler was a never-failing topic of conversation, and I heard many tales of things he'd done (just that day, the mail had included a letter from Widner denouncing him). Expulsion was already being mentioned, but no action was instituted. I thot that the Society should pass a resolution denouncing the Cosmic Circle, to be sent to publicity channels that Coordinator Clod mite try to use, but no one particularly took to the idea.



The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society has its name and coat of arms boldly painted on the large plate glass window that faces the sidewalk. As some of us stood before the door (this was probably earlier in the afternoon), two schoolgirls came by and asked, "What do you all really do in there?" Answered Daugherty, "We play tiddledy-winks with manhole covers."

The faithful were beginning to arrive pretty steadily now, and I was introduced to most of those that I didn't already know. For some reason Dollens and Brackney didn't attend this meeting, but the MFS was pretty well represented anyway.

Enter Arden Benson. Phil and others pounce on him, hug him, and pound him on the back, the while blubbing, "Bunce! My old pal Bunce!" I'm told that they go thru this ritual every time they meet.

Enter Miss Bronson. Gaw... If she ever goes to a convention, she'll cause more trouble than Trudy and Pogo did put together. Forry says there's already been much strife within the LAFFMFS over who shall sit next to her at meetings. He rather disapproves of attractive girls in fandom, but I haven't the heart to agree with him.

Enter Art Joquel, recognizing me. "Gad, fellow, I thot I left you in Washington."

At last the meeting was called to order, and business disposed of. The piece de resistance of the evening's program was a lecture on Egyptology which Daugherty has delivered before various groups in Los Angeles. He didn't have projector and slides, so passed around pictures to illustrate the talk. Unfortunately, he started them around the circle from both ends. I was about at the middle and they came at me from both sides, and I'd get mixed up and pass them back, and then the fen on both sides would

"Being a science-fiction fan, I'm an atheist of course, and don't believe in this King Tut's curse."

say they'd already seen them and pass 'em back and I'd have to lay them by, and at the end of the lecture, Alojo, at one end of the line, called, "Hey, we didn't get to see any of those that started around the other way."

After the meeting we divided into little discussing groups. I let fall a remark about the BFS which showed my ignorance, and I got a British fanzine from somewhere and gave it to me, with evidence of great concern, and I read much that I hadn't known, while Walt conducted a discussion of what the next general fan organization should be like. Walt was a great surprise to me; I'd supposed him rather a dabbler in fandom, but he seemed to be vitally interested.

The J presently took me a couple doors southward, where Morojo rooms. Quite a few of the members have taken rooms within a block or so of the club, which indicates how large a factor it is in their lives at present. Morojo's was a typical fan den, with large shelves of promag files and books. I made some inquiries into her system of filing correspondence, too, wondering whether my generalizations in the Fancyclopedia had been correct.

One-Face and I returned to the clubroom, to find nearly everyone gone. In a soft-drinks place nearby we found the remnant, and a few more came in while we were guzzling. Then began the last walk together, down eastward toward the hotel. Several dropped out en route, but we were still enuf to fill up a couple of sofas in the lobby. This arrangement wasn't conducive to group discussion, however, and the only topic that went all along the line was Fifty Million Monkeys. Presently all but Degler and Ackerman left, and finally Degler went.

"I was working the nite shift then, dozing on the job, and all of a sudden, there in front of me it said, 'Send full details on Martian invasion.'"
--4SJ

With Forrest I carried on a very enjoyable conversation from the time we left the milk shakes. I asked quite personal questions, such as, "Do you ever intend to marry and raise a family?" "Where do you think your strong humanitarian feeling comes from?" and "Would you commit suicide if you went blind?", and he answered them all frankly and fully. Someday someone should do a careful character study of the Number One Fan; thus far almost the only ones

"Geo, I'll bet I like science-fiction better'n anybody else in the world!"

--4e at 14

are Fassbeinder's articles branding him a schizophrenic, which is totally inadequate. In general, I prefer that fans make a strong place for themselves in the outside world as well as in fandom, but a few 100% fans like Forry, who'll build their whole lives around science-fiction fandom, definitely have their place. The striking thing about Ackerman's character is the youthfulness of some of his ideas--Lowndes would call it arrested development. He has refused to take

on some of the responsibilities and attitudes of an adult. He is Claudia, he is the Marble Faun, who had no soul as long as nothing very catastrophic had happened to him. In ordinary moods he has the happy optimism of Disney's Duckling. He has a faith in things that thinkers are telling us the Twentieth Century has proved to be undependable.

After a time we went down to Main Street to get red pop and hot dogs, and I had a little brush with a belligerent drunk. Then it was time for him to go. At the car stop he looked me over and said I didn't look a bit different from the way I appeared at the Chicon. Maybe I'm a case of arrested development too. Then his street car came along, and with a final handshake and aufs Pacificon he boarded and was borne away. The #1 Face was my last sight of Los Angeles fandom.

SAN FRANCISCO

Next morning I took a bus which traveled inland till it made contact with the San Joaquin Valley. Some time I looked at the landscape and some time read But Without Horns, but the irregular life in LA must have put me in bad condition, for reading on the bus began to make me feel a little sickish. Slept it off.

Awoke at twilight to find the bus passing thru the residential section of some small city, and I was somewhat surprised to see leaves lying on the grass--had scarcely thought of its being autumn. The leaves would be falling in Chevy Chase too, I thought, and felt a tinge of homesickness. For Oklahoma? No; Washington.

Late, late in the evening we came into San Francisco, and after trying half a dozen hotels, found one where I could get a room. I immediately phoned Harry Honig, whose address Ackerman had given me, and made arrangements to come out next day. Then I left my things in my room and went outside to wander around.

Frisco reminded me a lot of Boston: most of its sightseeing parts are within easy walking distance of each other, and it has the look of a very old town. The most striking thing about it, tho, was its up-and-downness. I never saw such a place. I got a map of the city and the Bay region, but almost all my needs were served by a little Clinton's Cafeterias map, which showed all of Frisco, and gave the downtown section street by street. Market Street was aswamp with sailors and soldiers, and this was only Friday night. After a while I turned toward a tunnel and emerged in Chinatown. It had a very sleepy face, tho; I saw hardly a single hatchet murder while walking thru it. Climbed Nob Hill then, dropped down toward Market again, and after a final turn around a few blocks, returned to the hotel.

After breakfast I had some hours for sightseeing before time to see Honig, so headed toward the Barbary Coast. Its evilness has been pretty well thinned out with commercialism now, I fear. Duquesne again gave me trouble, and in unjamming the cable I lost a screw off the face plate. That wasn't fatal to picture-taking, either, but was bothersome. As I approached Telegraph Hill I shot up the last of that cartridge on the precipitousness of it, and hadn't thought to bring any more film. They had me check the camera before going up the Coit Tower atop the Hill, however. It gave a beautiful view all about, and I got my first real look at the Pacific from there. Going down again, I asked the old man in the elevator if he knew of any place where I could buy some more 35mm film. You can take pictures from the plaza on top of the hill, he answered, but you can't take any up in the tower. Film, I said. No, not up in the tower, Fossil answered.

It was getting close to the time I'd agreed to see Harry, so I tumbled down the almost vertical front of the hill, but had a long wait at Fisherman's Wharf, and by the time I got a taxi and reached his address over on the west side of the peninsula, he and his mother had decided the phone call must have been a practical joke by that awful (in Mrs Honig's opinion) Bill Watson. Harry asked that I not tell his age, tho I think it's pretty generally known, but you can get a good idea of it when I say that he's a militant socialist and atheist, and is addicted to correcting his friends' pronunciation. He had a large collection of books and a lot of magazines, but has read very few of them. After I'd looked them over and examined into his non-existent system of filing correspondence, and we'd consumed some sandwiches and cola, he was able to get some of the localities on the phone, and a little later we set off for Watson's.

We rode on one of those old cable-cars which have no doors closing the entrances at either end, opposite which one often sits, and they apparently care not a farthing whether you fall out. A woman sitting on the other side of Honig handed him some religious

literature, which he took one look at and passed on to me. I took it and in the same motion tossed it out the door. After a while the woman said "If you didn't want to read it, you might have given it back or passed it on to someone else." "We're atheists", I explained. She was silent a while more, then said that we might change our minds after awhile, and her husband agreed that they always do change their minds when they're about to die. I forget what we said then, but it was something that called forth from him the old bromide about God creating man as a free moral agent.

About this time we reached Watson's apartment house and thundered at the door till he let us in. I got a chance to look at his collections a bit while he was getting ready, and he gave me the first two issues of his poetry magazine. Then off for Oakland and Tom Wright. Boucher lived nearby, I was told, but unfortunately required more notice than this to receive visitors.

Dick Kuhn

W T BELL

George Ebey

W
a
n
y
G

Bill Watson

Jack Speer

In the course of the evening, MM George Ebey, and finally Dick Kuhn, recently transferred, showed up, so that we had a gathering of six, not bad for a locality that was supposed to be dormant, and there were a few others who weren't able to come this nite. We looked over the art work that Wright had around, and he made some uncomplimentary remarks about me and mildly tore his hair over laymen presuming to criticize art. I wanted to look over TW's filing system, but he seemed to desire to conceal it from public gaze. So we talked of various persons, places, and things, including a lot of the confidential stuff that never gets into print and seldom into letters. Ever and anon I smote my palm and groaned for film and flash bulb to take a pic of this distinguished gathering. (No, John Taine wasn't there; W T Bell is Wright's way of being shy.) Kuhn told us stuff about the Michiconners, and how stewed Bronson was the nite they went out dating. I went out several times to fone around seeking information on transportation, with little luck.

We took our departure and the street car back across the Bay. After I'd left the last of the boys, I continued west to the Pacific. Passing thru an amusement park, I reached a sandy beach where the waves came in in irregular surges, and laved my hand in Balboa's ocean, as I'd said I would. Walking along the edge, I noticed a pier running into the sea, which didn't seem designed for anyone to walk on, but carried a pipe slung beneath. The pipe on the landward side presently dived into a low bluff at a sign saying Blank Sea Water Company. Can this be one of those ocean-mining projects that we read about in ASF?

Next morning I missed the bus and decided to take the train instead. There was time before its departure to go back to Telegraph Hill, this time fully loaded with film. The air was pretty misty, and lite poor, so I attempted a bulbing time exposure, and again had to dissect the camera to unjam the cable. Decided to go down the front face and take a picture or two of the victory gardens which marvelously clung to the precipice, and the houses of the art colony. Going down was much easier than returning to the top, and lite wasn't much better, but I tried a shot.

An MF asked, "Taking pictures here?" I told him what the old man of the tower told me, but he wasn't much impressed. He was nice, tho; not at all like that bull in Chicago.

But he had a job to do. No, I said, I hadn't taken a picture up here yet, except that time exposure a while ago on which the cable jammed (apparently, they hadn't seen me until I returned from my trip down the cliff face). He said several times that I was in a bad spot for taking pictures, and I think one time he didn't say "for taking pictures"; I stuck to my story of what Fossil had told me. One after another, I showed him my War Department fotografic badge, my draft registration, driver's license, and finally fotostats of my birth certificate and other evidence that I'd sent Civil Service. The certificate seemed to carry the most weight, and he asked me a few questions about Oklahoma, and I couldn't remember Kerr's name when he asked who was governor. This minor fault may have helped keep my story from seeming too perfect, however. While we talked, I noticed another MP standing nearby, in case I should pull a Luger out of the brief case, I suppose. Why did I want to be taking pictures up here anyway, MP asked. Same reason you usually take pictures--to show where you've been and to look at afterwards. Finally he said what he should do was take me to the Provost Marshal's office, but he'd let me go --I'd told him I had a train to catch.

By ferry across to Oakland, and then on the train westward, sleeping thru the Sacramento region. Later we began to thread thru mountain upon mountain, till it began to be mind-numbing. How in the world would Americans ever be able to use all this land and trees? We began to go thru tunnels, too, the first I knew of going thru, I remarked to a trainman off duty who sat with me. Every now and then I'd notice the train tossing a roll of newspapers to some lonely mountain cabin or sentry post at a tunnel mouth. I asked the trainman how many tunnels there were between here and there, and wondered if it'd be all right to take a picture of some. Better not, he advised; one guy was fotograffing RR property about here one time, and they telegrafted ahead and had FBI men waiting for him. Sitting in the aisle seat, I had a poor view of the sights, and went out on the inter-car platform to look for a while. When I returned, the trainman accused me of taking a picture of a tunnel entrance--actually, it was an orange I'd had in my hand. Pretty soon he got up and went out.

I'd told the MP I hadn't taken a picture after returning to the hilltop, and honestly didn't think I had. But after I got to remembering, I remembered that I had clicked the camera before the MP spoke to me. So at the first opportunity I went in the lavatory, rolled the film back to where the exposure of the Bay should be, and burned it with the electric lite. As for the trainman's statement that he was going to turn me in, nobody took me off at any of the small towns west of Reno, but it wasn't a comfortable feeling, and I wasn't sure I was free until nobody met me when I alited in Reno. FooFoo, I don't wanna be a hunted man.

SALT LAKE CITY

In Reno I foned the air lines, and was told there was no space for non-priority passengers, but I was lucky enuf to get a Pullman for the nite. In the diner, a couple of colored soldiers sat down opposite me, so I got a box lunch. Got to talking with the Pfc beside whom I sat in the coach to eat it, and remarked on what a nothingness this creation of Republican politics was (believe it or not, the fone directory for the whole state of Nevada is one rather small book). I was somewhat embarrassed when he turned out to be a native of Nevada, but he didn't seem to disagree.

"You can learn to make a living after you get out of college, but lots of young fellows never do learn how to live."
--man in the lounge

When I awoke next morning late, the train was already crossing the long long bridge and islandway over Great Salt Lake. The supports of the bridge, as well as all rocks and sticks that had been at the edge of the water long, were thickly encrusted

with salt. Presently we were across and entered Ogden. While the train stood in the station there, I went over to a box against the fence to mail, among others, a card as follows:

27 Sep 43

Dear Mr Degler:

I have a Cosmic Mind. What do I do now?

Walter von Raschen

Oedipus Utah

So far as I know, there is no place named Oedipus in Utah. I stayed on the train when it turned south, tho this was off my direct route, since I'd decided to see Salt Lake City.

Leaving my bags at the depot, I walked around in the Mormon capital. Main street was long and prosperous looking, as befits a city with upward of a hundred thousand. Cashing a Government check in the large Zion Cooperative Mercantile department store, I wandered into the office supplies section and began sorting out styluses etc for which I had to pay outrageous Mimeograph prices. In a large five and ten, I was disgusted to find glow-in-the-dark crucifixes for sale, which, the clerk told me, were for Catholics. I prefer Mormonism a hundred times to Catholicism.

After waiting for a long time in the railway office downtown, I got waited on and decided to Ubernacht in GSLC and go on the next day. After trying several hotels, I put up at the H Utah, and fetched my baggage from the station.

Entering the Temple grounds, I wandered thru their museum for a while, then joined a party of tourists that a young Mormon was showing thru the place.

At dusk I returned to the street, and got to talking to an old man who was admiring, in a bookshop window, the display of Sholem Asch's The Apostle. He was surmat surprised to hear what Asch's angle on Paul was. Thence I looped thru downtown and had dinner somewhere, then wandered westward and came to capitol hill. Turning aside there, I rambled along till a cliff dropped away on the left, and sat on a pile of mown weeds looking out over the lites of the far-stretching residential section, and later walked thru part of it. The Mormon culture probably would not appeal to our young intellectuals, with its emphasis on family discipline and hard work, but it has produced great results, and its tendency to collectivism places it in the progressive current at present.

From Salt Lake City I mailed another package of dirty clothes and other things I wouldn't need now, to General Delivery, Washington. From the train, I watched the countryside of the great plateau slip by, and was surprised to find so much of it well-watered valley land, quite capable of farming. I was disappointed that we passed within sight of no more mountains, and that I never saw any snow-capped ones. At one point that mine of information, the railway time table, said there were Rocky Mountains to the south of our route, in Colorado, but I didn't see them. North of us was Casper, too much out of the way, with poor train connections, for me to visit Perdue. The day passed without incident, except another dining car matter, in which I merely moved to a vacant seat at another table, and I slept or read most of the time. Some time in the nite we passed thru a corner of Colorado and much of Nebraska.

As we passed thru Iowa and Illinois, I sat analyzing the ugliness of the Middle Western small town. It seems to stem partly from the placing of houses far apart, with little attention to weed-grown vacant lots, or even to the yards of many houses. Many of the buildings are artless and ugly, of course, while houses, taken by themselves, often have some charm, tho built in the worst tradition of the architectural Reign of Terror, the General Grant period. 19th Century industrial installations have contributed greatly to the ugliness. The countryside, on the other hand, is very pleasant to look on.

BATTLE CREEK

In Chicago I raced frantically back and forth between stations till I found out which one my train would leave from. I'd then I might try hitchhiking again somewhere along here, but time was too short to take a chance. My extension of leave, if it was approved, should run out the end of the month, and I'd need to be back in Washington to find out where I stood on employment. While waiting for the train I tried to fone Tucker (I had originally planned to pass thru Bloomington), but he didn't seem to be in the fone book, and got something to eat and took a shower. Then off to Battle Creek.

The taxi driver had heard of Ashley, but belonged to a different company and didn't know anything about him. I hoped that they hadn't moved yet. No one answered my knock at 86 Upton Ave, and I was fixing to rap on a lited window when someone exploded onto a side porch I hadn't noticed. Liebscher. He recognized me instantly, tho we'd not met since 1940, and hustled me upstairs to the Ashley apartment. I sent him back down for my bags.

It was a

typical get-together, the principal Battle Creek fans being there: E. Perry, Jack Wiedenbeck, Al, and (with his arm around her) Walt and Abby Lu. The room was in the disarray into which they'd allowed it to fall after Slan Shack became definite for the future, and Al had more to describe than to exhibit the filing system that he theoretically used. Unusual equipment too they showed me, including the machine which photographed drawings on stencils--but strange to say they've never had a hektograf. Wiedenbeck displayed his set of drawing tools, with two fotos of naked women in the lid. Walt or somebody produced an album and scads of loose fotografs of fans. Gradually we settled down to just talking.



The subject matter covered many things not ordinarily considered suitable for mixed company. I heard about their new dirty word, "Rosebud!" and its origin, and about Tucker's marital mess, and I told some of the dirt I'd picked up in New York, I.A., and Frisco. After while the conversation turned on Slan Center, and from there wandered into the question of what's wrong with our educational system, and thence into Ashley's ruggedly individualistic ideas. I was shocked

"Why don't you do serious thinking like Speer does?"

-Ashley to Liebscher (reported)

to learn that he doesn't vote in civil elections, because he thinks both sides are so bad. And we talked on many other topics too, before I had to leave at midnite. I told 'em I'd come back if they called a Michiconference, so they said they would. Abby Lu served up some delicacies out of the ice box, and went down the street to fone for a cab. Al paid the driver and asked him to make me late for the train if he could.

After studying over the schedules, I'd decided that I could make the best time by going thru Detroit and Ontario, and then dropping south from Buffalo. I was asleep by the time we reached Jackson, and only clearly awake in the misty morning hours approaching Niagara, so saw nothing of Canada but some scattered houses too obscured to deduce anything from their architecture. After getting a ticket in Buffalo, I had a dollar and some change left, aside from some silver dollars. Some of the Spirit's three hundred had been banked, and some more spent on durable goods, and I'd cashed a check in addition to it and had kept no accounts, so I couldn't tell you within fifty dollars what the trip cost me. I just know it was worth it.

NOCH EINMAL NEW YORK

Time passed, but my appointment hung fire due to a reorganization. However, I resigned from the War Department and had terminal pay for nearly a month more. Idle hands find evil work to do, and I engaged in furious fan activity and stuff, and after a while decided to go slumming again.

Never having had much occasion to do hitchhiking, I decided to try to go that way on this trip, and if it took an extra day or two, I could spare it. For this purpose I bought a little wood-and-paper handbag to carry my camera and clothes, and about noon on Columbus Day took transit to the edge of town opposite Baltimore and began to wield the thumb. Very soon an Army officer stopped for me and took me to Baltimore, talking most of the way about how easy it is to evade rationing regulations.

In Balto I took a street car and caught a ride out to the edge of the city, but was told that US 1 is no longer the principal artery to Philadelphia. It was three or four miles along a side-road across the autumn-flamed countryside (I was using Kodachrome this time); I walked most of it. A ride of a mile or so got me to the new dual hiway, whose construction delayed the Washington vigilantes on their return from the Philly Blitzkrieg in '40. Another ride and a rather long period of thumbing, then a truck that was bound for East Orange stopped.

From East Orange transit took me to New York, and after being lost downtown, I got up to midtown and took a room about midnite.

Astir late next morning, I called Rockefeller Center to see how their tours ran, and foned Campbell, who without enthusiasm said I could come up at 3 that afternoon. I took the tour around Rockefeller Center, then, also the one thru NBC. Always before I'd been in New York on holidays or weekends, when most of the sights were unseeable; the situation this time was welcomingly different. DuQuesne went along with me, now equipped with a tripod, and there was no more trouble with the cable jamming because it had broken off and I had to touch off the mechanism with a match stem.

Then it was time for the old ritual. Calling on Campbell, which I'd never performed before because of the weak-end situation. John W. began by talking about security regulations in Washington and in buildings held been around to, and it was some time before I could bring up any subject in which I was interested. He only warmed up a little toward the end of the interview, when I got out DuQuesne, fotografy being a hobby of his.

Next I headed into the East Side, and found the gloomy building in which the Electrical Testing Laboratories were housed. I foned Koenig from the lobby. He was at first under the impression that I was calling from somewhere outside, but when he found I was there, asked me up to his office. We talked for a while there, but business kept coming in. His cordiality was in heartening contrast to Campbell's coolness. We arranged to get together for lunch next day, and I took my leave. I sat up near the bus driver to know where to get off, and he tossed back comments on the way that even good sections of New York were going to slums under the incursions of foreigners; for some reason he spoke particularly of the Japs.

I foned Julie Unger and found he'd been in all day, it being some kind of a holiday. I was much surprised to learn later that he is a religious Jew. We planned for him to meet me at the hotel next afternoon.

It was still some time before the Planetarium program began, and I spent it wandering around midtown (I had two maps of the city, not counting some small ones). Arrived a little late at the Planetarium, but they were still down in the room with the motion model of the solar system. In going

upstairs, a lot of the crowd swamped the scales which showed their weight on the various planets. In the dome room, I was startled at the illusion of being outside which was created when the lites were turned off and the dumbbell-machine turned on; felt like the guy in the control room of Universe when Joe-Jim turned on the telescreens. After the lecture I looked over the projector, marveling that it could produce and direct the movements of so many stars with apparently so few lens openings.

I've long wanted to look into a nite club like the one in The Mis-laid Charm, and had asked Julie's advice about finding such a one. Finally I followed my own guess, which was bad, and went to the Coconut Grove. No illusion of being anywhere but in a nite club, and pretty punk floor show. I took dinner there and left.

Next morning I shopped around some, getting some toy balloons among other things. Heck and I had lunch and returned to the Laboratories, which he proceeded to show me thru. 'Twas intensely interesting, even to one as scientifically uneducated as I am. One of the props was a bathysphere-sized shell intended for testing lite efficiency, with a blank-white interior whose distance one can't estimate when he's inside. Willy Ley, Koenig said, was impressed with this. It's a little agoraphobic.

Koenig seems to be the top man in at least a large department of the establishment. And here I found for the first time a fan who has secretaries to do his dirty work. Remember "The Prince Amuses Himself" in the Lastop to Limbo dept? While HK tended to some of the work that had accumulated, I went upstairs and looked over the varityper on which one or another of the girl clerks stencils "That crazy thing of Koenig's", as well as the mimeo with the automatic slipsheeter on which they're run off. A picture I took of the varityper didn't turn out. Down in the office again, I fotograffed Hiss Honor, and went on my way, an hour or so late for the rendezvous with Unger.

He was even a little later, however, so no damage was done. We went first to the Employment Service to see what overseas jobs they mite have for me (this was the only object of my trip that I'd told to people who gave me rides), and then took a double-decker bus down to Doc's office. Drygulch came forward to greet us, looking a little seedy, and we stood at the rail talking to him for some time. Julie wanted to know what Doc's annual earnings were, but he said he didn't know and refused to estimate it. He indicated his abandonment of fandom very definitely. It was about closing time there, and we left together, with the woman he had been engaged to, and appeared to still be keeping company with (Boy! A split infinitive and terminal preposition in one frase!). As Julius and I boarded the subway, he mourned, "An' Doc an' me used to be the best of friends."

We couldn't do much conversing on the train. Finally arrived at his apartment, and I had dinner with the family, his wife and son. Afterwards I helped Jay play with tinkertoys for a while, and Julie called to see if Langley Searles or one of the other localites could come up. They'd be very late if at all. So I sat in his living room eating grapes with one hand and turning the pages of a volume of tryple-F with the other, and found out for the first time what an ingenious hoax Odd Tales had been. Also found much other material that I was sorry I'd missed, and broke down and bot a subscription. Julie also let me paw thru a box of prints and get a complete set of fotografs, including an unpublished one of Widner that he suppresses. I was surprised to find that Unger keeps no definite collection of the pro mags, but depends on it that his stock of copies will always include a nearly complete set of any pro. After a while he got out the card file of present and past subscribers to FTF, which had formed Degler's basic mailing list, and thumbed thru them one by one, pausing to wonder where this fan had disappeared to, or why this one had dropped his sub, and occasionally mention a newcomer who showed promise.

Next day there was still some unfinished business to be attended to. I foned the W, and went up to his office. He got Michel, and we went to the roof to take a picture, then stood at the office door for a little while talking. They complimented the Fancyclopedia, and Rad said he'd try to finish up checking it pretty quickly and send it on to the others.

Returning to the hotel, I changed back to hitchhiking clothes, and took the wrong subway up toward the George Washington Bridge, having determined to go back by a new route. Eventually I found the Bridge, but rain began falling as I stepped on it, and by the time I reached the center of the longest span in the world, it had become torrential, then let up a little later. Thoroly soaked, I made a half-hearted effort at catching a ride on the other side, then took a bus. Most of the afternoon I wandered around trying to get westward by bus, and ended up by taking the bus from Newark. A middle-aged man sat beside me most of the way, and I quizzed him about the countryside and its industries.

Finally, at one stop, the bus driver got very worried with his counting, and said he'd have to check all tickets before he could go on. Looking at mine, he asked, "You wanta go to Easton?" "Oh, is this Easton?" I asked. I'd waited around half an hour and then obediently re-boarded the bus. It was still a rainy nite, so I went directly to my room and read a story and so to bed.

Next morning I walked out thru Easton, interested in it as what I imagined was a typical small city of Pennsylvania. One or two rides carried me westward from there, under the edge of the mountains, which I was surprised to find so far east. Another down-pour, I suppose from the trailing edge of the air mass that hit me the day before, killed the car engine with water splashed up from underneath. Some Pennsylvania Deutsch boys came up while the driver and I were fussing over the motor. Their accent was queer but their advice good, and we were rolling again, presently reaching country I'd driven thru before on a visit to Indiantown Gap Military Reservation.

After late lunch in a diner wagon, I proceeded toward Gettysburg by a series of short Saturday-afternoon rides. I was impressed with the special friendliness people showed toward a fellow, such as I appeared to be, who couldn't afford to take paid transportation.

Unloading at the square in Gettysburg, which for years had marked my farthest advance northward, I walked immediately to the battlefield south of town, tho I hadn't eaten since mid-afternoon. Walking along the edge of East Cemetery Hill and following the height of land to Culp's Hill, I read the monuments of units and tablets describing the action. It was pretty dark when I climbed the tower on the latter hill and sighted along the ingenious pointers to pick out points of interest on the battlefield. Thence I went on eastward, smiling at the way Yankee monuments spoke of "returning" instead of retreating. I strained my eyes on markers, and craned my neck to get the skyshine on them, until the stars came out, and at last came to Spangler's Spring.

Playing the game of vagabond to the hilt, I slept for the nite in a haymow. A cold wave came up, and I burrowed deeper into the straw.

In the morning I entered the Cemetery and found a showplace just opening, where I looked at a relief of the battlefield (the lecture wouldn't begin until considerably later in the morning), and bot a candy bar and package of cheese crackers which, with a couple of apples I picked up, carried me till mid-afternoon. Walking on along the fishhook ridge which the Federals defended, I climbed eventually all the observation towers on the battlefield, even the one on Round Top. As I read the monuments on Little Round Top and other assault points along the line, I felt like acknowledging that the Yankees had fot well here, probably the best they ever did fite, and the Confederates acquitted themselves

with less honor than usual. Despite this, and despite their numerical superiority and excellent defensive position, the Union troops suffered greater casualties than the Southern, and time after time in the course of the three days' battle escaped defeat only by a hair's breadth, which may lie in the province of pure chance.

Leaving Round Top, I rambled over to Devil's Den, and then thru the Wheatfield up to the Emmitsburg Road. Ah, I thot, now at last I'm in Confederate territory. There continued to be very few Southern monuments, however, partly because they didn't start erecting them in quantity nearly as soon as the Yankees did, largely because they hadn't anything like the money for such things that the Northerners had, and probably to some extent because the Confederacy can with much more pride build its monuments on Bull Run, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, or a hundred other battlefields.

Thru error, I crossed a field and found myself back at the High Water Mark, and turning about, walked across the field that had seen Longstreet's assault. Crossing it in the opposite direction, I took about 15 minutes to reach Lee's monument. He was a fool to order the charge; I'd have been a dead duck in 5 minutes. I walked up the Seminary Ridge road as far as the North Carolina monument, then turned back southward, and finally came to the main highway leading toward Frederick.

There were several eating places about, but it seemed to be a season when all were closed. At one house, where there was no answer to my knock, I could walk into a refreshments stand on the porch, and seeing several sacks of peanuts, took two and left 10¢. Then the bitter wind and the lite traffic, and I was at last on the point of saying ghu take this vagabonding and going into a house and foning about buses, when a Washington-bound car stopped for me.

WHAT TRANSPIRED AT THE MICHICONFERENCE °°°

First we must get Speer to the Michiconference, so we drag him away from the house, where he's been happily mimeoing all afternoon, and reach Union Station two minutes after his train pulls out.

After unsuccessful efforts to plot a faster course, I resigned myself to waiting for the midnite train, and improved the time by seeing a double feature of Saludos Amigos and Transatlantic Tunnel. The latter has abundant weaknesses, but there are one or two scenes that I'd call great. Probably the greatest fault is that you must pretend for the purpose of the story that a transatlantic tunnel would have economic value.

After a considerable layover at a little junction in Ohio, and a longer wait in Toledo, I took the bus on to Battle Creek, arriving not too late Saturday nite.

The place was still a clutter with boxes of stuff they'd brot over from Upton Avenue, and I didn't help any with quizzing the laborers about the NFFF and taking pictures, and letting Al tell me about his conversation with Degler that afternoon, but in an astonishingly short time most of the rooms had been made habitable and lived-in looking. The chaps and their women gathered in the library and talked of cabbages and kings. A little later, Tucker suggested that we ought to issue an anonymous Cosmic Circle publication renouncing everything and--as the idea grew in group discussion--send it to Unger with a faked letter requesting it be mailed out to the FFF list, we (Degler) being too poor to pay for mailing it. Nothing was done, tho; we kinda felt it would be unethical.

Someone mentioned a friend of some of them, who maintained that neither the existence of the world nor the validity of logic could be proved. I agreed. Al and the Doorman challenged it. We wandered into the dining room for refreshments while discussing it. Several fanlised into the argument for a while, but presently only Ashley, Saari, and I were left. I asked Ollie how the validity of logic is ordinarily established. By results, of course, he said. In fact, he seemed to think that the only kind of logic is the inductive; he'd never heard of a syllogism, nor even of that type of reasoning; his training was in math and science. Attacking his basic axioms, I attempted to put forward other premises which he didn't believe in, and show that they were "established" by results.

At about this point, the boys in the front room called in to ask who the girl was. The girl was Calise Chauvenet. They'd set up my projector, and were putting thru the slides I'd sorted out as being of stfnal interest. I took over and projected them one by one, with comments. Milt building a spire of toy blocks on Tallwood's back porch drew applause, and they were generous with hisses for Hiss Honor H C Kbnich.

As soon as the lites came on, Saari took up the argument again. It had been a mistake on my part to pick my unacceptable premises from the field of religion, for he has the emotional reaction to religion characteristic of the E Haldemann-Julius type of dogmatic atheist. For instance, I later used the expression "being saved". Where an adult ordinarily would have given it a naturalistic interpretation and let it go at that, Ollie hastened to make it clear that he wasn't interested in soul-saving.

As we headed upstairs to retire, Saari challenged me to show anything good that religion had ever accomplished. Without much enthusiasm, I mentioned a few things. At one point Saari said that

the desirability of freedom of speech could be proved logically. This was a tangent, but a topic that I was interested in, so I challenged him to prove it. Wiedenbeck, who'd retired earlier, groaned again and rolled over in bed. We agreed on an ideal, the advancement of scientific knowledge, and Saari gave a series of propositions, revealing a profound ignorance of sorites, one step of which I denied. To explain my apparently inexplicable refusal to grant that link in the reasoning (not, of course, that I don't believe in freedom of speech), I described a type of person, first called Nazis, then aristocrats, and finally simply "the elite", who would accept our ideal, and regard logic, yet would not agree with the conclusion. At long last, to Wiedenbeck's immense relief, we arrived at some understanding, and then Saari denounced me for using ordinary words in new meanings without re-defining them, and Ashley called Ollie down for irrelevant digressions.

To

bed, but not to sleep. The three rooms were within easy conversational range of each other, and the air was thick for an hour or more with dirty stories. The boys were in such a filthy state of mind that the most innocent remark was given a sinister twist, the more innocent the better. The women downstairs could probably hear us; they got an earful.

We began to bestir a little before noon, and straggled into the library to paw thru the periodicals and books in the Galactic Roomers' collection. Besides a lot of reference books of all types (including numerous unsatisfactory dictionaries) and various shades of pornography and eroticism, a few fantasy books can be found if you look hard enuf. There seems to be no longer any system in the arrangement of books; you just run your eye along the line till you find an interesting one. To speak fairly, the great majority are fantasy. A little later in the day, we had an argument with Liebscher over the definition of fantasy; he seems to want to regard any highly unusual stories as fantasy--such as life in a madhouse, the controversial worship of pagan gods, and so on.

Breakfast was served at the round table, whose perimeter barely sufficed to accomodate the mob. I hear that the rationed food was black market. It is not true that I refused to eat any of this commodity: I was in Slan Shack, which is not subject to the sovereignty of the United States, tho it enjoys the military and police protection and the economic opportunity of the US.

We returned to the front rooms and read or gabbed awhile, then noticed that several of the lads were missing, and found them down in a cellar room watching Al airbrush the autograf book which was his Conference publication. He fussed around for some time correcting an indiscernible defect in the operation of the air gun, then got it going again.

Earl Perry foned, and a little later Len Marlow arrived and passed out Erebus. Al emerged after a bit from the nether regions, and gave me instruction in the theory of crap-shooting. Day was declining, so everybody herded outside for a few pictures, none of which turned out very well. The fotos reproduced on these pages are the most interesting of the lot, I think, but if any of the jerks want a set of enlargements of the twelve shots, I'll get them made for 60¢.

The attendees had to be ferried to the restaurant for dinner in two shifts, the second shift gabbing inside while we waited. The gabbing continued while we ate. Up at one end of the table, we talked about ideas for stf stories, and Tucker and I wept over the good old days when no fan gathering was complete without a knock-down-drag-out fite, and spoke of these pink-cheeked mother's darlings of this decadent day. Outside again while the second shift waited in a mud puddle for the car to return, we quizzed Marlow about his fellow-Indianan, Degler, and heard some really hot stuff on the Co-ordinator.

Back at the Shack, I guess it was about this time, Tucker hauled out Ashley's bound set of Chicon pubs

which included the Science Fiction Song Sheet, and led some of us in singing one or two of them.

At length I got across to the Slans the feeling that I was going to make an intelligence test of them, and they all fumbled around till they had pencils, and I passed out and administered, in an hour or so, a test I'd bot copies of from George Washington University. It was titled Mental Alertness, but this correlates so hily with general intelligence that we can consider it an intelligence test. Conditions were far from ideal for getting the highest possible score; the lads kept speaking out when they should have been studying or writing, even running into such irrelevant matters as Robinsonian statistics on stf, and Ed Counts' girl-child took so much of her father's attention from his study sheet that I didn't think he was going to do well at all. When the sheets were shifted around and graded, however, (we had considerable difficulty getting straight on the scoring system for different sections of the test), the results looked like this:

	Age	Education	Score
Tenth Decile (165-200)			
Al Ashley	35	Hi School	194
Marlow	20	Hi School	168
Ninth Decile (152-164)			
Counts	29	Hi School	160
Anonymous			156
Robinson	17	Hi School	154
Wiedenbeck	33	Hi School	153
Tucker	29	7th Grade	153
Eighth Decile (143-151)			
Connor	22	Hi School	149
Saari	25	College	147
Perry	22	Hi School	145
Sixth Decile (125-133)			
Liebscher	25	Hi School	126

The scores are standardized by comparison with college freshmen; they have no direct connection with IQ. College freshmen are at the peak of their intelligence curve, and are supposed to be drawn from the upper half of the population. In view of this, we can probably say that virtually all fans fall in the upper 25% of the population, and the average fan is in the upper tenth. There are no grounds here for claiming that fans are geniuses, when genius is defined as top man of a thousand, tho I suspect that the FAPA Brain Trust could produce some likely candidates. Some may think this sample of ten fans isn't enuf for drawing conclusions, but I believe it was a pretty good cross-section, from what I know of fans in general. There are no fannes in the above table, but later someone administered the test to one of the women, and I understand she did vory well in it. I hesitate to generalize any further on just this data. I'd thot that fans mite score somewhat poorer in the section on mathematics than on those that tested verbal intelligence, but a check of the sheets shows no special tendency in that direction.

While giving the test, I'd discovered that DuQuesne was no longer with me. A fone call to the restaurant brot negative results, but after the tests were scored, Jack drove me to the place, and someone there produced my camera. When we returned, Saari was arguing against the validity of such tests as this. He should get together with the Swishers (altho, Doc, the lack of correlation between scores and age or education, within these limits, should be strong evidence that it is not a test of information, as you or your goodwife allege).

The evening was just getting under way. In the course of the afternoon and evening, I'd blown up my stock of balloons. Many of these were round black ones, in recognition of

the sixth anniversary of the launching of Michelism, and when one burst, I'd shout, "There goes the Chamber of Commerce!" Another was a large yellow one dubbed Grandaddy Viton. Saari (VIII) and others took sadistic delight in balloon-breaking. I'd also brot along a pack of serpentines, and began tossing these about the room. Later, masses of this were picked up and strung about the library, giving it a festive Halloween atmosphere. (In the fotograf are the Counts child, Ecco, Twankie, Marlow next to Erebus, Perry, and Liebscher in the foreground.)

After awhile, some of the obscuring decorations were swept aside, and the auction began. Unfortunately, most of the originals were contributed by magazines specializing in a type of blood and thunder art that I'm not particularly keen to have seen on the walls of my room, but I bot a cartoon and a Krupa of a rocketplane, and helped run up bids on several others.

Ashley read a news-letter from Daugherty containing many items of interest. We had been desolated to learn that Ackerman's plans to attend fell thru at the last minute, but VoMs with brief individual notes brot his regards to us. There were several conference publications; in addition to The Uninhibited Electrode, which will be reprinted in Chanticleer, I'd brot extra copies of the Brief History of Fandom from current Sustaining Program.

Returning from a trip to the Ashleys' inexhaustible icebox with a Coca-Cola in hand, I found Liebscher reading from some Chanticleer stencils, the entire party listening and laughing uproariously. Was reminded of the idea I've occasionally had, that additional pleasure from stf stories mite be gained by occasional group reading, even of serious stories if they had a good reader.

Ashley (X) and I got into a huddle to discuss such things as the present practice of preservation of the unfit, and rugged individualism and economic planning, at the conclusion of which I found that his criterion for judging things is something very much like survival value. The discussion became general when the question of Catholicism came up, and with my eye on the Doorman, I jotted in my shorthand pad, "A young man is one who holds a girl's hand and argues with her about religion."

We went upstairs, and after dressing for bed (I think I was the only one in that barbarian band who brot pajamas), some of us sat around a while as Bob (IX) read from Anecdota Americana, interspersed with stories by others. These were not received with choking lafter, however, and after a time Ashley (X) said, "It's slowing down, Tuck. Let's get some sleep."

Again we trailed down around midday, and somebody put on some records--I believe they had an automatic record changer--which continued to play thru breakfast.

From time to time I tried to raise the railroad station, but the busy signal persisting, finally called the station at the Army camp nearby, and got my information, which was that the train I should have taken was already gone, but there'd be another at early eventide, which'd fetch me back to Federal City about as soon as I needed to be there, save I'd miss appointments with OWI and a dentist.

Len. (X) had to catch a train, and Walt (VI) and Bob (IX) wanted to do some prowling among the book stores, so the Genius cranked up somebody's car and drove us down. Afterwards he and I went to the post office, where he left change of address notices for the Galactic Roomers, and I mailed a few letters and cards I'd carried from Washington. On our

return we were discussing the plans he and others had for making a machine to assemble fanzines. Counts (IX), who had recently taken a course in therbligs and such stuff, had some good ideas on equipment to make the task easier, the performed by hand. Thence Edwin and I went into a desultory discussion of the purpose of fandom and Slan Center and the mobility of population, while I thumbed thru a book.

Went outside during the afternoon to fotograf the Shack. As you can see, it's a clapboarded American Gothic house, but it has more possibilities than, for example, a stucco or brick bungalow would. Al and Abby Lu have extensive plans for remodeling it.

As I sat reading in the living room, Brains approached with a pack of cards and, "You know, there's been some speculation that I have telepathic power..." I nodded for him to go ahead, and obediently took a card. He did it over and over, and my upright unbelief in telepathy began to weaken the slightest little bit. When he finally explained the trick, I felt chagrined for not breaking it down.

Robinson (IX) and Connor (VIII) set to work on the extra of Fanews-card headed "FREE Connor & Robinson", like "Free Tom Mooney", Tucker (IX) said, and I contributed my cherished suggestion that the date of a newsie should be the date of going to press, and was nearly bowled over when Frank accepted it. Meanwhile, Liebscher (VI) had spread out the stencils he'd completed for Chanticleer and was getting them arranged or something. Someone got to talking about jewing, and I brot out Ashley's copy of Lest Darkness Fall and read that beautiful passage in which Padway negotiates a loan with the banker.

In the midst of this peaceful pastoral scene, time grew near when I must depart. Abby Lu got the dinner on the table and I bolted a plateload, savoring it even under the circumstances, then bid everybody a long farewell and rushed outside with Al (X) to try to start a vehicle which almost didn't start and so I reached the station in time and slept not too comfortably that nite and next day saw Pittsburgh by daylight for the first time but was not much impressed and reached Port of Call once more.

THE HARRY HERMIT OF HAGERSTOWN

"It's such a beautiful Indian Summer day," I said, "even tho it is mid-November: I think I'll go up and see Harry the Horrid."

There were, of course, other considerations. My period of freedom was drawing to a close, and not long after, I hoped to be blowing the country. In August, when I'd tho I wouldn't return to DC, Harry and I had talked about getting together, but transportation was poor, and his father has a nervous illness, so we hadn't visited. Now my elder brother had been in the Capital again for a while, and left the Panzerkampfwagen with me to ship, and it was time I was turning it over to the shipping people. First, tho, I must burn up all the gas ration I'd gotten for it.

Visiting my Selective Service board, purchasing stencils, and other duties delayed my departure till noon, and I stopped in Frederick for lunch, but reached Hagerstown about mid-afternoon, and without too much trouble found Bryan Place, Rothman and I having visited once before in 1939.

Warner hadn't been warned of my coming, but received me with fairly good grace. Shortly we returned to the car and I got out the set of stinal kodachromes, and we looked them over in the house. Then I brot up the matter of the intelligence tests, and he suggested that he take it. It was administered with some irregularity; he studied one shoot about five minutes instead of eight, and the other side an even shorter time, since it was about newspaper stuff that he already knew. He must have taken longer on the non-study questions, tho, for he didn't finish much ahead of time. The result:

Warner 20 10th Grade 176

After this he showed me his room, and up in the attic the boxes and boxes of collected but unassorted stuff, and downstairs, his desk, dictionaries, asf.

I suggested we drive around Hagerstown a bit, and wound up at the Herald-Mail Building where he works, and for a short time the other nite was editor in chief, and had a floor littered with teletype pages to prove it. Thence we looked thru the printing room, and went over to the public library next door and prowled thru its stacks for some time. I looked thru several works on the American language without getting any authority to back my criticism of Astounding's use of "Uh-huh" and similar words.

Thence back to his house to talk for a while. Not being a character analyst, I don't know exactly how to describe my experience of Warner. "Reserved" and "untalkative" are unscientific words for it, and certainly introvert is one psychological word that applies. That, tho, doesn't include the information that he seems afflicted with the great disease of fankind, aimlessness.

Mrs Warner had come in earlier in the afternoon, recognized me immediately and greeted me cordially. She fixed a supper snack for us before I left. Nite was falling, and there was much fan publishing yet to be done. I didn't have my camera this time to fotograf the Hermit, having at last sent it off for repairs; however, he looked not much different from the fotos we took four years ago.

The Panzerkampfwagen snorted at the door. I spoke the traditional "See you at the Pacificon", and turned away from the last fan I may visit for some time.

