



1925-2025

un an avec Howard Phillips Lovecraft

#186 | 7 juillet 1925

« Quant à mon journal, ce qui concerne le lundi 6 juillet est aussi banal et sans histoire que d'habitude. Le mardi 7 juillet, je me suis levé tôt et j'ai répondu à un coup de poing inhabituel sur mon heurtoir en laiton imitation régence. J'ai découvert que le visiteur était ce jeune vagabond erratique, Edward Lazare, qui a perdu le contact avec le gang depuis longtemps mais qui s'interrogeait sur ce qu'il était advenu de Kirk et de Loveman. Je lui donnai les informations nécessaires, écoutai patiemment un triste récit sur son travail dans un journal de banlieue qu'il quittait avec dégoût, et étouffai discrètement mes bâillements devant ses ambitions théâtrales effervescentes. Heureusement, il avait un autre engagement tôt dans la journée, ce qui m'a permis de m'atteler à un siège d'écriture qui s'imposait pour toute la journée. Le soir, préparé des sandwiches pour accueillir S.H. au retour de ses tribulations de recherche de postes, ai continué à écrire, repris la lecture des *Weird Tales* puis sur ce au lit. »

Et moi qui pensais que Sonia avait déjà un nouvel emploi, que son retour de Saratoga était lié à cette embauche, ainsi que ses journées passées quotidiennement à arpenter Manhattan : si, au contraire, elle est en quête de plus urgente d'un emploi, et que ses ressources financières maigrissent, qu'est-ce que cela signifie pour le couple ? Ils continuent pourtant leur vie habituelle, et parfois cinéma ou les arrêts chez John's. N'anticipons pas : un gros coup dur se prépare, que Lovecraft dévoilera en détail le 1^{er} août.

[1925, mardi 7 juillet]

Up early — Lazare call briefly to find GK — SH go out — write all day —
dinner — SH return — write more — read & retire.

*Levé tôt. Brève visite de Lazare qui cherchait Kirk. Sonia s'en va.
Écrit toute la journée. Dîner. Retour de Sonia. Écrit encore.
Lu & couché.*

Edward Lazare est né en 1904, décèdera en 1991. Lovecraft le croise pour la première fois dans son voyage de 1922 à Cleveland, il fait partie du groupe entourant Hart Crane. Il rend visite à Loveman en 1924, et participe à plusieurs réunions des Boys : il a 20 ans, son nom commence par la lettre L, Lovecraft propose qu'il soit officiellement membre de leur Kalem Club, mais le bouillonnant jeune auteur de Cleveland décline. Il ne sait pas, apparemment, que Loveman est reparti à Cleveland (il reviendra bientôt, sa situation là-bas n'est pas meilleure qu'à New York, l'étouffement familial en sus). Ni que Kirk a déménagé : aurait-il sinon frappé à la porte de Lovecraft ? Il a 21 ans, et c'est le théâtre maintenant qui l'attire : Lovecraft bâille. On ne sait rien de ce qu'il en adviendra, sinon qu'en 1940, 15 ans après et pour une durée de 25 ans, Lazare sera le responsable éditorial d'un « argus » concernant la cote des livres rares : le *American Book-Prices Current*. Cela nous concerne ? Oui, comme chacune de ces mille vies qu'aucun destin littéraire rêvé ne viendra catalyser, sinon pour un seul, celui qui bâille. L'enfoncement dans l'écriture, la façon dont Sonia lui laisse l'appartement. Une journée pleine à écrire : peut-être parce que l'urgence financière est plus palpable. Se remettre à l'étude qui deviendra *l'Horreur surnaturelle dans la littérature* ? Ou bien, au moins chez soi et pour soi seul, jouer à l'auteur professionnel .Devenir écrivain digne de ce nom (c'est-à-dire, capable de contribuer de façon décente au toit et à la nourriture) en s'éloignant de la fiction pour magazine et en prenant pied dans le monde intellectuel par un livre de la critique, autant que pour fonder la légitimité de ce mode de récit dans la tradition littéraire, dont il n'a jamais été absent ? Échec sur les deux plans, et continuer quand même : écrire. Dans le journal : régime estival, sinon la dose habituelle de crimes et violences — à New York on tue pour 35 dollars. Et Walter Johnson, le « negro » retenu en prison sans preuve depuis le 18 mai dans l'affaire du meurtre de Florence Kane est très discrètement libéré.

New York Times, 7 juillet 1925. La voiture de Louis Penella, chauffeur de taxi, qui a été trouvé assassiné samedi soir au bord de la route entre Mineola et Garden City, a été retrouvée hier par la police de New York. Si cela a été reconnu par la police, aucune information supplémentaire n'a été fournie par les inspecteurs en charge de l'enquête. La voiture a été transférée à Flushing. Selon l'opinion de la police, Penella a été tué jeudi matin très tôt. Le vol est probablement le mobile. Penella a répondu à un appel peu après minuit depuis son emplacement près d'un restaurant de Hempstead. C'est la dernière trace qu'il laisse, jusqu'à ce que son corps soit retrouvé près d'un entrepôt de ciment sur le bas-côté de la route. Il a reçu deux balles dans la tête. Ses poches ont été retournées, et 55 dollars et des possessions personnelles ont été dérobés. Et pour ce hold up tout près de Prospect Park à Brooklyn, l'étonnement : les jeunes femmes présentes n'ont pas été violentées...

FIND SLAIN DRIVER'S AUTO.

Police on Case Refuse to Discuss Chauffeur's Murder.

The automobile of Louis Penella, taxicab driver, who was found murdered by the side of the road between Mineola and Garden City Saturday night, was recovered by the New York police yesterday. While this was admitted at Police Headquarters, detectives at work on the case refused to discuss it. The recovered automobile was taken to Flushing.

In the opinion of the police, Penella was murdered early Thursday morning. Robbery is believed to have been the motive. Penella answered a call shortly after midnight from his stand near a restaurant in Hempstead. That was the last seen of him until his body was found covered by a cement slab on the roadside. He had been shot twice in the head. His pockets had been turned inside out and cut and other valuable

Kane Murder Suspect Freed.

Walter Johnson, a negro, who had been held in the Raymond Street Jail since May 30 and questioned in connection with the murder of Miss Florence Kane in the East New York section of Brooklyn on May 29, was freed for lack of evidence by Magistrate Rayfield in Gates Avenue Court, Brooklyn, yesterday. He had been held on a technical charge of vagrancy. Johnson was arrested on the Myrtle Avenue elevated station when Miller saw him weeping and acting strangely. His inability to give a satisfactory account of his whereabouts at the time of the Kane murder led to his being suspected.

ROB TWO GAS STATIONS, FAIL AT TWO OTHERS

Thugs Make Nineteenth Raid on Sobel Brothers Branch in Three Weeks.

Sobel Brothers, who operate gasoline stations in Manhattan and the Bronx, reported yesterday the nineteenth raid by hold-up men in the last three weeks. Two robbers, apparently concentrating on this particular company, visited four of its stations between 4 and 5 o'clock yesterday morning.

At the last one visited, at 158th Street and Morris Avenue, the main entrance was held up by two attendants. One attendant, who was going through his third hold-up, was told by the other attendant that he did not produce more money next time he would be shot full of holes.

Twice the thugs were scared off, once by a policeman who fired several shots and another time by one of Sobel Brothers' foremen. About 4 o'clock the pair drove to the station at Ninety-second Street and Flushing Avenue. In this case, too, the two drove. As the "passenger" stepped out, pistol in hand, an attendant yelled and a policeman a block away jumped on another car and started after the bandit car which sped away when the employee shouted.

In the next hour they visited two stations in St. Nicholas Avenue, one of which was driven off by the foreman, while the other they got a few dollars. They wound up the morning's work at 38th Street and Mott Avenue.

SAY SHE STOLE TO DRESS.

Police Declare Clerk Admits \$3,000 Steals From Employers.

Mrs. Jessie Goldstein, 24 years old, of 1,550 Fifth Street, Brooklyn, who has been a bookkeeper for Henry H. Fidler, a dress manufacturer, of 498 Seventh Avenue, at \$35 a week, was arrested yesterday charged with thefts of cash and goods amounting to approximately \$1,000. Mrs. Goldstein admitted she had stolen from her employer, the police said, and that she could not live on her present half her salary.

The police also said Mrs. Goldstein, who had the pistol to his home, and on being chided by his mother for having it, buried it in the yard and heaped boxes on the place. He afterward showed the detective where he hid the weapon and it was recovered.

According to the detectives the boy confessed to shooting young Amato, but said that it was purely accidental. The boy was questioned concerning the pistol, the detectives said he told them, and that when it came his turn he fired it when it was close to young Amato. The Amato boy was killed instantly.

9 IN STORE HELD UP, ROBBERS GET \$4,000

Borden Branch in Brooklyn Looted in Five Minutes as Crowds Pass.

WOMEN ARE NOT MOLESTED

Thugs Make Men Deliver, Then Rifle Safe and Register—Leave in Automobile.

In broad daylight yesterday afternoon, while scores of persons were passing, four armed men walked into the store of the Borden's Farm Bureau Company, at 88 Sterling Place, in a busy business section of Brooklyn, and after holding up the cashier and eight other employees escaped with more than \$4,000.

None of the employees resisted the bandits and they were able to obtain the money and leave the store within five minutes of the time they walked in.

John Cornshen, the cashier, and some young women clerks were in the front part of the store, while three drivers, who had just completed their day's collections, were checking up their money when an automobile pulled up at the door. The young men, all smartly dressed, stepped quickly from the machine and walked into the store, leaving another man at the wheel of the automobile.

As they entered each drew a pistol and pointed it at either Cornshen and the clerks to face the wall. One of the thieves stood guard over the employees while the others went to the cashier's cage and took what money there was in the cash register. They also took a sum from the safe, the door of which was open. Then they made the collectors turn over their money and watches. The women clerks were not molested.

Their work completed, the bandits left the establishment and drove off. The cashier notified the police at the Grand Avenue Station, and detectives were sent to the store.

Two of the young women in the place at the time were Sam and Anna Miss Catherine Ducre, whose addresses the police at Grand Avenue Precinct did not know. They and their boy did not know exactly who the drivers who were in the office at the time.

The hold-up men were described as young men, ranging in ages from 22 to 25 years, of every complexion. None of them resembled any of their victims as former employees. Detectives questioned persons in the vicinity but from none were they able to obtain the license number on the bandit automobile.

ARE YOU SATISFIED With Your Direct-by-Mail Results?

This Announcement Shows How You Can Increase Your Inquiries from 4 to 40 Times

Do you want your Direct-by-Mail efforts to secure for you a definite and legitimate response of 17%, 20%, 28%, 35½%, 40%, 48%, 56%, 60%, 63%, 72%, 78%, 80%, of your prospect lists?

(The above figures are actual replies obtained for old-established, conservative manufacturing concerns. Names will be given on request.) You can also see the names of about 15,000 companies' answers secured for our clients in 20 different fields and industries.

You can see just what they said.

Just What Do You Mean by Direct-by-Mail?

It is using the greatest and most direct distributing medium (the U. S. Post Office) in an intelligent and systematic manner. If a concern's "circularizing doesn't pay" it means that they are misusing the most direct and efficient distributing system in the world.

What Direct-by-Mail Should Accomplish

It should give you (a) information concerning your prospects; (b) it should steadily give you new leads for your salesman to follow; (c) it should break down sales resistance by being of *actual value* to your prospects; (d) it should revive dead accounts; (e) it should straighten out old-time misunderstandings with former customers; (f) it should be of daily help and of intelligent inspiration to your sales staff; (g) it should automatically show how product, selling and administration can be constantly improved.

What Direct-by-Mail Can Not Do

(Usually) it cannot sell goods by itself (except in distinctly mail order business). It cannot be effective without properly edited mailing lists. It cannot be effective if it is produced by a well meaning amateur. It cannot be effective if it is rushed through in spare time.

What Type of Concern Can Use Direct-by-Mail Successfully?

Direct-by-Mail is particularly suited to companies making high grade products sold at a high first cost. It is particularly effective for products of complicated construction. For products sold on an engineering or service basis.

Contrary to general belief, Direct-by-Mail becomes increasingly effective on products as they increase in unit value. It is effective only where products or service are of *unquestioned value*.

What Kind of Concern Should Leave It Alone?

- The maker of inferior merchandise.
- The company with a wobbly price and sales policy.
- The company that plans spasmodically from day to day.
- The company that sells and buys on a cheap first cost basis.
- The company that is operated without imagination.
- The type of company that is always seeking something for nothing.
- The company that puts a 98% valuation on paper and printing, and values direction, brains and experience at 2%—because they *can't be measured and weighed on a scale*.

The Unusual Rate of Response

An experience of over 23 years indicates that the usual response from Direct-by-Mail (as measured by actual letters or inquiries received) is from 2% to 4%—in rare instances 5% or 7%.

Why Philip Kobbé Company, Inc., Consistently Gets So High a Response

- Because we do six simple things which we have learned after 23 years of observation.
- Because we start where most concerns stop. We deal only with companies of the highest standing who have something distinctly *worth while* to sell. With this simple formula of practice it is impossible for our Direct-by-Mail work to fail. Re-read this paragraph — you will realize how much of the success depends on your reputation and the quality of your product.

Philip Kobbé Co.'s Usual Rate of Response

During the last five years, Direct-by-Mail campaigns handled by this company have never produced less than 16% direct response or more than 87%. In most cases the tangible response runs from 35% to 55% of the prospect list.

How We Have Used Direct-by-Mail for Machinery Manufacturers

For simulating interest in Heat Treated Axles, Armature Bearings, Rubber Mill Machinery, Rail Grinders, Conveying Belts, Railway Forgings, Castings and Springs.

For securing leads and for the education and information of Architects, Consulting Engineers and Owners.

Among well-known companies which have been served by us in this field are Farrel Foundry & Machine Co., Manning, Maxwell & Moore, Inc., Superheater Company, Putnam Machine Company, John W. Ferguson Company, Thomas R. Bailey Company, Illinois Zinc Co.

How We Have Used Direct-by-Mail for Miscellaneous Manufacturers

For securing leads, reviving dead accounts, educating salesmen and branch offices on commodities, including paints, wire cabling, springs, fabricants, metal shingles, gears, pebble mills, mechanical scales, truck trucks, back and bank safes, coin counting machines, coal tar products.

Among well-known companies which have been served by us in this field are Standard Jute Company, Inc., Racine Tool & Machine Company, Toch Brothers, Inc.; Wallace Barnes Co.

For opening new retail accounts, for stimulating interest among jobbers and jobbing salesmen in renewing accounts and covering such products as Knit Underwear, Hair Nets, Moth Bags, Period Furniture, Tent and Awning Material, Confectionery, Paints, etc.

Among well-known companies which have been served by us in this field are Little Falls Mfg. Company, White Tar Company, Erskine - Danforth Corporation, William L. Barrell Company, of New York, Inc., Park & Tillford.

A SUGGESTION

for using this simple, inexpensive method for creating and stimulating new business:

FIRST—Have clearly in your mind what you expect to accomplish by Direct-by-Mail.

SECOND—Make appointment for interview at your office or ours.

(Appointments can best be made in writing, stating when and where will be most convenient for you to meet us. We will immediately confirm your suggestion by telephone.)

PHILIP KOBBE CO., Inc.,
45 WEST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK
Est. 1916