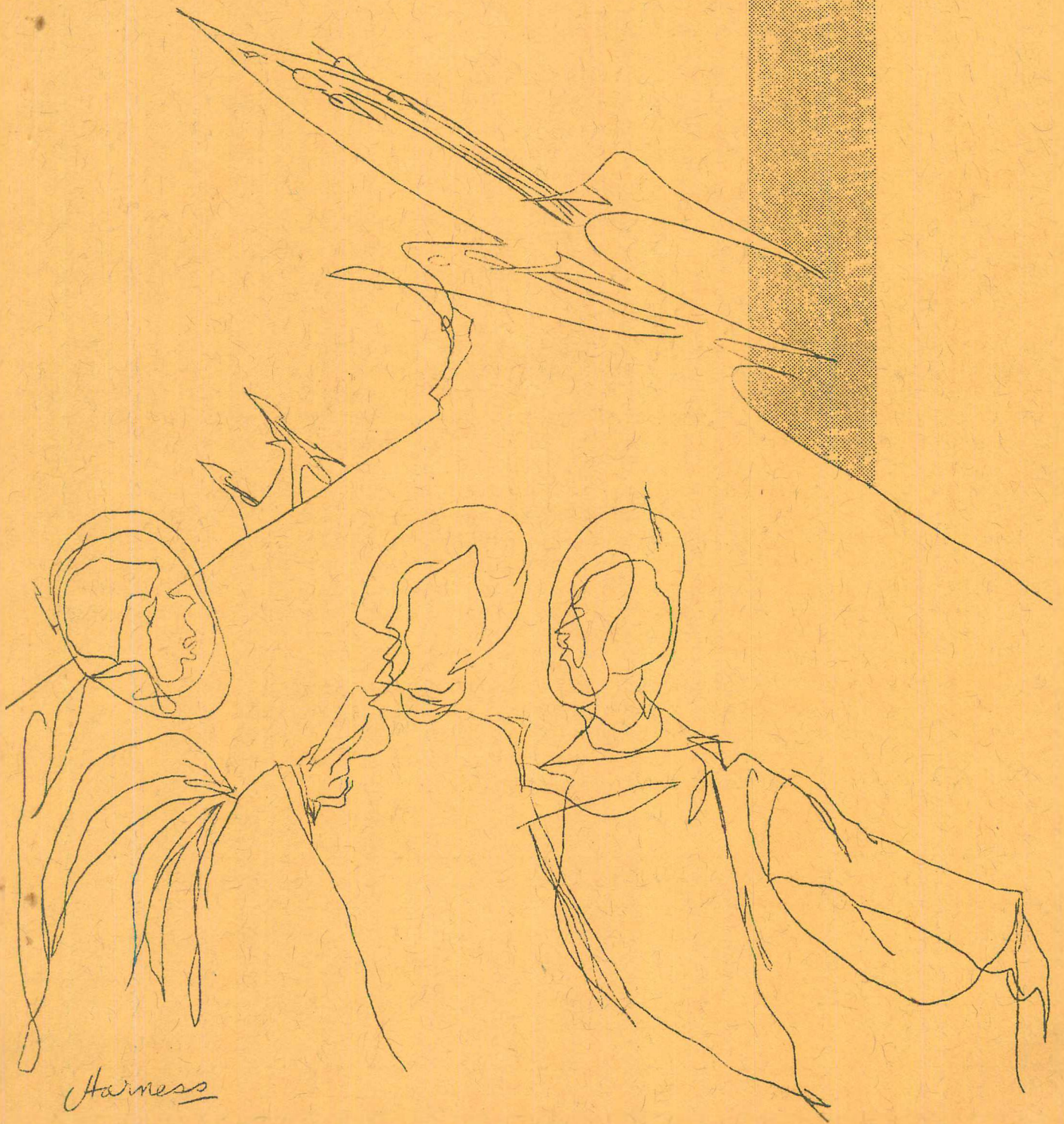


NULL-F 5
NYCONISH



UFFISH THOTS

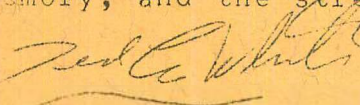
My apologies to those who expected mailing reviews, but things have been fluctuating around here so that NULL-F hasn't been following its set-out policies at all. As a matter of fact, even those self same policies have been jumping about a good bit. It boils down to this--I can't continue devoting myself to two or three different fmz at the same time, and still support myself as well. Last spring, I was producing mammoth-sized F's right and left. And fancy ones as well--all laden with color, etc. Well, this summer I started working on STELLAR, and F slipped back a little. Since then I've attended another Con, produced two STELLARS, and am finishing a third. I've enjoyed the last two FAPA and OMPA mailing tremendously, and I've loads to comment on. In exactly one week, the FAPA mailing must be assembled, and I've produced nothing for it yet.

Of course I have an advantage. When I finish this zine, I'll simply drive over to Eney's with it--he lives closer to me than any other fan in the area... And as a matter of fact, I'll be helping on the assembly session as well...

The usual policy for this zine was to be to present the reviews, and nothing else. Indeed, I had even considered changing the name to :NOTE. The mimeo column I liked very much, and was beginning to get results and interest, but I haven't the time to include it in this zine. If anyone else wants the column, I'll try to do it for them. Any takers?

Thish, as it says on the cover, is devoted solely to the NyConII. I'll cover my side of it, and Ron Ellik has furnished his. I'm not at all sure whether the portion of THE ENCHANTED THUMB I'm publishing here is all of this epic--but it's all that I have on hand to print. I drove Ron down here for about 12 hours sleep after the Con, and he wrote the first four pages here. He then resumed his hitchhiking out Rt.50, and mailed the rest to me later, on stencil.

My own report of the Convention will be in chronological order, on-stencil, and will rely on what few notes I took, as well as Eney's excellent ONE/FOURTEEN as a cross-reference. As I type this, I have no idea how long it will be--it will depend entirely on my memory, and the strength of my one, sole, and only typing finger...



...If I had to do it all over again, I'd do it all over you!*

This is NULL-F #5, published by Ted E. White, 1014 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, Virginia, USA, for distribution to FAPA & OMPA, and is intended for the fall mailings of both apae. 1956

(*James Blis

Have you ever snogged? No, but I've corresponded with Larry Bourne, which is the next best thing...

through grunch and eggplant to over there

by ron ellik

Chapter I

Hitch-hiking is a joy and a pleasure, and admittedly the fastest means of ground travel and the cheapest means of any kind of travel, but-- NEVER AGAIN! Never more, I swear, will I hitch-hike across the country! I'd prefer a new edition of the Spanish Inquisition, to quote the song, before I'd ever do it again.

This may seem funny to those who read the first installment of this in Merrill's FOR BEMS ONLY. In that article I was filled up to here with the happiness of hitch-hiking. Even after I later went to Dallas to visit Benny/Sodek, I was hopped up on the wonders of the old drug, hkhiking.

What, I wonder, could have changed me? Like Briden Murphy, perhaps we can make use of suggestion and the subconscious to reveal things about my past that would otherwise remain buried forever...

I left Long Beach at 8:00 pm, Friday, August 24. Immediately, I had troubles. I got a ride from LB to a place called Hawaiian Gardens, which, while it is only five miles from where I live, I had never heard of. I doubt it exists--I think it's a plot on the part of Northern California. I stood there for two hours, waiting for a ride...

I finally got to San Bernadino, but it took a total of eight rides and three hours, and I should have been there in two hours. S.B. is the first "jumping off place" in California. It's 150 miles from there to Barstow, and 200 from Barstow to Las Vegas. There are no other cities on hwy 91 worth mentioning.

So, once I'd made it to SB I was pretty well set. Anybody going anywhere would be going to Barstow or, possibly, even to Vegas...

The first ride, which came 40 minutes after I hit SB, took me all the way past Vegas on 91, and then clean up to Salt Lake City. That was from 11:30 or so until 3:00 pm the next day--or about sixteen hours of travelling, a very nice ride...

The gentleman who picked me up in SB, I might mention, was a homosexual. He was also the hard-working, much be-burdened son of a very wealthy person in Los Angeles. His father had finally given him a credit card and told him to get out. He was on his way, when he picked me up, to Minneapolis. While I was in the car he paid fabulous prices for gas and oil, and never even blinked an eye. He just handed the attendant the credit card and signed the bill. In Barstow he paid 34¢ a gallon, which is unbelievable, and in Las Vegas he paid 39.9¢ a gallon, which is simply ridiculous.

Fortunately, because I'd gotten the ride in SB around 11:30, we hit Las Vegas at 5:00 am, and were actually through Nevada's hottest areas before the sun was more than a hemisphere on the horizon. By the time the sun had come up, we had turned half-north so that it was on one side of us, rather than directly in front. Since I was driving then, that suited me just fine... You who live in cities or fertile areas cannot know the torture of driving into a desert sunrise, beautiful tho the thing may be...

From Vegas to SLC is a good 500 or 600 miles, and while there is roadside business, and a scattering of small towns, Utah and the parts of Nevada and Arizona we crossed are composed of remarkably large expanses of cactus. There is less civilization along hwy 91 in Utah than there was on 66 in Arizona and New Mexico, the time I went to Dallas. I did a goodly part of the driving, since my gay friend had been working hard before starting the trip and was then quite bushed; let me tell you: without company, those Vegas hills and those Utah deserts are real bloody murder. Somebody to talk to in the middle of Utah would be a real boon...

Finally we made it to Provo, which is south of SLC just about 50 miles. My ride felt he just HAD to get some sleep, so rather than wait for him I took off again, glad to be free, and hiked up to SLC.

It took me two hours to get into the City proper, from which I phoned Gregg Calkins. He was at work. Wouldn't be home until 8:30 that night. I contemplated: Should I keep moving, and hit for Denver that afternoon, or should I kill three hours waiting for Calkins?

Wanting to meet Calkins again got the best of me, and I went to a movie for two and a half hours--Martin&Lewis' PARDNERS and EARTH VS THE FLYING SAUCERS. Sheesh...

I finally tore myself away and wormed my way out to where Calkins lives. He's quite inaccessible, you know, but I found this will not remain so. I knocked on the door of 2878 Morgan Drive, and introduced myself to his father who showed me to the head--Calkins was engaged in expressing his new-found manhood...he was shaving.

For a minute or two he didn't recognize me. After all, it had been over fourteen months since the 1955 Westercon... Then, just as I was about to reveal my name for the information of that noble fan, he did so for me and we shook hands... A greasy operation, I must admit...

Wiping my hand on my trousers, I sat on the edge of the bathtub and we prattled whilst he finished shaving. He wanted to know where I was going, how I'd gotten to SLC, who I was with, and so on. When I told him I was going to the New York Convention, was hitch-hiking, and was quite alone, he nearly cut his throat...

Then came the big news: He was exercising his manhood in yet another way--by getting married. The lucky girl is named Joanne (or Jo Ann, or something, however you spell it) and unfortunately he had a date with her that very night to address invitations. Shades of fan-pubbing! Gregg confessed that he didn't like addressing anything, much less fanzines or invitations, but it must be done.

Then he actually invited me to stay overnight...

Well, I had wanted to get going for Denver immediately, but Gregg plied me with offers of breakfast...and, besides, I'd been moving for 24 hours, I felt I'd earned a few hours of sleep...

I awoke at ten o'clock the next morning, after about twelve solid hours in the sack. We sat around and talked for a while, ate breakfast, read the Sunday comics, and Gregg took off for work, driving me downtown first. On the way it was revealed that as soon as he got married, he and the lovely Mrs. Calkins would move into an apartment downtown, right close to the center of everything. He didn't know the address, so I can't tell you now--but he will be married before this appears, and John Hitchcock will publish the new location in UMBRA.

So I left SLC around noon, Sunday. Of course I went to church first; this is for the information of Cliff Gould...

I stood in downtown SLC for just a few minutes, and got a ride out to the City Limits, on hwy 40 going east. Stood there for a half hour, and was just about getting fed up when, at long last, up pulls my savior: a ride all the way to Denver, some 515 miles away. There was only one trouble...

It was a 1926 Buick.

How many of you have ever ridden in a 1926 automobile? Not many, probably. Those things were sturdily built in some ways, and again in others they were more fragile than glass. For instance, to turn certain things on and off you had to turn handles and knobs made of white metal. If you tried to use these handles for levers, they were likely to snap right off in your hand, so it was twice as difficult as it would have been had they been stronger types of steel.

Also, the speedometer is located, as you must know, in the right third of the dashboard, so that the driver must crane his neck to find how fast he is going. Not only that, the dial registered ten mph slower than actual velocity.

There were compensations, however; I finally drove a car with wooden wheels (not tires, just the spokes and like that) and a wooden steering wheel. Quaint.

What astounded me mostly was that, since the Buick would still run, it was so cheap. The present owner had bought it just last month for fifty dollars. I was under the impression that cars that old were beginning to get more expensive as collectors' items, and such.

The Buick boiled over four times going up the Salt Lake Hills, and we had to wait fifteen minutes each time while it cooled off, then put more water in and keep moving in second gear most of the way. Finally we made it to the top; filled our reserve cans with water, made sure the radiator was full, and went on.

All the way, I expected something to happen. Finally the sun went down, and there was no more danger of the car boiling over. Then we set down for a long, harrowing night ride. The lights didn't work properly, you see... The low beams were too weak, and the high beams shot out at angles and hardly touched the road at all. Good for work in mountains where you had to see the walls--but on open highway like in Utah and Colorado it's murder... And, again, I was driving.

Finally, at one o'clock am, it happened. Ellick at the wheel, and suddenly the car stops working. It acted like I'd just pulled my foot off the throttle--but in reality I was pumping the gas like a fiend... It just slowed to a stop--and we couldn't have been out of gas because we'd filled up just two hours before.

I woke up my benefactor, a fellow of about twenty years, and told him why we were stopped on the side of a lonely highway in Colorado... Knowing something about the car, he got out and fixed it--or tried to. He took the distributor apart and brought the un-working parts back in the car, since it was cold outside, and we sat there for two hours trying to fasten something back on to something else with paper clips.

At three o'clock we got fed up and flagged down the next car.

Now, there is a difference in this kind of flagging down and in hiking. We were not bums out on the road for a free ride--we were fellow travellers in distress... And my ride had to be in Denver by 7:30 that morning, anyway...

The car we flagged down was quite different -- it was a 1956 Cadillac, convertible. Two bachelors on a trip to Denver for combination of business and fun. My friend and I went to sleep in the back seat, and sure enough, come 7:00, there we were. Remarkable car, that Caddy--went up and over the Rockies like they weren't there.

So I made my way into the heart of Denver--and was informed by the first person who picked me up that hiking was illegal in Colorado and that if I were picked up it might mean three or four days in the pokey for me...

I sent some postcards home, and one on ahead to Grennell telling him I'd lost some time and couldn't make the side trip to visit him, and went onward, ever onward.

Took me three more rides to get outside Denver's City Limits, but once I did I got a ride all the way to Fort something or other, about 70 miles further on. From the heart of this town I rode out a few miles and stood in the middle of nowhere, without any signs of civilization, for a LONG time...

As an interjection, I might say that the best place to hike is at a traffic signal on the far side of a town--the side towards where you are going, I mean. Second best place is by a gas station; third best place is under street lights or by a major hwy junction... So there I was, on a road with NOTHING anywhere.

Undaunted, I stood under a shadeless tree, thanking my lucky stars that thusly protected me from the Colorado sun, and waited.

You in the Cult must now wait for the Fractional that Ted White will publish; you in FAPA must turn the page; because I have to leave 1014 Tuckahoe now, and hike back home. I cannot wait here until the rest of this epic comes to me in a star-begotten vision, so at Ted's suggestion I am quitting at the end of page four, calling the foregone part chapter one, and will stencil chapter two at home in Long Beach.

chapter 2

Well, altho I couldn't finish this monster while I was at Ted White's residence, I am now home again, and will proceed from where I left off...

I believe it was in Denver someplace, wasn't it? Probably around Ft. something-or-other, around 75 miles north of Den., Col. At least, that's where I picked up a ride with a couple of kids, who took me about two miles outside of the town to a lonely spot on a lonely road under a lonely tree... But it was a US highway, so I couldn't go wrong, I said to myself... Then, once more, fifteen minutes later, I said it again, having counted about three cars. Again, thirty minutes after that, I reminded me that it was a major US thoroughfare, and EVERYBODY would be traveling on it...

Well, finally somebody stopped... It was a Ford with Pennsylvania license plates--and, sure enough, he was going all the way to Harrisburg, Pa. Here was a boon from the gods such as few indeed dare wish for...

He was an Army sergeant who had just received his discharge papers, and was on his way home from an Airborne group stationed at some AFBase in the Mojave... He had come the same way I had, and had spent the last two nights in Colorado Springs or thereabouts, resting up summat from his journey. I took off my coat and leaned back to set it on top of my suitcase in the back seat..... And Shades of Berry, there was a PARAKEET! Caged, of course, so that he couldn't attack me. I did a minor obeisance so that the Sgt wouldn't think I was crazy...and sat there wondering if perhaps this unprepossessing young man were an agent of the Goon, sent to deliver me from that country road and to test my loyalty to The Chief. Of course!, I thought, who else would carry a minor deity around with him wherever he went so as to be never away from its overpowering spiritual aids and influences?

So I decided to let him know I was on to him... "I noticed your parakeet in the back seat..." I began.

"Oh, him. Sure, I'm taking him back to Joliet, Ill., to give to the mother of a buddy of mine. He's the troop mascot, and he belongs to this woman's son...but his owner will be going back by plane, and they won't allow the bird aboard...so I have to drive him back." Flimsy, flimsy. Why shouldn't the airplane people allow a budgy on board? IT WOULD SAVE THEM GAS... But I let him think I believed him, and mentally told myself to watch out, he might report me for the slightest show of non-squirrellishness...

Finally we passed through Sterling, Colorado, where hwy 6 and 284 (I think) divide. 6 goes to Lincoln, Nebr., and 284 cuts north to join 30 in Nebraska. I asked him how far it was to the Col-Nebr border on 284, and he said, "Get the map out of the back seat." I reached back and grabbed a map from a small stack, and it said NEW MEXICO. I put it back, and tried the rest of the stack. CALIFORNIA, WASHINGTON, OREGON, UTAH, NEVADA, ARIZONA, MONTANA...but no Nebraska or Colorado map. "It must be on the floor," he said. I looked. By the budgy's cage were maps of Ill, Iowa, Miss, Mo, NY, NJ, but no Nebraska or Colorado. I was feeling frustrated. "How many maps do you have?" I asked feverishly. "All of them, including Canada and Mexico, and that big one there..." I looked. Crumpled in a corner was that Monster Map that Rand McNally puts out for \$1.50--large maps of all the states, Canada, Mexico and certain major cities, plus statistics on distances. I took that one, and looked up Nevad - I mean, Nebraska. Ghod, which state was I in? Oh well...

It seems that this Army sgt was going to damn well know where he was going before he went... Then another thought struck me: He's obviously from England or Ireland! He doesn't know his way around the US! HE'S AN AGENT! WATCH OUT!

Anyway, we rode on through Grand Island, Nebraska, through Columbus, from which I attempted to fone Ray Thompson and failed, and went several miles north of Omaha, Graetz Capitol Of The World, then into Iowa. We hit Iowa about day-break on Tuesday, and also hit a thunderstorm about the same time. Iowa fans will kindly not expect me to ever visit THAT state again...or Pennsylvania fans, either, altho that's further along in the story...

We finally finished fighting our way across the breadth of Iowa, and forged a path across the Mississippi at Clinton. WE WERE IN ILLINOIS! It was about 3:00 pm then, and the Sgt was getting tired... I'd tried to drive while we were around Omaha, but was too tired myself. Hadn't had any sleep since we left Jolkins, except in the back seat of a Cadillac--and that wasn't any sleep, just a painful unconscious state... So the Sarge finally reasoned that he would have to sleep while in Joliet, since we would arrive there around six, and leave for Harrisburg the next day--it was another 500 miles, and he just couldn't keep going after a day and a half without lsleep.

We did not go through Chicago, but went slightly south of it on highway 30, right into Joliet. The Sgt started looking around for a likely place to let me off... "Not here, too congested; not here, no traffic light; not here, traffic won't stop for you... Ah, HERE!" HERE! comprised one lonely country road, one lonely railroad track, and a whole goddam slew of lonely trees...

Well, I didn't argue. The poor man was about to drop. So, at 6:30 in Joliet I stood on another lonely road, with no street lights, no traffic lights, traffic wouldn't stop for me... But it was shady under the trees. Then I thought: The sun is going down! No wonder it's so shady... Fine thing, I thought: I'd better get a ride, fast...

Well, needless to say, I got a ride before I was left in pitch blackness. I was standing under a street light in some other Illinois City when the sun finally went down, and got a ride soon after. No sweat.

Later that night, at the Ill-Indiana border, I got my first ride in a truck, which took me 3/4 the way across Indiana. I hopped, skipped and jumped over to the Ind-Ohio border, from which I got another ride with a trucker, all the way to Kent, O, which is clean across the state, up around Akron...

out of my way.

But, altho it was out of my way, it was a long ride and I got some sleep. About 7:30 Wednesday morning this trucker set me down in Kent, Ohio, near Hwy 14 which goes south from Kent to Pittsburgh where it joins hwy 30 again. So I started thumbing, and thumbing, and thumbing... It took me six rides to get to Pittsburgh, but I made it in five hours--I ate lunch in a Polish diner around 12:30. I tried to phone Bill Danner, but nobody answered at 720 Rockwood... No doubt you were at work, Willum? Or what? Just WHERE WERE YOU at 12:30 pm, Wednesday, August 29? Huh?

From Pittsburgh, on hwy 30, it took me ten and one-half hours to get to Hagerstown, Maryland. That is plain old LOUSY time. But that isn't all. Not only did I stand around the general vicinity of Pburgh for two hours, not only did I stand in Lagnierre (sp?) for three hours straight, but IT RAINED ON ME IN BEDFORD!!!

I just pulled up my coat, over my head, and started flagging down cars--but they refused to be flagged down. I pushed my suitcase over under a tree where less rain hit it, and continued to hold coat over head and wave my thumb at cars. It was ten minutes after the rain started that one of William Danner's statesmen finally picked me up... And never again will I travel through Pennsylvania on Hwy 30...

Well, that broke my string of bad luck. The gentleman who picked me up out of the rain in Bedford, Pa., at nine-thirty pm was maneuvering a 1954 Buick precisely to the middle of Hagerstown, and was going thence to Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, I could not take up his kind offer to go all the way and see the Captol (Capitol, I mean) because it was my life's ambition to see glorious Hagerstown...

As we were crossing the Pa-Md border, my ride pointed out a grove of olive--no, lemon trees--and told me a delightful anecdote (whoops) which I shall naturally pass on to you... It seems he and his wife make the trip quite often, and each time they would go over this rise and into Maryland she would say, "Smell that southern atmosphere!", inhale deeply, and exhale amidst an imagined aroma of mint juleps &c., just because they had travelled thirty miles south, to the Mason-Dixon Line... Naturally he was irked at this, and kept telling her that the air didn't smell any different just because they'd crossed a border, but this did no good until one night during a bitter winter freeze when they had occasion to make the trip again. The Missus began to go into her routine, inhaling and emoting, when she was stopped right in the middle of "Smell that south---" by the enticing aroma of a whole lemon grove full of smudge-pots which had been set out to offset the freeze.

From that day hence she manages to pass the border in complete silence.

We progressed onwards to Hancock, neighboring city to Hagerstown; in which we stopped for food. While our hamburgers were coming and my ride was pestering a rather cute waitress, I went outside to a pay telephone and found out from Information what Harry Warner's number was and how much it would cost me to phone from there. I don't recall the amount, but it was just enough to discourage me so I wrote down the number and skulked cheaply back inside. I was on a budget... The three or five bottles of root beer I was drinking a day meant nothing--but a long distance phone call was verboten...

We arrived in Hagerstown, Beauty Capitol of the County, at approximately 11:00. Harry Warner knew I was coming, but didn't know when--this was for a good reason, because when I'd sent him an airmail postcard I didn't know when I would get to Md. I had told him "Wednesday or Thursday" and let it go at that... I phoned his home from downtown Hagerstown, and was informed by his mother that he was still at work. She gave me his number, I phoned him, and shocked the heck out of him by informing him that Maryland was overrun by fans, all converging on the newspaper office, and that he should run for his life. --No, I must be honest with you, dear reader. I actually introduced myself in my usually friendly manner (sneering like Gould says I do when on tape or telephone) and asked him how I could get to the office, or where would he like to meet me so we could talk for a while, or what?

Amazing tho it may seem to those who do not know Hagerstown, I had located myself in a hotel precisely one block from the Morning Herald offices. ((I think it was the Morning Herald--wasn't it, Harry?)) He was very glad to hear from me, for he had been worried I wouldn't make it or something.

I walked into the building and upstairs, and asked the first person I saw where I could find Harry Warner, Jr. I was reasonably sure that that was not he, for it was a woman. I was directed to enter a door and proceed to the end of the room--the man with dark hair was Harry Warner.

This was, of course, an historic meeting. Filled with the knowledge that this would be recorded for posterity, and that all future incidents hung upon his words, Harry was standing by his desk when I entered and seeing my suitcase, dirty jacket and travel-worn clothes assumed my identity correctly and said (historically):

"Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"

Harry Warner is, despite his isolation from fandom in general, almost a completely typical faaaaaan. He complains that while in FAPA he is considered a conservative that the Forces that Be in Hagerstown think of him as a wild-eyed radical with possibly un-American tendencies. He likes his town, his job, the people he works with--but it seems to me he likes them as he would children, or toys... For being secluded in such a small town he has done a tremendous amount with his life, and is not at all uneducated or narrowly educated.

We talked about Wetzel, GMCarr, Danner, L. Shaw, and all sorts of everpressing items of utmost importance. I saw the gadget which might replace hand-cutting art on stencils (as described in Horizons) and was shown around the newspaper offices and printing presses and all like that downstairs. Harry complains that everybody surrounding him drinks Coke which he detests, and that everywhere he goes he sees Coke machines. When I had been there talking for two hours, I asked him how soon he would be going home--to know when I would needs be getting on the road again--and was informed that he had been "through" at the office as of an hour earlier... Well, he took me out for some 7-Up--he drank coffee, which I wish I could drink seeing how badly I needed to be awake while on the road--and then he drove me out to the city limits and set me down on a freeway which took me into Baltimore.

Or should I say "expressway," or "parkway," or "throughway"? There are so many names for that kind of non-toll road that I'm not quite sure what to call it when in Maryland. Anyway, I found myself hitch-hiking once more on a four-lane divided highway with clover-leaf type intersections and no "cross-traffic". In Los Angeles that sort of thing is called a freeway.

Picked up a ride pretty fast, seeing as how it was 1:30 am, with a young fellow (young fellow--a few years older than myself) going into Baltimore (which John Hitchcock insists is pronounced "Bulmer") to visit his sweetheart... Fascinating person, actually, being a typical college grad about to become married, and happy as the devil about it. Delightful conversation, we enjoyed.

He let me off on the western city limits of Bulmer (sic) and took off to meet his lady love. I, on the other hand, began to think I was ready to end my journey. I was standing on this "free/express/through/way" for three hours, trying to flag down a ride when the ONLY people driving past were taxi-cabs (thousands of them), trucks (all company trucks, who couldn't pick me up for reasons of insurance) and a VERY few drivers...

Finally I was delivered into the heart of Hitchcock's home town at five o'clock am or thereabouts--if I recall it was dark but just getting light. I was too tired to remember much...I hadn't had any decent sleep since riding with the Sgt through Iowa...about two days before. I had dozed across Ohio, but the trucker had, if you remember, needed more sleep than I did, and I had to keep HIM awake with dirty stories most of the time... No--I just checked back on what I have written, and I find I didn't even mention that. It was actually very funny--short, fat little truck driver carrying cattle, and he swore up and down that if I didn't keep talking he would fall asleep. This is referring to page six, the sixth paragraph down--the trucker who took me across Ohio to Akron.

Hmm--the above illustrates one of the dangers of typing on stencil--I get off the subject. Blame it on White--it was his idea for me to compose on stencil.

Finally I got out of that awful town of Baltimore, with a ride in a truck with an extremely friendly fellow --Mexican, I remember, since I could hardly understand him-- who took me almost all the way to the beginning of the Jersey Turnpike in Delaware--er, I mean, he said it was in Delaware. A few facts like that stick out in my mind, superimposing the fog which surrounded me, both mentally and literally. I could hardly stand because of fatigue, nearly fell twice when getting out of his truck--and I was enclosed in a strictly visibility-zero type East Cosat fog.

Ahem...I seem to have gotten carried away and run too far down the previous page. Just so, I got carried away and went too far without decent sleep of any sort.. I was on the Turnpike, and so confounded fatigued I could hardly stand. I had trouble keeping my feet while flagging a ride—which is not good, since a small slip of the feet could have landed me right in front of hundreds of fast-moving, crowded-together autos which were buzzing towards New York and the area for work on that foggy Thursday morning. I got a ride with a trucker, finally, up to about exit number three, which is some hundred miles, if I recall. And there I stood, in front of a fork in the turnpike, one lane taking traffic into a city, the other marked "New York".

I don't know quite how to accentuate how I felt standing there, without getting Merritt-ish and talking about the mists swirling around me and the fog that was within my head, part of me, akin to that which surrounded my body, which body did not feel like it was connected with the sleepy little boy who tried desperately to flag down traffic at eight o'clock Thursday morning on the Turnpike. Needless to describe, however, were my emotions upon being picked up by a kid driving a '56 Buick, with Penna license plates and the entire family with him.

The family was on an excursion to New England, to visit relatives. I rammed my bulky suitcase into the back seat, and then rammed my bulky body in on top of it—literally. The matriarch of the family and her youngest child, a slobbery little female, were there with me, along with coats and things that would be of no use once the day got warmer, which it was to do shortly. The teen-age son and a buddy of his who was making the journey with him were in the front seat, and the fellow driving was having a real ball, flexing his 200-and-some-odd horsepower on a Jersey turnpike. These were the same kind of people I had met in Pa when I had met people there instead of being turned down by prospective rides—friendly but not curious about you, intimate without volunteering information about themselves. Seems funny a friendship can be struck up that way, and it took me a while to catch on, but sure enough they were nice folks.

We got along famously. Finally I convinced the little girl she should swap places with me—I couldn't stretch my legs sitting in bhu da (buddha?) fashion atop the suitcase, and she was much smaller than I... Her mother didn't mind, so we wriggled through the procedure, and she sat atop the monster I'd dragged across country, playing with her doll. I settled down in a slouch position and gratefully went to sleep...

Two or three hours later, we stopped to eat. Hotcakes again—but they were the cheapest thing on the menu, and filled me up. Warm and cozy back in the car, so back to sleep I went... DISASTER!

We were doing 65 on the turnpike, which is a 60-mph zone all its length. All of a sudden a police car was following us—passed us slowly, pulled ahead; scrutinized us in the rear-view mirror, dropped behind. Followed. Closely. Then its red light began going on and off, on and off, and the driver flagged us over to the side of the road.

I should have such luck flagging down traffic...

The kid's mother was worried and fretting, screaming at him that he should have stayed down under the speed limit, and that now he would get what he deserved... The kid was manfully trying to keep his temper and drive to the side carefully with his mother yelling. I was sitting bolt upright, listening to all of this. The driver's buddy was trying to keep him calm, and not doing it. The little girl was almost in tears because her brother was in trouble...

And the cop? He just wanted to see the fellow's driver's license...

It seems, dear reader, that the Jersey-~~NY~~ cops --er, excuse me, Mr. Berry, I meant to say Policemen-- stop, as a matter of policy, all or most teenagers who are driving new cars, and ask to see driver's liscense and owner's certificate. The gentleman in question was suspicious because all he saw was a gang of teenagers driving a 1956 Buick quite steadily at an even 65, doing no lane hopping-- in other words, a gang of teenagers acting VERY suspiciously.

However, he was informed that the maternal authority was present, and was quite apologetic. He didn't even lecture the boy on driving under the speed limit-- 65 seems to be quite legitimate. Having driven with Ted White since then, I can understand why. He did say that the owner's certificate should be on the steering column, tho--or closer at hand than in the glove compartment.

So we rolled on, quite squashed in our outlook. The boy's mother still seemed to think he should stay under the speed limit, and I wished to Ghu they would just let the incident dig--so I could get some sleep. . .

Just a few minutes after that, they let me off about 100 yds short of the Lincoln Tunnel Exit in Greater New York and like that, and over a fence I went and hitch-hiked to Lincoln Tunnel... Quite illegal, but also a great thrill and so forth. As I believe I mentioned (I'm not going to bother looking it up) the Authroities with a capital Authroity sort of frown upon hitch-hikers on turnpikes, because (1) the bus-lines lose money whenever someone hitch-hikes (2) it is a form of vagrancy and begging and (3) all the usual reasons why Authroities frown on hitch-hiking in other places, only more so. It's a gamble when you get on a turnpike...much more so than our SoCalif freeways, which are almost open field for hitch-hikers.

I went into a restanaunt right by Lincoln Tunnel, and tried to find Dick Ellington's number in the book. Tried information...no Dick Ellington. Duke Ellington they had, but that didn't help me any--I like Bruno Walter. So I compromised, and called Phyllis Economou.

She was amazed to hear that I had hitch-hiked across country, could not quite believe it, as a matter of fact. So I asked her if she could direct me to Ellington's pad, and told her where I was, and immediately got out and took the bus just like she directed me--almost...

Well, you see, I'm a hitch-hiker first and a bus-rider second. When I can get someplace the cheap way, why pay money? So I asked the fellow running the restaraunt how to get out to Riverside Drive--and by golly, he just plain old didn't know!

I left feeling quashed--where was the proverbial citizen who knew his way all over the city blindfolded? Huh!

I asked a news-dealer. Fine answer he had--take such and such a bus, transfer, get off when the driver says to.

So I did. Easy way indeed--I'd have had to feel my way braille-like half-way across the city, and I wasn't about to-- I had a healthy respect for the size and complexity of New York... So I got on a bus (same one Phyllis had recommended) and transferred, and rode a while, and walked a block and rode an elevator and rang a doorbell and told Boyd Raeburn,

"Hi. I'm Ron Ellik."

Ny Conotes...

...by ted e. white

As usual, I was off to a late start--After loading two typers, and all our luggage in the Weiss Rak II, Stark and I left 1014. We first went to Arco Printers (stopping on the way to fill up with gas), where I left my key that I'd had--I'd quit my job as a printer. Then we angled across Arlington County towards Alexandria. Around forty-five minutes of fast driving later, we showed up at 417 Fort Hunt Rd... And Dikini bounded out to meet us. It took about twenty minutes to stow away all his gear, and get last things taken care of, and then once more we were off.

About two hours later, we were at Arbutus Avenue. We'd planned to head on for New Brunswick directly, but John Hitchcock, who we'd just picked up, had other ideas. We headed for his new house, across Baltimore. He wanted to check his mail. So, by the time we were all loaded up, and finally on our way, we were about five hours late--by my schedule. But then, I always plan my schedules about five hours too early, so everything was working out all right. We stopped for a snack at a Hot Shoppe on the outskirts of Balto, and as we walked in, all conversation stopped.

We all wore Beards...

And then it was on again; up thru Delaware, and to the toll bridge which began the New Jersey Turnpike. I won't mention how we lost our way trying to find that bridge, and lost another half hour--it's not important.

As we crossed the bridge, and came onto New Jersey soil, Larry Stark breathed deep, filling his lungs. "Just breathe that wonderful New Jersey aire!", he expelled. The rest of us held our noses. N.J. seems almost entirely composed of smelly swamps and garbage dumps. But it was home to Stark.

It was Tuesday, the Tuesday before the big Con, and we were on our way to Stark's home in New Brunswick. We were to leave the car there, and take the train on in to NYC. We planned on dinner at the Starks, and the night there. We'd check into a New York hotel the next day.

We'd been on the N.J. Turnpike for about an hour when it happened. There was a "clack, clack, clack" from under the hood. Then, a few minutes later, a sound like a handful of pebbles being thrown against the hood. Eney slowed to a stop. I got out, and lifted the hood. The fan belt was shredding. But there seemed to be a fair amount left, so we decided to try to make it at least along to the nearest service station. We tried. A little later, we noticed that the noise had stopped. And then I glanced at the instrument panel. Battery not charging, and water HOT!. I stopped.

Even as the Rak rolled to a stop, there was a "hisssss!", and water spurted thru the radiator cut off. We sat down to wait for a patrolling cop. We remembered the time after Sean had collected his mail, and had read us MEUHPEON, and then Eney initiated Sean into the Mystic Order of Rosco, and then we told vegetarian jokes, and then we told scientologicial jokes, and then we just waited...

After four hours of utter helplessness, we were on our way again, and about 11:00 pm, we arrived at the Starks. Mrs. Stark, bless her, had a meal waiting for us, and much later (after having watched Steve Allen) we all bedded down for the night. I drifted off into sleep thru the echos of Dikini's long loud snores...

Wednesday, Aug. 29

Wednesday, we got up. I can't say when, but it must have been around the middle of the day. Somehow I dragged myself out of bed, and dropped down from the attic to the kitchen below. The others had eaten, so I shaved and ate, and we began to collect our stuff from the car. Suddenly I decided to sell my typers in New Brunswick if possible, rather than taking them on the train to NYC. An hour later, I had sold one for \$60, and refused an offer of \$40 on the other. Imagine! Only \$40 for an almost brand new Royal standard! Back we went to the Starks. By early afternoon, we were at last in New York.

After a quick flip thru the Hotel Red Book, we settled on the Hotel Knickerbocker, as being fairly close to the Biltmore, and also near Times Square. After getting our things stowed away in what was actually a suite, we set about contacting people. Eney phoned the Dive, and got Karl Olsen, who invited us up there that evening. I called Ellson, and he invited us for (I think) 5:00. Since we had several hours to kill, we decided to drop over to Royal Pubs, which we did. We rode up a creaking old elevator, which was piloted by a gnome who appeared to live in it. Royal's offices say "Magnum Publications" on the directory and the doors, but luckily I remember that name as well. We tip-toed into a gigantic room. There were desks around the edge, but the center was deserted. Over to the left sat Larry Shaw. We all said hullo, and remember me, and paused, embarrassedly. Larry was quite nice about having been interrupted in the middle of whatever he was doing, and I dragged out a large envelope which I had been guarding jealously all the way along the trip. Out came some sample Harness illustrations, and several of my own. Jack hadn't been able to make the Con--seems ElRon had just returned from England or something--and I had been deputized to bring some of his samples to show Larry and his art editor. Unfortunately, they weren't Jack's best, and were not too enthusiastically received. I still think STELLAR gets the cream of the crop... I had two illos done some time ago, plus a craftint I had dashed off the preceding week, and two versions of an illo I'd done for STELLAR, one in craftint, the other in line-work. After explaining them and handing them over to be shown to the art-ed, we admired the proofs of the coming covers for SFA and INFINITY (both now out), and compared them with the original paintings which were there. Eney took some pictures (he's been taking fannish pics all summer, but I've yet to see one printed...), and we made some small talk, inquired about Leeh, and the new house, and the horses, and finally left.

I had planned to drop in at EC some time that week, so I phoned, and got Jerry Dee. He explained that some special shindig was coming off right then, but I'd be welcome tomorrow.

So we walked over to the Empire State Building with the idea of going to the top. One look at the admission price was enuf to detain us. By this time, we had only time to return to the hotel before going over to Harlan's. This we did, and by the time everyone was ready to go again, we were late. After fooling with the subways, and the cross-town shuttle, we were later. We arrived at Harlan's apartment about 6:30 or thereabouts. and were greeted by Steve Schultheis. We had a look around Harlan's apartment--a really beautifully furnished place--and met his pretty wife, before it was time for him to leave on an appointment he had in the Village. We left about 7:00, well primed with instructions on how to get to the Dive.

We arrived at the Dive to find only Olsen, whom I did not recognize at first because of the long hair and glasses. He'd had a crewcut at Cleveland. We hadn't eaten, and he recommended a good restaurant at 103rd and Broadway, a few blocks away. The Red Chimney was all he said it was, and we all (including vegetarian Hitchcock) enjoyed a fine meal. When we returned to the Dive, we met Ellington (who I had seen but not spoken to at Cleveland, and who holds the honor of being STELLAR's first subscriber) Art Saha, and the rest of the crowd. Kyle came in and began to supervise the removal of the Conmaterials, which had been stored at the Dive, to the Biltmore. I loaded and ran the elevator... Eney, and perhaps Sean left with Kyle and Olsen and the others to actually take the stuff in the cars, and I sat back and talked with Ron and Cindy Smith, who, it seemed, wanted to see my art for INSIDE. I told them they followed INFINITY... Somewhere along the line, after the crowd had left, and things had quieted down, the Toronto fen blew in. I greeted Boyd, and later Howard and Pat, and things settled down to a gab-fest.

It seemed that Ellison had invited the Canfen and the WSFen to a party at his place for 11:30, so, about 11:00, we set off again for Harlan's, which is just down Broadway a few blocks. There were seven of us, Boyd, Howard & Pat, Sean, Stark, Dikini and myself. After fooling around with the crazy elevator in Harlan's building, and finally getting to the proper floor, we discovered that no one was home. Harlan & Party had not yet returned. As we left the building, disappointedly, we saw someone approaching. Two someones. Charlotte and Harlan Ellison, to be exact. Back to the elevator, and back to Harlan's apartment we tramped. Howard unveiled a fifth, and we settled down to the business at hand, drinks. We split into two parties, with Sean, Eney, and Boyd and myself on the couch, and the others in the alcove Harlan uses to write in. My memory is hazy on what actually transpired that night, but the liquor was good.

Sometime in the morning, we said our goodbyes and staggered out of the door. Boyd left us to return to the Dive, while Pat and Howard and the WSFans hunted for a subway. After waiting almost twenty minutes, we finally got a train, and were at Times Square in short order. We almost had a car to ourselves, and my best memory of the happy journey was Howard, making cranking motions with his hands, and pushing motions with his feet, as the train started. The other occupants of the car, non-fen, looked at us bemusedly.

After stopping off for coffee, we all said goodbye, and returned to our respective hotels. It was 1-a-t-e...

Thursday, Aug. 30

About 9 or 10 the next morning--some unghodly hour--the others got up.

Stark informed me that he was taking Eney out to get some Culture, and that Sean was going over to the Dive to wake up Raeburn. I grunted, turned over, and went back to sleep.

I got up about noon.

I wandered around, got a breakfast of sorts, bought a 10¢ pad of paper, and a 25¢ ball-point pen. I'd committed the incredible error of not bringing any scratch paper or a pen or pencil. Those who know me know I usually have both shirt pockets stuffed full of both... I felt naked. I shopped around the hole-in-the-wall-record-shops, picking up a few bargains, consisting of a Duke Ellington Allegro LP, and an old Teddy Charles Prestige LP. I'd returned to the hotel room to look over the PLAYBOY I'd bought the previous day, when the phone rang. It was Magnus. We'd arranged for him to call the Dive when he hit down. They'd tell him where we were. He was in the lobby. Minutes later he too was checked in--we had a cot put in one bedroom. He said his car was up around 99th street--he'd taken the subway down.

We decided to go over to Sam Goody's (a Super-Record-Market), and after gazing at the stupendous stacks of lps, I stampeded for the audio department. We looked around, and a salesman, attracted by my beard, no doubt, sold me a taper. The sheer folly of it all! A Pentron Clipper looks nice, and will play, when coaxed, but--well, I didn't know it then, so I plunked down \$80.00 for it, and Magnus and I took turns carrying it back to the Knickerbocker... I was to meet the rest of the WSFans at the Red Chimney around six, so, to kill time, Magnus proposed we hike down to Stephen's Book Service. Down in the Village area, my knowledge of subways suddenly loses ground, and it took us around an hour to get to Stephen's. Once there, I glommed onto the NEW WORLDS, SCIENCE-FANTASY and AUTHENTICS I was missing, plus the latest sf pbs, while Maggy argued with Steve over the crates of old AMAZINGS and WONDERS which he (Magnus) had weighing down his trunk, and most of the back seat. When we left Steve's, it was already 5:50--I never saw a man who took so long at wrapping stuff--and we subwaysed frantically to 103rd. Naturally, this was rush hour, but I was squeezed against a very attractive young woman who didn't wear a girdle, so I wasn't too bothered with the crush...

We burst in the Red Chimney to find two strangers occupying our traditional table with the WSFans. The two were introduced as Alex (or Rich) Kirs, and Ron Ellick. Magnus and I settled down to the delightful business of devouring a wonderfully tender fried chicken, and the others left, promising to be at the Dive.

It happened that I had brought up in my car two big bales of STELLARS, both #1 and #2, but had left them in the trunk of the Weiss Rak when we took the train to NYC. So at this time I asked Magnus to drive out to N.B. with me to pick them up, along with the Royal. I said I'd pay all the tolls, so he agreed. We went up to the Dive, picked up Ellick, Stark and Eney, and set off for Magnus' car, which was only a few blocks away.

I won't relate that trip--it's adequately reported in Eney's ONE/FOURTEEN, but it was one hilarious pun-fest from mile to mile. We had a snack at the Stark's, and returned to New York. Magnus parked near the Knickerbocker, and we carried the STELLARS in, and I distributed the first copies of #2. It was after midnight, but we decided to go back to the Dive and pick up Sean--the consensus of opinion being that he might not get back at all, otherwise... Magnus, dead tired, declined to come.

My memory is hazy on that party... I don't even remember when we left, but it was so late that we had to wait over half an hour for a train... We straggled in to the Knickerbocker, woke up Magnus, and all went back to sleep again. That's all I remember, tho I'm sure there was more...

Friday, Aug. 31

Friday, we awoke, with groans, went out for breakfast, and then returned to pack our stuff and switch hotels. We had considerably more to take out than we'd brought in--a tape recorder and a big box (which had come with the taper) of STELLARs. Sean assured us that it was only eight short blocks to the Biltmore, but if it was, I'd hate to have walked eight long ones under those conditions...

When we walked into the plush lobby of the Biltmore, our eyes were greeted by the sight of the Canfens, the Youngs, Ellik, and various others gathered in a cluster. Eney and I checked in, while Stark and Sean stared at the Big Names... As the bell-boy was leading us to our room, we passed Tucker and Phyllis Economou sitting and talking. We held the bell-boy up for about five minutes chinning... I had to reintroduce myself; Bob didn't recognize me with the beard. After checking our stuff in the room, Dick and I returned to the lobby, and the Faans...

A motion was made to adjourn to room 403--our room--and the entire cluster began slowly moving towards the elevators. Again we passed Tucker and Phyllis, and again we stopped, until we were ushered on by some official--we were blocking the hall, or something. I remember a mild-mannered fellow who was tagging along. Someone asked him who he was.

"I'm Harry Stubbs". This was greeted with blank looks until I said, "Harry Clement," and he was unmasked. Leaving the Twosome in the hall, we all piled into the elevators, and rode up to 403. We'd discovered that we had AC current, so I had decided to try out my taper. It didn't work. It ran on $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips, but not on $3\frac{3}{4}$. I had brought along the Young's round-robin tape, and had hoped to play it. But all was not lost. Andy went to his room, and returned with his taper. After we'd heard the round-robin, and things had relaxed, there was a knock at the door, and Bloch came in. I hurriedly started recording. Wothell, I could always transcribe it to $3\frac{3}{4}$ later... Unfortunately, the transcription was included on a tape to Grennell, and the original erased (it now has FIRST AND LAST FEN on it...) so that I can't say much of what went on. We discussed (and cussed) George Wetzell, and Howard Lyons mentioned Ellison's \$400.00 coffee table, and generally, things just went along fannishly. This is my collective memory of later parties and gab-fests as well, I must admit--my memory is not too keen, and others have grabbed the best quotes--Eney stole my best, but more of that later...

After a while, we decided to go out and eat, and so the whole crew of us tramped across the street to Childs' Restaurant. I think the manager had found out about our Con across the street, for the prices were high, and the food below average. We were forced to split up into three tables, with the Youngs and the Lyons at one, and the rest of us divided between the other two. Our table sat around and talked for some time, so by the time we had returned to the hotel, registration had started.

I went up to the Convention Hall, and was dismayed to find a tremendously long line waiting for registration. But I decided to brave it, and I joined the line. Various others of our crowd came along from time to time

to entreat me to wait until the line was shorter. As I moved up the line, they gradually began slipping in, behind or in front of me... Soon enuf, Pat Werner was handing me my stuff, and I was putting my badge on. This year, the pin type badge wasn't being used--instead there was supplied a disk of paper with a gummed back. These promptly fell off, as most of the attendees were sweating, due to the lack of air-conditioning on the convention floor (this was the first time the hotel broke its 'contract'.)

That night was a hectic one. Stark had registered at the desk some time in the afternoon, and a cot was brought to 403 for him. But Sean had not yet checked in. He was too busy meeting fen. So sometime that evening, I went down with him, and he checked in. A cot was promised to arrive at 403 shortly. I'm no longer sure whether I called once or twice, but by 10:00 or 11:00, the cot still wasn't there. I finally went down to the lobby, and had a talk with the manager. Half an hour later the cot arrived. Bob Pavlat, Dot Cole, and Joe Vallin, all WSFans, showed up that night, and I circulated from party to party to my room.

At one point Ron Ellik and I were walking down the hall, and saw some fen looking for a party. Ellik says, in a quiet voice, "I hear there's a real hot party in 403..." A little later he repeated this to a crowd on an elevator. I shudder to think of their reaction when they found 403 locked and couldn't get in. Probably that it was a 'Locked Door Pre Party' or something... Around three or four that morning (or, more properly, Saturday Morning), five of us showed up at 403: Eney, Stark, Hitchcock, Ellik and myself. We'd told Ellik we could stay in 403 and help cut the cost down. Eney and I took the beds, Stark and Sean took the cots, and we all donated bedspreads and blankets for Ellik on the floor. Actually it wasn't bad, with all the blankets over the carpet, and Ellik is a Marine...

Saturday. Sept. 1

Some time around or just before noon, Saturday, we got up for breakfast.

The official program was to begin at 1:00, but didn't start till closer to 2:00. Kyle stood up and gave a welcoming address in which he quoted newspaper interviews with one David Kyle, and generally told everyone how he was Kyle and how this was HIS convention. This was a mistake. Now everyone knew who to blame...

Everything ran smoothly until the introduction of pros & fans... Tucker had a typed list of people to introduce, and had left it on the podium. When he returned, it was gone. There followed, therefore, a series of introductions which was not what it should have been, but which was nevertheless not bad. About five fans were introduced in proportion to the forty or fifty pros...

After an intermission, came a "Panel of Science Fiction Experts", which somehow included prozine hater Raeburn--he knew nothing of it until he saw his name in the program... Then came an excellent tribute to Fletcher Pratt by de Camp. Instead of shedding tears by the bucketful, Sprague told some delightful anecdotes about Pratt, which sketched him as a very wonderful man. I have a line thru SCIENCE AND SCIENCE FICTION on my program, so I think that was skipped. I hope so... There then followed TODAY'S FANCY IS TOMORROW'S FACT by one Giles Strickroth, who told us all how we should recruit engineers. The pros should make their heroes all engineers, etc... This was bad enuf, but then he went on about how we should have engineers so we could invent and develop new and better weapons--he bragged about the ones we've got... I got up and walked out

in protest. Consequently I missed THE U.S. SATELLITE PROGRAM and most of a panel discussion which followed. It didn't bother me. Why it is assumed that those who like science fiction will also be interested in the minute details of science, I don't know...

I went out to eat, and while out bumped into Dave Ish and Sally Dunn. Stark, who was with me, handed out STELLARs... By the time I had returned, I missed LONGER THAN YOU THINK, a movie of sorts, which I understand was worth missing. I did see all of CLICHE, a ballet which I particularly enjoyed, amateurish tho' it might be. Because things were behind schedule, there was no second showing of the movie, and we moved into a cocktail party. Imagine four or five hundred people bunched into a small room, reaching for free drinks, and you'll get the picture. I spilled mine down some guys back when he backed into me and stepped on my toes, but he didn't notice, so I said nothing. The least that can be said is that the party was mismanaged. The convention was running true to form, you see...

The costume ball wasn't bad. Magnus told me he had seen some girl out in one of the corridors wearing an absolute minimum, and I followed him. He was right. She was one of four, two men and two girls, known as THE GREEN TEAM. When not dressed for strip-tease, she and her cohorts sold "science fiction records". I went back into the ball room and found Ellik. I told him there was something he'd like to see. Just as he walked out, she walked in. Ron flipped, and actually fell to the floor in astonishment. I believe the girl won an award. "Most Undraped" or something.. Pat and Howard Lyons won an award in their costumes, which were really clever--right out of Cartier. Lee Shaw was there as The Ghost of Fandom Past, with Larry, who were a beany copter with dollar signs on the blades. I met a fellow whose name escapes me who works as assistant art ed on INFINITY, and is responsible for those clever ads on the inside covers. And this reminds me of the fact that Larry Shaw had said that his art editor liked my stuff--If I stayed in New York, I could sell to INFINITY. Alas, I am in Falls Church...

That night we all returned to a quiet party in the Youngs' room. Present were Magnus, Stark, Raeburn, Kidder, Steward, the Lyons (I believe), Eney, Hitchcock, the Youngs and the Shaws. At one time Harlan came in; a much subdued Harlan, who told a couple of story plots to Larry Shaw, told a few jokes, and quietly left. We went to the automat for coffee and then split up. I believe it was that night (it might have been the following) that Sean elected to go back to the Dive or someplace with Boyd, and Kirs filled the extra bed. Once again Ellik slept on the floor.

Sunday, Sept. 2

We did NOT get up for the boat ride at 9:30 the next morning. We did get up around 10:45 or so when the phone rang next to my ear. It was the Youngs. We joined the Lyons to get something to eat at the automat, while Ellik went to church.

Somehow I got to the session and heard P.S. Miller on the book survey in ASTOUNDING. Don Ford wasn't there, so there was no TAFF report, but Ted Carnell talked quite entertainingly on English prodrom and fandom.

Then Kyle got up and said that the next speech, FICTION AND SCIENCE FICTION, was to have been given by Aldous Huxley, or some other big name

writer, but none of Kyle's choices (all the Biggest of the Big Names of literature) could make it, surprise, surprise. So instead (he intimated), we had to put up an old hack by the name of Ted Sturgeon. Sturgeon gave a very entertaining and informed talk, in which he pointed out that stf is judged by its worst instead of its best. "90% of science fiction is crud," he said, "but so is 90% of all writing!" There were cheers...

After the intermission, I caught snatches of JWC's talk on Psionics. I was quite tired, and found myself nodding, so I went out and looked over Henry Chabott's collection of fanzines, which included a FANCYC for \$15.00 which I neglected to buy. That was too much. I did buy quite a stack of fmz tho, SKHKs, OPUSs, FVs, the Burbee SHAGGYs, and quite a few others, tho Magnus had beaten me to it and had the pick of the lot. We compared notes afterwards, and he was disappointed to discover that he'd let me get SNIDE #2, which he hadn't noticed. I collected my sole autograph by getting damon to autograph that SNIDE...

I don't remember the rest of that session, except that I didn't stay for it. I returned to 403, stowed my stuff away, hawked a few STELLARS to some neos, and then caught some sleep. My mistake. I should have stuck to the Balcony crowd. Then I would have been treated to a dinner. As it was, I went out with Ellik and Bill Dignan for dinner. Naturally I wasn't going to the Banquet at 7.10 a meal. Not even for Al Capp. We returned to find Tucker and the balcony crowd seated on the steps leading to the balcony. Due to the settup of the ball room; and the balcony, the steps and in a small anteroom, and it was impossible to hear what was going on in the ball room, tho we could see. After a bit a hotel official said he thot we could go up on the balcony, and we proceded to. But first, as we sat there, Bill Merrill and sister came along. It seemed Merrill was so sure that London would get the Con that he was already rustling up a rumpcon. Arguments went hard and strong, and I pointed out that his hefty sister was a rumpcon herself. After we had surged up to the balcony, we were still separated from the balcony proper by a partition. Then came a rumpus. Kyle's Men said we'd have to go back down. Kyle's orders --we might see A*L C*A*P*P, if he wasn't careful. We sat back down on the steps after an attempt at Passive Resistance. "Move On" came the order, and so we stood about at the bottom of the steps. "Kyle says you can't stand here" came the order. We trouped into the exhibit room, and sat down on the floor. They tried to move us from there, but finally failed. Bob was so mad that he was ready to move out and hold his own 'rumpcon' then and there. The crowd at this time consisted of all the WSFAns (except Cole, Pavlat, Stark, and Fallin), the Canfen, the Shaws, the Youngs, the Lyons, Tucker, Kirs, Ellik, Walt Leibscher, Rusty Hevelin, and perhaps a few others. I got Walt to tell me the full story behind Rosebud, but since this is a family fanzine, I won't repeat it here. If you wish, it will be sent in a plain sealed envelope upon the receipt of one dollar (\$1.00). After some time, it was announced that Capp's speech was over, and we could return to the balcony. However, we were barred until most of Asimov's speech was over as well.

We heard Boucher trying to be witty, Bloch succeeding in being witty, and Arthur C. Clarke being over-long and drawn out. Midway thru Clarke's speech I noticed LeeH poking herself with a pin. "Why?" I asked her. Came the reply: "Somewhere there is a little wax doll screaming and writhing in pain." I took it down, but later repeated it to Eney, who swiped it, and printed it without giving LeeH credit. We started talking, and she did a small drawing on my ever-handy note pad, for the cover of STELLAR #10, which I told her was being devoted to her in part. Walt Leibscher noticed us talking, and joined the conversation. He then asked for the

pad, announcing that he would write me a poem. Which follows:

Oh, with some misapprehension,
I attended a convention
In Gotham, that's the city of New York.

There was an air of great excitement
And much to my delightment,
I found a lot of other fans were there.

Fans of old, and fans of new,
Fans beginning, fans askew,
Fans aplomb and fans a thirsting,
How they grew.

How they grew,
Grew, grew;
How they grue.

They were coming in the windows,
They were coming thru the doors.
They were coming, coming, coming
From even underneath the floors.

There were fans from out the timber;
Some were straight and some were limber.
Some were thin and some were fat.

Imagine that, that, that.
Imagine that.

But the strangest attendee
Of which there were very mendee,
Was a critter very
Difficlylt to ken.
To ken, ken, ken, to ken.

For he had no eyes or hair,
No arms or derrier,
No nothing, everything, or anywhere.

For you see while still attending
This info is heart rending.
'Twas the little man who really wasn't there.

Walt Leibscher '56

Still bored, our talk turned to the Con Committee, which Leeh announced she wanted nothing to do with. She was afraid that because she and Larry were New Yorkers, that they might be associated with the fiasco that was the convention. And so she wrote up the following:

We, the undersigned, were not members of the New York S-F Convention Committee, and are not in any degree responsible therefore--

Larry T. Shaw
Lee / Shaw
D.H. Easonman
Alix Kuen
Bob Silverberg

The signatures are those of Lee and Larry Shaw, Phyllis Economou, Alex Kirs, and Bob Silverberg. The idea being to get prominent New Yorkers who might otherwise be associated with the Con Committee to sign it.

After the speeches were over, we all went to Phyllis' room on the 12th floor. We were close to the convention suite, and we could see the crowds of neos running up and down the halls. Phyllis said she'd heard and seen bicycles in the hall the night before. We were properly stunned. What started as a fairly innocuous party grew by leaps and bounds and Bloch came in, and then Evelyn Gold, James Gunn, and finally the room was packed. It was a happy session, with the highlight as Leibscher's recital of his version of THE SONG OF BERNADETTE, which Eney has quoted in part, and which he has all of. (Send one dollar...) Around two or three in the morning, the place had cleared out again, leaving mostly the Balcony crowd again. The main subject for grousing was the failure of the hotel to keep its work, Kyle's Exclusion Acts, the proposed RumpCon, which we all bitterly opposed, the uselessness of incorporating the WSFS, and generally how poorly things were being run. I left about 3:30 or 4:00.

Monday, Sept. 3

We in 403 had decided to attend the business session which was to start at 10:00. So Dick left a call with the desk to wake us at 9:45. The jangling of the phone, about six inches from my ear announced the time. We got up, and staggered up to the convention hall. There were about 25 people there, and about ten more trickled in as the meeting wore on. The first piece of business (and you interstand, the votes here were on the question of whether or not to present the amendments and other business for vote in the afternoon. Anything voted down here would never reach a general vote, and conversely, anything passed here could still be defeated in the afternoon.) was an amendment to provide that 80% of the fans at a business session could expell any member (it was not stated from the premises, Society, or what). This came to a tie vote of--get this--14 to 14. de Camp, who was presiding, broke the tie by voting it down. I wonder if there was someone the author of the amendment had in mind...80% of 28 isn't too many...

Second, William Merrill, the villain of the business session, along with his two flunkies, made a special motion that the time limits on debate be junked. This was voted down. Merrill called for a division, so those who sided with him went to one side of the isle--the rest of us to the other. On every vote which followed, Merrill called for a division, and the room remain divided as before--with less on Merrill's side. Merrill began delaying tactics--he thot if he waited, more of his supporters would show up. He called for points of order, points of inquirey, points of this that and the other.

Then came the big thing. An amendment proposing that "The members of the WSFS, Inc. pledge themselves to wholehearted support of any Worldcon to be held outside of the U.S., and the WSFS, Inc. would then sponser a North American Conference for those who could not go to the Worldcon." The time for debate was lengthened, and Merrill began every trick of dirty politics he could think of to delay things. As it turned out, he turned some of his supporters against him. One of his big-mouthed jackassed friends got up and stated that at least 2,000 American fen wouldn't be able to go to London, and needed a sponsored conference to go to. Then he stated that conversely only five or ten fans in England would be hurt by the Con not being in England. He bandied the terms "active fandom" and "2,000 active fans" around quite a bit. This did it. I asked to speak and pointed out

that there weren't 2,000 active fans in the world, that he obviously wasn't an active fan, or he'd know that, that further, as a sample of his ignorance, there were considerably more than five or ten active fans in England, and that if (and this was my strongest point) he couldn't go to the Loncon, and wanted to go to a convention, there were five or six already in existence: The MidwestCon, the Secon, the WesterCon, the OklaCon, the Philly Conference, etc. They didn't need endorsement by the WSF, Inc. to make them eligible for him and his friends to attend. Further, I pointed out that it's quite expensive to come from the West Coast to New York. As I sat down, there was scattered applause. I wish Ol' Slash 'Em Bash 'Em Young had been there to see me, but he was still asleep in his room. Of course the dull-witted oaf claimed I had deeply offended him for saying he wasn't an active fan, and demanded I retract the statement. I was urged not to, but de Camp pointed out that this was merely consuming valuable time, so I did. The effect had been made. A retraction altered nothing (I read Perry Mason, you see...) As it was about to come to a vote on the question, another of Merrill's lackeys, after having whispered with him, jumped up and stated that there was no quorum. And since none had been provided for in the rules of the WSFS, Roberts Rules of Order was followed, and since the necessary percentage of the members (some 1200...) weren't there, de Camp declared the meeting adjourned. All that for nothing! The big fellow accosted me on the way out, and tho he was much bigger than I, I threatened him with some sort of physical violence if he didn't get out of my way. I think the sight of Eney behind me scared him off...

We at 403 checked out, and took our bags 'n' stuff up to the Youngs' room for storage, and then we all went out for breakfast, still fuming at Merrill & Company.

I returned to the Afternoon Business Session, and joined Tucker & Co. in the balcony. The question of sponsoring a rump con was again brought up, after de Camp declared those present a quorum, so that the business could be conducted. The sponsorship amendment was voted down, 136 to 47. An overwhelming victory for us, and indicative of future voting on the consite. The next by-law was to ban recruiting by the Air Force (or anyone else) at future cons. A gentleman from the AF spoke up, said he had been asked to provide an exhibit by the Con Committee, and that exhibits are always arranged by the recruiting division, but that they hadn't done any recruiting. Dick Ellington said to me later that they trapped six. Still, the by-law came from Merrill's Commie crowd, and I was just as happy when it was voted down.

The bylaws were passed, over the balcony's vehement and voluminous objections--we wanted to scuttle the WSFS, Inc., and perhaps we will next year. It is useless as it stands. The Directors were then presented for vote. We were to choose six out of seven. An eighth had been nominated (one of Merrill's crowd) but wasn't even there for the voting and was disqualified. Merrill Himself was the seventh, and he was the one excluded from the Board of Directors.

Then came the voting for the consite. First Boucher came up and nominated Berkeley. He said that it would be undemocratic if there was no one for London to run against. I remembered how London withdrew in favor of New York last year. So this is how a favor is returned... EEEvans stood up and said that the LSFS were for Berkeley--a lie; he was for Berkeley, and how the Los Angeles bid which had been withdrawn was from "a no-count group with no power", the Chesley-Donovan Society. Martin Greenberg stood up, also to second Berkeley and allowed as how he knew London wasn't pre-

pared for a Con, and how Berkeley was. This earned him no new friends...

Ted Carnell then nominated London, and at the close of his speech said that he was so sorry to disappoint Marty, but London was quite prepared, was completely geared to hold the con in '57. There were cheers from the balcony and elsewhere. Larry Shaw and Dick Wilson both seconded. At this point, ballots were again passed out, and we voted. The ballots were dumped on the table, and were counted, one pile being given to Boucher, the other to Carnell. Tucker counted Carnell's, and I counted Boucher's. I stopped when I saw that Boucher had about 40 to Carnell's ever-growing pile of over 100. The final tally? 203 for London, and 65 for Berkeley. We stood up and cheered.

After that it was all down hill. Kyle stood up and announced that he had guaranteed 400 at the banquet and only 310 attended. Strike off \$740.00. Three Air Force mannikins valued at the preposterous amount of \$150 each were gone. Strike off \$450.00. Total debts, somewhere over \$1000.00!

But would they default? No, it would give the convention a black eye, and we might be blackballed from the good hotels in the future (The Biltmore was a GOOD Hotel?). So, the only reason why the WSFS was incorporated in the first place--so individuals could not be held responsible for the Corporation's debts--was invalid. A hat was passed, with Ackerman starting it at \$10.00. I put nothing in for two reasons: I didn't feel I had any duty to make up Kyle's mistakes, and then too, I hadn't any money to spare--I borrowed a little from Eney to pay my bill... Two poor paintings were raffled, and all together, around \$300 was scraped up.

I received a letter from Dick Ellington itemizing the debts and the way they were cleared, but I have misplaced it, and so can't give the full details here. However, two of the AF's dolls were found, and the con did not have to pay for the third. The other debts were taken care of as well, and the con did not default.

Looking back, it can all be traced to Kyle's over-assurance in himself. He would delegate little of the planning or work, and he himself was not a big enuf man to shoulder the burden of putting on a Con single handed. So, he failed. He failed in his estimation of the number of fans attending --he figured on close to 2,000, when only 1,200 registered, and only half that many showed up--and so picked a hotel not too well suited for a con, a hostile hotel, which was over-expensive, all along the line. He placed too much faith in the money-raising abilities of the auctions, which had very poor material (the top artists release only reproduction rights; they do not sell their work), and he angered the fans who could have helped him with his high-handed policies (which are too numerous to mention. There was a ban on the front elevators issued by Kyle, there was his exclusion act, and a lot more).

That night, we trufen all gathered to watch movies of past cons, courtesy of Bill Grant. And, after seeing all the movies I could without falling asleep, I bid goodnight to Phyllis Economou, Bob Tucker, Walt Leibscher, and the one or two other fans still there (it was early Tuesday morning by then), and I went out for a cup of coffee at the automat--my last visit.

When I returned to the hotel, I went up to 1114, the Youngs' room, and joined Dikini, Sean, and Stark. We figured out of train schedule and packed up. About 15 minutes before train time, Sean decided he must say good bye to the other fan, Tucker, the Shaws, and all, still watching movies. five minutes before train time, he returned. He couldn't find them. We

dashed out of the hotel seeking a cab, but none was in sight. About seven minutes later, one pulled up. You see, we had to go to the Penn Station, instead of the nearby Grand Central.

We missed the train. So we waited for the next. I went to sleep on the bench, and had to be prodded when the time came to get on the train. My foot was asleep, and it buckled under me when I stood, and I couldn't think straight, but I staggered down the steps and onto the train.

The four of us were returning to Stark's home in N.B. Ellik was to ride down to Falls Church with us, but objected to PAYING for a train ride. He hitch-hiked down the turnpike to N.B. The fellow in front of me on the train had his window open, so I got little sleep on the train. I shivered.

We arrived in New Brunswick about 7:30 Tuesday morning. I haven't put the break for the day in yet, since I am going by sleep periods. We waited in the station (which has no benches or chair in the lobby, only by the tracks) for Mrs. Stark and her car, which showed up half an hour later. I was dead on my feet, as I guess we all were.

We were going to sleep at the Starks until about 6 or 7:00pm, and then we'd start out for D.C. I dropped off into a blissful miasma of nothingness.

Tuesday, Sept. 4

Stark came bounding up the stairs about 2 or 3:00 in the afternoon. "Hey aren't you guys getting up? It's 6:30!" I looked at my watch. It wasn't. I swore at him and then went back to sleep. But the damage was done. Eney who sleeps like a log, woke up, and once awake was ready to get up, and shortly later, Sean got up. I was outvoted, so I got up too...

Downstairs I found Ellik asleep on the sofa. Misery loves company, so I woke him up. Eney and Sean wanted to discuss TAFF nominations, a subject which Leeh had brot up the night before. I decided to shop the newsstands in N.B., and Stark and Ellik came along.

An hour later I returned, we rounded up Dick and Sean, and after saying goodbye to Larry and Mrs. Stark, we left.

The trip home was uneventful. We dropped Sean at his place around midnight, got lost in Balto once, tuned in JAZZ AT MIDNIGHT on WOOK as we approached D.C., Left Eney in Alexandria, and finally Ellik and I pulled up to 1014. I glanced thru the mail, explained Ron to Ma, we ate some hot dogs on my electronic hot dog cooker, and went to bed. It was about 3:30 am.

Wednesday we got up around noon or thereabouts. Ron had decided to write up his hitchhiking for me, and he began at once. He planned to be on his way around 7:00, tho we offered him a bed for the night. I went out and finished up the sale of my Weiss Rak I, we had dinner, and I took Ron out Route 50 a short way, and there I left him. It was the final end of the convention for me. I said goodbye to the last fan...

Afterword:

This report is not all it should be. It is not completely accurate, and there are undoubtedly things I'll wish I had included later. Further the spelling and typing is lousy--I know, you needn't bother to mention it. I have been quite sparing with the corflu, in my haste, striking over, whenever possible. All thirteen stencils have been composed and typed at one sitting, and it is nearly dawn as I type this. So please overlook the typographical errors for the content.

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