

[1925, vendredi 20 mars]

Up noon — read — GK books arr. help carry & classify — gift — Dryden
— bought Tibullus — dinner Johnson's — ret. & help GK — read — GK
get ice cream & cookies — read more — return & retire.

*Levé à midi. Lu. Kirk a reçu ses livres, je l'aide à les monter et les classer.
Il me fait cadeau d'un Dryden. Acheté le latin Tibulle. On dîne au
Johnson, on continue à ranger la bibliothèque de Kirk. On lit. Il descend
chercher des glaces à la vanille et des gâteaux. Je redescends et couché.*

On douterait, à lire l'emploi du temps de Lovecraft, que George Kirk ait une autre activité dans la vie qu'acheter des glaces à la vanille à minuit, pour complaire à l'ami presque co-locataire de l'étage en dessous, qui l'aide à ranger ses livres. Fourmi des livres, il consolide son projet d'ouverture de librairie. Un fonds racheté dans une vente ? Lovecraft l'aide à déballer, vérifier, classer, ranger. C'est toujours les livres, le lieu naturel où cristallise l'écriture, ou devrait. Si on avait la lettre écrite à Lilian ou Annie, on aurait confirmation que c'est bien ce *Poetical Works of John Dryden*, édition anglaise de 1893, que Kirk lui offre en remerciement. En tout cas, comme le Tibulle (*A Poetical Translation of the Elegies of Tibullus, and of the Poems of Sulpicia*, texte original, notes et traduction James Grainger, Londres, 1759, 2 volumes) qu'il lui achète — il a « un compte » auprès de son ami et voisin — le Dryden fera toujours partie de sa bibliothèque à sa mort. Cela méritait bien un dîner à l'économique Johnson (il y était deux soirs plus tôt avec Sonia), et puis, ces livres, les lire un peu. Dans le journal, toujours cette tornade, 920 morts en décompte. Mais, pour la première fois, pourquoi pas un reportage à vue d'avion ? Un journaliste a pu s'embarquer, dans le reste de tempête, sur un biplan survolant les zones sinistrées — cela change quoi à la langue qui dit le réel, ou la catastrophe dans le réel ? De Tibulle à Murphsburo et ses centaines de mort, jamais eu autant de grand écart.

New York Times, 20 mars 1925. En avion, à 2000 pieds au-dessus de Princeton, Indiana, 19 mars. De lourds nuages regardaient effrontément hier soir les trois États de la prairie qui préparaient leurs morts de la tornade pour l'adieu. Un vent menaçant continuait ses cris de mort soudaine dans les états du mince biplan aux ailes noires sous le ciel bas. Ce vent est ce qui reste de la tornade qui a tué ici neuf cents personnes. Sous l'avion, une petite ville maintenant paralysée, la dernière leçon sur la faiblesse des humains. L'avion termine sa ronde au-dessus du district dévasté hier en fin d'après-midi. L'avantage de l'altitude rend aisé et douloureux de suivre le tracé serpentin du démon des vents. Comme un gigantesque boa constrictor, il a blessé au cœur les trois communautés, écrasant tout sur son chemin. Des heures à tourner sans but dans le ciel, à cent quarante

kilomètres/heure, maintenant presque stationnaires en remontant le flux vicieux, et les observateurs aériens sont emplis d'une irrépressible émotion à mesure que le panorama du désastre se dévoile. La pleine échelle de ce que la main du destin a tiré de mort à même le sol d'une si belle terre, la vue de tant de maisons, magasins et ateliers réduits à rien, et la pitié des petits points noirs devant la morgue dressée dans chaque village et chaque ville, voilà ce qui frappe d'abord, mais quand on rejoint l'Indiana cette monotonie a rendu cela supportable, en a fait l'ordinaire de la souffrance et du chagrin. En chiffres ronds, neuf cents hommes, femmes et enfants sont morts sous les rayons malades du soleil couchant, sous ce que l'avion survole. Peut-être 10 000 proches et amis pleurent aujourd'hui leurs défunts, et la perte économique se chiffre en millions. Cela pour un caprice de la nature, quand deux masses d'air, aussi vicieusement que ce qui tourbillonne maintenant contre le nez de l'avion, s'affrontent et dansent dans les cercles fous de la mort. Et il est bien difficile à décrire, quand les doigts gelés enfonce les touches de la machine à écrire, le message retenu de ce que les yeux ont contemplé. Nous avons laissé derrière nous Murphysboro, Illinois, avec ses centaines de corps, West Francfort avec ses 350 cadavres entassés dans les morgues, et nous survolons maintenant ces fermes prospères du sud de l'État. C'est un grand damier, où chaque fermier a labouré des champs tour à tour marron ou noir. La future moisson a commencé ses pousses et recouvre l'ensemble de vert. Des arbres complètent parfois le paysage, donnant des airs de village suisse en jouet. Les maisons sont éloignées et dispersées. Et puis soudain apparaît un vide, où apparemment la maison aurait dû être. Il reste une grange sans toit où quelques bêtes se serrent contre le froid, et puis des lignes géométriques, indiquant l'entrée de ce qui était une belle, une solide maison américaine.

NEW YORK, March 19.—Within 200 Miles | Elsewhere in the U. S.

TORNADO DEAD EXCEED 820, INJURED 2,900; HUGE DAMAGE IN 36 TOWNS OF 5 STATES; WHOLE NATION JOINS IN RUSHING RELIEF

Smith Offers State's Aid to Tornado Victims, Hylan Proposes Relief on the City's Behalf

ALBANY, March 19.—Governor Smith announced today that he had telegraphed to the Governors of the States affected by the tornado of yesterday, extending the sympathy and offering the aid of the people of the State of New York. He said:

"The calamity which has visited several of our Western States not only excites our sympathy with those so suddenly stricken but calls forth our aid in the relief of their pressing necessities, and I have, in behalf of the people of New York, telegraphed to the Governors of the several States affected, making known our desire to aid in every way possible."

New York City offered relief to the tornado stricken States of Missouri, Illinois and Indiana yesterday, when Mayor Hylan sent messages to the Governors of those States expressing sympathy and offering assistance. The telegrams were addressed to Governor S. A. Baker of Missouri, Governor Small of Illinois and Governor Edward Jackson of Indiana. The message to Governor Small read as follows:

"We deeply deplore the great catastrophe that has overtaken the southern part of your State. You have our heartfelt sympathy. Is there anything we can do to aid you?"

Evangeline Both, National Commander of the Salvation Army, announced that she had directed the Chicago headquarters of that organization to assist in relief work.

STORM STARTED IN OZARKS

Swept Eastward From
Missouri, Covering 300
Miles in Five Hours.

CONFUSION STILL PREVAILS

But Survivors in Stricken Area
Are Trying to Locate the
Living and Identify Dead.

MANY FREAKS AMID TRAGEDY

Letter Is Carried 100 Miles—
Grain Elevator Is Moved 40 Feet,
—Bridge Shifted Six Feet.

COOLIDGE SPEEDS RED CROSS RELIEF

As National Head He Places Its
Entire Facilities at Work to
Aid Tornado Victims.

OPERATIONS ALREADY BEGUN

Special Trains With Doctors,
Nurses and Medical Supplies
Are Being Sent.

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 19.—President Coolidge, as head of the American National Red Cross, today urged that organization to place its entire facilities at the disposal of the States affected, for the relief of sufferers in the tornado-stricken areas of the Middle West.

Recognizing the disaster as being the greatest in the United States since the Ohio floods of 1913, the whole organization of the Red Cross was working at top speed last night and today and the relief measures being undertaken under directions issued by the President are in proportion to the magnitude of the emergency.

The interest and sympathy of President Coolidge for the disaster sufferers were expressed today in the following letter to Chairman John Barton Payne of the American Red Cross:

White House,
Washington, March 19, 1923.
My Dear Judge Payne:
Information has reached me of a disaster that has overtaken a portion of Missouri, Illinois and Indiana. It is said that many people are homeless and many are injured. I suggest that you put in operation all the facilities of the Red Cross to assist in the required relief. I am sending a telegram to the Governor of Illinois that you will do so.

Very cordially yours,
CALVIN COOLIDGE.

Governor Small of Illinois has officially designated the Red Cross as the disaster relief agency in the State, Chairman Payne of the Red Cross was advised this afternoon. Governors of all the States affected were informed by Chairman Payne that the Red Cross is fully equipped to handle the situation.

Sends Telegrams to Governors.

To Governor Small he sent this telegram:

"Extend sympathy American Red Cross to cyclone disaster sufferers Southern Illinois. You are doubtless advised of active measures already taken under direction of our St. Louis office, that office fully prepared to handle situation."

Chairman Payne also telegraphed to Governor Peay of Tennessee, at Nashville:

"Extend sympathy American Red

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AIRPLANE OBSERVER MAPS TORNADO'S WOE

Sails Over Flattened Towns
Where the Silent Living
Search for Their Dead.

GROUPS WAIT AT MORGUES

In the Countryside, Houses Are
Strewn for Miles—Sites
Marked by Wreckage.

Special to The New York Times.

IN AIRPLANE, 2,000 FEET ABOVE PRINCETON, Ind., March 19.—Fretted clouds stare brazenly late today as the three Prairie States prepare their tornado dead for burial. A menacing wind shrieks of sudden death through the struts of a tiny airplane, dark winged against the lowering sky. The wind is the tall feather of the tornado which killed nine hundred.

Below is a little city, impotent after this, the latest lesson on the weakness of humans. The airplane is just finishing a tour of a large part of the district devastated late yesterday afternoon. From the vantage of the air it was painfully easy to trace the serpentine course of the demon of the winds. Like a huge sea constrictor, it wound its way over the three commonwealths, crushing all in its path.

Hours of aimless sauntering through the sky, now at 90 miles an hour, now almost stationary under the onslaughts of the vicious currents, left the aerial observer numb to emotion, as the panorama of disaster unfolded beneath him.

Sorrow Becomes Commonplace.

The wholesale scale in which fate's hand dragged death across a fair land, the sight of whole blocks of homes and stores shredded to kindling, the pitiful little black clusters of grieving kinfolk in front of the morgue in each little city—these register vividly at first, but as Indiana is reached the sight has become a monotonous that is bearable through the very commonness of sorrow and suffering.

In round numbers, 900 men, women and children lie dead in the sickly rays of a Western sun behind this airplane's rudder. Probably 10,000 relatives and friends are sobbing their grief, and the monetary loss, as yet little considered, is many millions. This for a whimsy of nature, where two currents of air, vicious as that which now tugs at the snub nose of this stalwart craft, meet and dance in mad circles of death.

It is hard to describe, even as cold fingers try to convey to the knee-borne typewriter, the message that the eyes see far below. We have left behind us Murphysboro, Ill., with its hundred corpses, West Frankfort with its 350 crowding the morgues, and we travel high and rapidly over the rich farm land of Southern Illinois.

Tornado Killed or Injured All the Members of Two Families.
LOUISVILLE, Ky., March 19 (Associated Press).—As darkness fell over

By Courtesy of The American Trephorn
RUINS OF LONGFELLOW

and Telegraph Co.
SCHOOL, WHERE 60 CH

Copyright, International News Reel.
LDREN WERE BURNED.

Figure 1. Comparison of the estimated and observed values of the number of cases of dengue fever in the city of Rio de Janeiro, 1997-2000.