

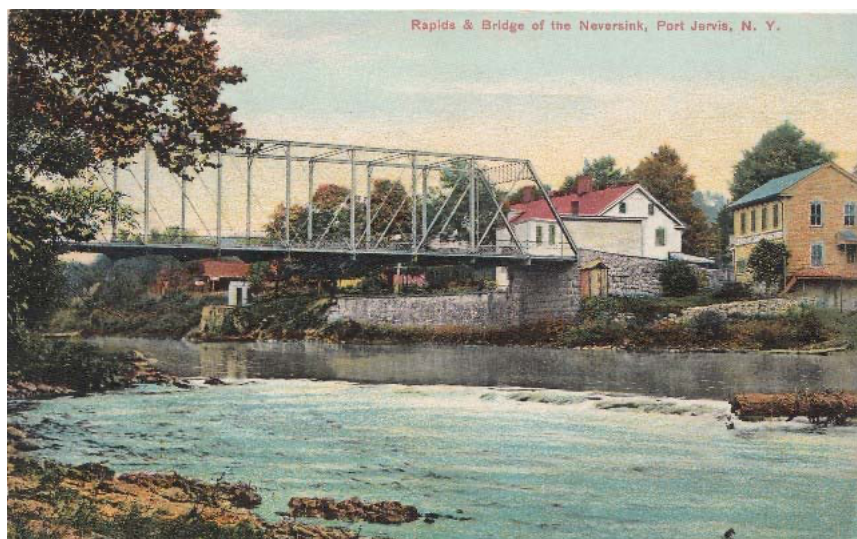
1925-2025

un an avec Howard Phillips Lovecraft

#199 | 20 juillet 1925



« Aujourd'hui — ce lundi 20 — pas cessé d'écrire, sinon pour le dîner, et la soirée se conclura par un peu de lecture avant le coucher. Ceci conclut le 20 juillet. La situation de S.H. semble toujours en bonne voie, et elle négocie pour de bonnes conditions. Kleiner et Morton ont fait une randonnée d'une semaine dans les régions sauvages à l'ouest de l'Hudson, loin des sentiers et des feux de camp de l'humanité. À un moment donné, ils se sont tenus simultanément dans les trois États de New York, du New Jersey et de Pennsylvanie — un exploit qui ne peut être surpassé qu'en se rendant dans le sud-ouest, où les quatre États de l'Utah, du Colorado, de l'Arizona et du Nouveau-Mexique convergent vers un point commun. »



Underpass, Port Jervis, N. Y.



Obelisk Square, Port Jervis, N. Y.



[1925, lundi 20 juillet]

Up noon — breakfast — wrote letters — SH return with dinner — write more — read & retire.

Levé à midi. Petit-déjeuner. Écrit des lettres. Sonia revient avec de quoi dîner. Écrit encore. Lu et couché.

L'échange hebdomadaire de lettres avec la tante Lillian semble chaque fois accompagné de documents, copie au carbone des écrits commerciaux pour Leeds côté du neveu, des articles découpés dans les journaux de Providence côté Lillian, que Lovecraft commente en retour. Aujourd'hui, grosse colère sur les reconstructions en cours sur la colline de Providence, et notamment College Street, où il habitera les six ans précédant sa mort : « Je suis vraiment en rage (*utterly infuriated* souligné) concernant le destin des vieilles maisons coloniales de College & Benefit Street, une des plus belles survivances coloniales de toutes les grandes villes, et savoir qu'elles seront détruites à court terme est au-delà du supportable. » Pour cette négociation en cours de Sonia, concernant un nouvel emploi, ni l'un ni l'autre ne se doute du coup de foudre à venir. Dans sa lettre, le « ainsi se conclut le 20 juillet » vient à peine au bout d'une ligne à le décrire. Mais il parle d'une « montagne de lettres », pas de précision mais sans aucun doute les résultats des votes pour l'association du *United Amateurs* et la passation de pouvoir au nouveau bureau. Ce point unique sur la carte des USA avec les frontières des quatre États qui se coupent à angle droit, c'est précisément le territoire fictionnel de Tony Hillerman, et ce cher homme que deviendra Tony et ses fabuleux polars vient justement de naître, ce 25 mai 1925, à Sacred Heart (Oklahoma) mais je déborde : ça ne peut concerner Lovecraft. Et pourtant, Machen, Bierce et les autres, c'est dans les mêmes auteurs que révère Lovecraft qu'il apprendra à écrire. Morton et Kleiner en excursion : ah non, pas si loin (et Lovecraft aurait bien dû les accompagner), c'est à Port Jervis, 160 kilomètres pas plus de Manhattan, sur la rivière Delaware, qu'est ce point où se rencontrent les trois États, allez donc l'explorer avec Street View (ce que Lovecraft n'aurait pu faire !) Petit détail rare : Lovecraft, en bas de page, n'a plus la place pour son habituelle formule de politesse « Your obt. nephew » etc, alors il l'ajoutera... au dos de l'enveloppe ! Dans le journal, à Brooklyn mais assez loin de chez les Lovecraft, cette histoire de cabine téléphonique qui témoigne des nouveaux usages de l'invention de Graham Bell, certes non prévue par lui-même (qui n'avait pas prévu, d'ailleurs, sa propre invention : reprendre l'inoubliable McLuhan) Souvenez-vous du nom de Josephine Koykowiser !

Canicule du week-end et furie des plages: sept noyades à New York et autour, dont une à Coney Island. L'homme perdu deux jours dans les marais de Newark, se réveillant à l'hôpital, raconte des histoires très lovecraftiennes (on dirait le dispositif de *Par delà le mur du sommeil*!).

New York Times, 20 juillet 1925. Josephine Koykowiser, domiciliée 540 Kosciusko Street, à Brooklyn, avait beaucoup à raconter quand elle est entrée dans la cabine téléphonique du drugstore de J.H. Hopkis, au 36 Reid Avenue, à Brooklyn, samedi soir. Quand elle eut dit tout ce qu'elle avait à dire, c'était dimanche. La conversation téléphonique qui a coûté une pièce de 5 cents à Mlle Koykowiser n'a pas seulement été à cheval sur deux journées, mais l'a tellement absorbée qu'elle ne s'est pas aperçu qu'on éteignait les lumières et qu'on fermait le magasin. Elle n'a rien entendu des sirènes d'une ambulance appelée pour un accident juste devant le magasin, ni les cris de la foule au dehors. Même la plus passionnante conversation a une fin, et quand la jeune femme raccrocha et revint des Champs Élyséens, elle se trouvait prisonnière du drugstore dans le noir. Elle courut et frappa aux portes vitrées, attirant l'attention de la foule près de l'ambulance. « Sortez-moi d'ici, criait-elle. — Mais comment êtes-vous entrée ? » lui répondit-on. Elle ne put faire entendre sa réponse à la question réitérée par plusieurs agents de police. On essaya la porte d'entrée et la porte de derrière mais tout était bloqué. La police téléphona au propriétaire pour qu'il vienne avec la clé, mais on ne put trouver ni lui ni son employé. Ils essayèrent en vain de ramper par le vasistas au-dessus de la porte d'entrée, mais personne parmi les policiers présents n'était assez mince ou petit. On lança une alarme générale dans les commissariats de l'est new yorkais pour trouver un policier assez petit pour se glisser dans le vasistas. Plusieurs policiers tout petits essayèrent sans réussir. On trouva avec Frank Feguida le bon candidat. Grimpé sur les épaules d'un de ses collègues il se glissa dans le vasistas, sauta de l'autre côté, enleva le verrou de la porte arrière, fit sortir la jeune fille et revint par le même chemin. « Mais comment étiez-vous entrée ? » redemanda-t-on à la demoiselle, mais on n'entendit pas sa réponse, repartie chez elle du plus vite qu'elle le pouvait.

TELLS A HAZY STORY OF 40 HOURS IN BOG

William Galtin, Recovering From
Exhaustion and Fever, Says
He Never Gave Up.

CONFUSES PLANE AND FLIES

Saw Aviators and Tried to Signal
Them—Fought Insects Night
and Day.

William Galtin was able to sit up in bed yesterday in St. Mary's Hospital in Hoboken and tell fairly coherently experiences in Monarchie Swamp, from which he was rescued late Saturday night after wandering for forty hours. His face and body covered with great red blotches from the stings of horseflies, his eyes still burning with the fever due to exposure and the poisons of the swamp, Galtin still appeared to be a very sick man.

He had known as he wandered in the swamp that Kraft and other fellow-workmen would be looking for him, he told his wife yesterday, and had not given up hope of being rescued. He saw the plane overhead flown by Lieutenant Chamberlain of Hasbrouck Heights and tried to attract the aviator's attention through the thick greenery of the scrub maples that cover much of the swamp. Then his talk wandered to the flies that never let him alone night or day and it seemed to listeners that the man confused these flies with the plane overhead in his memory.

He remembered most distinctly the swift coming of darkness and thunderstorms Thursday night. What he did and where he wandered in the swamp which covers four or five square miles between Eas: Rutherford and Secaucus he could not recall. Sometime in the two days and nights he removed his clothes whether to seek relief from the heat or with some dim idea of swimming either the Hackensack River or the Erie Railroad Canal, he was unable to say.

Doctors in St. Mary's Hospital feared for a time that Galtin would succumb to weakness and malarial fever, but a hardy constitution has fought the one and the thorough war against mosquitoes waged by the Bergen County Extermination Commission, by whom he was employed, reduced the danger of the other to a minimum.

When he was brought to his home Saturday night he did not wish to go to the hospital but demanded that refreshments be brought and that a table be laid for his friends and neighbors to celebrate his safe return. Prevailed upon by the family physician and his wife, however, he went to the hospital, where yesterday he held receptions as long as doctors and nurses would permit.

7 BATHERS PERISH AT NEAR-BY BEACHES

One Man Loses Life at Coney
Island, Where a Girl Also
Narrowly Escapes.

4 OF A FAMILY GO DOWN

Two Men and a Girl Try to Save
Aged Man Stricken by Heart
Attack in Water.

Special to The New York Times.

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., July 18.—Four persons were drowned today when two young men and a 12-year-old girl went to the assistance of an old man who is believed to have suffered a heart attack while swimming at Corson's Inlet.

The dead are Joseph Ducannon, 68 years old; Frank J. Waltz, 25; Andrew Wood, 26, and Ruth A. Wood, 12. All were from Philadelphia. The bodies of Ducannon and Waltz were recovered by United States Coast Guards shortly after the tragedy. The body of Andrew Wood was recovered about 10 o'clock tonight. Coast Guards were still searching his tonight for the body of Miss Wood. The bodies are being held at Corson's point.

Eyewitnesses said Ducannon was some distance from the beach and the other three were swimming in the surf close by. Waltz and Andrew Wood apparently heard the old man call for help and went to his rescue. Miss Wood followed the two and lost her life trying to give aid.

People on the beach saw the four together some distance out, and then they suddenly disappeared.

One Death at Coney Island.

On bathing fatality and a rescue from drowning occurred at Coney Island yesterday when about one-fourth of the 700,000 persons who visited the resort went in bathing.

Charles Pomarico, 23 years old, a stone mason, of 13 Carlton Avenue, Brooklyn, was drowned in Gravesend Bay off West Thirty-second Street. He went to the island with his wife and a party of friends and, though not able to swim, went into the water with other swimmers of the party. He sank before his depth, and it was some time before his body was recovered. Dr. Gaber of the Coney Island Hospital tried to revive him with a pulmotor.

Sylvia Jacobson, 18 years old, of 811 Hohn Street, the Bronx, narrowly escaped the same fate, and only the quick intervention of Samuel L. Slatkow, a life guard, and the prompt work of Dr. Newark with a pulmotor saved her life. She was playing with a number of young men and women and struck her head on the bottom. Slatkow, hearing the cries of the others, dived and brought the young woman to shore, where Dr. Newark treated her for immersion and hysteria. Later in the day she was able to go home.

Girl in Booth Phones On While Store Closes; Rescued by Slim Policeman Through Transom

Josephine Koykowsky of 540 Kosciusko Street, Brooklyn, had a lot to tell when she entered the telephone booth in the drug store of I. H. Kipkiss at 36 Reid Avenue, Brooklyn, on Saturday night.

By the time that she had said it all, it was Sunday morning. Miss Koykowsky's five cents worth of conversation not only occupied parts of two days, but it was so absorbing that she did not notice the lights being put out and the drug store being locked. She did not hear the clanging of an ambulance called to a street accident in front of the store, or the shouts of the crowd outside. She talked right through it all.

Even the most thrilling talk has to come to an end some time, and when the young woman hung up the receiver and came back from the Elysian fields, she found herself a prisoner in the dark glass doors and soon had the crowd away from the ambulance.

"Get me out," she shouted. "How did you get in?" they demanded. She could not make her explanation heard and did not regard the question of how she got in as the matter before the house anyway. But policeman after policeman came and each one shouted:

"How did you get in?"

The front door, side door, front light and side lights were tested and found locked.

"How did you get in?" they kept on demanding. The girl kept on shouting answers, but could not make herself heard.

The policemen sent telephone calls and messengers to the druggist with the key, but could not reach him or the clerk. Finally, they tried to crawl through the transom over the front door. This was too small for any policeman on the spot.

A general alarm was sent out from the Brownsville and East New York station to find a policeman who would fit a small transom. Several undersized men were tested and rejected. At last, Policeman Frank Peguda was found a perfect fit. On the shoulders of another policeman, he wriggled through the transom, and dropped inside the door. He pried the locking bars on the rear door loose, let the girl out, and helped her over a fence. Then he rebarbed the rear door and wriggled out through the transom.

When the girl made her appearance on the sidewalk, forty voices demanded at once, "How did you get in?"

But she shot off for 540 Kosciusko Street at a rapid pace and did not utter a sound.

TAKE BELL-ANS AFTER MEALS
for Perfect Digestion.—Adv.

Haldeman - Julius booklet, (which I regret to say are published
no more) we proceeded by subway to Dyckman St. - up near
the northern end of Manhattan - & paused for a drink of
bottled orangeade before strolling to the ferry which leads
across the Hudson to the N.Y. palisades. Then crossing, we
began the zigzag ascent of the majestic precipice by means of
a winding route partly identical with the wagon road, partly
a footpath through the verdant twilight of forest steep, & partly
a stone stairway which at one point hauled under the road.
The crest, which we attained in about a half-hour, commands
the noblest possible view of the Hudson & its eastern shore; &
along this we ramble - coming now on a patch of woods, now
on a grassy pasture, & now on a clasper bordered by the falling bed
rock of the plateau itself. At one point we beheld the ruins
of a noble stone house; overgrown densely with ivy & reminding
one of the ruins of some sinister Rhine castle. Later we
settled on a bench near the edge of the cliff & did our reading
- my book being "Es. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde" which I had not perused
for 25 years. At 6 we had lunch - piecing it out with ice
cream & lawnade from a neighbouring pavilion - & thereafter
we descended, recrossed the ferry, & finished our walk on
the N.Y. side by following Riverside Drive in its worst
picturesque stretch from Dyckman to 181st St. At the latter
point we took the subway home - stopping at the shop under the
Tasminia for ginger ale & ice & drinking the farmer upon our
arrival at 169. I then disposed of an invoice & retired. The next
day - after which I read some & threw
away - Friday the 17th - I was up at noon, picked up my file & threw
away bundles of useless documents, & proceeded to peruse an
historical anniversary issue of the Cambridge Tribune by Rev.
Samuel Eliot was superb, fought to be republished in booklet form.
suppose some had sent to me. The next day - Saturday the 18th
I then resumed with dinner - I wrote some & went out on
some errands, & finally retired. The next day - Sunday the 19th
I wrote all day, really clearing up in the morning I read &
afternoon I went out for groceries. I read all day
retired. On Sunday the 19th - yesterday - I read all day
finishing Eyer's "Early American Craftsmen" which contains much
matter of marvellous interest. It seems that your banister-
back chair is a really early type - descended from the tall
chairs of the restoration period & preceding the Windsor.
There was also a great deal about Bennington pottery - telling
the now high value of those fuzzy-haired little china poodles
which one used to see everywhere. Did we have some
once? I could gnash my teeth at what has been sold,
given, or thrown away! I was out for grocery errands now &
then, & retired fairly early. Today - Monday the 20th - I have
been continuously writing except for the dinner hour, & shall
end by reading & retiring. This concludes July 20. S.H.'s
position still seems good, & she is negotiating for a larger truck.
Kleiner & Marton have been on a track & campfire of wandering.
wilds west of the Hudson, far from the tracks & campfires of mankind.
At one point they stood simultaneously in the three states of N.Y.,
N.J. & Penn. - a feat surpassable only by travelling to the southwest
where the four states of Utah, Colorado, Arizona, & New Mexico
converge to a common focus. Oh, yes - as to the Amy Lowell poem
- it is poetry, because of the imagery, but not the sort I'd try to
paraphrase intentionally. And so it goes. Yaff Nephew to S.H.