



1925-2025

UN AN AVEC HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT

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« Après m'être ainsi étendu sur la prospérité des autres, il me reste à présent le devoir mélancolique de faire la chronique de l'exact contraire dans un quartier plus proche de chez moi. En effet, malgré une nette amélioration de sa santé depuis sa dernière visite ici, S. H. a fini par trouver intolérable l'atmosphère hostile et exigeante de Mabley & Carey's; finalement, elle a été virtuellement chassée de son poste par des cadres chicaniers et des inférieurs inavouables. La dernière lettre qu'elle m'a adressée avant son retour éclaire tellement les conditions difficiles qui ont précédé la perte de son poste que je pense que je vais la joindre pour que vous et L.D.C. puissiez la lire. Il ne fait aucun doute qu'elle a droit à la plus grande compassion et j'espère vivement qu'elle parviendra à établir ailleurs des relations d'affaires rapides et permanentes. »

*Lettre à Annie Gamwell du 26 février, Sonia licenciée de son travail
à Cincinnati va revenir à New York.*

[1925, jeudi 19 février]

Up & read — out to Taormina & exploring trip — Gowanus — cinema —
Greed — return & write. Kirk return — call on him — ret. & write.

*Lecture le matin. Déjeuner au Taormina et voyage d'exploration pour
Gowan. Au cinéma voir Greed. Je reviens et j'écris. Retour de Kirk, je
vais frapper chez lui. Puis je reviens et j'écris.*

Il manque des éléments, d'ordinaire Lovecraft n'est pas si lacunaire. Et quand on retrouvera l'accompagnement des lettres, le 26 février, la lettre envoyée à Annie Gamwell concernera quasi uniquement son séjour en Floride, le foulard que Sonia lui a expédié mais qu'elle n'a pas reçu, la prise de poste de Morton à Paterson et son déménagement dans le New Jersey à proximité du musée (et son mariage avec « Mlle » Pearl K. Merritt, dont Lovecraft se garde bien de signaler à la rigide Annie qu'elle est noire), enfin le fait que Sonia ait dû renoncer à son travail : « avant que je ne devienne complètement fou à cause de l'incertitude des choses et de l'incapacité de poursuivre un programme tranquille d'écriture nocturne solitaire ». Le retour de Sonia ne sera avéré que le 23, dans quatre jours, et apparemment elle ne dormira pas Clinton Street, même s'ils se reverront tous les jours. Il a apparemment écrit à Lilian, parallèlement à sa lettre à Annie, la lettre avec suite de son « journal » si précieux. Taormina, puis « exploration » : probablement visite et présentation de Brooklyn pour ce Gowan (dont on ne saura pas plus, sinon que lui aussi latinisé en Gowanus). *Greed* est sorti en 1924, encore un film marquant de l'histoire du muet, pour lequel Eric von Stroheim a tourné plus de quatre-vingts heures avant montage, pour une version de 2h30 totalement disparue (et seulement en 1999 la reconstitution d'une version de 4 heures) avec mine d'or en Californie et deux mois de tournage rien que dans la Death Valley. On saura aussi, pour les deux séances de cinéma précédentes, que l'une devait concerner *Le voleur de Bagdad*, puisqu'il retournera le voir avec Sonia. Dans le journal, un prêtre catholique retrouvé asphyxié à Coney Island disposait de près de 250 000 dollars sur quatre comptes bancaires, on va suivre l'affaire. Un décret interdisant toute référence à Darwin dans les établissements scolaires et universitaires en Caroline du Nord. Un opérateur de radiographie laisse tomber la précieuse molaire attestant de la présence d'hominidés dans le Nebraska dans les temps préhistoriques. Au Sénat, validation d'un décret empêchant la création d'une poche (*swimming hole*) réservée aux Noirs sur les plages de Washington, et la mention des luttes contre la ségrégation : qu'on

se reporte à l'inqualifiable passage de la lettre de Lovecraft à Annie Gamwell, ce 26 février, à ce propos.

New York Times, 19 février 1925. De Suffern, New York, 18 février. Cerry Palmarozza, gérant de motel, a tiré sur Thomas Cheke, 39 ans, entrepreneur, et l'a tué, Main Street, ce matin. Checke, qui était marié et père de 9 enfants, a été inculqué récemment selon le Mann Act après avoir été surpris à Brooklyn avec Helen Palmarozza, 18 ans, la fille du gérant de motel. Il a aussi été inculqué pour abandon. Helen était la principale témoin à sa charge et, selon la police, il lui avait écrit ce lundi une lettre lui proposant de s'enfuir ensemble. Palmarozza se rendait à la banque en voiture quand il aperçut Checke. Il arrêta son véhicule, décrocha son fusil à pompe à l'arrière, et tira sur Checke à travers les barreaux, puis, selon la police, sortit un revolver et tira à nouveau sur le corps. Le chef de police Lunney, qui était juste à un bloc des événements quand il entendit les coups de feu, courut sur Palmarozza, qui — selon ce qu'a déclaré Lunney —, l'attrapa par le bras, lui serra la main et dit : « J'ai fait du bon boulot, ce matin. » Palmarozza a été mis sous les verrous, il comparaitra samedi matin devant le juge de paix Wennstrom.



Greed (Eric von Stroheim, 1924, scène finale dans la Death Valley.

PRIEST FOUND DEAD; \$216,000 IN 4 BANKS

**Father Slane Dies in Coney
Island Hotel on His Way
to Ireland.**

OWNED BROOKLYN REALTY

**Brother, Living Here, Didn't Know
His Relative Was a Man
of Means.**

The Rev. Peter J. Slane, a Roman Catholic priest of Owosso, Mich., was found dead in his room in the Hotel Sagamore, Coney Island, yesterday. Examination of his effects showed deposits amounting to \$216,017.18 in four banks.

Father Slane registered at the hotel several days ago and said he was planning to go to Ireland for his health. He left word that he wanted to be called each morning at 8 o'clock. When there was no response to her knock yesterday, Miss Clara Chase, the housekeeper, notified the police. Patrolman Edward Carlson found the door locked, so he climbed up the fire escape and through the window.

On the floor Carlson found the body of the priest, who apparently had been overcome by fumes from a gas heater. Priests from nearby churches were called and identified Father Slane, who, they said, had assisted at mass on frequent visits to Coney Island.

The police found one change of clothing in Father Slane's bag and bank books showing deposits in his name in three financial institutions. Two bank books of the Manufacturers' Trust Company, 84 Broadway, Brooklyn, showed deposits of \$79,535.06 and \$34,573.47; a third book showed \$50,000 on deposit with the State Savings Bank of Owosso and a fourth credited the priest with \$1,883.65 at the Citizens' Savings Bank of Owosso. There was a fifth book, which showed that about \$84,000 in the Wayne County Savings Bank of Ohio had been withdrawn. Papers indicated that he possessed real estate in Brooklyn.

Charles Slane, a brother of the priest, was called from the office of the Federal Appraiser, where he is employed. He said he had visited Father Slane on Tuesday night and gave him \$180, of which he said he was in need. Search revealed \$134. The brother expressed surprise when shown the bank books.

Daniel Lipsky, Secretary to Nathan S. Jonas, President of the Manufacturers' Trust, said that the priest was well known to officers of the Brooklyn branch of the company.

"He had substantial sums on deposit," Mr. Lipsky said. "The precise amount, however, I cannot divulge."

When Mr. Lipsky was told of a report from Owosso that Father Slane's bank deposits there amounted to less than \$5,000 and that he was known as a practical joker, he said that such reports were ridiculous so far as the Manufacturers' Trust was concerned.

An autopsy will be performed today to determine the cause of death. Later the funeral will be from the home of Charles Slane, at 333 West Fourteenth Street, Manhattan.

ANTI-EVOLUTION BILL SURVIVES IN CAROLINA

**Motion to Table It Fails and House
Keeps It on Calendar After
Three-Hour Debate.**

RALEIGH, N. C., Feb. 18.—After a debate of nearly three hours on "evolution" the North Carolina House adjourned today with the resolution to put the General Assembly on record as opposing the teaching of "the Darwinian or any other theory of evolution linking man with the animal order of life," the unfinished business of the calendar.

A motion to table the resolution, which came to the House on a minority committee report, was defeated, 52 to 49.

Determined that there should be no repetition of the experience of last night, when the House was forced to adjourn because spectators crowded the floor and prevented debate on the anti-evolution bill, the floor of the Assembly was cleared today twenty minutes before the session opened.

Public agitation over the bill, which would prohibit teaching of the Darwinian theory in State-supported schools, attracted such a throng to the State House last night that a near stampede developed, and the body adjourned its discussion of the bill until today.

There was only a scattering of members on the floor, others being entirely blocked from access to the chamber by the jam of men and women who stood at the entrances to chamber aisles, some merely amused and others excitedly discussing the merits of the bill and its subject. Red-capped freshmen were conspicuous among the scores of students from North Carolina State College in the crowd.

SENATORS RULE OUT NEGRO "SWIMMIN' HOLE"

Decide After Long Debate to Provide Neither White Nor Black Beaches in Washington.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—With its legislative calendar jammed and cries of "Fillibuster!" resounding through the cloak rooms, the Senate devoted almost its entire session today to discussion of the advisability of a negro "swimmin' hole" in Washington.

Objection was made to establishing a negro bathing beach in the tidal basin between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial and opposite a beach for white persons.

The strain of the long debate over the bathing beach, during which reports of physicians and engineers were submitted and the question of racial discrimination was argued, was broken late in the day by a discussion of the charms of youthful bathers and other more or less related subjects.

Finally, after an involved series of votes, the Senate decided to withhold any appropriation for either negro or white beaches.

'Million-Dollar' Man-Ape's Tooth Shattered; Museum's Prize Falls From X-Ray Man's Hand

The so-called "million-dollar" Hesperopithecus tooth of the American Museum of Natural History, which proves that a manlike ape inhabited Nebraska in prehistoric times, has been accidentally broken to pieces, it was learned yesterday, but has been reconstructed and is still useful.

Obese volumes have been written in this country about this famous molar and it has appeared frequently in the anthropological literature of Europe. It was the first proof that an ape-man or a man-ape had existed in America. After being studied for months by Prof. Henry Fairfield Osborn, Dr. W. K. Gregory, Dr. Milo Hellman and other scientists of the American Museum of Natural History, the tooth was taken to Dr. George Palmer Ratner of the Fifth Avenue X-Ray Laboratories for X-ray photographs for the study of the root canals. The photographs proved useful for the study of the tooth, but it was determined to take a new set

showing the interior of the ancient molar from different angles.

Dr. Gregory handed the tooth to Dr. Ratner's assistant.

"Be mighty careful," he said. "That tooth is worth a million dollars."

At the word "million" the assistant's hands trembled, the tooth rolled out of his palm, and in snatching at it he struck it sharply against the tiled floor. It broke into many pieces.

"We got all the pieces together," said Dr. Ratner, "and the tooth has been rebuilt so that it is as useful as ever for X-ray studies and other purposes."

The subject has been increased in interest by news of the discovery in Northern Mongolia of a tooth like that of Hesperopithecus. There was no previous evidence that any great ape of this type had wandered so far north, although the American Museum of Natural History now is sending a great expedition into Mongolia in search for fossil beds which are expected to prove that primitive man and his apelike ancestors originated in Mongolia in what is now known as the Desert of Gobi.



De la ségrégation sur les plages, bien après 1925 : en 1963, au moment de l'assassinat de Medgar Evers, confrontation noire pacifique, et contestation blanche de masse.