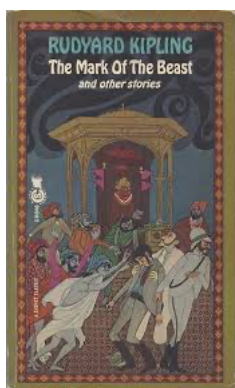


1925-2025

un an avec Howard Phillips Lovecraft

#214 | 4 août 1925



« Pour en revenir à l'agenda, ce mardi 4, me suis levé à midi, ai écrit des lettres, et reçu un appel téléphonique de Loveman que j'ai retrouvé à la librairie de la IV^e avenue avant d'aller dîner (pot-au-feu-crème glacée) à l'Automat, puis voyage jusqu'à son logement pour inspecter ses trésors littéraires. Ces derniers sont, comme je l'ai peut-être mentionné lorsque je les ai vus à Cleveland il y a trois ans, exceptionnellement variés et précieux. Des lettres autographes d'hommes aussi célèbres que Chatterton, Clare, David Gray, Browning, Dowson, Beardsley, Dermody, &c. &c., des livres d'une rareté fabuleuse, une pièce de théâtre complète et inédite en

MS de Thomas Wade-&c. &c. J'espère vraiment qu'il n'aura pas à se séparer de ces biens précieux par nécessité économique ! Il m'a lu la fin de son poème en prose *The Sphinx*, qui est aussi dramatique et coloré que les parties précédentes, ainsi que le seul chapitre terminé du roman sur la guerre civile, *Thracia Deane*, qu'il a commencé et qui semble promettre une puissance et une vivacité inhabituelles. Je suis reparti à 1h30 du matin après lui avoir promis de l'aider à trouver une chambre à Brooklyn le jour suivant. Il n'aime pas l'atmosphère des quartiers chics, et a trouvé le petit appartement incroyablement bondé à cause de l'arrivée de quelques parents de son hôte. Je suis ensuite rentré, ai lu puis me suis couché. Ces longs trajets en métro, je les améliore toujours en lisant les livrets Haldeman-Julius dont mes poches sont pleines. En ce moment, les nouvelles de Rudyard Kipling, qui peut certainement écrire des histoires merveilleusement étranges quand il le souhaite. *La*

marque de la bête est un petit chef-d'œuvre ».

[1925, mardi 4 août]

Up noon — write — down to meet Loveman at Martin's Book Shop —
Automat — up to 115 St — look over MSS. & c. — return & retire.


*Levé à midi. Écrit. En ville pour rendez-vous avec Loveman à la
librairie Martin. On déjeune à l'Automat, et on remonte jusqu'à la
115ème . rue. Me montre ses manuscrits, etc. Retour & couché.*

Posons la question à l'inverse de nos habitude (ça pourra servir quand de nouveau nous n'aurons plus les lettres) : qu'est-ce que Lovecraft écrit à Lillian qu'il n'a pas inscrit dans son carnet ? Par exemple le menu à l'Automat, par exemple la liste des trésors que Loveman a rapportés de Cleveland (il devra en vendre bon nombre pour tenir à New York), et surtout des surtout que, dans la poche de son costume neuf, il ne part jamais sans deux ou trois opuscules des Little Blue Books, et que c'est Kipling qu'aujourd'hui il relit. À l'Automat ce jour *pot roast & ice cream* et expédition jusqu'à la chambre de Loveman pour en examiner les trésors : Loveman collectionne les lettres autographes, et la réaction de Lovecraft est mitigée, commentant plus la valeur commerciale des livres, lettres, manuscrits et curiosités de la collection commencée, que des objets eux-mêmes. D'ailleurs, nous ne connaissons plus aucun nous (sinon Chatterton) de ceux dont Loveman a obtenu des reliques — certes le moindre mot de Lovecraft à Loveman vaudrait plus cher que la dernière pièce manuscrite non publiée de Thomas Wade. « Un long trajet en métro », dit Lovecraft de son retour, depuis presque Harlem jusqu'à Brooklyn : certainement au moins cinquante minutes. Mais s'il part de chez Loveman à 1 h 30 du matin et arrive chez lui à 2 h 30 comment nous vénérerions aujourd'hui, au lieu des menus de l'Automat, quelques croquis de ce qu'il y a vu. Dans le *Times*, la réticence du journal à mettre en avant le geste fabuleusement provocateur de cette Mme Gardener, oubliée de l'histoire, à laquelle pourtant elle porte un fameux coup de butoir — coup de boule, carrément. Et respectueusement (c'est le crâne de Lovecraft aussi, que Providence aurait dû garder).

New York Times, 4 août 1925. De Washington, le 4 août. Guy Moffett, de la commission des Affaires civiles, et exécuteur testamentaire de Mme Henlen Hamilton Gardener, a apporté hier un démenti aux allégations de la presse, rapportant que son cerveau avait été incinéré, contrairement à ses instructions testamentaires de le confier à l'université Cornell pour l'intérêt de la science. M Moffett a précisé que le cerveau de Mme Gardener avait été prélevé au Walter Reed Army General Hospital et avait

été porté à l'université Cornell. Le cerveau de Mme Gardener a été trouvé en bon état lors de l'extraction, mais sans qu'aucune précision sur sa taille, structure etc ne soit apportée par les personnels en charge de l'opération post-mortem. Les autorités de l'hôpital ont dit qu'ils ne pouvaient transmettre aucune information sans l'ordre express du Corps médical des armées. Les instructions laissées par Mme Gardener autorisent l'université Cornell à établir de soigneuses comparaisons entre son propre cerveau et celui de quelques hommes célèbres, pour établir si la taille et la structure du cerveau présentent des variantes selon le sexe. Mme Gardener prétend que non, et a fait don de son cerveau pour prouver le contraire. « C'est un problème fondamental », avait-elle déclaré et y a consacré un ouvrage avec le Dr Spitzka de New York, intitulé *Le sexe du cerveau*. Ses amis rapportent qu'elle considérait le don de son cerveau comme le point final à cet ouvrage.

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CHAPLIN ARRIVES FOR HIS NEW FILM

Comes From Chicago for Presentation of "The Gold Rush"
Here on Aug. 15.

A BIT GRAYER, BUT LIVELY

Comments Humorously on the "I Knew Him When" People Who Occasionally Corner Him.

Charlie Chaplin arrived here yesterday morning from Hollywood, after a day's stop-over in Chicago. He was accompanied by Harry d'Arrast, a Frenchman, who officiated as assistant director of Mr. Chaplin's last picture, "The Gold Rush." Mr. Chaplin came here for the presentation of his new comedy which, according to plans following a conference yesterday morning, is to open at the Mark Strand Theatre just before midnight on Aug. 15. This film has been running for several weeks in Hollywood, where it is meeting with great success.

Mr. Chaplin was met at the station by some of his Eastern representatives, including Arthur Kelly, Vice President of the United Artists' Corporation. The comedian's hair is a little grayer than it was when he was here about two years ago for the presentation of "A Woman of Paris," but he appears to be in excellent health and his step is as lively as ever.

Referring to persons recognizing him, Mr. Chaplin waxed humorous when seated, with one leg under him, on a sofa in his suite in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

"I occasionally encounter one of those persons who remembers me from the vaudeville days," said Mr. Chaplin. "They often do not know how to say good-bye and it is extremely difficult to get away from them. This type will come up to me and say quietly:

"Mr. Chaplin, I believe?"

"I admit I am Chaplin, and he forthwith goes on, still in an ordinary conversational tone: 'I saw you in 1908 in vaudeville,' and then in a rasping voice that can be heard all over the place, he ejaculates: 'Am I right?' I agree, confess and mumble. He repeats this, adding that 1908 is a long while ago, and then blares out again: 'Am I right?' He often does it a third or fourth time without much variation to his questions. I say that I am glad to have seen him, that I am flattered that he remembered me, and that sometimes he looks as if he were going to kiss his friends up. It is then high time to put one's foot down."

"The Gold Rush" is a picture which in a measure reflects some of the disappointments of the comedian's early career. It has taken nearly two years to produce, and Chaplin has had it in his mind for several years. "The Gold Rush" has a background of Alaska, and in it Charlie is seen as a pathetic plodder over the snows, as a gold hunter, and also as a very hungry little man.

Chaplin said that his wife was well, and that everything was happy at home. His son has been named Spencer Chaplin and is said to bear a strong resemblance to Papa Chaplin.

SAYS BRAIN BEQUEST HAS BEEN FULFILLED

Executor Under Mrs. Gardener's Will Declares Organ Was Sent to Cornell.

CREMATION REPORT DENIED

University Authorities Have Not Yet Received the Brain, but Are Expecting It.

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4.—Guy Moffett of the Civil Service Commission, one of the executors under the will of Mrs. Helen Hamilton Gardener, issued today a denial of press reports that her brain had been cremated, contrary to instructions in her will devising it to Cornell University for the use of science.

Mr. Moffett stated that Mrs. Gardener's brain was removed at Walter Reed Army General Hospital and had been shipped to Cornell University.

Mrs. Gardener's brain was found in good condition when removed, but no particulars regarding its construction, size, &c., were obtainable today from officers in charge at Walter Reed Hospital, where the post mortem operation was performed. Hospital officials said they could not discuss the operation under strict Army Medical Corps orders.

Observance of the instructions given in Mrs. Gardener's will will enable members of the Cornell Brain Association, and science in general, to make careful comparison of the brain of Mrs. Gardener with the brains of famous men in their study of the question whether there is any variation in brain cells due to sex. Mrs. Gardener had contended that there was no structural difference in the brains of man and woman and contributed her own brain to prove her contention.

Mrs. Gardener's interest in the subject was awakened in 1882, when Dr. William Alexander Hammond, then Surgeon General of the United States, declared there was a fundamental difference between the brains of men and women. She regarded Dr. Hammond's declaration as a challenge, which she decided to accept, and she began an exhaustive investigation into the subject.

Mrs. Gardener took a post-graduate course in biology and medicine, and in the preparation of her thesis on the subject she sought the advice of Dr. Edward Anthony Spitzka of New York, an authority on the brain and nervous system. She framed ten questions which so interested the specialist that he went to work with her in an effort to solve the question.

When Mrs. Gardener's questions were submitted to Dr. Spitzka he is represented as having declared: "This is fundamental work," and that it had never been done before. She and Dr. Spitzka worked together on the problem more than a year.

The result of Mrs. Gardener's studies was embraced in her work, "Sex in Brain," in which she contradicted the theory that there was sex in brain. Her friends say she bequeathed her brain to science as a final point in her written thesis.