



1925-2025

un an avec Howard Phillips Lovecraft

#167 | 18 juin 1925



Quand Lovecraft et Sonia ce 18 juin dans l'après-midi vont voir ce grand western pionnier qu'est « *The Riders of the Purple Sage* », de l'auteur populaire Zane Grey, HPL ne se doute pas que le texan Robert Howard lui en chantera les louanges, ni que par l'art de Tom Mix s'établira un lien direct de lui-même... aux Beatles !

[1925, jeudi 18 juin]

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Up early — write — SL book arrive — write — dinner — out to walk —  
Flatbush Av. — cinema *Purple Sage* — walk back — refreshments — home  
& retire.

*Levé tôt. Écrit. Reçu livre de Loveman. Écrit. Déjeuner. Sorti  
marcher par Flatbush Avenue. Puis cinéma, vu The Riders of  
Purple Sage. Retour. Rafraîchissements. Maison & couché.*

Écrire, écrire : et si c'est ce journal qu'obstinément il envoie tour à tour, déplié de ce carnet, tour à tour à Lillian et Annie, est-ce que c'est le même verbe « écrire » intransitif : l'usage et la rétribution intérieure du journal une finalité en soi, indépendante même des deux vieilles dames qui le reçoivent (et ne l'archiveront pas, pour la plus grande masse, et pour notre malheur — ô goût des zeugmes). L'absorption intérieure dans le journal comme retour sur soi-même, et lesquels et lesquelles d'entre nous pour ne pas le savoir au tréfonds, ce vertige et cette plénitude, sans autre fin que continuer, et toujours reprendre comme reprennent les jours ? Aussi pour tourner le dos aux obstacles, aux angoisses, à la promiscuité même, celle à reconstruire toujours qui est celle du mariage ? Et puis les voilà, lui et Sonia, à marcher sur l'infinie Flatbush, la grande artère large de Brooklyn, mais dont les rives sont autant d'alvéoles, brocantes, bouquinistes et comme un monde miniature à chaque bloc. Le cinéma n'aura jamais su conquérir pour Lovecraft son autonomie esthétique : divertissement, pareil que lorsque lui et Frank Belknap Long y accompagnent la maman de ce dernier et que lui, Lovecraft, dit que cette sensation d'engourdissement n'est pas si désagréable, et même plutôt salubre, l'interdiction de se lever et partir, le repli dans le noir, la fraîcheur relative, même dans ces salles populaires d'alors où on rit, mange, fume, se tripote et s'embrasse — Kafka aime, Fellini aime, lui il pense, ou s'abandonne. Et si cela convient à Sonia, cela lui conviendra aussi. S.T. Joshi, dans son décryptage pionnier du carnet, avait proposé : *The Parade Sage*, peut-être par contamination avec un grand succès de l'époque : *The Big Parade*, le bel art du muet et la magnificence du noir et blanc, un saut en avant dans la possibilité immersive et la dramaturgie du cinéma — et l'autorité naissante de *King Vidor*, mais en ce cas Lovecraft n'aurait pas fait erreur dans le titre ? Et puis zut de toute façon, le film ne sort qu'en décembre. Merci à LB une fois de plus : c'est « purple sage » qu'écrit Lovecraft, et facile de remonter alors à un autre succès, l'aube des grands westerns, *The Riders of the Purple Sage*, vous le retrouverez

aisément sur YouTube, donc merci LB mais notre enquêtrice principale ne s'en tient pas là : le héros du film (il y aura un remake en 1941, un autre en 1973 et un groupe de country-rock de la même décennie 1970, famille Birds et Gram Parsons, prendra ce titre pour emblème), c'est donc Tom Wix, et, pour moi dont le premier 33 Tours en 1967 fut le Sergeant Pepper's des Beatles, avec Poe, Dylan, Marlon Brando, Karl Marx et H.G. Wells, l'acteur figure bien sur le panthéon légendaire ! « Les auteurs superficiels, comme Zane Grey, ne font que reproduire des situations conventionnelles », répondra Lovecraft à Robert Howard dans une lettre de janvier 1933 : il ne s'épanchera donc pas sur son après-midi, et pas de folies le soir, ni arrêt au John's ni au Taormina ni à la cafétéria Tiffany, dont les chats vont s'ennuyer. « *Refreshments* » : on a pu cependant y prendre limonade fraîche ou ginger ale, avant — dans le petit studio où les époux cohabitent — de rouvrir les livres. Et les initiales « S.H. » sont absentes du carnet, ce soir. Dans le journal : retrouvée noyée dans l'étang de Central Park, si c'est une adolescente de quinze ans, et sans chaussure, vous êtes sûrs que c'est un accident ? À guetter dans les prochains jours. Des passagers clandestins sur les paquebots ? À preuve celui-ci, en provenance de Brême, qui a eu le malheur de mettre le doigt dans un piège à souris, en soutirant des pommes de terre de la cambuse. Cinq morts de plus dans le déraillement d'hier, avec explosion de chaudière, on en est à 44, le *NYT* rajoute les nouveaux noms.

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*New York Times*, 18 juin 1925. Portée disparue depuis le soir du mardi 9 juin, Rae Wolf, âgée de 15 ans, domiciliée au 28 de la 112ème rue Ouest, a été retrouvée hier, noyée, dans le réservoir de Central Parc. L'agent de police Daniel P Beye, du commissariat de l'Arsenal, Central Parc, a trouvé le corps et l'a fait transporter à la morgue. Les vêtements de la jeune fille ont été identifiés par son frère, Martin Wolg. Lorsqu'elle a été mise en présence des vêtements de la jeune fille, sa réaction nerveuse a été telle qu'il a semblé inenvisageable de le mettre en présence du corps de sa sœur. Le Dr Nash, du Reception Hospital, qui a examiné le corps, a déclaré qu'il séjournait probablement dans l'eau depuis deux ou trois jours. N'ayant trouvé aucune marque de violence, il a déclaré qu'il pensait la noyade être la cause du décès. La police, cependant, est interloquée par le fait que la jeune fille ne portait pas de chaussures. Un autre élément de l'énigme c'est où la jeune fille a pu aller depuis la nuit de mardi, où elle a disparu, jusqu'à samedi ou dimanche, moment probable de la noyade. Lorsque Martin Wolf avait signalé la disparition de sa sœur, il n'avait pu fournir aucun motif de son départ. Aucune piste n'a été fournie depuis lors, jusqu'à la découverte du corps dans le lac.

## BODY OF GIRL FOUND IN PARK RESERVOIR

**Rae Wolf, 15, Had Been Missing Since June 9—Doctor Says She Was in Water About 3 Days.**

Reported missing since Tuesday night, June 9, Rae Wolf, 15 years old, of 28 West 112th Street, was found drowned yesterday in the Central Park Reservoir. Patrolman Daniel P. Beye of the Arsenal Station, Central Park, found the body and took it to the morgue. There the girl's clothing was identified last night by her brother, Martin Wolf. On being shown her clothing Wolf became so hysterical that it was thought inadvisable to permit him to see the body of his sister.

Dr. Nash of Reception Hospital, who examined the body, declared that it had probably been in the water for two or three days. Finding no marks of violence, he said that he believed that death was due to drowning. The police, however, were puzzled by the fact that no shoes were found on the body. Still another element of mystery was the question of whereabouts of the girl from the Tuesday night she disappeared until the probable time of her death on last Saturday or Sunday.

When Martin Wolf reported his sister's disappearance to the Bureau of Missing Persons he could give no reason for her absence. Nothing had been heard of her until her body was found in the reservoir.

## JERSEY WRECK DEAD TOTAL IS NOW 44

**Five More, Injured in Crash at Hackettstown, Die During the Day.**

### SIX INVESTIGATIONS ARE ON

**Officials Differ on Preventibility of the Accident—Special Funeral Train for the Chicago Victims.**

*Special to The New York Times.*

**HACKETTSTOWN, N. J., June 17.**—Five more persons died today in hospitals in Easton, Pa., and Dover and Philadelphia, N. J., from burns received in the wreck of the special tourist train on the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad near here early yesterday. This brings the total deaths to 44, most of whom were scalded to death by escaping steam from the locomotive. Thirteen injured are in a critical condition. The total deaths eventually may exceed fifty. Twenty-five persons are still in hospitals. A few with minor injuries have been discharged.

One entire family of five persons was wiped out by the tragedy. They were Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Brunner and their three young children. Like all the passengers on the wrecked train, they were German-Americans from Chicago, bound for a summer excursion to their homeland. Several other families were broken up by the wreck. In some cases it was the father or mother who died; in other cases a child, brother or sister.

Relatives of some of the dead and injured left Chicago today for the scene of the wreck, according to reports received here. The Lackawanna announced that free transportation, sleeping accommodations and meals would be supplied to relatives who wished to make the trip. In some cases it will be necessary for relatives to make final identifications of the dead, for many were taken from the wrecked train without any identification marks on their scant night clothing.

#### Mistakes in Identification.

Survivors of the accident, railroad officials and representatives of the United States Lines, on whose ship the Republic the entire party was to have sailed for Germany yesterday, have been cooperating in making identifications. Compiling an accurate list of the dead and wounded has been a slow and confusing process, and mistakes have been made in some of the identifications.

**JURGENSEN, Mrs. JEANETTE**, 3,715 North Crawford Avenue, Chicago; critical.  
**JURGENSEN, Mrs. Theodore**, 2,580 Arroyo Street, Chicago; daughter-in-law of Mrs. Jeanette; critical.  
**KARLING, HENRY**, 3,818 North Claremont Avenue, Chicago; burns on the face, feet, legs and hands.  
**KENNY, WILLIAM**, 20 Pearl and Genesee Streets, Buffalo; head, face and legs burned.  
**LEHMAN, WILHELMINA**, 3,238 Armitage Street, Chicago.  
**MUNICHOWITZ, WILLIAM**, 75, Elgin, Ill.; critical.  
**NEUBERGER, CLARA**, 46, of 1,507 North Lockwood Avenue, Chicago; burns on back, shoulders, left arm, left thigh and face.  
**ROTEMOND, GERTRUDE**, Mrs., 51, of 1,001 Fourteenth Street, Maywood, Ill.; burns on right arm, face and neck.  
**SAUER, CHARLES**, 36, of 323 Lull Avenue, Chicago; cut by glass on head and face.  
**SAUER, ELIZABETH**, Mrs., 50, of 326 Lull Avenue, Chicago; wife of Charles; cuts and shock.  
**SAUER, JOSEPH**, 3,504 South Mozart Street, Chicago; burns on head, face, back and chest.  
**SCHMIDT, JOSEPHINE**, Mrs., 66, of 1,540 South Clinton Park, Chicago; fractured left arm, burns on back and chest.  
**STEFFENS, H.**, 4,735 N. Koster Avenue, Chicago.  
**STOCK, CHARLES**, 50, of 2,150 South Carolina Avenue, Chicago; slight burns on right shoulder and face.  
**STREAKE, or STANKE, HILDA**, 63, of Forest Park, Chicago; shock.  
**TECHER, REINHOLD**, 54, of 3,343 West Iowa Street, Chicago; critical.

#### Six Investigations Under Way.

Six investigations into the cause of the wreck were under way today. The Interstate Commerce Commission, the New Jersey State Board of Public Utilities, the County Prosecutor, two county coroners and the railroad company are conducting inquiries. Most of the public officials who visited the scene of the wreck were inclined to agree with railroad officials that no responsibility could be attached to any one for the accident. It was described in one quarter as "an act of God" which could not have been foreseen.

The question arose whether the presence of a trackwalker would not have insured against accident. J. J. Pierce, Superintendent of the Morris & Essex division of the Lackawanna, admitted that a trackwalker formerly was assigned to the stretch of road where the accident occurred, but that the man had been withdrawn some time ago.

It was also learned that a watchman had been on duty until two years ago at the Hackettstown township and Hookport Highway crossing, where the engine struck the landslide which derailed it and the first four cars of the seven-car all-steel train.

#### Differ on Prevention Theories.

If the watchman and trackwalker had been on duty at the time of the accident, it was held in some quarters, they might have been able to observe that the sand and gravel driven down on the tracks from the hillside caused a dangerous obstruction, and might have been able to warn the oncoming train in time to prevent the accident. On the other hand, it was pointed out, the accident occurred at the end of a terrific electrical rainstorm, and neither a watchman nor a trackwalker might have been on the spot in time to prevent it.

## Mouse Trap in Ship's Kitchen Their Nemesis; Bremen's Stowaways Face Burglary Charge

A crestfallen stowaway, who had been caught by a mousetrap in midocean, arrived at Hoboken yesterday on board the North Germany Lloyd liner Bremen from Germany.

This was Leo Vitriol, a young Czechoslovakian, who stowed away at Bremen with a companion named Abraham Gross. The two men picked a spot in the Bremen's potato cellar and provisioned it, before sailing, with black bread, Lieberwurst and Pilsener.

The potato hole was dark and uninteresting, and the stowaways kept themselves amused by eating and drinking. They miscalculated the speed of the boat, or overran their eating schedule very badly, and found themselves without food four days from New York. They tried raw potatoes, but found them very disappointing.

Desperate from hunger, they climbed out of the potato cellar and stole into the ship's kitchen. Lights were out, but guided by their sense of smell the two men pawed about in the darkness. There were many beguiling scents, but the odor of toasted cheese stood out among them all.

Vitriol headed straight for it, in the darkness groping with both hands. There was a click and then a shriek, followed by some expressive Czechoslovakian.

Otto Lustiger, the fourth assistant dish-wiper, came rushing into the kitchen. A fight followed, and the two stowaways were caught. They will be taken back to Bremen, where they will be charged, not with stowing away, which is a misdemeanor, but with breaking into the ship's kitchen, which is burglary.

Livcraft

Sonia  
Greene

