
APPROXIMATE DRAFT #70 or
Vol. 12, No. 4
12 Jul 65

In which Combined
Issue Dave Van Arnam
so moans and groans
a while about how beat
up and tired and all he
is from the Great Trek,
and tries to get to the
bottom of the page real
fast so he can turn the
rest of the Combined

maLaise #38
Vol. 7, No. 2
12 Jul 65

Issue over to *Ted White*
and his Electric Trip Report. I'm sure there will be some duplica-
tion between my stuff and Ted's, but I'm also sure that I don't really
care that much; after all the effort expended on going on the trip, a
little extra duplication of effort hardly makes that much difference...

The trip ended last night at about 10:10, for me, when, after some
scrabbling about in the back of the Greenbriar, my cartons of old fanzines
were gathered together and carted up to my apartment -- where I was
pleased to see that the electricity was still on, as I'd only paid the
bill the day before I left, and that was for something over six months'
accumulated service.

I sat there for a while and stared at the old cultzines I'd bought from
rich brown, the FAPA/lll mlg Jack Harness had sold me, the various bits
of fannish fragments, yawned, and went to bed...

I see by the 38th Apa L mlg that was awaiting me in the post office this
morning that Andy Porter has already covered some of the opening aspects
of the trip, including the Time we almost Got Killed on the Pennsy Turn-
pike. It was probably for the best that Ted was driving, because I am
fairly certain that there aren't many drivers who could have gotten out
of the situation safely. I couldn't have, if for no other reason than
that it wasn't until the trip back that I had driven Ted's car enough to
feel that I could handle it at all well in a really tight situation such
as that one. There's a lot of dead weight in a Greenbriar loaded down
with Fanoclasts....

It was a good Westercon for me, even if I didn't see any of the program
until the last day. It was especially pleasant to have the recurring
experience of seeing a strange face, being introduced or introducing my-
self, and finding no difficulty in conversing because the unfamiliar face
almost always belonged to a familiar Eller. This was quite unlike the
Midwescon, where those few that recognized my name knew it from having
received a copy of JARGON #1 almost two years ago... There is a sense
in which fans (most of them) are almost automatically friends, of course,
and so conversing did not really present an obstacle at Cincinnati; but
I did not feel easy in conversation there, unlike L.A. Perhaps I shd
clarify the importance of this to me by mentioning that I am usually
quite reticent in talking to people whom I do not know and/or who do not
know me. Thus I enjoyed myself much more at the Westercon, amid the
unfamiliar faces and the familiar names.

I'm chock full of all sorts of things to say about the trip and the Mid-
wescon and the Westercon, tho right at the moment I feel too fatigued and
Used Up to commence a formal report right now. But I am fairly certain
that if you will simply turn the page, you will find three pages by Ted
White, which may well contain items of interest for all of you along those
lines. Next week, I get back in gear. TRICON IN '66, NEW YORK IN '67,
and LOS ANGELES IN '68!!! Not to mention that I am hoping you are the
----- sane...

Null-Q Press
Undecided Publication #134

-- dgV

Wowee, gang! It's the New Look MALAISIAN FLU! ----- by Ted White

Before getting into the meat of this issue -- your egoboo -- I must introduce my new typer -- or let it introduce itself, at any rate. I fear that this introduction will not be an auspicious one, however; the combination of shaded face and \$1.00-a-quire-cheap stencils does not appear to be an altogether happy one. Next stencil I'll try a more expensive brand and see if it improves things. If neither seem adequate for the job, I suppose I'll go back to my old Underwood for stencils and APAL.

The humble Underwood standard with its anonymous pica face has been my favorite typer for years; ever since I bought it in 1955 or 56 from my boss in the stationery store where I worked, in fact. It was a used model then, and it's been much-used since. I've turned out countless scores of fanzines on it (alternating occasionally with the Remington "deputy serif" typer I used on STELLAR; I had several with that face, and sold them off as hard times pressed. The last one was stolen from Pete Graham's apartment, along with his hifi equipment, in 1968. I also made occasional use of an LCSmith elite for a few VOIDS, and much use of my wide-carriage LCS microelite in VOID, MINAC, and various other zines.), and, if I can get back to the beginning of this sentence, I've grown very fond of my Underwood.

As I've said before, I'm a one-finger typist, but I'm fast. On a manual typer, when composing as I write, if the writing is flowing easily I will average 40 to 60 wpm. On an electric, I can get up to 80wpm for short creative bursts.

I "learned" to type on my mother's old (1914) LCSmith, an elite typer which turned out all my first year or two of fanac. I replaced it with a newer elite, but once I had my hands-on the Underwood pica, that was it. Not only is pica an easier face to read, and somehow more 'fan-nish' to me (and universally preferred in the publishing industry), but the Underwood had a shorter stroke and an easier touch for me. I loved it.

But when I started writing professionally, I found several hours pounding away at the ol' typer quite tiring, and I recalled with fondness my happy month of typing on an IBM while gainfully employed by Scott Meredith.

Thus the purchase of this typer, a recent-model IBM with what Dave Van Arnan assures me is the fastest action of any typer he's laid fingers to -- and Dave's an old pro who uses an identical model at work every day. I didn't want this face -- I wanted a standard pica -- but the price was a bargain, and I couldn't turn it down.

So here it is, and I've killed most of a page talking about it and avoiding important topics, just in case this comes out too poorly to waste eyetracks on. But, inevitably, we must get on with our Story...

THE GREAT TREK

The car crested the hill on the Pansy Turnpike at something over 65, and there below us, impossibly close, were three cars spinning out of control, smashing into each other, rocking, and throwing up clouds of smoke from skidding tires.

Immediately I began pumping my brakes. There was no time for conscious evaluation; I relied upon what instincts I'd developed in eleven years as a driver never confronted with such a scene as this.

I was aware that there were cars not too far away on my right; I was in the left lane. I did not try for the right shoulder. I was carrying

six passengers in the car, including myself, and in addition to their luggage six cartons of books which belonged to Avram Davidson. The car was heavily loaded, and as I worked the brakes, I knew it would not stop in time.

By then the three cars were blocking all the road and the right shoulder as well. But on the left there was a narrow space between the car that was angled broadside across the road and the center guardrail. Still at something over 20 mph, I slid through.

Nine miles later, I stopped at the Service Area, and reported the accident. No other cars had followed me through, nor did any for at least twenty minutes.

Thus began the first day of our two-week trip to the Midwestcon and Westcon, and Points Inbetween. Later, on the trip back, I began having frightening dreams of the car spinning wildly out of control, killing us all; I was irrationally certain that we would not make it back safely to New York. These dreams were compounded by having only a week or two earlier read John D. MacDonald's Cry Hard, Cry Fast, a novel about a highway disaster, and having listened to Phil Dick describe how he wrecked his VW last year, spinning out at 35, and sliding wildly on the car's side for an impossibly long time. Phil broke an arm, and was lucky to come away so lightly; his VW was totalled.

In one dream I was for some ridiculous reason perched on the front bumper of my Greenbrier (I suppose a symbolic reference to the way one sits so close to the actual front of the car) as we were crossing a main-drag when a tractor-trailer combo pulled out in front of us, and I watched us pile directly into its side, my body pinned for one brief second before I awoke. I had at least one other, equally scary dream of the car spinning out of control at a high speed. Significantly, I dreamed these dreams while sleeping in the back to the high-pitched drone of the Greenbrier's steady 70 to 90 mph along the western highways, and in my nightmares I was never myself driving, but simply the horrified spectator.

In any case, I became a bit of a trial to Mike and Dave, when they drove, with my backseat cautioning notes from time to time. But the proof, as they say, is in the pudding: we made it back safely and soundly. *whew*

The Midwestcon was great -- it's the first time I've seen Granddad Tucker since 1930 (or was it '31? The last Midwestcon I attended, anyway) to talk to him for more than a few moments. He has a Ford Econoline now, and we compared the relative merits of our different buses, each finding features in the other's car that we coveted. The Midwestcon was also notable for the opportunity to talk shop with Roger Zelazny, Fred Saberhagen and Alex Panshin. Roger showed me the first draft of the first 15,000 words of his next novel, and I was astonished to discover that large parts of it were handwritten. It seems that when he hits a difficult section, he takes the page from his typer and writes in long-hand until that passage is past. Then, back it goes, into the typer. Roger also finds a sixpack or three of beer helpful to his muse, and several of my favorite sections of "And Call Me Conrad" (F&SF, Oct.-Nov., 1935) were written when "I was really juiced." "Conrad" is Hugo-quality stuff, and I urge you all to watch for it.

We left the Midwestcon late Sunday night, and drove nonstop to Oklahoma City, Monday night. There we found Mike's suitcase had been left behind, and Andy Porter's Fine Hand was detected in the machinations, although Mike and Rich seemed to think Bruce Pelz, of all people, was

the guilty party. In any case, our headlong rush for the westcoast, broken only by a brief sojourn in Las Vegas where Mike and Dave won, Arnie, Rich and I lost, resulted in our arrival in Los Angeles Thursday morning, in plenty of time for the LASFS meeting that night.

First we found Calvin Dommon's place in Alhambra, and discovered he was not home. There was a large red WARNING - POISON GAS --- FUMIGATION sign on his door, though (with "Certified True" rubber-stamped on it), so we know we had the right place. Indeed, the fumigation notice had an angry note from his landlady tucked in it which started out "This is not a joke..." I added "See over if you value your life," and on the other side informed him that our presence was not a joke either. I also left notes in his mailbox and tucked into the handlebars of his cycle. We dropped Rich off at his parents' house in nearby (ha!) Pasadena, and drove madly through LA's careening freeways (where they drive bumper to bumper at 65, the idiots!) for Westwood and Greenfield Avenue. There we met our first fans: Charlie & Marsha Brown.

The LASFS meeting was fun, but did not turn me on as much as I'd expected it to. I'd forgotten how dreary dues, committee reports, and the like can be, and they seemed to be the only substance of the meeting. It doesn't seem to me that this is enough to offer new or prospective members -- or, indeed, older members. However, I am an Ignorant Foreigner and will say no more.

Calvin called me during the meeting, and we arranged from Dave and me to stay at his place. When we pulled in there, in the wee small hours of the morning, "Welcome Fanoclasts" was scrawled on the dusty back of his disabled Ford.

It was great to see Calvin again, and to meet Wilma, his beautiful girlfriend. I found myself spending much of my time with Calvin, the Mains, and the Benfords, during the Westcon itself, and the only way I can explain this boorishness on my part towards the others I should perhaps have been seeing more of is that these people are old friends, and their presence transcends fandom and fannishness. Such people are the real reason I doubt I'll ever leave fandom; fandom is for me now a set of interlocking friendships.

Nonetheless, I very much enjoyed seeing, talking to, and holding on my lap various of the others at the Westcon. It was a relief to find myself on speaking terms with those I'd felt it necessary to avoid a year earlier, and in all I found myself digging everyone and everything. It sort of reaffirms my faith in People. (I'm going to omit Naming Names, because the list of those I enjoyed seeing and talking with is a huge one, and I'd be embarrassed if I left anyone out inadvertently -- as I'd be sure to do.) Special thanks must go to Bill Blackbeard, though, for presenting me with SUSPENSE #39, the only Marvel comic I was lacking from my collection. Thanks, Bill -- that was indeed thoughty.

We fell behind our schedule, and spent only an evening in the Bay Area, so we saw less than half the people we intended to see. We did spend several pleasant hours with Phil Dick (who, to my vast surprise, asked me if I'd like to finish a book he was doing for Doubleday; and to whom I showed the talking suitcase in Android Avenger which I'd stolen from Palmer Eldritch), a shorter time (sadly) with the Knights, and then with Avram Davidson, whose books and manuscripts I'd brought west from Milford.

We drove nonstop to Chicago, accomplishing it in roughly fifty hours, and found we'd missed Larry McCombs' arrival by one day. But Rays Phoenix and Cymocziensky were hospitable and the day we spent in Chicago was in several senses a profitable one.

(Next week: I catch up on mailing comments) -- Ted White