TAFF BAEDEKER

DON FORD

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About This Ebook

US fan Don Ford (1921-1965) won the 1960 eastbound TransAtlantic Fan Fund race held in 1959, with rival candidates Terry Carr – a later winner in 1965 – and Bjo Trimble. His platform, published on the TAFF ballot, was as follows:

> Don Ford began reading science fiction in 1930, and still reads it. He attended the Toronto Convention in 1948. The following year he became known as "Mr. Cinvention" due to his activity with the 1949 Cinvention. He was a founder of the first Midwescon so that those who could not make Portland that year could still meet and talk with fans. Don read Wm. N. Crawford's *Marvel Tales* in 1935 and has been a fanzine addict ever since, even to the extent of publishing his own. Don was the first USA administrator for TAFF. For four years he worked to help put TAFF over. He has entertained and is a friend of the British delegates to American conventions, and also corresponds with many other British fans. He is well known in England and the USA. Don will make a good representative of U.S. Fandom and can be counted on to follow through with a written account of his TAFF trip.
>
> *Nominated by: C.L. Barrett, M.D., Lynn A. Hickman, Daniel E. McPhail, Ted Carnell, Norman G. Ashfield.*

He was a mainstay of the CFG (Cincinnati Fantasy Group), and chaired Cinvention, the 1949 Worldcon hosted by the group in its home city. In 1957 he published a history of the CFG to date, titled simply *Cincinnati Fantasy Group*. His fanzine *Pooka* was distributed through Britain's amateur press association OMPA (Offtrails Magazine Publishers Association, founded in 1954) from December 1955 to March 1965. Readers new to fan history should now be prepared for mentions of the CFG, Cinvention and OMPA in what follows. The BSFA or British Science Fiction Association we have always with us.

Don Ford attended the 1960 Eastercon in London, played tourist with a great deal of camera equipment, visited UK fans in London, Cheltenham and Liverpool, and made a side trip to Paris. His trip report *TAFF Baedeker* was published promptly in two sections, 1960 and 1961. For the sake of the historical record the division between sections is recorded as a

chapter break in the contents list, although it may well mark nothing more significant than the point when the publisher Lynn Hickman felt Section One was long enough. The report runs to some 33,000 words and includes sidelight contributions from several British fans who gave their own accounts of the TAFF winner's adventures: Norman Ashfield, Ken Bulmer, Ted Carnell, Bill Gray, Roberta Gray (née Wild), Eric Jones, Ella Parker, John Roles and Norman Shorrock. More about the great upheaval of 1960, when the Eastercon was forced to find a new hotel at the last minute, can be found in another TAFF Free Library ebook: *The Compact Ella Parker* (2022) compiled by Rob Hansen.

Sadly, Don Ford died from cancer on 2 April 1965 aged only 44, following surgery by fellow-fan Charles Lee "Doc" Barrett – one of his TAFF nominators. The following obituary appeared in *Skyrack* 77 (12 April 1965) edited by Ron Bennett:

DEATH OF DON FORD

Fans the world over will be both shocked and saddened at the report that Donald E. Ford, the American Mid-West's "Mr. Science Fiction", died of cancer at the age of forty-four a week last Friday, 2nd April.

Don was a life-long reader of s.f. and possessed one of the largest magazine collections in the world, his applebox shelved basement collection being a talking point by many more fans than those who had gazed enviously at the complete runs of pulps and digest sized prozines.

In addition to being a leading light of many years' standing in the Cincinnati Fantasy Group, Don was Chairman of the 1949 Worldcon, the Cinvention, a photographer of more than local renown, a member of OMPA since December 1955 and a founder member of First Fandom.

He was the only fan to adminster the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund without actually having made the trip himself across the Pond. Under the guidance of Don Ford and Walt Willis the Fund came safely through its period of teething troubles and Don was himself finally rewarded with a TAFF trip to the 1960 Easter London Convention at which he made many friends, thrilling the audience with a show of some of his many prize winning colour slides and introducing to British conventions a new technique in party-throwing.

Little Don, all six feet six of the man who lived for science fiction, is no more. On a recent trip to see fellow fan Dr. Charles

L. Barrett, Don had mentioned a pain in his groin. Tests showed a malignant knot and a subsequent operation came too late.

Science fiction has lost a tireless worker. Fandom has lost a true friend. The sympathy of fans everywhere will be extended to Margaret, Terry-Anne and the rest of the Ford family.

Thanks as always to Claire Brialey for her eagle-eyed proofreading skills, to Fanac.org for making *TAFF Baedeker* available online (see the Appendix for links) and to Rob Hansen for numerous suggestions and the photograph below.

David Langford
December 2022

Don Ford and Ted Carnell in Carnell's office, 1960. Photo from the Don Ford collection.

Preface
Don Ford

As this is being written, I've been home about ten days from the trip. The longer one puts off the less reliable one's memory will be. There is no attempt on my part to try to exceed in length the wonderful write-ups that Walt Willis, Bob Madle and John Berry have done of their travels. I'm simply going to set out to tell the story of the TAFF trip: 1960 and whatever it takes, that'll be it.

Likewise, I'm not the master of the polished phrase, clever quips, and sterling prose that these fine gentlemen are. Since TAFF is a going thing and is likely to continue for years and years there will be some space devoted to the differences in our two countries, the problems of travel, and anything else I think may be of some use to future TAFF representatives from the U.S.

I feel that each TAFF winner owes it to fandom to produce a write-up of his trip. This should be clearly understood from the moment of entering the race. In England I found several people who were unaware of this phase of TAFF, probably due to this point never having been actually stressed too much. However, this has been one of the original aims of TAFF since its inception back in 1953.

One more thing and then we're off: as I face the task of writing this report, I don't see how I can avoid using the pronoun I thousands of times, so why not just pretend that you are reading a personal letter from me to you and that way it won't sound too much like I've suddenly gotten the big-head or something.

Section One

On January 1st, 1960 I was recovering from New Year's Eve and quietly watching *77 Sunset Strip* on TV when the phone rang and Margaret said it was for me. A voice said, "Get your ass in gear, boy, you're going to England!" It turned out to be Bob Madle calling from Virginia. I replied by raising hell with him for not getting going more actively with FIRST FANDOM. Always be obsequious, I say.

The passport application was handled through the Federal Court in Cincinnati, and since I wanted to get back in the U.S., I obtained a form from the U.S. Public Health Service for my shots and vaccination. Note: this has to be taken back to the U.S. P.H. to be stamped with their seal after your doctor finishes the series.

I wanted to fly rather than go by boat since the costs are approximately equal and it takes four to five days each way on a boat. That's nice if you have the time to spare, but my trip had to be done in three weeks. Bob Madle tried to arrange for me to get on a charter plane out of Washington, but the CAA regulations are a bit strict and I just couldn't qualify. What you have to do is be a member of the group/organization making the flight at least six months before the trip takes place. The only thing he could find going were flights made up of government workers, which left me completely out. This would've saved TAFF considerable money as the fares are much cheaper on a charter deal.

It resolved itself by TAFF forwarding the money to me and letting me make my own arrangements. This, I did by going to American Express. I remembered reading Nick Falasca's account of the Berry troubles, as well as John's own write-up, and figured that American Express has agencies in most cities where I could always request local service if I needed it. London and Paris both have large offices and that would be where I'd need help on this trip.

The Cincinnati office booked me in on BOAC, but just as the tickets were made out, they called back to American Express and said that they were cancelling that flight and I'd have to either go a day earlier or a day later. This wasn't too satisfactory so we cancelled with BOAC and switched to Pan American. Their flight 100 leaves daily from New York to London non-stop. I paid them and left with my tickets to London and back and was feeling pleased with saving the $30.00 jet surcharge which had just been dropped a few weeks before. So pleased in fact that I bought a

lens for the Exakta which I'd seen on sale. Then, three weeks before I left, American Express notified me that all the airlines had reinstated the jet surcharge as of April 1st.

I had time to do some planning and, thanks to Ron Bennett, many stupid questions about England were promptly answered. Ron was really on the ball. He kept wanting to come down to London just to meet me at the airport, but I told him that's crazy: it's 250 miles from Harrogate to London and besides if I get 4,000 miles I can surely find my way into London from the airport.

Easter time is generally a bit cool in England for Americans, and from all I'd read they had rain every day. So I bought a waterproof cap and planned my wardrobe. My film needs were estimated as being one roll per day. Everything was packed up like I was leaving and I had the suitcase and gadget bag weighed. 54 lbs. 10 lbs over the free limit of 44.

Near as I could figure from reading the fine print on the plane ticket they'd be glad to carry the extra 10 lbs for $2.00 a pound each way. Something had to go. Mary Martin offered to loan me a lightweight suitcase and, by tossing out half my clothes, I got it down to 22 lbs for the suitcase and 22 lbs for the camera bag, and this only by taking out one of the telephoto lenses and carrying it in my top coat pocket.

I made up a list of names and addresses to send postcards to and attended a Burton Holmes lecture on London in order to get some ideas of what was interesting, photographically. One of my fellow camera club members invited me over to view his slides of London and Paris, taken over the past five or six trips he's made. Crammed with information on which guide book to get, restaurants to visit, etc. I left his house with a notebook full of hastily scribbled writing. Never trust your memory.

Invitations to visit different fans and fan clubs were coming in, as well as many cards, letters, and a telegram of congratulations on winning the TAFF election. (Telegram from BJO.) All of a sudden this TAFF trip looked B*I*G! The British Information Service was helpful with pounds of literature on touring England, replete with maps, etc. Well worth writing for.

My employer was contacted, tentatively, about me getting a leave of absence to make the trip. The Personnel Director was lukewarm to the idea and gave out with some double-talk. So I went to the next rung over his head and was told to make all my plans as definite, rather than tentative. I asked the Planting Engineer to see if he could arrange for me to tour a Bumper Plant in England. When the Plant Manager heard about it, he wrote for me and suddenly the Personnel Director thought it was a good

idea, my trip; even asked me to be sure to take notes as he wanted me to give him a write-up for the Company paper, along with photos. Thus, I was now leaving Autolite with their blessings, which is always better.

Now, all that remained to be done was count off the days until April 9th.

Eventually it came, and that Friday evening I drove the 35 miles from my house to the Greater Cincinnati Airport, which is in Kentucky. I got my luggage checked through to Idlewild, bought some additional insurance at a special counter and sat down to wait for boarding time (7:10 p.m.) with Margaret, Terry Anne, Jim and John. Dale Tarr showed up and in a few minutes along came Lou Tabakow. I told Lou, "Here's the $1.75 I owe you, Lou." Lou'd only driven about 200 miles up from the wilds of Kentucky at 70 and 80 mph. to be there. He's a salesman out on the road all week long and had stopped working that afternoon to make it to the airport in time. "I really didn't hurry just for that, Ford," he said unconvincingly to all of us.

Time was up and my flight was called. The kids went up to the observation deck to see me off, along with Lou and Dale, while I kissed Margaret goodbye.

It was a four-engine DC-7, propeller job, which suited me fine in view of the troubles that the Electras had been having lately. Two had blown up in mid-air and there'd been a rash of suicides via the bomb in the plane routine and I quite frankly wasn't as keen about the flying trip as I have been on other journeys. A nice meal was served shortly after takeoff; following completion of that, rough weather set in. The airsick tablets Mary Martin had given me were effective, though. My formula for preventing airsickness is not to eat or drink anything for several hours before taking off. I got my own pilot's license back in 1946 under the G.I. Bill and I used to get sick as a dog almost every flight until I learned to lay off the soft drinks and snacks before takeoff time.

Idlewild is a huge place and each airline has a section of their own which is as large as the Cincinnati airport alone. Unless you know where you want to go, it's easy to get lost. I'd taken this flight from Cincinnati so I wouldn't have to change airfields. It's bad enough, without having to come over from LaGuardia or even New Jersey. I took a taxi to the International Hotel, which is right at the edge of the field. The six-lane expressway runs under the runways and you always hope the pilot doesn't run off the bridge on top of you.

After checking into the hotel, I telephoned Pan American to see if my name was on their roster for tomorrow (it was) and was told all I had to do

was be at their counter at 9 a.m. the next morning. I bought a paper to read, checked the TV schedules and saw nothing but crud on. The weather report called for rain that night and, since my room faced the airport, I made a couple of time exposures with each camera. I'd taken a nap that afternoon and, combined with the fact that I was somewhat keyed up, I slept very little that night. In fact, I could've done without a room and waited in the lounge at the airport just as well. It was a short bed and a foam rubber pillow, which I detest.

My alarm clock rang at 5:45 am and at 6 the hotel gave me a ring on the telephone. I looked out the window and saw an overcast with a low ceiling and a drizzling rain. Fine! I had visions of waiting around the airport for hours for the weather to clear or even the cancelling of the flight. I ate breakfast, made the morning ablutions, packed up and decided to call Pan American just to make sure the flight wasn't cancelled. Not cancelled, I was told.

So, I rode the bus over to the terminal building, checked my luggage through and made the 44 lbs by carrying one camera and a lens with me. Next thing was to pay the jet surcharges and then to get seat assignment. Since I was early, I got a window seat. Next stop was the observation deck, where I took some general scenes around the area and noticed that the ceiling was rising and that the rain had stopped. I ordered a couple of cartons of cigarettes for delivery on the plane and had inquired about customs, since I'd been advised to register my camera equipment before leaving the U.S. With a mixture of German and Japanese cameras and lenses, I might be forced to pay duty when I got back unless I could show evidence of prior ownership. It was a long walk to another building and I was tired, so I said the heck with it.

We loaded at 9:30 a.m. and there was considerable confusion about seating as the numbers were not clearly marked and there were a lot of passengers to load. I counted 96 in the economy section and don't know how many in the first class area. 56 I'd guess. We started taxiing at 10:05 a.m., only five minutes behind schedule! The engines started smoothly and if you weren't watching them it was quite possible never to notice. It took considerable time to get to the runway... a couple of miles, anyway. There were five or six planes waiting when we got there and more behind us. We got priority over the propeller jobs and at 10:40 we started the run down the runway with a sinking back into our seats from the acceleration. With only a short run we were up and off and banking in a left turn over Long Island heading East. The surge of power forces you back into your seat like a small scale version of the acceleration couch and is quite reassuring.

I got my camera going and came up with some nice shots taken during takeoff and over Long Island. The P.A. system announced that our estimated flight time would be 5 hours and 40 minutes, with London now having rain. Scheduled time from New York to London is 6 hrs and 25 min. We climbed steadily to 29,000' and the stewardesses served tea.

Travel companions can oftentimes be a pest. I'd decided many months ago that I was not going to be someone's chaplain and be subjected to hearing all about their troubles. Nowhere in my three-week journey did this ever occur: all of my traveling companions were quite pleasant. On the 707 in the economy section you sit three abreast on each side of the aisle. Next to me was a girl about six or seven, whose parents were across the aisle. She was a perfect little lady and amused herself by drawing pictures for her mother. I loaned her my ball pens which have different colored inks and she made some drawings which I thought were excellent for her age.

Later on, an engineer from Toronto traded seats with her so she could sit with her parents and we two had a nice chat for the rest of the trip. Lunch was served and the pilot announced we were at 33,000' and, with the aid of a 125 mph tail wind, were now traveling at a ground speed of 750 mph. The cabin was quiet and you could talk in a normal tone of voice; there was practically no vibration; and they played nice background music over the P.A. system. The idea of traveling at that speed so easily was incomprehensible to all. When I was a boy, the *Columbus Dispatch* had a Sunday Supplement feature saying that man would travel at the speed of sound (700 mph at sea level) in 20 years. This was in 1930 or so and I recalled, now, the violent argument I had with a neighbor friend who claimed man would never travel that fast. It was impossible. Funny how little things like that stick in your memory.

We clipped another fifteen minutes off the schedule and set down at London Airport in 5 hrs and 25 minutes for a new record, by two minutes, and an average speed of 670 mph for the trip. The view of London at night from the air was truly a beautiful sight to behold. I rate it as a highlight in my lifetime. There are various colored lights, in addition to the usual neon signs, which delight the eye. The mercury vapor lights, the sodium lights and the pedestrian zebra crosswalks with their flashing orange globes all go together to make London quite different from U.S. cities, colorwise.

We went directly from the plane to a special bus which would take us to customs. The driver must have been a frustrated pilot. With only a 1,500' run he managed to give us all the feeling of the race at Le Mans. The through passengers were let off at one area and then the rest of us

were herded into the customs receiving room. The British subjects were separated from us foreigners and sent off through another door, which allowed them to flash brief smiles of superiority at us.

Four examiners stamped us through with only brief questioning. When I assured mine I'd be taking my camera equipment out of England on my return journey, he was satisfied with that and then asked me where I was going to stay. I told him I didn't know. This was a new thing in his life. He said, "Look, you just can't stay in the park. I need some sort of an address." I said, "I may end up in the park for all I know, but here is an address for you," and gave him Ted Carnell's address.

I got the O.K. then, and was admitted through the magic door behind the examiner. Our luggage was there and as you claimed it, you placed it on a bench and awaited the customs men again. This was a baggage search if they felt it was necessary. I got a mysterious chalk mark inscribed on my suitcase and was free. My friend from Toronto was there and I noticed that the British subjects were still getting cleared, while us foreigners were completed. We walked through the doorway into the lobby and there was Ted Carnell.

Ted was a little grayer than eleven years ago in Cincinnati, and a little heavier, but other than that, still the same old Ted. We rode the airport bus into London and Ted was introduced to my friend on the plane, who wanted to know a few directions on how to find his hotel, etc. in London. This, Ted could give him easily, as well as a brief run down on how to figure out the monetary system. That done, we could exchange a few pleasantries and try to get caught up on any fan news. This bus driver was a bit more sane than the previous one, but I cringed at the left hand side of the road driving.

From the Air Terminal on Cromwell Road, Ted hastily shoved me into a taxi and told the driver to head for a train station. I told Ted that according to my watch and stomach it was supper time in Cincinnati and I needed food before I went to bed and perhaps we could stop somewhere at a restaurant. He said right now the important thing was for us to get on a train as before long the service would be less, and that Irene could fix me something to eat when we got to his house. From then on it was a confused jumble of train travel, bus travel and finally we came to 17 Burwash Road.

By this time I was completely lost and turned around and had the feeling that London was still in the far off future and that this was only a dream. Ted opened the door and said, "Here's Don!" and I met Irene and their two children Michael and Leslyn, and the dog made more noise than all of us put together. I also met Ted's Mother and can't recall whether it

was that night or the next morning. Anyway, I felt at home in the Carnell household. It was good to be there.

Irene fixed me a platter of eggs and bacon, with various side dishes that really hit the spot. The bacon is about what we'd call ham in the U.S. I had only one request to make: a glass of cold water. Everyone watched in amazement as I drained it in three seconds flat and upon the offer of a refill said yes. Water drinking just isn't one of the British pastimes. With the time being changed to daylight saving that night, it meant an even shorter night for Ted and Irene (I'd only gotten up at noon, London time) and we turned in for the night.

Ted Carnell writes:

FORD'S FAMOUS FIRSTS: Don's first experience with London's famous red double decker buses came on his arrival from London Airport late on arrival day. Arriving at our local railway station around 11:15 pm we just managed to get on a packed bus filled with cinema-goers. There was only room inside, and this for standing purposes. As the height of the compartment was only 5' 10" (conductors have to be under this to qualify for the job) Ford's 6' 6" was something of a packing job.

He eventually managed to fold his head down and rest his shoulder blades on the ceiling by which time everyone on the lower deck was sympathetic and one dear lady was attempting to get up and give him her seat (only she was wedged into an inside berth). As the conductor fought his way through the press of bodies to collect the fares he eventually came upon an immovable object – Ford; by the time he had managed to by-pass Don the bus was almost at the terminus and there was one vacant seat, right behind the driver's cabin.

Inviting Don to sit down so that he could complete collecting the fares the conductor then found that Don's knees were so long that he had become wedged between the driver's partition and the back of his seat. We practically had to pry him out of the bus when we reached our stop. Parting comment from the conductor as we alighted – "Let's know when you're coming again mate, and we'll build a special bus for you."

Ted Carnell.

In the morning after breakfast, I telephoned Ken and Pamela Bulmer, Norman Ashfield, and Mr. Williams. I chatted with Ken and Pamela and made arrangements for Ken to meet me at Ted's office on Monday, and for me to stay with the Bulmers Monday night. Norman was home and said he'd be over, shortly, to take me to his house to stay tonight. Mr. Williams was the Works Manager at Pyrene Ltd. where I was going to visit on Tuesday.

Later on Norman arrived and we rode the bus over to his house at Sidcup, not too far from Ted's place in Plumstead. I met his wife, Molly, and step-daughter Janet. Janet and my daughter, Terry Anne, have been corresponding for some time now – their ages being about the same, with Janet about six months older.

Norman and I have been corresponding since 1948 or so and this was our first meeting in all those years. We had much to talk about. All of us talked away until quite late in the evening. I took photos of the Ashfields and set up the camera so Janet could take a photo of Norman and I together. They wanted to know about life in America and I told them what I could and how our family lived, etc. The fact that our drinking water is collected off the roof and stored in a cistern underneath the kitchen seemed to strike them as odd. In fact, it seemed to startle all to whom I mentioned it. Water under pressure is available over practically all of England. We compared the costs of electricity, food, cars and everything we could think of. Norman said his electric bill was around $4.00 for three months. I'd just paid ours before I left home and it was $17.50 for l month. The discussion ranged far and wide that evening and I certainly had a pleasant stay. Janet was going to take some office training and then would be going to go to work. She seemed so young by our standards to be getting out into the working world. I never did get used to seeing the girls of fifteen and sixteen out working, during my whole stay in England.

Norman worried that he'd used up his leave and couldn't take off work to show me around London the next day; and worried that I might not have a good time, etc. I assured him that I'd make out fine, if he'd just show me how to get to Ted's office. That was the sort of feeling I ran into everywhere on my TAFF trip; people kept worrying that I might not be doing what I wanted to do or going where I wanted to go, and continually outdid themselves to show me a good time.

Outside of Tuesday, I had no definite plans other than to be at the convention Friday. I'd also promised to be at Ella Parker's on Wednesday and at the Globe on Thursday. I wanted to have somewhat flexible plans in order to fit into whatever the fans wanted me to do.

Monday, then, I rode into London with Norman. This was my first glimpse of the city by daylight and I snapped away at everything. Norman's house, Sidcup, the train station, out the train windows and inside Waterloo Station, our destination. We left my suitcase there and walked across Waterloo Bridge. There were street musicians, the morning traffic jam and a view up the river of Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament. I went through film like army ants.

I wanted to get a roll of film processed in time for my slide show at the convention. Eastman Kodak had given me their London address, which was on Kingsway. I told them I had a roll of High Speed Ektachrome and when could I get it... which had to be no later than Friday. They called their processing plant and hemmed and hawed and said it'd take a week. No point in even leaving it. They did suggest an independent processor a block or so away and there I was told it could be picked up the next afternoon. Next stop was a luggage, or leather goods, shop. Norman knew of a place on Sicilian Way, across from Les Flood's book shop. There I picked out a strap for my gadget bag and said I'd take it. He asked me how soon I wanted it and I said I'd wait while he put it on. He turned pale and rolled his eyes towards heaven, probably mentally cursing these mad Americans he had to deal with.

"Oh, I can't do that, Sir." he replied.

"Well, if you can't do it, give me a hammer and a rivet and I'll do it myself, right here," I said.

When he recovered his speech, he said, "It just isn't done that way."

"I don't see what's so complicated about it... all you need is a hammer and two rivets. Any fool can do it."

"We send all the cases out on Thursday and they're returned the following Thursday."

"O.K.," I said, "Forget all about it." And I walked out with Norman apologizing to him.

"American, you know," he told the shop owner.

"Yes, I can see that."

Norman Ashfield writes:

A telephone call from Ted Carnell on Sunday morning, 10 April, brought me my first personal contact with Don. Soon after I started talking to him, on the "Blower", his reaction in a deep rich voice was "I don't get you." I had forgotten that Don was

used to slower speech and not my fast almost cockneyish way of speaking. (By the time he left me on Monday 11 April, I am sure my speech had considerably slowed down – I was getting in less w.p.m.) (Words per minute.)

I went over to Plumstead, and after losing myself there I finally landed up at Burwash Road, where I met Don in person. He certainly was as tall as I'd been told, but turned out to be a very pleasant person to know, and I soon got used to his height and forgot the difference in stature.

We then travelled back by double decker bus, Don choosing to go upstairs so he could spread himself more and see more, to 81 Valliers Wood Road, Sidcup, Kent (my new address – all interested persons please note!), Don taking an active interest in everything – a "Monkey Puzzle" tree had him puzzled too! At Sidcup, Don met Molly, my wife of a few weeks, and my step-daughter, Janet, who corresponds with Don's daughter, Terry. Don was soon at ease with us and we with him. Of course there were some misunderstandings based on the different "lingo". I learnt that "THE bathroom" and the "BATHroom" meant two different things, and understood Don's astonishment when I had told him that in my old house, the bathroom was in the kitchen (The "bath" was, but it took a few minutes to straighten things out.) We had also to get used to the idea that the "fall" was the "autumn" and not the "Fall of Man".

Don stayed with us that night and we would cheerfully have had him longer had he not had so many other fans wanting him to stay with them. The three of us found him excellent company and greatly appreciated having him with us. It was grand to meet someone I had corresponded with for so many years and find he was all one could have hoped.

Don spent much time taking photographs – in fact I was astonished at the amount of photographic equipment and films he had brought with him. (He arrived in England with two cases about 22 lbs each, one full of clothes etc., and the other full of films, lenses etc.) But when I saw his exhibition of coloured slides at the Convention, I fully understood why he had devoted so much travelling weight to his hobby; I have never seen such good colour transparencies as he showed there, especially those of Cincinnati by night.

Thank you for sending such a fine friend over here. I

believe that U.S. fandom will find it difficult to produce another TAFF delegate to equal Don.

Norman Ashfield.

Norman got me on the Tube and told me which station to get off at and how to find Ted's office. Eventually I arrived, and later on Ken got there and we had a nice time greeting each other, again. It had been 1955 when we last saw each other, and I told him he looked quite different without the beard. The beard came in for some joking when we remembered how the Sharonville Police had stopped him as a suspicious character. I said I hoped the London Bobbies wouldn't be after me.

The three of us had lunch at Ted's favorite restaurant and then Ken and I headed for Piccadilly Circus and Monument Tower, two stops on the way to Ken's house, so that I could take some photos. At Piccadilly a tout came up and asked me if I wanted to see the Guards (which I knew were only down the street a few blocks away). I was going to string him along a bit, when Ken came over and asked who was on that day, the Reds or the Blues? The tout took one look at Ken and asked if he was with me. Ken said yes and zip, the tout was gone. He probably thinks to this day that Ken was there first with the sucker.

We got to Monument Tower and walked up 311 steps to the top. Ken said he'd never been up there. Finally, gasping with the exertion of our climb and with the rarefied air, we got out on the narrow platform for an excellent view of London. The Tower Bridge was up, letting a ship pass through, and for the next 45 minutes or so I shot stereo, and then interchanged lenses for the 35 mm format. The clouds alternately came and went over the sun and it was one of those days where you have to meter every shot. It even came up a rain shower while we were up there.

There was a uniformed guard at the top of the stairway, and I speculated with Ken over whether he carried his lunch and if he had a private space somewhere, otherwise he'd have those 311 steps to face every time he answered a call of nature or went out for lunch. We both decided that job was not for us.

Going down the steps was a bit easier but nevertheless, the bench outside was a good place to collapse on. No sooner had we sat down than Ken jumped up with a loud cry. I couldn't figure out if he'd sat on a tack or a nearby pigeon had bombed him. Neither one. He'd found a ½lb package of India Tea. His day was made. Success would surely follow. I said he'd better be careful... that might be a smuggler's "drop" and he'd get home and find a diamond in the center, or heroin, etc.

Ken asked to borrow my camera, saying he wanted to take a picture

of me and the tower together. I showed him how to work it and there he lay, flat on his back, in the middle of the street! I have a stereo to prove it. Cars either had to detour, or wait for him to get up and move. The sight would have been a little less unnerving if he hadn't had my camera.

We stopped by Pan American's office to see if I could change my date of return to May 1st from April 30th. They didn't give me much encouragement and put me on a standby list of some fifteen people. We'd have to hope for a cancellation, which wasn't too likely.

We got my suitcase, then, and rode the train to Catford, and a bus to Wellmeadow Road. There was Pamela and the newest Bulmer, Debra. Ted Carnell 'phoned to say Dave Kyle probably would be in Saturday. Since nobody else knew this, it should be a bit of a surprise to spring on the convention. Dave and Ruth had stopped by our house some months back, while on their trip out west, and Dave had mentioned that he might be at the convention, too, as they had two plane tickets.

Debra was a bit fussy and Pamela and Ken hovered over her very solicitously. I'd say that she is an extremely well looked after baby.

Ken Bulmer writes:

When it turned out that the telephone call was not transatlantic but came only from Eltham way, Pamela relaxed and spoke to Don in the way the typically dignified English hostess does speak. It was a most eerie experience to talk to Don on the blower, to hear that familiar voice, and to know that he wasn't sitting at home speaking into a tape recorder but was in the same city as us. After Norman Ashfield, at whose house Don was, had flapped about, a rendezvous was fixed for Don and myself at Ted Carnell's office. Typical, was that Ted didn't know this and was deluged with bods at an early hour, telling his authors that he considered them all kinds of so and so's. Well, me anyway.

Don was sitting with his feet on the floor and his head tangled up in the lighting when I opened the door. I'd been practicing a sort of tip-toe, head back, peering sort of welcome for him in view of his height, and this was still a necessity. I'd been warned about the ton and a half of photo equipment he had with him, and this comprised most of the studio gear of MGM and Warner Bros. He was still the same suave, good-humoured, slow-talking, yet essentially cheeky chappie I remembered. He

loves to slide the poignant in undetected and smoothly. Only when you're bleeding your ego all over the floor do you realize what's hit you. To hear the CFG *[Cincinnati Fantasy Group]* going full blast is an education in civilized mayhem. It's just as well they're a good-hearted gang and gentlemen – and Don is a true representative of all that's best in U.S. fandom.

After my idiot cries of delight we got around to discussing the day's campaign. Don had a number of places he had to see and Ted saw us off with suitable movie shots. I'd kinda like to see the one of me leaping into the air to get Don's topcoat on for him, and of him crouching down to facilitate the operation. With these two movements we nearly were on a level. Took Don up the Monument. He was carrying the ton and a half, and I naturally didn't want to deprive him of the job of guarding all that loot. At the top the Monument leaned a little.... We were met by a flurry of London snow-cum-rain and Don shot shots. As a camera bug, he kept apologizing to me for stopping; but that was fine by me; he was the honoured guest. We went up to Piccadilly to check air reservations and more photos were taken. Don was wearing a white cap which looked like the nose cone of a missile soaring over the homburgs. Some character wanted to take Don on a sight-seeing tour of the Horse Guards and, all unknowingly, I choked the guy off. Kinda feel that Don hankered after that trip. Still, I took him to Tresco and a dishful of ice cubes, hollow, which made up for that. Don drinks so much iced water that his veins must struggle to keep his big toes frozen out. Anyway, our refrigerator came through the test well – I was left with two trays of solid ice cubes after Don had gone. *Unwanted* ice cubes.

Ted Tubb came around and we had quite a gab fest. Don commiserated with us over the LC *[London Circle]* fiasco; we said it was the way of the world. All true pioneers aren't wanted. Don was full of his dry anecdotes and the time whistled by. He had to be up in Ted Carnell's office at 9:15 the following day. So I managed to wake up, force a cup of tea on the unwilling recipient of same, and leg off with the cases to the bus. We just made it to the station for a nice train and Don went off. I'd given him an extra quarter of an hour to get lost in; but, ornerily, he didn't get lost and was pawing on the doorstep before the place was awake. Still, he wasn't late for his appointment; which was

the main thing.

At the con Don made a big friendly impact. One character said that he was darned if he was going to be polite to him – but after a minute of the Ford personality they were hitting on all cylinders together. Don's like that. I managed a tenuous dream, tho'. I'd cracked a corny joke in Cleveland with Dale Tarr, Dale Smith and Don. Now I found a young fellow at the con – never did find out his name – and matched him with Don. Wait for it – the youngster *topped Don Ford by three inches*! My convention was made. Missed most of Don's very well received coloured photo show through the new daughter; and missed the shots of Pamela and self. Still – Don will be back, I hope. We'll see them than. As a TAFFman Don was right up to form and his visit has, I hope, ironed out a few misconceptions. I hope he made a lot of new friends and I hope he enjoyed the trip. He darned well deserved it! And he lived up to the high standards expected – viva Don Ford for TAFF.

Ken Bulmer.

Ken had me sign the wall in his den and I inspected some of the fannish decorations in this combination study/writing room... water pistols hanging on the wall, etc. I was afraid to inquire whether they were loaded or not.

Supper was ready and Ted Tubb came over while we were just finishing up. He's tall, 6' 4" at least, looks to be between 35-40 and has a friendly manner and appearance. There are crinkles around the corners of his eyes that make you think of laughter and I soon found that Ted and I think alike in many respects... don't take things too seriously, fandom is not a way of life but certainly most pleasurable, it's fun to get "authority" rattled once in a while, etc.

After reading about Ted in the fanzines for so many years I'd often wondered if he'd measure up to his reputation in person. He does. I can't begin to recall all the wide range of topics we discussed that night. We ran the gamut. One thing that did keep cropping up was how the London fans were somewhat divided into roughly three camps, or perhaps three interests would be a better phrasing of it. A lot of the old timers hardly ever came to the Globe any more and it seemed like it was hard to breathe life into the old embers. I said one fan I'd like to meet was Charlie Duncombe. Charlie, along with Vincent Clarke and one other fan I'm too lazy to look up now, were the ones I'd mailed the hard cover books to following the grant for such project voted upon at the Cinvention in 1949.

Ken said he had no phone, so we wrote him a postcard and the three

of us signed it. We tried to compare fan groups in various cities and I related what I knew of the clubs in the U.S. and talked about the Midwestcons, our get togethers at Bellefontaine with Doc Barrett, some comparisons of U.S. and British fandom, etc. No attempt was made to solve the world's problems; we simply had a good bull session that evening.

The next morning, Tuesday April 12th, was the appointment to visit Pyrene Ltd. Mr. Williams, the Finishing Superintendent, was to pick me up at Ted Carnell's office at 10 a.m. I told Ken 9:30, so I'd be sure to get there on time. I was up about 6 a.m. or so and then Ken saw me off to the train, saying he was now going back home and sleep some more. I don't know why, we'd had four hours' sleep already.

Ted was not in when I arrived and I waited in the lobby to make sure I wouldn't miss Mr. Williams. He arrived and we introduced ourselves and were just leaving when Ted showed up.

Pyrene is out on Great West Road in Brentford. They make fire extinguishers and bumpers at this particular plant. Since Autolite also makes bumpers and we use the same basic process from Harshaw Chemical Co. we had much in common. Mr. Williams had also toured automobile and bumper factories in the U.S. last summer... including our plant at Sharonville. Apparently they had treated him well in the U.S. He seemed determined to outdo the hospitality he'd received.

We talked "Shop" a bit. I showed him some stereo slides I'd taken of our plant and then went on a tour of their plant. I photographed whatever I liked and they stopped any operation if necessary. I concentrated more on items that were different from ours and that might be adapted for our operations.

Next we went out for lunch and he tried to fill my hollow leg full of gin at a pub called the Red Lion, not too far from Kew Gardens. The fillet steak did, though. We returned to the plant about 2 p.m. where the engineering staff were awaiting us. They viewed the stereos and asked questions about our equipment and operations, and I turned over to them some samples of a planting pin that we use to hold the bumpers onto the plating carriers. They now intend changing over to them.

It was now too late to get me back to Ted's office at 5, so Les Flood's book store was selected instead. I supposed he'd just drop me off there but no, he wanted to meet Ted. We ended up down in the cellar with Les in his office. Then Mr. Williams said he was going to take all of us out to dinner. Les had an engagement, so it ended up with the three of us going to the Carvery in the Regent Palace Hotel.

This is somewhat on the lines of a smorgasbord. There are roasts on a V-shaped counter and you're invited to carve your own meat. Being the bashful soul that I am, I only made three trips. Then we adjourned to the bar until 10 p.m. All during this time, I still couldn't spend a penny. I kept insisting that I be allowed to buy at least one round of drinks, but nothing doing.

I've skimmed over the conversations we had all during this time. They weren't particularly fannish. We talked shop conditions, productivity, hourly rates, unions, etc. I'm the Bargaining Committeeman for Plating at Autolite and the Co. had written Pyrene that I was the Union rep. I had no intentions of bringing it up, but they did. I was introduced to the Chief Shop steward at Pyrene and left a copy of our contract with them, etc. But we talked on widely scattered subjects and I found Mr. Williams to be what one calls, "A man's man".

Anyway, we parted at 10 that evening. He and Ted made plans to get together this coming summer and I was told over and over that if I found myself back in London with nothing to do, just telephone him and he'd be glad to pick me up. Quite a gentleman and it certainly was a fantastic day for me. Ted and I rode home remarking to each other what a nice guy he was.

Wednesday, then, I met Roberta Gray in Ted's office. We went up to pick up my film at the processors and from there went to a place to eat that Bobbie thought might appeal to me. I did get a hamburger, French fries, cold water; but the milkshake was just that. If you want ice cream in it, you have to order something else and I don't know the name of it. As Jack Paar said, "You could starve in London because you don't know the right words." We went back to Ted's and met Ron Bennett and Brian Jordan.

They asked me where I wanted to go in London. I said I had four objectives: Piccadilly Circus, Trafalgar Square, Monument Tower, Tower of London and Changing of Guard. That's five, isn't it? Anyway, since I'd been on the Monument, yesterday, and was going to the changing of the Guard tomorrow, why not the Tower of London this afternoon?

We got there under darkening skies and off and on showers. I got a permit to use my camera and flash unit and then went to the area where the armor is on display. There are knights mounted on horseback and there are a couple of floors of this. Quite nice and the stereos came out rather well, too. Bobbie knew much about early British history and could rattle off the names and dates faster than I could comprehend. We got kicked out at closing time and this is a place I'd like to return to.

We made our way to where I'd parked my suitcase and then set off...

to Ella Parker's in the pouring rain right at the rush hour. With a 22 lb gadget bag on my left shoulder and a 24 lb suitcase in my right hand, I was not the most maneuverable person. In the underground corridors people would come racing madly around a corner and come face to face with me. Gruesome thought, isn't it? Since I couldn't move and they were going too fast to change course, we collided. There must have been dozens of black and blue kneecaps from beating against my suitcase. I simply stood there and let them batter themselves against it. Oftentimes my arm would be practically straight out until the hapless victim could untangle him/herself. There was a fifteen minute delay while Ron went out in search of a candy bar. Finally the proper Tube train was boarded and we were on the way to Ella's.

We arrived at Ella's and when we were introduced she said, "Christ, they told me you were tall, but you're a giant!" Present that evening were: Bobbie Gray, Brian Jordan, Bill Temple, Sture Sedolin, Ted Forsyth, Ron Bennett, Alan Dodd and Alan Rispin, and Ella's brother, Fred.

Big topic of discussion was the fact that the convention hotel had cancelled out only two days ago. Bobbie had told me about this early that morning and I was now hearing Ella's version. Between the two of them they had managed to secure another hotel on such short notice and things were now booked into the Kingsley Hotel on Bloomsbury Way. Notices were being mailed out of the change of hotel.

Chief reason for the change was the fact that the owner balked at the idea of us bringing liquor into the hotel and had then nullified the agreement made by the manager. The owner was a woman active in politics and on the council. I gathered from the lucid descriptions of her that she thought the sun rose and set on her ass.

Roberta Gray writes:

> The Tuesday before the Convention, I was wondering whether there would be a Convention at midday. The fact that the hotel we had booked decided not to have us at the last minute is old hat now, but I am not likely to forget that particular Tuesday.
>
> It started just before midday when Ella rang me and said in a rather strained voice that a crisis had arisen re the hotel. Sandra and I went round to the hotel and discovered what it was and thereafter the three of us spent the afternoon walking around looking for another hotel and wondering if we would end up

booking a bed for the TAFF candidate in the crypt of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. However, the London Chamber of Commerce (Paddington) came to our rescue and got us fixed up at the Kingsley Hotel in Bloomsbury at special rates for the Con members.

It was that day that my right foot suddenly decided to play me up again and I was wondering how on earth I was going to keep my promise to Don to walk him round the interesting parts of London. Anyway, I went back to the flat and hoped that keeping off my feet for a while would help, but it turned out that I need not have worried when I called at Ted Carnell's office the following morning.

I was late, of course, a bad habit I seem to have acquired over the past few months. When I arrived at Ted's office a tall, dark chap got up – and up – and up. My first thought on seeing Don Ford was "My God! How am I going to keep up with him? He's a foot taller than I am." But Don, it seemed, had also been having trouble with his feet and what actually happened was that he had a job to keep up with me at times. When my feet aren't bothering me I am a quick walker, though, and anyone I'm with usually ends up asking "Where's the fire?" Don didn't feel like a lot of walking (neither did I) so after taking him up to Piccadilly and Kingsway – and discovering to my astonishment that he did not drink coffee – we returned to Ted's office to collect Ron Bennett and Brian Jordan and moved on to the Tower of London.

Outside the Tower were a couple of men with a fruit stall and Don took a photograph of them as part of the London scene. When he'd taken it one of the fruit-sellers came up to him and said, "Ere, mate, you needn't 'ave wasted yer money taking me picture. You coulda got one of me fer nuffin' from Scotland Yard." But five minutes later he was giving Don a queer look when Don said to a little boy by the stall: "Hey, sonny, steal an apple and I'll take your picture."

Inside the Tower there was such a queue for the Crown Jewels that we decided to give it a miss. In any case, no cameras were allowed in there at all, whereas permission could be obtained to take photographs in the White Tower. Now it was the first time that I had been in the armoury section of the Tower and all the boys got from me was, "But where's the fifteenth

century plate armour?" We reached it eventually, but just beforehand Ron came up to me and said "Have you seen the obscene suit of armour in the glass case?" I hadn't, but I got over to see it with indecent haste. The armour had belonged to Henry VIII for use in foot combats and it had been made so that there was not a crack or crevice where a weapon could enter. But egad! The steel codpiece. Henry was a hefty character, but I still think he was bragging. Don, of course, took a photograph of it, helped by Ron, accompanied by scandalised looks from several of the visitors who were probably wishing they had the nerve to ask Don to send them a copy of the photo when developed.

The Yeoman of the Guard eventually persuaded us they were closing down for the night and back we went to Ted's office to pick up some gear. From there we went on to Ella's place where a number of fen were waiting to say hello to Don. I had to leave fairly early, but no doubt Don has persuaded Ella or Ron in writing up that part of his trip.

Don was taken along to the Globe on the Thursday night, but again I had not a lot of time to spare so it was a case of "Good evening, goodnight."

Friday was the day the fans started moving in to the Kingsley Hotel and discovering where the cafés and restaurants were in the district. I had gone to meet Bill, but the coach was early and I finally rang the hotel to discover that he was already there. When I arrived myself Ella had already done stalwart work introducing people around. As the Convention proper did not start until Saturday the evening was spent in meeting and reunions and getting the geography of the place.

The following morning Bill and I went to the National Gallery as I had been telling him for months about Da Vinci's painting "The Virgin of the Rocks" and this was an opportunity of showing him why I was so enthusiastic about it. Then I remembered that I had never seen the original portrait of Richard III, and as the National Portrait gallery was next door in we went.

Then it was back to the hotel for the official opening of the Convention. Doc Weir introduced Ted Carnell, the guest of honour, who in turn introduced Don, the TAFF delegate. By this time I had found that Don could keep an extremely straight face when he was kidding one along and I was prepared, but the

audience had found out, too, and his speech went down very well.

I may add at this point that the British fen were wondering if Don were an American. He didn't drink coffee, he didn't smoke, he didn't drink whisky and he didn't hustle. Nevertheless, I noticed that what Don had planned to do during his visit did get done.

After Ted Carnell's talk on the state of present day S.F. there was a break for tea, followed by an auction and then one of the highlights of the Convention – Don's slide show. This made quite an impression on the audience and was much appreciated.

The fancy dress party followed later in the evening although not many people turned up in fancy dress. Dave Kyle (who arrived on Saturday afternoon) and Don had fun with their cameras, though, and Don and Ted, with Pam Bulmer, were roped in to be judges. First prize was won by Ethel Lindsay and Ina Shorrock as the Witches of some extraterrestrial place that I cannot remember offhand.

Room parties were going full swing, of course, but on Saturday night I gave them a miss. Had a feeling that I should be as wide-awake as possible for the BSFA meeting the following morning, which was just as well because soon after it started I found I was more or less chairing it, much to my surprise. Meanwhile, Bill had taken Don to see one of the traditional sights of London – Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park – and I have left that part of the report to him.

The afternoon was covered with "This is Your Life, Norman Shorrock" to Norman's complete surprise, followed by Doc Weir's talk on Karel Čapek and another auction.

Have just remembered another reason why I was not at any room parties on Saturday night. Don wanted to do some night photography and Bill and I took him up to Piccadilly, but after midnight the lights were going out on the signs fairly rapidly. We went through Leicester Square and Trafalgar Square and thence back to the hotel, but Don did get some shots of London side streets that had not caught up with the mid-twentieth century including a little street that was sheer Regency.

There was a TAFF candidates' quiz, but for the life of me I cannot remember now whether it was Saturday or Sunday and, as usual, I can't find the programme. The professional film stood

the test of time fairly well and it was during this film – just beforehand, rather – that we met an American girl, Ernestine Hope Bellamy, who had actually seen U.F.O.s. I had always kept an open mind about the things myself, but I was curious and we talked to her afterwards about it. And I should like to say right now that Miss Hope Bellamy was no crank, but a very intelligent young lady.

The professional film was followed by various amateur films and we eventually wound up at a party in Don's room. I did not count the number of people who were there, but every inch of space seemed to be filled up with fans. The party broke up about 3 a.m., I think, and the Con proper was over.

Before the Con started we had suggested to Don that he might find it interesting to take his camera up to Trafalgar Square on Easter Monday as the anti-nuclear people would be arriving from Aldermaston. It seems that a number of people suggested it to Don during the Con, too. Anyway Don went to the Square ahead of us and Bill and I said we'd meet him by the statue of George Washington. When we arrived there were about fifty thousand people already there waiting to see the marchers arrive and Bill said we would never find Don in that lot. I spotted him half a minute later on the steps of the National Gallery, to Bill's surprise. We went over to him and found he had got himself comfortably ensconced on the railings at the top of the steps where he had a good view of the whole square.

More and more people arrived so that by the time the actual marchers reached Trafalgar Square there were already fifty thousand onlookers, including some who climbed on to the roof of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. As there were forty-five thousand marchers (Whitehall was a mass of people from wall to wall and end to end) it meant that at one point there were one hundred thousand people in the square.. Mind you, a good many thousands of the marchers had not come all the way from Aldermaston – the exhibitionists and the jerks had joined the column in Whitehall and just beforehand (and looked a damned sight dirtier and scruffier than the genuine people who had done the full march). Although I think the whole thing is pointless, I did feel it a shame that the really sincere people should have these slobs tacking themselves on, and probably getting judged by the unwashed beatniks in their midst. My views were the

same as Don on the march – that it would not do any good, but if people wanted to go ahead and demonstrate why shouldn't they. I have heard that there will not be a march next year as it had served its purpose, but perhaps the organisers took a jaundiced look at what had attached themselves to the march and decided that next year the beatniks and exhibitionists could damn well stage their own show. But I must say here that the march was extremely well organised and although an enormous number of people had turned up to have a look at the marchers there were, as far as I know, no brawls of any kind.

Bill's coach went in the afternoon so we had to start thinking about getting away from the square and up to Victoria. The three of us were making our way out of the Square when there on the steps of St. Martin-in-the-Fields were all the fans from the Convention who had not yet had to think about catching trains or coaches. So I suppose one can say that the Convention finished in Trafalgar Square on Easter Monday afternoon.

Don was staying with Eric Jones for a few days, so on Tuesday I met him at Paddington and we travelled down to Cheltenham together. Don took some shots of the steam trains we passed, telling me that in the States they are now used for shunting and that diesels had taken over the passenger lines. I told him that our railways were being modernised but in the meantime we were paying exorbitant prices for lousy service. Having had experience in the last few months of the so-called express service I should know. After Kemble the journey was enlivened by an old soul and her dog and two soldiers on leave from Cyprus. After hearing what they had to say my opinion of the archbishop went down even more. When I arrived in Cheltenham we made arrangements to meet the following day and Don set off for Eric and Margaret's home.

The following day he did not want to rove too far afield, so I took him to Tewkesbury. We had lunch in a restaurant with the fascinating name of the "Ancient Grudge" and then set out to take some photographs of the town. And I actually managed to surprise Don, though quite unintentionally. We were walking along the main street when I mentioned that the houses we were passing at the time had not been very well built as they were not two hundred years old yet and the windows were bulging

outward already.

Don took a shot of Abel Fletcher's Mill, whose claim to fame is owed to the fact that it is mentioned in the book *John Halifax, Gentleman*. I recalled the O.D.T.A.A. garage (service station) which was next door to Gup's Hill Manor and thought it might amuse Don to take a shot of it. Its name is derived from the fact when the owner started it he ran into nothing but snags and at one time thought he would have to close it down so in a moment of wry humour he dubbed it O.D.T.A.A. and from then trade picked up – people just had to stop and enquire what the hell it meant. Don guessed it by the way. The garage is on the site of the Battle of Tewkesbury – the "Bloody Meadow" of 1471 A.D. – and it was from a window of Gup's Hill Manor that Queen Margaret watched her Lancastrian forces defeated by the Yorkists.

On the way back we dropped into Tewkesbury Abbey, the present incumbent of which has spent an enormous amount of his own money in restoring it. We wandered around for awhile and I was just quietly congratulating myself at having manoeuvred Don past the steps to the top of the tower when Canon Purefoy, the incumbent, spotted Don's camera, said there was a wonderful view from the top of the tower and had taken the admission fees before we quite realised what had happened. As Don said, the good Canon could have made a fortune as a barker at a fair. But I had had a reason for avoiding the tower. Heights don't bother me in the least, but spiral staircases do. I don't know why, but they just make my hair stand on end. And right at the top the stairs became so narrow that I wondered how Don was coping. Canon Purefoy was right, of course: there was a wonderful view from the top of the tower. There was a catwalk all round, but at one point Don slipped and as he said afterwards, for one awful second he thought he was falling two or three hundred feet.

The following day I took Don to Bourton-on-the-Water, a very beautiful village that is known as the Venice of the Cotswolds. The river Windrush runs through the centre of the village and at short intervals little stone bridges span the river. Bourton-on-the-Water had three places of interest for the visitor – Birdland, which we did not have time to visit, the Witchcraft Museum, and the Model Village. The latter is in the gardens of

the Old New Inn and is a Lilliputian replica of Bourton-on-the-Water. All the buildings are of Cotswold stone and were about waist high to me but not much more than knee high to Don. There was a perfect copy of Bourton Church and here Don had a slice of luck. He wanted a copy of the church and was waiting for someone to stand by it when along came a parson and his wife and the padre very obligingly stood by the model church while Don took a photograph. There was even a model of the model village and a model of the model of the model village. Then space ran out.

Our next call was at the Witchcraft Museum, where the girl selling the admission tickets gave a whinny of alarm when she saw Don's camera. It seemed that they had had trouble with professional photographers trying to take a crafty snap or two. However, we managed to persuade her that Don was not a professional and we went in. The lighting was not too good and Don used a flash to take shots of the Witch's Kitchen, the room of the Horned God, and the living altar. This last, of course, is a model of a girl with her feet on the ground but her back laid on a wide slab and she is grasping a candle in either hand. There is a strip of cloth across her, of course, but two old ladies who came along, gasped, tut-tutted, and said "How disgusting!" but whether they referred to the altar, or to the fact that Don and I were taking a photograph of it I don't know. If the truth were known, I expect the dear old souls thoroughly enjoyed themselves looking round. Of course, I did suggest to Don that he could say that he took the photo at an actual ceremony and that the living altar was one of the femmefans. Don thought this a good idea and said cheerfully he'd say I was the altar. Why don't I keep my big mouth shut?

We had gone to Bourton by bus, but we came back by train. When we asked for two singles to Cheltenham, the ticket seller suggested that we take returns, as they were only two shillings and fivepence, whereas a single was three shillings and sevenpence. So we took the cheap day returns and a two carriage corridor train (yes, really and truly) took us back to Cheltenham. The train wound its way through the Cotswolds and Don, who appreciated the scenery, took several shots from the train.

The next day he left for Liverpool and he called round for lunch before he had to go for his train. (Haven't heard from him

since – I hope that apple pie didn't kill him.) The taxi eventually arrived to take him to the station and we told each other goodbye.

As it left I told Don it was nice to have met him and I meant that. It was, and I hope he enjoyed his stay in England as much as we enjoyed having him over.

Roberta Gray.

We went out to find a telephone booth for me to call Ted Carnell. I also called the Kingsley Hotel and told them that I was now at a party and for them to hold a room for my arrival later in the evening and one that I wouldn't have to change from when the convention came up two days later. I explained that I was from America to attend this convention and that had the effect of clarifying to them my "impossible" demands.

Ted Carnell, then, told me to relay on to the gang the news that the original con hotel was not informing people that the convention had moved. Ken Bulmer had called them to make a reservation and was told the convention had been cancelled. He'd been somewhat upset when he telephoned Ted.

Bill Temple and I rejoined the party and things began to hum with conversation. There were tables loaded with drinks and mixers and anyone who couldn't have quenched his thirst that evening wasn't human.

Ella looked to be about 30 to me and this'll no doubt get me shot next time we meet. She wears glasses and from the cartoons Atom had drawn of her, I was prepared to see a woman of 160-180 lbs in weight. Far from it. She is a person very much alive with energy, drive and personality. Her voice reminds me a bit of Tallulah Bankhead's and her hearty booming laugh can override the din of such gatherings. She is blunt in her talk and one always knows where one stands with Ella... a trait I much admire in people as I hate mealy-mouthed individuals. In short, I liked Ella Parker very much from our first meeting.

Alan Dodd and Sture Sedolin sat off in the corner of the room from the rest of us and I was introduced to Ella's brother, Fred. He said he wasn't a fan and was going to leave, but I asked him to stay and found myself talking about farming with him. He had been in Canada on a farm for quite a few years. He eventually went to his room to watch the dog races on TV.

Alan Dodd was rather quiet and left a bit early. He never took off his overcoat and always seemed poised on his chair ready to leave instantly. Sture Sedolin is a fan from Sweden who has been active in fanzine publishing, but I never could get much conversation out of him. In fact,

after Alan Dodd left, Sture sat off by himself, apart from the group. I thought he was simply shy, but was told a few days later that he seemed to get that way when the group he was with didn't do just whatever he wanted to do. On those occasions he played the part of a "dumb Swede". Not having much conversation with him or seeing him too much, I didn't have much impression of him one way or the other. He seemed to blend into the walls and since there was life and activity going on elsewhere, I didn't make the supreme effort of dragging conversation or replies out of him.

Bennett, Jordan and Rispin were playing Brag in the center of the room and Ted Forsyth and I got active with our respective cameras. The evening seemed to pass quickly and I got ready to leave for my hotel. Bill Temple made sure I got on the right train and we said goodbye until convention time. The party was quite a blast and it made a pleasant thing to attend as a pre-convention warm-up.

Somewhere along the line somebody had given me a map of the London Tube system. I'm glad they did as it came in quite handy. With the aid of that I was soon able to find my way about London without using fans as seeing eye dogs. I rode to Tottenham Court Road station and then via taxi to the hotel.

The hotel was nice and my room had a private bath. The bellboy clued me in a bit on the monetary system and tipping customs. My trouble by this time was in being able to figure out if I was getting the right change or not. He'd seen me give the cab driver a pound note and made sure I got the right amount back. I don't think I ever did actually get cheated on my whole trip, but cab drivers I never trust in any city. Lou Tabakow was a cab driver in Cincinnati for two years and the stories he relates must be typical of the breed. By the time I unpacked, took a leisurely bath and jotted down some notes for my trip report, it was well after 2 a.m.

Ella Parker writes:

I've heard it said that anticipation is the best part of any treat. Looking forward one is apt to over emphasise the pleasures to come so that when the Big Day arrives, events fall flat on their face and turn out something of an anti-climax.

When I heard that Don Ford had won TAFF I'll admit to having lost some sleep through excitement. I'd plugged Don in my fnz but this was a public expression of a personal wish. I

wanted to meet Don Ford. Now I knew I was to have my wish granted I began wondering what he'd be like. The best place to make an assessment of anybody is in your own home and among your friends. Also, too often one hears the complaint after a convention attended by a BNF that he – the BNF – had been monopolised by his friends and the newcomers didn't get a chance to meet him. This seemed a good opportunity to introduce some newcomers in fandom to Don before the con as well as meeting him for myself and judging whether I'd voted right or not.

I planned a party for him with this in mind and so he wouldn't feel overwhelmed by a lot of strangers I invited Ron Bennett whom Don had already met. Some of the other guests arrived before Don and his escort – Bobbie Gray, née Wild, Ron Bennett and Brian Jordan – put in an appearance. I was in the middle of brewing tea and making coffee for them when the door opened and what seemed like a horde of people streamed into the room. Actually there were only four but to those of you that know him, when Don is one of the four it is apt to look like a crowd. I'd heard he was tall (he had to duck his head as he came into the door) but, somewhere along the line, someone had neglected to mention he was LARGE with it! Don is the only person I know who can vacate a room holding 50 other people and leave it looking half empty.

What to say about him. I don't honestly know what I expected him to be like. I surveyed the roomful of fen discarding outer clothing and Don stood out among them. Privately I thought: if he has a voice to match his build then I'll have met my match at last! He strode over to where I stood amid a welter of tea cups and all he said was, "Ella." In that one word he managed to convey his pleasure at the meeting and at being where he was. I particularly liked his handshake. One of my pet hates is the person who extends a limp hand leaving it up to you whether you take it or not. Don made no pretence. He really took hold of my hand and shook it.... I'm still wearing the plaster as proof!

As more people arrived and the talk grew in volume you could hear Don's voice easily only because of the accent. He speaks very quietly but his opinions are expressed in such a way you know he's saying what he thinks and not what he thinks you

want to hear. There was no anti-climax to my meeting with Don. He was every bit as nice as I'd hoped he'd be and if he stood for TAFF tomorrow I'd vote for him again. Inevitably, I didn't get the chance to ask him all the things I wanted to. We met frequently during the convention but, just as inevitably, the talks we had were in hurried snatches. There were some comical moments but this is Don's report so I'll leave him to recount them for you... he'd better!

I know he was popular and he mixed well with all who were there. He obviously loves meeting people and did just that. I like Don and his sense of fun. For all his years in fandom he is still intensely interested in its welfare. I only wish we'd had the chance for a longer talk. It was real nice meeting you, Don. Come back among us, one day. Yes?

Ella Parker.

I'd left a call for 6:30 and the hotel switchboard operator sounded disgustingly cheerful that morning. Breakfast came with the room and I ate early that morning, ordering a glass of ice water to the disgust of the waiter.

This was to be a complete day devoted to photography. Since it is tiring to carry my gadget bag and try to shoot pictures at the same time, I'd made previous arrangements with Ted Carnell's son to hire out as my camera "Caddy" for the day. I removed the flash unit from the bag before I left the hotel and walked down to meet him at Charing Cross station. There, I saddled him with my camera bag and we started off. The route was past Trafalgar Square, through Admiralty Arch and up the Mall to Buckingham Palace. Along the Mall, the bums kept approaching me to let them show me the Changing of the Guard and in general to be my guide. It came as somewhat of a shock to them to find Michael was from London and not my son.

At the palace I learned from one of the Bobbies the times and locations of events coming up and then chose my vantage point accordingly. As time drew near, the crowd increased and we found that we had the best spot. There were not too many American tourists about, due no doubt to the fact that it was just a bit early in the year for them. I did see a man and his wife from New York who had troubles figuring out their new camera equipment and we swapped information for awhile. Then, about five minutes before the Guards came marching up the street, two buses stopped and disgorged a horde of tourists, mostly German and Japanese.

The ceremony lasted about an hour or so and the wind was rather strong and cool, leaving me feeling quite chilly and determined to buy a sweater before the morning was over. I wanted to go to Westminster Abbey and was looking at a map, since Michael wasn't too sure where it was (in fact this was the first time he'd ever seen the Changing of the Guard) when a gentleman walked up and asked if he could help me. I was a bit wary of another tout, but on talking a few minutes with him learned he was a machine tool salesman. He gave me his card: H.G. Harding. I asked him if he'd ever heard of the Cincinnati Milling Machine Co. "Our biggest competitor," he replied.

I said I was from the Cincinnati area and one thing led to another until he said his car was just around the corner and he'd be glad to drop me off anywhere I wanted to go. I said I wanted to buy a sweater and then go to Westminster Abbey. So, Michael and I went with him and he took me to the Army-Navy Store, which was a rather large department store, and then pointed out the way to Westminster Abbey. Nice chap.

I bought a sleeveless sweater, which I immediately wore out of the store, with my receipt safely in hand in case I was thought to be a shoplifter. The nylon zipper jacket simply was not heavy enough for this cool weather. It was handy to stuff the pockets with extra film, lens hoods, exposure meter, guide maps, etc. I wore this a lot on my trip, along with the white waterproof cap. Apparently there are no such caps available in England. People would openly stare at me, my camera gear and clothing when I rode buses, subways, or trains. I'd have two cameras and a lens slung about my neck and another lens on my belt. This immediately placed me in the tourist class. I'd heard that Londoners were like New Yorkers; nothing could startle them, but this didn't hold true in my case.

Michael and I walked down towards Westminster Abbey and it being near noon, I said it was time to eat. We picked a likely looking restaurant and either the help was French or some other nationality as we had trouble being understood when we gave our order. Following lunch, then, we had only a couple of blocks to go to our destination when I saw a crowd gathered down the street. Figuring something was up I got ready to snap photos of whatever it might be. There was a murmur in the crowd and an official car pulled out from the driveway alongside the Abbey and I shot away and asked questions later. Turned out to be the Queen Mother returning from the Maundy Ceremony which is traditional each Easter time. She was representing the Queen, who is supposed to give money, I take it, to six paupers. The photo came out just fair. It's good of the limousine, but unless you know who's in the back, you'd never be able to

tell.

We walked into the rear courtyard and I asked a kindly looking gentleman a couple of questions and really got sucked in. He was a tout. Started showing us around the Abbey and giving us all the history, etc. He was so nice and polite I hated to rudely leave him. He was like a leech and by the time I figured out he must be a tout, we were sucked in but good. Michael kept referring to him as “the old bloke”. I finally gave him a two-shilling piece to get rid of him, all of which “goes for charity”. I didn’t want to waste a bright day on an inside tour. And frankly, I didn’t particularly give a damn about the Abbey anyway, the inside that is.

I photographed Parliament Square, Big Ben and things in that area while we headed for the Tube and to Waterloo station. We then walked across Waterloo Bridge and at a bus stop I asked for some directions as to how to get down to the Embankment. A man and his wife walked half way across the bridge to make sure I found the proper place, despite my protests that they’d miss their bus.

We walked along the Embankment to Westminster Bridge, across the bridge for a view of Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament. It clouded over and sprinkled a bit and as it was now getting into the late afternoon, I went back to Charing Cross station with Michael. Ted had told me that Michael really hadn’t been around London too much and that if he got back to Charing Cross he could find the proper trains home. So, after paying off Michael, I rode to Tottenham Court Road and then walked to the hotel, where I got in an hour’s nap before Ron Bennett met me at six.

After a bite to eat we arrived at the Globe, where I met: Mike Moorcock, Sandra Hall, Ella Parker, Brian Jordan, Ken Cheslin, Mal and Sheila Ashworth, Ken and Irene Potter and Lawrence Sandfield, Brian Burgess, and some others I’ve forgotten. One, I know, worked for a Book Club.

They all kept buying me drinks throughout the evening. I don’t like beer, scotch, wine or ale. I chose gin and orange with ice and found it a good standard drink to stay with. The orange is a concentrate and can be diluted down a bit with water to make a highball. The ice usually presented a problem. Two half-cubes of ice was thought to be sufficient for any man, but I demanded more. I like a drink so cold you can hardly hold it in your hand so drink it instead.

Sandfield related his romantic adventures, which were brought on by his guitar and irresistible charm with women. Mike and Sandra seemed interested only in each other and exchanged soulful looks all evening long. Later on, it was announced that they were engaged to be married. Ken

Cheslin is one of the new crop of budding British fans. I'd been getting copies of *Les Spinge* and it was a pleasure to meet him. He's quiet, smokes a pipe and strikes me as being a fun-loving chap.

The Ashworths and the Potters related that they were not staying at the convention hotel and wherever they were staying there wasn't enough beds for all, so it was their turn (the Ashworths') to sleep on the floor that night. Mal is sort of quiet and, as a TAFF candidate for the Pittsburgh run, I was anxious to meet him. He's taller than average and somewhat on the serious side, as compared to his effervescent companion, Ken Potter. I rate Mal as a nice guy. His wife, Sheila, has that rare facial quality which made me wish for time to do some portraits of her. There's a look of wide eyed innocence about her which is reflected in her eyes. Those eyes could make a lot of men forget many things. I'm not kidding when I say she would make an extremely good portrait model.

The Potters are a lively couple. Ken has written some articles about his selling jobs in London and his stories in person were even funnier. Each one is so true to life, and if you've ever done any selling at all, you get an even greater kick out of them. He's a bit short and shall we say chunky? Not fat.

So with fourteen conversations going on and with drinks flowing freely, the evening passed all too quickly. I was just unzipping my gadget bag, in preparation to getting out my flash unit and cameras, when a loud buzzer scared the hell out of me. "What's that?" I asked. The five-minute warning, I was told. Warning for what? Closing time. So, at the ridiculous hour of 11 p.m. we were kicked out of the Globe. That's just when things start to liven up back home.

Where to go, now? Finally they suggested a party at Ella's. I was all set to go until I found out that the bus and subway transportation dies at midnight. Nothing runs until 6 a.m. except taxis. Medieval times must have been more gay. Deciding that an all night party wouldn't be particularly wise to start out the convention with, I chose to return to my hotel. I'd figured that perhaps I'd go to the party until 2:30 or 3, but with no way of getting back, I couldn't see it. Besides I was a bit tired from all the walking I'd done that day. Brian Burgess saw me back to my hotel room and by the time he left it was about 2 a.m. I made a few notes of my daily events and hit the sack.

Friday, April 15, 1960

I slept until 11 a.m. and then went down in the lobby to meet the incoming

fans. There weren't too many about, so I strolled about the hotel area for some photographing. Then, the fans seemed to come alive. I have a sheet of paper with some of their names signed: Ethel Lindsay, J. Fairley, Ken Cheslin, Peter Tea Davies, Mike Kilbert (sp ?), Jim Groves, Jim Cawthorne, J. McGovern, Archie Mercer, and one I can't read. Also got to meet Inchmery Fandom, Joy Clarke and Sandy Sanderson. They said Vin¢ was baby sitting and would be here tomorrow.

By now I was using both cameras and some shots came out good and others crud. I never seem to have too much luck with hurried shots, which is frequently what you have to do at conventions.

Here were lots of familiar names. Names from OMPA, fanzines, con reports, letters, etc. I had a fine time placing faces with the names. Met Ted Tubb again, and his wife Iris; also Arthur Thomson and his wife, Olive.

Ted and Iris took me out to supper at a Chinese restaurant. The menu is a bit different from what's available here. About the only things that seem to be the same are sweet and sour pork and egg rolls. I had fun experimenting with different and new dishes. Then Ted and Iris were full and I played Ellis Mills by cleaning up what was left. I thought Christmas came early this year! They seemed fascinated by my capacity. I don't know why. Afterwards I was in the hotel bar until quite late that evening.

Saturday, April 16, 1960

Up at 8. Met Ted Carnell and we walked down to the American Express office, where I got my tickets to Paris. It had taken a couple of days to secure a definite confirmation for my return flight. Air France had a special deal. Go early Monday and return late Thursday night and it was about half fare. Around $28.00 for the trip. Something like $45.00 or $47.00, I think, otherwise.

On the way back, I stopped in Foyle's Book Store and had them put Stanleigh Vinson on their mailing list. He wanted some *Passing Show* mags from back in the '30s. Then, we went to see about renting a projector. I got a projector, magazines, screen and spare bulb. Had to put up a 26 pound deposit, plus the rental of another 3 pounds, I think it was. Since they would not be open Monday and I'd probably be gone by then, the problem was how to get my deposit back. I suggested they call the hotel, where I'd previously told the manager I wanted to rent a projector and had inquired as to their current availability. The camera shop proprietor hemmed and hawed. Finally, I said, "Do you have a telephone?"

as I walked behind the counter and into his office with him behind me. Sensing his still further indecision, I picked up the phone and handed it to him and said, “Call the Kingsley Hotel and ask for the manager, Mr. Edgar.” He did and everything was worked out smoothly. During the conversation I flipped out my passport to him so he could double check my identity with the hotel. He sort of gave a half-sigh and half-wince when he saw the U.S. passport.

Parking the projector temporarily at Les Flood’s shop, I had lunch with Ted, Les, Brian Aldiss and Ildiko Hayes, along with a stop at their favorite pub. Miss Hayes used to work for Ted, but now worked for a record company*, I believe. Quite attractive and charming and intelligent to talk to. I can’t recall what all we talked about, but the group reminded me of when we get Marty Greenberg, Phyllis Economou, Lou, etc. together for lunch at a Midwestcon.

** Perhaps not at that exact time, but from later in the year, she edited the newsletter of the UK SF Book Club, a subdivision of Readers Union. [Ed.]*

We got back to the hotel and were ready when the con opened at 2 p.m. I got to meet Vin¢ Clarke today, having met his better half yesterday. Doc Weir opened with a general hell-raising speech about fans taking unwarranted quantities of Hotel Notepaper from the lobby, etc. Since I had about eight in my coat pocket, I tried to slump down in my chair and pass unnoticed. Doc wound up by introducing Ted Carnell.

Ted spent his time in eulogizing me, much to my embarrassment. I still had no idea of what I would say. I did have some notes of some points I wanted to cover, so the “speech”, if you want to call it that, was an ad lib affair. I guess it didn’t turn out too badly. It’s been my experience that most convention speeches are forgotten by the audience five minutes after the speaker is done, anyway. I finished up by presenting Ted with a Bellybutton Brush: “For the man who has everything.”

Later on, after circulating about and trying to meet everyone I could, I ate supper with Ron and Daphne Buckmaster, Lawrence Sandfield, Norman Ashfield, and Brian Burgess. I had a gag item I’d stolen from Doc Barrett when he used it on me at our birthday party (Lou and I) in January. It’s a piece of rubber that looks like someone vomited. Pretty gruesome when you lay it on a chair or table. Daphne wouldn’t sit in a certain chair. Back at the convention hall it created quite a stir when I’d toss it into the lap of Ella or Ethel, etc. Pamela didn’t appreciate it when I put it in the bassinet with Debra. I got a frown over this from a lady, who was later

identified as being Dorothy Ratigan, fellow OMPAn. So, I guess I'm now on her "list".

Following the ending of the TAFF quiz, I was due to show my slides. I believe the auction followed, but also during this time I had to load the slide magazines. Dave Kyle was in the hotel and was being readied for a special grand entrance. Ted Carnell made the announcement and everyone turned back to see Dave walk into the room. It was quite a dramatic event. I think everyone's eyes then turned towards Joy Clarke and Sandy Sanderson.

Dave said he'd already made his speech but no one applauded... at the Sandringham Hotel (the one that cancelled) and it was just like the one year at Bellefontaine when he came one week early and nobody was there.

With the aid of Ron Buckmaster, Norman Shorrock and the expert assistance of Peter West we got ready to get the show on the road. During the necessary confusion of getting the screen up, projector set up and focus slide put in, etc., Charlie Duncombe came up and introduced himself. I tried to talk to him while I was working, but it wasn't too successful. I never saw him afterward and hated that I didn't get to talk to him in a more lengthy conversation. I've thought a hundred times since the convention, "I wonder if Charlie thinks I'm a no good s.o.b.?"

I'd prepared a slide show of previous Worldcons and Midwestcons, trying to avoid showing too many of the fans who'd been over to London in '57, and concentrating on some of the lesser known or shall we say lesser travelled fans than they'd previously seen. Also, I'd been warned to cut to the bone; that fans were a bit tired of convention slides, etc. In addition, I'd included photos of the CFG, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and the start of my TAFF trip from Loveland to London, which was why I had to get the roll of films processed earlier in the week.

I stood near the screen to point out and identify fans, while the other three worked the projector and changed the magazines for me. This particular Argus model wasn't working so good and the magazine kept sticking or else would advance. However, despite these obstacles we managed it fairly well. I'd included a number of night scenes of Cincinnati into the show, remembering these had drawn favorable comment at the Midwestcons. They also look pretty to the average person who is not particularly a camera fan. After the show was over, they commented more on these than they did the fannish slides.

The costume party was next and things were held up for a half hour or so while the movie and still camera fans had a field day. Ted, Pamela and I were judges and we were to choose two winners. First place was to Ethel

Lindsay and Ina Shorrock as the Witches, and second to an unidentified fan who had a monster get-up on. There were some good costumes and the selections were not too easy to make.

Bill and Roberta Gray suggested that I really should get some night shots of London while I was there. That suited me fine! We went to Piccadilly Circus and Trafalgar Square. I got some good ones that night. Things were a bit quiet in the hotel when we got back. Bill and Bobbie retired, so I collected a couple of fans or so and we went to Dave Kyle's room and got him out of bed. I tried to talk him into going over to Paris with me and he was quite tempted. It was about 5 a.m. by the time I got to sleep.

Sunday, April 17, 1960

The alarm went off at 9. I re-set it for 10 and went back to sleep. Bill Gray took me to the corner at Marble Arch at Hyde Park. This is "Speakers' Corner"... there, they sound off on anything they can get the crowd to listen to. With the aid of the different lenses I got some nice close-up shots. One man kept his head shaved in order to show off his tattooed scalp. He's quite a gruesome sight on the screen! He was waving an American detective magazine which had an account of him in it and his prison sentence. I never did pay too much attention to what any of them were saying, for photographing them.

There was one woman, who had a dog on a leash, that would get in front of a speaker and start singing in a loud voice, songs like "Easter Parade", "You Are My Sunshine", etc. Then she'd yodel, screech and holler in the damnedest voice you ever heard! Bill and I laughed ourselves silly at this free show. Then as soon as she'd break up one speaker, she'd move to the next one, the crowd following along to watch and egg her on. I could see why she needed that dog with her.

One man felt he got cheated in World War I and had a sign: "How The War Office Robs Inventors". He was witty and had the crowd laughing with him, not at him. The religious were there too, and all in all, I'd recommend that anyone visiting London include this on your itinerary.

Bill took some black and white shots of me, here, and I'd get alongside a speaker while Bill would pretend to look off elsewhere until we were ready for the set-up.

Bill Gray writes:

This just couldn't be anywhere else than Britain. Imagine what would happen if a corner of the Red Square was at the disposal of anyone at all to say what they liked to anyone that wanted to listen. (Did I hear anyone mutter "Revolutionary?") Yet such freedom of speech is exactly what happens every day, and especially on Sundays, at the so-called "Speakers' Corner" of Hyde Park, London, just behind the Marble Arch.) Absolutely anyone is completely and entirely free to say whatever they like short of obvious obscenity, or technical treason.

We went along on Sunday morning for a sample of the best free entertainment to be had in London, and that is exactly what it proved to be. There were some fifteen varieties of speakers in action when we arrived, some on home-made rostrums, some on plain kitchen chairs, and the remainder on their overworked feet. Around them in groups surged the crowds of sight-seers, listening here, heckling there, and generally drifting about from speaker to speaker having all the fun there was to be had for nothing.

What did they speak about? Who knows, and for the matter of that, who cares anyway? The speakers were the only ones taking themselves seriously; everybody else was simply having a darn good time listening to a few words from one while they were still laughing at another. Nobody knows the meaning of the word "toleration" till they've seen a British crowd at Speakers' Corner. Hovering in the background somewhere were one or two London Bobbies with their customary inscrutable expressions. Theoretically, these police are provided by the Metropolis to deal with any riot or disturbance the speakers may incite. Practically they seem to be a waste of tax-money, and they probably compete with each other for such an easy spell of duty.

Listening to some of the speakers makes one wonder why there isn't a riot. A neatly dressed elderly man is explaining why the Pope is the main evil of the world. Another makes remarks about the ruling government that would swell the Siberian population by one elsewhere. Either nobody cares, or else it's all too funny to bother about.

One woman was having a private war on every speaker. As soon as one got going in the middle of a fair crowd of maybe a couple of hundred, she worked her way to the front and sang at the top of her voice to drown every word he said. (No

loudspeakers permitted.) She had a dog with her on a lead, and as soon as she could find the room, she and the dog did quite a little show and step-dance. There is no denying she certainly had a voice of considerable quality, and once she got really going, not even the most stentorian speaker could compete with her. After all, if they were free to speak, she was free to sing in the very same place. One by one, she invaded every cluster, and disorganized it. We never found out why, but it was certainly good clean democracy to watch.

About the only character this speech-buster didn't quell was a Burglar Bill type with a completely bald head, tattooed all over including his face. He was keeping his audience in convulsions of laughter with the quick-fire humour for which Cockneys are famous. As we passed him, he was saying, "Wot I wants to tell you, ladies and gents, is that I 'ave 'ad the Honour of bein' at Hoxford College." He waited a second or two for this to sink in, and then followed it rapidly with: "O' course I 'adn't bin in the blinkin' place five minutes than the bloomin' burglar alarm went orf!!!!"

Yes, that was a sample of Speakers' Corner. It goes on all the time. Unspoiled and non-stop variety. Don't miss it, folks; it's too cheap to pass up. People from all nations come to see it on their way through London. They photograph it, write about it, tell incredulous countrymen back home about it, but one gets the feeling that most of all, they envy it. No Englishman can see the need for envy, there's no copyright on the idea, but somehow, it remains like the police who guard it: indubitably and traditionally "Made in England".

Bill Gray.

We got back to the hotel in time to hear Kettering voted as the site for next year's con. Ina Shorrock was voted in as BSFA Chairman, Brian Aldiss as Association President, Archie Mercer as Treasurer (and definitely for the last year he says) and Jim Groves as publisher.

A goodly mob of us went out for lunch at the Moulin Rouge, a nearby restaurant. We went downstairs and somehow or other I got into a conversation with the owner who looked to be Italian. He said he used to live in the U.S. until he got deported following his sentence. Been in England ever since. I asked him what gang he used to be with and what he got sent up for. It was for bootlegging and he used to be with Capone's mob, he said.

I kept telling him what a nice set-up he had for a casino down in this cellar, and asking him if he knew the Detroit Purple Gang and mentioned names of some of the gangsters who'd been in an article in *Life* some time back. When we left the restaurant, Carnell looked at me with awe and asked me how I knew so much about the gangsters in the U.S. "Next time you're in Cincinnati, Ted, let us take you to the hot spots in Northern Kentucky," I said.

Meanwhile back at the con, they were ready to go on with "This Is Your Fan Life" and planned to pick the victim by surprise. The word was leaked out that since Dave Kyle was now in London, Sandy Sanderson would be the victim. Eric Jones was to handle the taped effects and Eric Bentcliffe was the m.c. Norman Shorrock, it was told to Ted and I, was who the real victim was going to be. Ted was asked to work Norman's movie camera. So, he asked Norman to move next to him, on the ruse that the angle was better. Eric Jones asked Norman to come up and adjust the mike for the tape recorder and then Eric Bentcliffe had him on stage and a more surprised person than Norman couldn't be found.

Ted had some little difficulties with two cameras, so Peter West took over Norman's camera and bobbed out and in the first two rows of seats with camera in hand. He decided he needed a plug and reached for the one Eric Jones had on his tape recorder and narrowly missed getting backhanded. The show of Jones beating off West was almost as good as the one on stage. Eric had to alternately change speed and synchronize with Bentcliffe's script, while beating off Peter West. All in all, it was a wonderful production of a spoof of Norman Shorrock's life which, of course, the Liverpool and Cheltenham group conspired to do without Norman finding out. Even Ina kept her mouth shut, and who says women can't keep secrets?

Out to supper with a group, again, we passed an outside telephone booth. I heard the phone ring and suggested to Ron Buckmaster that we answer it. He strung someone along at the other end with phrases like, "I'm sorry, the Duke is out." etc. It was all we could do to keep from laughing and giving the joke away.

We got some drinks and set-ups and went to Ella Parker's room for a chat... Ted Carnell, Ella, Brian Jordan, Arthur Thomson and myself. Told a few jokes, talked about the state of British Fandom, etc. Arthur reminds me a lot of Frank Robinson... they both have a voice which is very similar in tone, they think alike and have the same sense of humor. I suggested that we could have a party in my room that night, but I didn't have the capacity to hold the entire convention. I'd also brought along some B.S.S.

cards that the CFG has used ever since 1953 and gave these to Arthur. He took charge of passing them out and figuring who to invite. The whole thing to come off later in the evening after we'd all visited about.

Ted had planned to go on home and left. A few minutes later I was down in the lobby when he called me over to where he and Dave Kyle were talking to a Miss Bellamy, a newspaper woman from New Hampshire somewhere. She was hipped on flying saucers and had noted the s-f con on the lobby bulletin board. It just so happened that she was on a European tour and was staying at the Kingsley. She related some of the sightings she'd written about in her newspaper work. The movie, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, was now being shown in the con hall and after her taking a few notes for a possible column in her hometown newspaper, she adjourned to the con hall and Ted got his chance to dart out the door and head for home, now considerably later than he'd anticipated on leaving.

I watched the end of the movie and then circulated around a bit. A number of fans were leaving the con, now. Next stop was Ethel Lindsay's room where an OMPA gathering was in progress. Following that, Ron Bennett, Sandy Sanderson, Eric Bentcliffe and myself adjourned to my room for a brief TAFF discussion. Mal Ashworth had left. We discussed whether there should be any changes in the TAFF setup for the immediate future and after some discussion decided that only minor changes were necessary; that TAFF had worked in the past and should be able to do so in the future.

Next fans started drifting in and before long only standing room was available. Bob Parkinson auctioned off half his beard for TAFF and raised well over a pound, I believe. I was chosen as the one to do the job and started hacking away with my razor, saying: "This reminds me of my old job... I used to be an orderly in a maternity ward."

The hotel rang a couple of times asking to keep it quiet and finally the Bell Captain came up about 3 a.m. and asked me to break it up. It was late and since it was primarily a sedate hotel, I didn't feel they were unreasonable about it. They were nice about it and I was getting a bit weary anyhow. So, with a flash of inspiration I turned to the crowd and in a confidential hoarse whisper said, "Quick everybody! Grab the booze and head for Dave Kyle's room... room 524!" There was that fatal split second of indecision. I opened my room door and gave the nearest person a strong shove and propelled him out the door. Same to the next person and then like sheep following a judas goat they all ran pell mell up to Dave's room.

I'd nearly completed the operation "scram" and was talking in muted tones to three or four fans still left when the phone rang. I didn't answer it.

Later a knock at the door. I didn't answer that either. Finally a wrathful voice outside the door said, "MISTER FORD! This is the night manager. Please open your door immediately!" I opened and saw this cat in a silken robe, with a hair net on, rising up on his tippy toes looking indignant. I said, "I thought you were someone wanting to get in and I've nearly gotten them all out now." He spluttered a bit, but when the others left, cooled off a bit. I then waited for him to tip toe back and slyly knock, himself, later on when the coast was clear, but I guess he figured I wasn't his type.

Monday, April 18, 1960

Was up at 9; and at breakfast, Archie Mercer asked to see my receipt from the photo shop for the projector. I showed him and suddenly he pays me the rental charges I'd paid. I was a bit hung over right then and by the time I'd collected my wits about me, he wouldn't take the money back.

The fans now seemed to be deserting the hotel in droves. It began to get lonesome. Eric Jones left, saying they'd see me in Cheltenham on Tuesday. The Liverpool mob left with a reminder that they'd see me the next weekend. I reached in my coat pocket and found a letter Dave Kyle had given me the night before, saying he'd gotten it at the Sandringham Hotel when he was there. It was from Walt Willis inviting me to come to Belfast. With the scheduling I now had, such a trip was impossible.

The Clarkes had wanted me to see the Aldermaston March on Easter Monday. I really didn't have too much desire to see this event when I came over, but now with fans gone and time on my hands, I decided I might as well go and photograph the crowd anyway. The Clarkes said they'd be on the steps at St. Martin's. I told Bill and Bobbie Gray I'd be in the square somewhere and to look for me in a spot where I'd get a straight on view at the column.

They found me, later, on the wall at the National Gallery. After I was there about an hour, a Bobby told me I'd have to get off. I did, feeling no use creating an International incident. The natives protested. I searched about for another vantage point and could find none. By now, there were over 50,000 people in the square. I drifted back to my original area and watched the arguing. An elderly couple, their faces red with rage, were protesting loudly. Two more Bobbies came up for reinforcements and they were apologetic but insistent. It finally boiled down to the fact that the curator of the gallery had requested that people get off. This woman said that if he'd come out personally and tell them to move, she'd get down; otherwise no. The Bobbies shrugged their shoulders and left. I told this

woman that I now felt badly... I was the only one who'd moved and now I'd lost my place. In fact there was someone in it now. The crowd made this person give me my place back, while they boosted me back up on the wall.

Next, a man alongside of me asked me who I thought our next President would be. I told him I really couldn't say, but that to me the indications were strong that Kennedy would win the Democratic nomination and Nixon the Republican nomination. In a contest between these two men I felt that Nixon would win, but it could only be a guess on my part. This seemed to anger him and he said that his choice was Adlai Stevenson. I didn't pay much attention to him and kept taking photos of the crowd and of the marchers who were now coming into the square. He then proceeded to tell me what was wrong with the U.S. and what all should be done.

That filled me up to the top so I began arguing back and needling him a bit. He was in his fifties and a laborite. I asked him if his party was so good, why Macmillan won. "That election was rigged," he replied. "Baloney!" I shouted, "How can you rig the man in the street?"

He edged away carefully. "Sure, you might buy a few individual votes, but how are you going to get them all?" I asked in a loud voice. I turned away to shoot more photos and he was gone when I looked for him again. The other people on the wall were amused at us over this incident and several congratulated me for sticking to my guns.

Since this march was going to take hours, I figured I'd had what I wanted and went over towards St. Martin's steps to see if fans were about. Bill and Bobbie Gray were with me. The March was orderly and so was the crowd. What it proved, I don't know. I figured there were a few who were sincere about it, but in with the marchers were a vast collection of what appeared to me to be: screwballs, beatniks, college kids out for a lark, exhibitionists, and chronic bitchers. My attitude is: so they marched, so what?

Circulating were a group of fans waving at me when I got to St. Martin's. They asked me where I was going and I said I had to go to the hotel and then a bite to eat and then I was free. They invited me out to their party (Inchmery) that evening and I accepted eagerly. Ron Buckmaster said his car was nearby and since he was a bit hungry too, he'd take me to the hotel and after we ate we'd go out to Inchmery and join them. He was parked in front of Scotland Yard in a no parking zone. Under the eyes of several uniformed minions of the law we backed up on the sidewalk, made a U-turn and were on our way. All it takes is guts.

Being a holiday, not every restaurant was open and those that were, were crowded. At one place we were standing in line and I said to Ron that ever since my military service I've always hated lines. He replied that he was still in military service, so we cut out to find someplace else. We were in the Tottenham Court Road area. At last a Chinese restaurant was spied... The Great Wall. Ron turned out to be not quite as hungry as he'd anticipated and once again Christmas came early! It was a tasty meal and here I had the best tea I'd ever drank. It was on the menu as lemon tea. It came in a tall glass which was inserted in a silver holder with a handle that was somewhat like the old soda drinking holders the drugstores used to have twenty years ago. In the bottom was a slice of lemon and by the time the tea had cooled off enough for me to drink, it was delicious. Most British tea is on the bitter side to me. So is the U.S. tea. Here, we get Orange-Pekoe, but I like green, black, or Oo-Long the best. These are to be found in the Chinese restaurants in the U.S. and the same thing prevailed in England.

Near as I can recall, now, the people at Inchmery that night, besides the hosts, were: Frances Evans, Ron and Daphne Buckmaster, Ron Bennett, Brian Jordan, Ella Parker, Ted Forsyth and Ethel Lindsay. There were movies, drinks, discussions and a good time. I told Vin¢ that Stan Vinson was looking for copies of *The Passing Show* if he wanted to part with his own copies. Ron had his version of a Haggis, made out of a potato. The room was full of books, magazines and the paraphernalia that goes with a fanzine publishing dynasty.

Section Two

Ron made a couple of trips to drop us off at transportation centers and when I was with him, I'd trigger off my electronic flash at people on the sidewalk, or at cars alongside of us at traffic lights. Their puzzlement at where the light came from produced various looks on their faces, much to all our amusement. At the train station when we dropped off Ron and Ella, etc. a woman practically jumped in front of the car as we were making the turn. I gave her a flash and she thought she was killed for sure. Like New York only the parking lights are used at night for driving. The street lights aren't really bright enough to compensate.

At Inchmery that night people were passing around cards to be signed which they were going to mail to their friends. Remembering I hadn't written Madle a card as yet, I wrote on mine: "Dear Bob: Your address book working out swell. Having wonderful time. Don." Then, I had all the women sign it and they added brief comments like: "Come back Bob, I miss you." "Do you remember? I do." I'm sure Bob appreciated me thinking of him while I was on my trip.

Tuesday, April 19, 1960

At breakfast this morning I saw Miss Bellamy of the flying saucers and we talked about the Aldermaston March of the previous day. She thought they made quite a collection of oddballs. I gave her my address, asking her to send me a copy of any columns she may have had published about the con or the March. Said she would but I'll wait and see.

I packed up my gear and reluctantly had to abandon the British apple box Liverpool had presented to me at the con, complete with nails and a rubber hammer to assemble it with. The hotel housekeeper was delighted when I told her that she could keep the rubber hammer. What she'll do with it, I don't know. I turned in the projector and screen and got my deposit back and settled up my hotel bill. Got some film and the camera shop owner examined my camera and lenses. German and Japanese imports are restricted except in certain cases. I saw Les Flood to say goodbye to him and then settled down in the lobby to await Roberta Gray.

At the hour of 12 she telephoned and said she'd overslept and asked if I could find my way to the station? It was Paddington Station and the Boots Chemists shop where we were to meet on the platform had been

moved. I got my ticket and decided to wait at the old location and hope she'd find me. She did and then had to go get tea. Not feeling the need of being revived, I waited with our luggage.

Bobbie tipped a porter to get us into a window location, knowing I'd want to shoot photos along the route to Cheltenham. We had a chance to settle down a bit and both of us were a bit weary with the after-con fatigue. Some soldiers were on the train and in the course of conversation it developed they were going home on leave and were stationed in Cyprus. I traded them some coins for some Cyprus and Israel coins they had. My son, Jim, had told me that he wanted souvenirs as gifts when I got back from the trip; not clothes, like Terry and Margaret wanted. Cheltenham is a hundred miles or so from London and the trip was soon over. We got out of the station and Bobbie gave the taxi driver instructions on how to find the way to Eric Jones's house; and then she left, saying she'd call the house that night. I was quite confused with the twistings and turnings of the route to Eric's. When I got there Margaret was home and said Eric would be along very shortly.

He soon pedaled up on his bicycle and supper was ready. We talked until quite late and kept ringing Bill and Bobbie Gray's phone but no answer. We listened to tapes and the evening was soon gone. Margaret and Eric both work and they said no use in me getting up early. Eric gave me a key to their house and said just be sure to lock up when I left. He drew a map of where and what bus to take into town and I planned to go in to look around and then visit Bobbie and Bill. Tomorrow night was meeting night, too. Tony Walsh had invited me to the atomic power station where he worked, but the transportation difficulties presented too great a problem without a car.

Wednesday, April 20, 1960

Eric had awakened me when he and Margaret left for work and I was shaving when the telephone rang. It was Bobbie and I told her I'd be on over before too long. She met me at the bus stop and we hurried on over to the bus terminal. It started out as a frantic race to meet deadlines until I begged her to let's slow down a bit and after all I could always find somewhere to go or do.

We then took a bus to nearby Tewkesbury, a small town a half hour's journey away. It is one of these old English villages with crooked streets, leaning houses, a variety of architecture and a photographer's paradise.

At lunch time we ate at the Ancient Grudge. In the window were

numerous types of pastries like cakes, scones and what have you. I asked the waitress to bring me four different kinds. She said, “But they’re sweet, sir!”

I said, “Fine. Just what I like.” All heads in the restaurant swiveled in my direction with an accusing stare. I said “They’re for sale aren’t they?”

“Yes,” was the reply.

“You don’t mind if I eat them here, do you?”

“No.”

“Well, then bring them to me... I’m still hungry.” The stares now changed to looks of awe. This mad American must be hollow. I topped off the meal with Hellygog Pudding and felt contentedly full.

We walked about the town while I photographed away. Bobbie wanted me to see the O.D.T.A.A. Garage, which translated meant: “One Damned Thing After Another”. Next stop was to visit her mother-in-law at the hospital to drop off cigarettes, etc. I strolled about the grounds and ended up in the back talking to the gardener about the vegetable garden he was working in. It turns out that what we call green beans are called French beans in England. I came back to the waiting room and had just sat down when Bobbie got back, apologising for keeping me waiting. I said that was all right, I didn’t mind.

We then visited Tewkesbury Abbey and climbed to the top of the tower for an excellent view of the town. By now, it was time to catch our bus and on the return trip it took a different route. We went over side roads and trails the back way to Cheltenham. Nice view of the countryside and I would ride in the front seat of the top deck in order to get decent leg room.

I stopped at Bobbie’s for a drink and then got on over to Eric and Margaret’s for supper. Eric is a pretty good trencherman, himself, but he said he’d met his match with me. I figured that he’d met Ellis Mills and no appetite could shock him. I did have the advantage, though: I’d been on the go all day and had worked up an appetite, while he was the chairborne type.

Frank Herbert and Shirley Stevens, who are now Mr. and Mrs., stopped by to pick us up in their car. Cheltenham has an extensive layout for their clubroom. It’s in the basement of a two story building and once was regular living quarters until it was condemned for living use. They have their library housed in a spacious hallway, their duplicator in a room with a permanent movie screen on one wall and cutouts in the opposite wall for projectors; there is a kitchen which converts into a bar, then a piano in what used to be the living room and is now their general meeting room. The toilet is called the “Pump Room” and has a dummy leg hanging

down from the ceiling with shoe and pants leg attached. A bit startling at first entry and I suppose is the corollary to that old gag cartoon: “Goodbye Cruel World”.

I met: Peter Mabey, Bob Richardson (old time fan and correspondent of Dale Smith), Audrey Eversfield – who helps give the place a touch of glamour, Bob Parkinson minus the other half of his beard, Howard Nicholls, Wally Johnson, John Challoner, Mike Jones, Bill and Bobbie Gray and of course Eric and Margaret Jones.

I signed the wall and then photographed them at Gavagan’s Bar, etc. The entire group is pretty much on the ball and is a lively bunch and on the creative side. They’d be a worthy asset to any country or city. Actually, with London being somewhat split apart, Cheltenham and Liverpool are the two main centers of fan activity in England. The other activities are more on an individual basis, whereas these two cities do group projects, etc.

We had a nice time that evening and they rushed themselves to keep my glass filled from Gavagan’s Bar. I wish Cincinnati could afford a club room half as nice. After the meeting they took me to a hamburger place and we just got in under the wire at closing time. They lock the doors at 11:15.

I’d like to come back to England with some capital to invest. I’d open a series of good hamburger and milkshake establishments and simply stay open until 1 or 2 a.m. and make a fortune.

Back at Eric’s he telephoned the Shorrock house at Liverpool and, since Norman and John Roles were not back from their business trip as yet, it was decided that I stay in Cheltenham another day. I told Eric whenever he felt it was time to go to bed, say the word as he was the one who had to work the next day. I also photographed some of the rooms in their house, which were really beautiful with their tastes for decorating and color mixing and matching schemes.

Thursday, April 21, 1960

Stopped over at Bobbie’s and Bill kept worrying that I might not be enjoying myself. He kept telling Bobbie to take me to this place and that place, etc. He is a chiropodist and had office hours to attend to and apologised for that. All of which was somewhat embarrassing as I was having such a great time that I felt I was imposing upon them. Bobbie seemed to be worn out from the convention. She’d worked very hard at it and the added strain of trying to find another hotel at the last minute must

have been wearing.

Now, here she was every day taking me all over sightseeing, which in itself can be tiresome. That day we rode the train to Bourton-on-the-Water. She told me it is often called the "Venice of the Cotswolds". It looked to be the size of perhaps 2 or 3,000. The streets were wide, the houses neat and of stone, and through the center of town ran a small stream. Across this were bridges and foot bridges, nearby were sidewalk cafés and this was a place where I think I'd enjoy living.

As a tourist attraction there was an outside model village, of the original town, which was complete down to the clock in the tower running and music coming out of the church. The stereo slides of this make the people look like giants, so detailed are the buildings.

The better displays are rooms set up behind glass. This presented a problem to photograph with flash and with Bobbie holding my flash I'd aim through another pane of glass and hope for the best. Came out very well and Lou thought I'd really been to a black mass.

Back in Cheltenham, I left Bobbie at home, where she was showing Bill a new jigsaw puzzle she'd gotten that day. They were bent over the table sorting out the pieces and barely heard me leave.

Margaret was waiting supper for my arrival and had fixed Toad in the Hole. This is small sausages baked in a batter and quite tasty. I saw a recipe for this in the *Farm Journal* the other day and my Margaret is going to fix some for us.

Eric and I were up late that night, exchanging limericks and conversation. We knew it would be our last evening together and each one of us hated to suggest that it might be bed time.

Eric Jones writes:

If for no other reason, DON FORD'S name will go down in the fannish annals of the Cheltenham S-F Circle as "THE TAFF CANDIDATE WHO FOUND THAT CHELTENHAM LIES BETWEEN LONDON AND LIVERPOOL". We hope that others who come across the pond will, in the future, do the same.

When we knew that Don had won the 1960 TAFF. we airmailed him right away to include a visit to St Fantony's Shrine on his itinerary, pointing out the fannish Historical Value of actually freezing in the subterranean vaults of the C.S.F.C. We also serve whiskey.

We know it was for the latter reason he came – not for the Historical Value.

The Ford Form first made its presence felt as we completed our registration with the Con Committee at the Kingsley Hotel; a large shadow blanked out the programme we were perusing, and a voice said, “Have you met Don Ford?” On looking up (and I do mean UP!), thar he was. But to prove that Britain can grow ’em just as big, an even taller construction in the form of a neofan appeared later in the proceedings. This character *must* have topped 7' 6"!

At various times throughout the con, confusion reigned when trying to make arrangements for Don to visit the C.S.F.C. This was mainly due to the fact that he had had two separate invitations to visit Cheltenham, one from Bobbie Gray and one from the Joneses. Correlating the two proved difficult at the outset, but eventually everything was worked out... which reminds us about the presentation by Don of a Bellybutton Brush to Ted Carnell....

We were made members of the B.S.S. and attended one of its meetings in Don’s room, bringing our own glasses (container-type). It was at this meeting that Bearded Bob Parkinson – a staunch Knight of St Fantony – surrendered half of his beard in aid of TAFF, and Ina Shorrock laid a false trail for Peter West who was eventually (to everyone’s relief) lost in some dim recess in the maze of passages around the hotel.

One highlight of the Con was the DON FORD SLIDE SHOW, and how we wished later, at the C.S.F.C. Clubrooms, that we could have seen them all again – if the time and equipment had been available. (Don’t forget, Don, we need one for next year’s Con here!) To make sure that he had a night record of London’s lights, Bill Gray took him down to Piccadilly Circus, and probably other places (if he didn’t, Don, you sure missed the more extensive attractions of London’s night life!).

Easter Monday found us on our way home – and Don, complete with peaked cap and black leather jacket plus cameras, went down to Trafalgar Square to take in the anti-nuclear demonstration... he was last seen being trailed by two plain clothes detectives down Shaftesbury Avenue....

He arrived in Cheltenham on the Tuesday after the Con and found his way to 44 Barbridge Road. (This is still a wonder to

us, as the local taxi drivers expect their passengers to direct them all the way!) He at once remarked how green everything was here as he stood knee-deep in grass on our front lawn. A visit to the local pub was frustrated by time which was mainly used up by trying to phone Bobbie to see what arrangements she had made to take Don on a tour of the locality the next day. We eventually decided that they couldn't hear the phone ringing – that was around midnight and the pubs had closed two hours previously! Consoling ourselves with brandy and rum we played the tape of the 1957 Kettering Convention and nattered the rest of the night away....

We didn't see Don again until Wednesday when he arrived back "on his knees" after taking in the historical sights of Tewkesbury with Bobbie... climbing up hundreds of stairs to the top of the Abbey Tower. ("I didn't like to tell her, but I'm not very interested in all this ancient stuff.") ("I didn't like to tell Don, but I can't stand heights.")

We eventually folded Don up in the back seat of a Hillman after he had met Frank Herbert and Shirley Stevens (now MR. and MRS. Herbert), and transported him to St Fantony's Shrine (it being club night). Evidence that he has been there can be clearly seen by his signature on the wall of FAME (famous names like E.C. Tubb and Ken Bulmer and Harry Hurstmonceaux can also be seen there) although we had to supply him with a chair to stand on as *even he* couldn't reach to the top of the wall!

GAVAGAN'S BAR was opened for this special occasion and a free supply of booze was available to all whilst we conducted Don around the more famous rooms of the C.S.F.C.'s fabulous home... the pump room where Charlie's leg still sticks through the ceiling after the cruel non-fen upstairs nailed the floor up over him... Don was also given tuition here regarding the English flushbox, a vital THING for all TAFF winners to recognize. You pull *and release* the handle!

The LIBRARY, wherein rests S-F by the yard (or metre) although it is very short of U.S. S-F magazines, was displayed with pride by its keeper – Peter Mabey.

ADVERT.

WANTED. DONATIONS FROM ALL U.S. FEN OF ANY OLD S-F MAGAZINES AND FANZINES FOR THE BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIBRARY. SEND THEM PARCELLED OR CRATED EVEN TO “THE LIBRARIAN, C.S.F.C., 130 LONDON ROAD, CHELTENHAM, GLOS, ENGLAND” where they will find a very welcome home.

FANZINE EDITORS.

Britain’s FANZINE FOUNDATION is also held at the above address... if you want your fanzine to go down in posterity, to be read by the millions of fen who come after you, then don’t fail to send every copy (and back numbers if you have them) to the above address. Many Thanks!

He regretted, however, that the C.S.F.C. hadn’t been able to obtain apple boxes as easily as a certain U.S. fan, and had therefore to resort to actually building bookshelves for that very purpose.

The INNER SANCTUM with its muralled St Fantony on the wall, noted for the Round Table, and the Bard’s piano (which is deliberately out of tune as when it is used none of the members are in any condition to appreciate HI FI), the relics of the great Tourney which was held between the Knights of the London Circle and the Knights of St Fantony at the Whitsuntide gathering of ’59 were shown in all their battered glamour... the silver shoes of Sir Tubb encased in a block of crystal... but all too soon it was time to depart and so, after Don had used up all his film, we moved on, traditionally to GYMIKS HAMBURGER BAR, there to compare the value of the British hamburger... apparently it passed its test quite satisfactorily.

On Thursday Bobbie took Don to the one and only Witchcraft Exhibition in Britain at Bourton-on-the-Water, and in the evening the intricacies of THE BRITISH FOOTBALL POOL system was described to him in detail, whereupon he traded a “LUCKY ENTRY PEN” for some outdated coupons, so next season we hope to win 75,000 pounds at least.

On the Friday we said farewell – though nearly missed the rendezvous at the railway station as we were looking for Don near the Booking office. On enquiring from the Booking clerk

whether a tall American had recently booked a first-class seat to Liverpool and receiving an answer in the negative, things started to look as though he would miss the train. However, he turned up on the platform where he had been all the time and upon being challenged to the fact that he didn't have a ticket, promptly produced one which he had bought a few minutes previously from that dumb-head of a Booking clerk.

The C.S.F.C. saboteurs were working away violently on the track in a desperate attempt to remove the rails before the train came in, but unfortunately didn't finish the job in time and so we said farewell and told him to beware the LaSFaS knockout potions....

Eric and Margaret Jones.

Friday, April 22, 1960

I telephoned a taxi and said for them to meet me at the Grays' at 12:30 to take me to the train station. I rode the bus into the Grays' and Bobbie wanted to fix lunch for me before I left for the train. Bill had some snapshots back of the con and told me to take what I wanted. I picked out some for myself that would make nice souvenirs of my trip and wanted to pay him for them, but no. Nothing doing. Typical of the hospitality all during my trip. It made me afraid to say I liked anything, for fear they'd insist I take it.

The morning passed too briefly and soon the taxi was at hand. I got my ticket and was on the platform watching them tear up the rails. When Eric arrived, on his lunch hour, I remarked that it looked like they were making sure I didn't come back.

On the train there were two other passengers in the compartment with me. At first only an elderly woman and then later on a Chinese. The woman was an estate agent and the Chinese was from Hong Kong and traveled about the British Isles in his business which had something to do with Chinese restaurants.

I'd always heard so much about the typical British reserve, but never did find it anywhere on my entire trip. Once I'd broken the ice with this woman she talked the entire four-hour trip to Liverpool. After I'd engaged the Chinese in conversation, she would feel it proper to talk to him and we carried on a three-way conversation that was interesting and also made the time pass much quicker.

At Lime Street Station, Norman Shorrock and John Roles were on

hand to greet me. It was rush hour and we took buses and ferry boat rides until we reached number 2 Arnot Way. On the ferry I saw the funniest sight of my entire trip. On the top deck the office workers were marching around in a circle, counter-clockwise. This, they did twice a day and was their constitutional. They did it solemn faced and with great dignity. I had the urge to start marching in a clockwise rotation and see what would happen, but spent the time in photographing the port of Liverpool instead.

When I got back to Cincinnati, I went to American Express and told the man who'd taken care of me what a nice time I'd had and how everything worked out O.K. He was from England, which I knew, and asked me where I'd gone. When I mentioned Liverpool, he said he used to live in Liverpool and asked me if I'd ridden the ferry boat. He had a smile on his face when he said it and I said yes, and I saw the funniest sight of my life. At this he laughed out loud and said he used to be one of those marchers on the top deck, too. I told him of my suppressed desire to walk in the opposite direction and had since then wondered what would have happened. He said very probably I would have been branded a counter-revolutionary and attempts would have been made to toss me overboard.

Ina then introduced the Shorrock offspring, Janet, Roy and Linda. They immediately called me "Uncle Don". To me dogs, cats and small children are a pain. Very seldom are any of the three categories trained and I think that is the reason. Anyway, what I want to say is that the three Shorrock children are that exception to the rule. The more I saw of them the better I liked them. Those who know me well can take fifteen minutes out for the shock to wear off.

I picked up mail for me. Ted Carnell had forwarded mail from home. Eddie Jones, the artist, came over and after supper we were up until 3 a.m. John Roles stayed over too. Eddie I'd seen in the M.A.D.* movies, and in person he was quite nice to talk to. He has an infectious enthusiasm and is full of ideas and has a sense of humor. He's also interested in photography and we exchanged photographic data. I was sorry I'd mailed my slides back to the U.S. already as several of the Liverpool group hadn't been to the con.

** Mersey and Dee-side SF group. [Ed.]*

John Roles has a rich pleasant voice and a luxuriant mustache. As a fellow OMPAn, we could share many odd bits of news and conversational twists. On paper John sounds a bit serious perhaps. In person he isn't that way at all. He also has a nice sense of humor. I find that the fans who do have a sense of humor, especially the ones who can laugh at themselves or

who can take a joke, are really all right. Those who take everything seriously and those who can't take a joke are almost invariably clods.

John Roles writes:

What I thought of Don Ford

That's a helluva thing. Ah well!

Are you "A Typical Englishman"'s conception of "A Typical American"? I can't say – I'm no typical Englishman, and anyone who comes to this country as a TAFF rep. is not likely too typical of Over There either. Fumbling around this point, I'm trying to put over the idea that you do create in my mind the impression of being typical of something which is not seen in England. Glimpses are caught in U.S. films, and seen frequently in visiting U.S.ers, of a quality which is novel to us – that of certain dynamic relaxation. This is what I have found really earmarks U.S. men (not the women). I have often pondered in the past on what it was that made the U.S. tourist in England so obvious as such. I found it wasn't the camera, it wasn't the dress style (tho' most can be identified on this alone) (the difference in cut, and textiles, and use of lightweight suitings), it wasn't always the physiognomy (very frequently a pointer), because I have identified the transatlantic visitor devoid of any of these characteristics. Prolonged observation has produced the simple fact that they simply walk and stand differently. There is a superb slackness which is yet potentially dynamic about him (this is you! – recognize yourself?) Not all U.S.ers have it of course. Dave Kyle hasn't, (and to even things up, George Nims Raybin hasn't certainly), but you have, Fred Prophet has, JWCjr has, etc. I wonder if you follow me....

Following this at a tangent I noted with interest your outlook on Alan Rispin. You said you liked him straight away, because he struck you as being just like a young American boy. This impression was assisted by Alan's mode of dress – jeans, wind-cheater, scrubby hair-do, etc. This get-up in England is the uniform of the "teddy-boys", and as such is not thought terribly high of. We all like Alan too. I was quite surprised in your quick summing-up of the people you met. It didn't take long to take Peter West's measure, for instance! Brian Burgess could quickly

have antagonized many people, and Norman G. Wansborough is rather a difficult one to estimate. You came thro' with flying colours.

In fact another surprise you gave me was your familiar use of names quite new in the field, and quite new to us; there would naturally be many names and people you met known to you previously, but I noticed you only needed to be told of a name and a face once. I can't do this myself – I'm shocking when it comes to meeting folks and being intro'ed to more than three people at once. I forget the lot! A handy talent for a TAFF man to have! Moreover when I produced a few old-time names out of the hat (Quagliano, Michel, among others), you were able to give me quite detailed information on their histories.

Finally, I must admire your constant alertness after what must have been a pretty debilitating run of parties, London, Cheltenham, then Liverpool, all late nights. It demands something in the way of stamina – and politeness, to have rowdy parties revolving around you for a solid week! And to treat it all with the same air of freshness, and participation.
Congratulations. And pleased to have met you – truly.

Incidentally it was quite a twist having you and Dave Kyle in Liverpool together.

John Roles.

Saturday, April 23, 1960

Slept until 11 am. Must have been tired out. Norman took me into Liverpool where I did some shopping for Terry Anne. She'd wanted me to bring her back a blouse. It wasn't easy to find her particular size and I compromised by getting a knit pullover. We shopped in some of the department stores and Norman got some cheese for the coming weekend. I got more film and we looked over the Liverpool clubrooms. A nice layout and in the heart of town. There, I signed the wall like I'd done at Cheltenham. They did have one of the largest collections of empty beer cans that I'd seen for a long time. What use they'll put them to, who knows?

With what shopping I could do over with, we went back to Norman's house and found Eric Bentcliffe there. I wanted to mail a parcel of dirty clothes back home, so I'd have some room in my suitcase and also cut down on the weight. Linda, Roy and Janet volunteered to show me where

the Post Office was located and we went there via a nearby park and playground. Afterwards we sampled the ice cream, where the owner said, "You three back again!"

By the time we returned, Alan Rispin was there. Norman, John, Rispin, Eric, and myself then headed for downtown Liverpool to meet Dave Kyle who was coming in at 7 p.m. He was taking the same circuit I had made. We stopped at a Chinese restaurant near Lime Street Station. However, as we were walking in downtown Liverpool there was a drunken woman singing bawdy songs weaving about the streets.

"One of your club members, no doubt," I said and started off to photograph her. She wandered out into traffic and narrowly missed getting struck by a bus, and amid the sounds of screeching brakes and honking horns I pursued her in a frantic foot race, with the rest of the Liverpool gang following behind me in order to lead me back to our destination. The one shot that would have been perfect was when a policeman was talking to her. Just as I got everything set on my camera a nice little 70-year-old lady walked in front of me. If she hadn't have been so frail I would have booted her out of the way. By the time I'd moved to a new position the tableau was broken.

Thus, arriving at the restaurant out of breath and hungry from my exertions, I ordered one of their specialities of the house and Rispin and I set a new record. We were just leaving the restaurant when here comes Dave Kyle in a red beret walking down the street. We took Dave back via ferry, but the walkers were not on deck. At the dockside, though, there were speakers like in Hyde Park. These were the religious fanatics, here. I posed Dave behind a few of them while taking his picture and even volunteered to nail him to a cross to give it authenticity, but he wasn't keen on it.

That night, then, I think I counted eighteen people at the party. Near as I can recall there were: Dave Kyle, Norman and Ina Shorrock, Eddie Jones, John Roles, Alan Rispin, Eric Bentcliffe, Norman Weedall, Frank and Pat Milnes, Stan Nuttall, John Owen, Jeff Collins, Ted and Joyce Collins, Maureen O'Rourke, Marjorie Denton and myself.

Liverpool mixes powerful and many drinks. Before long the girls wanted to dance and the rug was rolled back and on came the jazz, rock and roll, and various other types of music from the vast library of tapes Norman has. John Roles is quite the cat on the dance floor, dancing "loose as a goose" as the expression goes.

The girls decided after many drinks to put on a fashion show. This consisted of removing most of their clothing and of course Norman

Weedall, Eddie Jones and myself got busy with our cameras. (Note to Liverpool: Some of the stereos are for real, man!) We looked at M.A.D. movies, vacation movies, old Chaplin movies and really had a blast that night. Maureen O'Rourke came on like gangbusters. I first though she was auditioning for an air raid siren. They also showed some scenes from a projected movie they are in the process of making, which will give the U.S. fan audiences samples of cheesecake art available in Liverpool.

Eric Bentcliffe chickened out first and I held out to 4:30 or 5 a.m. and gave up, myself. Then, out of force of habit, I woke up early... 6:30! I kept dozing off into little catnaps and eventually gave up and got up at 10. After breakfast, Dave was showing some stereo slides of himself and Ruth on their western trip a few months previous. I still had some stereos I'd shown Ken and Pamela and these were mainly of my family and of Cincinnati at night. Eddie Jones fell in love with stereo that morning and I suspect he will have such a camera before the summer is over.

A little Brag session was going on and I sat in for one hand before we left to go to the train station to get me off to London. I don't play cards, normally, not wishing to waste the time. I figure I can play cards when I'm old. However, Brag is like a fast game of poker and in some ways better. I'd like to see Ron Bennett publish instructions of how to play it so we can convert U.S. fandom to it.

At 1 everyone left with me and I forgot to add something into yesterday's report... Eric Bentcliffe had said, "Take my picture, Don," and struck a pose. I was getting him lined up in the viewfinder when all of a sudden he was gone! I heard a shout, "Over here!" and turned to see Eric riding away on a bus. Seems like the bus had come along and he'd decided to take it. We ran after it, but it was too late.

Anyway, I got on the train at 2 with the entire gang giving me all sorts of advice for my trip to Paris in the morning. Dave was shooting movies and the rounds of goodbyes afforded some amusement to the other passengers. Ina confessed that Roy, Janet and Linda were quite convinced that I was a cowboy from my shoes and tie. I think if I ever go to Europe again I'll buy a western hat and play the part.

It was a six hour run to London. Sunday is the day they do maintenance on the tracks and our train took the roundabout way. I talked somewhat with a merchant seaman on my journey. He'd been over most of the U.S. and Canada and the world for that matter. 42 years on the sea. I took the Tube to Piccadilly and checked in at the Regent Palace Hotel.

There, I went in search of food and just across from the hotel I found a Chinese restaurant which filled me up somewhat. Then I telephoned Ted

Carnell to see how I'd done with my switch of flight schedules with Pan American. No soap. I told him to call them up about Tuesday and re-confirm me for Saturday, then.

I stopped by the lobby and left a call for breakfast in my room at 5:15 a.m. and headed out for night shots of Piccadilly Circus and Trafalgar Square. These two places in London are forbidden to tripods without a permit. I had no troubles at Piccadilly. In fact I stood right next to the cops while I took pictures there; however, at Trafalgar Square they asked me for a permit and I played dumb. They said it was O.K. and just as I got ready to set off the shutter the fountains went off... after all, who'd want to look at them after midnight?

I went back to Piccadilly and prowled the side streets for photo material. Saw a restaurant featuring barbecued chickens. Looked so good I went in and had their quarter chicken special. Then, as I was going back to the Regent Palace, a babe in tuxedo with top hat and cane approached me to see the strip show downstairs. I had no intentions of falling for this shill and told her: "Fine, I can get some good pictures down there." This went over like a lead balloon and she quickly shunted me aside in favor of some other passing sucker.

Norman Shorrock writes:

The Liverpool Group were delighted with your visit to us, and thank *you* for entertaining *us*. The last three weeks have certainly added something to that feeling that fandom is so very worthwhile – for meetings such as these alone (if you see what I mean!).

Trust your journey home was without incident, and that you had a ball in Paris. No doubt we shall be hearing all about that tho' at some future date!

Over the last decade or so I've heard and read quite a lot about you. Talking with Ted Carnell and Bob Madle; following the TAFF campaigns (and the fracas!); OMPA and general fmz; from fragments such as these a mental picture has been built up. Alas, such "pictures" are seldom to be equated with reality, being as they usually are an ideal. *You* are one of those exceptions. 'Course you will just have to accept that last statement as being true, for how am I to explain just what my mental picture was? You've been described as "a genial giant"

(true), “relaxed but fast moving when the occasion demands” (true – er, with the possible exception of that time Eric Bentcliffe caught the ’bus and we did not! – hah!); you don’t like all this bull about labeling fans (and boy do I agree here), and you’ve put a lot *into* fandom. Perhaps I may say some more some day to you, when you have ready access to a tape machine.

Ella writes to say that she and Ted (Forsyth?) went to the airport with you, and that you were torn between leaving and wanting to get home with the story of your travels. Dave Kyle wrote last Saturday, en route to Copenhagen by boat (he finally made up his mind!). He was due to fly back to the States from Frankfurt yesterday (Wed.). Let us all hope that this scheme for *cheap* transatlantic boat fares comes into operation real *soon*. Then maybe *batches* of fans can cross, more frequently.

Norman Shorrock.

Monday, April 25, 1960

I got up at 5 and was shaving when breakfast arrived. I checked out by 6 and left word to save me a room for Thursday night and that I’d be in late. I took a cab to the West London Air Terminal on Cromwell Road. I checked my baggage in and sat down to wait.

We got to the airport and went through customs and were off the runway at 8 a.m. and arrived at Orly airport in Paris at 9:05. The sky was overcast until we got to Paris. The plane was a four-engined Constellation belonging to Air France. It didn’t take long to get through customs and the airport and we were soon on the bus to the air terminal in downtown Paris at Invalides.

I had the name of a hotel (Metropole) which is in the area Étoile, near the Arc de Triomphe. I showed the cab drive the name of the hotel, the street name, and pointed it out to him on the map and hoped he wouldn’t try to go there by the way of Versailles. He didn’t and I soon found myself being told no rooms available. I’d torn an ad out of the London *Times* that morning in the air terminal in London, which advertised the Hotel Neva. I showed them this and they finally got an interpreter to tell me it was on the next block over.

De Gaulle had recently revalued the franc and you knocked off the last two ciphers on the paper money. Thus the franc was now worth about 22¢ as compared to the old rate of 2¢. My room rate was 14 N.F. per day... about $3.00 per day with breakfast. The only thing, it was on the fifth floor

of a walk-up hotel. I cashed an American Express money order and got a carnet (book) of subway tickets and set out to find an address on St. Germain Street. When I'd talked to Ted on the telephone the night before he'd given me the address of a literary agent in Paris and said, if I had the time, would I try to find out why Brian Aldiss had not gotten author's copies of his books published in France.

He said the agent's name was Miss Le Bayon and that her secretary spoke English, so I wouldn't have any trouble being understood. The Paris Métro system is very good. I got a first class carnet and there are five cars on each train. The two end ones are painted green, with the middle one being painted red. The red is the first class car and there are more empty seats available in this section.

On the platform you stand underneath the sign reading "Première Classe" and the red car will stop there. A somewhat frightening thing is the way the doors close. They are pushed shut by a long ramrod actuated by a hydraulic cylinder. I kept thinking of the guillotine and noticed nobody lingered long in the doorways. The cars were also a bit higher than in the Tube of London. In London I kept bumping my head on the top of the doorway as I'd get on and off.

I finally located the address of Miss Le Bayon and wandered into the courtyard and up the steps of the apartment building. I missed the directory on the first floor and there were no names on the individual doors. Finally I chose a door at random and held up a paper with Miss Le Bayon's address on it to the woman who answered. She signaled me to go back down two flights and made sure I got the right door. I rang the bell and it was answered by a lovely young lady who didn't have a straight line anywhere.

I asked if she was Miss Le Bayon and was told she was in Italy and that she was her secretary. I then told her I wanted to inquire about some author's books for a Mr. Brian Aldiss. She invited me in and I explained what was wanted and our business was all too soon transacted and I was on my way out.

I strolled about the neighborhood and headed toward the Seine. I was on the left bank and the day was pleasantly sunny and fairly warm. I walked along the bookstalls and walked on over to Opera Place and to Brentano's Book Store where I got a map of the city and then went to Freddy's on the Rue Auber where I ordered a case of liquor sent back home.

I strolled back towards my hotel and tried to conserve film a bit as I could see I'd be out but fast at the rate I was using it up. I stopped in a

pastry shop and got what I wanted by pointing and then paying for them by holding out a handful of francs and letting them pick out the coins. They were very careful to show me exactly what they'd taken and then write down the price on paper, which I could follow if it was written out, but couldn't understand when it was spoken.

At the hotel I found myself slipping away into sleep, so took a nap for a couple of hours. The past weekend must have caught up with me. I had supper in a self-service restaurant, which is helpful if you can't speak or read French. Coming back for my camera equipment, I again ran the gauntlet of the prostitutes. Across the street from my hotel were four prostitutes, who stood in the doorways and greeted the passers-by. Every time I entered or left my hotel, then, I was hopefully greeted by each one in turn; unless, of course, she was away from her station on a "service call".

That evening I made a number of night shots and got a rare thrill when I got back home. A slide of the Arch of Triumph won me second place in a camera club competition and then an almost identical shot was on the cover of the June issue of *National Geographic*. I was asked by a man what kind of exposures I was using when I was sighting through my camera for photo angles. I told him and he said that with such slow exposures I'd need a tripod and he wished he'd brought his along from London when he came over. I reached in my hip pocket and produced a small folding tripod I was just getting ready to use myself. "Be my guest," I said. His eyes opened wide and he said: "I say, you chaps don't belie your hospitality, you know!"

"Oh, I don't know about that... I just came from London and many perfect strangers did nice things for me."

So, while he went out into the center of the Champs Élysées to make his shot, I sat on the park bench and talked to his wife. They had bought a motor scooter to get around Paris on and the traffic was a bit frightening to them and I think they now wished they didn't have the scooter. I made out very well by riding the Métro to the nearest stop and then walking. No parking problems for me either. I got some ice cream, which is served in a metal dish and seemed much colder than what I'm used to, but I imagine it's mainly due to the metal dish. Took some more night shots and went back to my hotel... running the gauntlet once again.

Tuesday, April 26, 1960

I slept late and didn't particularly hurry this morning. On Tuesday most

museums and public buildings are closed in Paris. The Eiffel Tower is about the only thing open. I spent the day between the Arch of Triumph and Eiffel Tower. It was alternately cloudy and sunny; once in a while a shower would come up, and the whole day was a bit cool.

There are wide streets in Paris and a tree about every 25 feet. The streets are clean and they have, built into the curbs, a special faucet with which they flush down the streets every day. Being a tourist and alone I was an easy mark for the con men. At least twenty times a day I'd be approached by men who'd offer to change my American dollars to French frances at more than the official rate of exchange. They'd offer to buy my cameras and wanted to sell me dirty pictures.

I'd often play dumb and then they'd switch to German or some other language. One left me at Pigalle calling me an "American Jew". I'd tell them that I didn't like the poses, or that I took better photos than that back home and in color, too. They were like leeches, though and would often follow me for blocks trying to make a deal.

That evening I tried a restaurant across from the hotel but had difficulties in being understood. I was rescued by a woman who translated for me. I'd say that if you are going to Paris a good English-French dictionary would be most helpful.

During the day I spent several hours on top of the Eiffel Tower and took photos at each level. I needed a shot of myself on the tower. Had hoped I'd maybe meet someone with a Polaroid camera. I didn't and went to a commercial studio on the first level. When I walked in, he said, "You've got more equipment than we have." He photographed me out on the deck and processed the film while I waited.

Wednesday, April 27, 1960

I started out the day by going up to the top of the Arch of Triumph. There is a good view of Paris from there and then, of course, underneath the Arch is the tomb of the unknown soldier of France, with the eternal flame burning. I'd often seen newsreel photos of this, but such photos never give you much idea of the relationship to the Arch in size or the location to Paris landmarks, etc.

Next a ride on the Métro to Place Blanche where the Moulin Rouge night club is. I was on a walking tour and then walked down the center park strip to Pigalle. Then up the hill on Montmartre to Sacré-Coeur. There are artist colonies in his area and at the Sacré-Coeur area there is an open air space where many artists have their easels set up and paint for their

own selves, or do portraits of tourists for money. Some do scissor cut-outs in black paper and the whole square is quite photogenic. In fact, any dumb clod can come up with a beautiful shot by merely setting off the shutter and aiming in any direction.

On the way back down the hill I took another route and came through a market district. There were a number of apple boxes in a huge pile and I stopped to photograph French apple boxes, wishing I could add one to my collection. The natives thought me a bit mad at this point.

What I did while in Paris was follow my Michelin Guide pretty closely. It lists walking tours and gives detailed information about the nearest Métro stops to each site, and I'd recommend it to everyone visiting Paris. It's made to slip into your hip pocket and if you're not self-conscious of being marked as another tourist by this guide, get it. Everyone knows you're a tourist, anyway.

Back to Pigalle the girls would eye me from head to foot and say, "Oo-la-la! Magnifique!" It's quite good for the ego, I must say.

I rode the Métro to Opera and went back to Freddy's to get some perfume this time. She steered me to Mony for lingerie and I thought it well named. Then I went by Métro to the Trocadéro stop and the Palais de Chaillot. Here there are some huge gilded statues along a wide courtyard between the two wings, which stand out from the building itself. This looks across the Seine to the Eiffel Tower and makes an excellent view.

I walked across the Seine for quite a ways to where I knew a Métro stop was nearby. It was about 5 p.m. and already the bums were bedding down for the night. I wanted to get some shots from the embankment at night, but didn't want to risk it by myself with my camera equipment. I would be too tempting a target for them and I probably would end up floating in the Seine.

Coming back to my hotel, then (it was Hotel Neva on rue Brey, by the way), the girls asked me if I got any good pictures that day. I had supper in another self-service and for about $1.20 had so much they had to put it on two trays. I got some pastries to take back to the hotel for a midnight snack and stopped off in an ice cream parlor across from the hotel. A quite elderly woman ran this place and while I do like ice cream, the main attraction here was the ice water. She kept a pitcher of water in the freezer and it was there that I got the only really cold water on my entire trip. Her daughter was one of the girls out on the street.

Back in the hotel lobby I met Mr. and Mrs. Vining from Maine. They were buying a car the next day to drive down to Spain and were having troubles figuring out how to get to the car agency. I mapped out a route for

them on the Métro and then we visited awhile with each other. It felt good to be talking to someone in English.

Thursday, April 28, 1960

This was to be my last day in Paris and I wanted to make the best of it. I started out at the Place de la Concorde and walked down the the Jardin des Tuileries (flower and formal gardens) which must stretch almost a mile, down to the Louvre. Here I had to shake my fist under the nose of a leech to get him to leave me alone. I saw a cop not too far away and figured that if he pulled a knife on me, the cop would be handy.

Inside the Louvre I couldn't use my flash, but had high speed Ektachrome in my camera. It would take weeks to properly visit the Louvre. My Michelin guide had a plan of the Louvre and showed the locations of the more important things. I photographed the Venus de Milo, Winged Victory, Mona Lisa, and some huge paintings by Rubens. It was a difficult procedure as there were so many people about.

Leaving the Louvre, I walked over to the Notre-Dame Cathedral. It takes quite a while to climb to the top of the tower but it's worth the effort. The gargoyles make interesting framing for views of Paris. It's interesting photographically but I think the building is a horrible, grotesque monstrosity. There's nothing beautiful about it at all.

As I came back down into the courtyard another leech approached. "Don't tell me," I said, "you want to change my money, buy my cameras or sell me pictures." He gave me a confused look and did give his folder of photos a quick opening. Remembering the movie of 25 years ago, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, I imitated Quasimodo and shouted "Sanctuary! Sanctuary! Sanctuary!" This so took him aback that he retreated out to the sidewalk to await me there. To get rid of the leeches, I found that it worked pretty well for me to aim my camera at them and act like I was going to take their picture. They'd take off in a hurry, then.

I ate supper and returned to the hotel to pack up and check out. At the desk, I wanted to cash a $10.00 American Express money order. He accepted it, but didn't want to give me par value for it. I protested and finally he checked the newspaper for the rate of exchange for that day. I gave him one more franc and figured the hell with it. When I got to the air terminal I reached into my pocket and found out I still had my room key.

Anyway, as I was leaving the hotel area, I told each of the girls goodbye as I ran the gauntlet for the final time.

By the time I paid the bus fare and the airport fee my French money

was gone, which was fine. On the plane I met an English couple from Cheshire. They'd been in Paris for a week on their honeymoon. The man was a farmer's son and was now going back to settle down on the family farm. He and his wife asked me a lot of questions about the U.S. and one burning question was whether the lorries (tractor-trailer trucks) really ran as fast on our highways as they did in the television series *Cannonball*. When I told him that they usually travelled at speeds of 60-70 mph he couldn't get over it.

We got into London some time after 11. At the Immigration offices I got fed up with some of my fellow passengers. There are a lot of German tourists in Europe and they still have the idea that they are the "Master Race". They have to be first on the plane and first off the plane and keep pushing and shoving like a typical New Yorker. One fat slob of a woman kept pushing me while in line to get our passports stamped. I turned back to her and said: "If you're in a hurry, go ahead of me, but quit shoving!" Her husband started to say something and I said to him: "And I don't want any shit out of you!" He contented himself by cursing me out in German, which I didn't understand. She quit pushing, though.

By the time we got through customs, where I assured them it was all my photo equipment and that I'd take it with me when I left England, and to the air terminal, it was late. I took a taxi to the Regent Palace and enquired about my room reservation. I was told they'd quit holding it for me. I protested and the clerk did remember me telling him, Monday, I'd be late. Finally he got the manager and he gave me his room... the last one available.

I had to get the bellboy to unlock the bathroom for my bath that night and the room window was stuck wide open to a bone-chilling breeze. We both couldn't get it shut until I got a screwdriver from my gadget pack. I had a set of various driver bits to fit into a handle. This impressed the bellboy immensely. More than my tip did, anyway. It must've been about 3 when I finally turned in.

Friday, April 29, 1960

At breakfast I met a man who was visiting in London and was going over to Paris. He told me how he'd fallen for getting his photo taken on the street. In London and Paris, both, there are a lot of these sidewalk photographers. Anyway, they took his picture after asking him if it was O.K. and then got a pound ($2.80) deposit from him!

Then, he'd fallen for that shill I told you about (dressed in the tuxedo)

who was going to let him see the strip show. He'd gone into the basement and another girl took him by the hand to a table (B-Girl) and ordered drinks until the show started. Also, he paid ten shillings for a cover charge. Drinks came and it was ten shillings ($1.40) and was a syrup. They told him they couldn't serve beer or wine, only the hard drinks. By the time the third round came and no show was on, he left. I laughed at his accounts and felt sorry for him in Paris.

Went down to Ted's and he said that he had an appointment after lunch. Ella Parker telephoned and wanted to see me, but I felt too tired to make the trip to her place and she instead met me at Ted's and we sat in a pub and coffee shop that afternoon and talked until it was time to meet Ted.

I was weary and it was nice to simply talk that afternoon. Ella Parker makes good company and I certainly had a grand time doing nothing but talking that afternoon. We exchanged gossip on fans, and talked our fool heads off.

Ted came back all shaken up. He'd visited a publisher who was in the process of moving. With the confusion of the moving and the telephone ringing during the interview this had unnerved Ted a bit. However, he sold four novels for paperback publication and twelve back cover ads for *New Worlds*. He said that it had been one of his most productive days and he hadn't worked more than a half hour the whole day. I told him this was a normal American interview (telephone ringing, etc.). Next time he visits the U.S. somebody has got to take him into a business office for a couple of hours.

We left Plumstead and Ella said she'd be at the air terminal to meet me in the morning. At Plumstead, Ted took me to a surplus store where I got a beret like Dave Kyle had. Then on the way to our taxi, we went through the market district. I wish I'd seen this a couple of weeks earlier. Quite a fascinating place and a good place to shoot pictures. They sell contraceptives at a regular stall... in contrast to the under the counter operations in the U.S.

After supper Les Flood and his wife came over. I've forgotten her name, which is unforgivable. We had a nice party that night and after sticking to gin all evening, Les then remarked that he'd brought a bottle of champagne to celebrate my going away. It drew late and Ted looked a bit fagged. Dave Kyle had been keeping him up late and I'd been getting him up early and he was ready, I suspect, for us to leave England and let him get some needed rest. They gave me the champagne cork as a souvenir.

Saturday, April 30, 1960

I woke up before the alarm clock with my stomach churning and cramping. I was sick. Sick as a dog. When I could weakly leave the bathroom, I shouted down to Ted and Irene to cancel out my breakfast and drank some Kaopectate instead. Mary Martin had given me a bottle before I left and I'd never been bothered with any intestinal troubles until now. In fact I thought for a while I'd really need that champagne cork for more than just a souvenir. I told Ted to get me on the plane if he had to have me carried on board.

Fortunately the baggage was packed and before long we'd taken our cab to the station and a train into London and were at the air terminal where Ella and Ted Forsyth were waiting. I said goodbye to Irene in Plumstead and hope she doesn't remember me as being a clod at that moment, but it was all I could do to carry my luggage and gadget bag.

Ted Carnell said goodbye at the air terminal and took movies of the three of us on the bus. At the airport, Ella and Ted Forsyth were soon separated from me in the rush to get seats and clear customs. They said they'd watch my plane take off, but I had no idea where they'd be and never saw them afterwards.

Our takeoff took longer. Due to the anti-noise campaign the planes couldn't use full throttle and after takeoff we throttled back until out of the London area. Takeoff time was 11 a.m. London time. We were actually off at 11:10, so Pan American was pretty good about meeting their scheduling. My seat was an aisle seat this time which allowed me more leg room. My fellow passengers were a man and wife from New York. They were very nice, although the poor woman was deathly airsick all the way back and merely curled up into a miserable ball by the window and slept.

We took the northern route over Ireland, Iceland and then down the coastline of North America to New York. The pilot gave out a number of statistics over the P.A. system and some that come to mind, now, are: we flew at 31,000 feet; bucking the head winds on the way back we only travelled at 650 mph. The temperature outside was 50 below zero and at takeoff time we had 130,000 gallons of kerosene. At 2 p.m. London time we'd consumed 50,000 gallons and the rate of consumption figured out at something like eight tons per hour and there was about a one-hour reserve of fuel figured in for the trip.

I forget what time it was when we landed. It took 6 hours and 15 minutes to come from London, though. I was feeling pretty good and had eaten some food on the plane. We went through the U.S. customs at a

snail's pace. I think they felt everyone was a saboteur. I figured I'd get a hard time over my camera equipment. I think what helped me was the fact that in Europe customs inspections didn't amount top much, while here they made everyone open their bags. This meant fishing for keys and unlocking and delays. I saw what was up and had mine already open and it seemed to help. I told him I had a case of liquor being shipped and he gave me a form to mail to France.

American Airlines said if I'd get to LaGuardia Field in time, they had a flight out to Cincinnati, leaving at 4:40. I took a helicopter over (I was at Idlewild) and this gave me a chance to get some excellent aerial views of Idlewild and La Guardia, both. I checked in at American's desk and then went for a hamburger and cold Coca-Cola. Good! The "Cokes" in England didn't have quite the flavor ours do. Coca-Cola tastes more like a flat Pepsi does over here and the Pepsi over there is horrible. I gave up on soft drinks.

The plane was late getting in and then had to be cleaned out and serviced. We were a half hour late in boarding. I'd telephoned Margaret and she was going to meet me in Cincinnati. The plane was an Electra Jet Prop and, with the recent disasters of this model, I was as nervous as a bubble dancer with long fingernails. It's fitted out nice. The seats are roomy and comfortable and there is a lounge in the tail with an excellent view. It was overcast and my shots of New York are washed out. Later on, though, over Pennsylvania I did get some beautiful cloud shots at 22,000 feet.

Compared to the 707, the Electra is extremely noisy with the props making all the racket. Over Kentucky a thunderhead developed and we had to descend to lower level and fly through the clouds on instrument readings. There is a radar on the plane and the pilot noted 50-70 mph winds ahead and didn't want to fly through it. We circled until he could get permission to leave the airlanes for another route into Cincinnati. I had visions of being forced to go on to Chicago due to weather. Permission came and we flew into Cincinnati on visual flight at 2,500'.

It felt good to feel the wheels touch the runway at Boone County Airport. I had my green beret in my camera bag and put it on just before I left the plane to greet the family. They weren't too sure whether they should recognize me or not. By the time I got home, got unpacked, passed out the travel gifts and related some of my journey, I had been on the go for 26 hours straight. I collapsed into bed and was relieved that tomorrow was Sunday.

Observations and things I forgot to mention...

Nobody ever used an ash tray in all of England, unless it was to knock the dottle out of a pipe. Cigarette smokers smoked down to the filter and would have smoked that if it would burn. Ashes went to the floor in a constant flicking of their cigarettes.... Waterproof caps are rare. People would stare at mine, and me and my camera equipment, not only in England but in Paris, too....

The airlines were very courteous to everyone and they made you feel like they wanted your business. By the same token I never saw anyone get nasty with their personnel.... I thought only the New Yorkers were the ones who got in a hurry, but the sight of people racing up and down the escalators in the London Tube system amused me. They couldn't wait on the escalators to carry them up and down.... The idea of everything closing down at midnight is horrifying as well as the weird hours in the pubs.... Our electrical sockets, plugs and fixtures are standardized in the U.S. In England it is not and the current can vary from district to district. The light bulbs have a bayonet base; you insert and then twist to get the pins to catch, while our bulbs have a screw-in base....

Tossed salads are out. The idea of such a salad in England is a bed of lettuce, some whole hardboiled eggs, a slice or two of cucumber, maybe an onion or two and that's it.... Ron Buckmaster told me that most taxis in London are diesel.... Certainly the traffic is more polite. One cabbie made a U-turn in front of another cab. There was no horn blowing or cursing, merely a polite stopping and waiting by the other cab. I told him if he did that in New York he'd find the other cab taking great delight in ramming him amidships....

All the time I was in Paris and walking about the streets, sightseeing, etc., the tune "The Poor People of Paris" kept haunting my mind. Try as I could, I couldn't help but constantly keep hearing this song. Actually, it has a nice melody and does seem appropriate to the city....

At Trafalgar Square the day Michael was with me a man came up to me and invited me to enter the Canadian Pacific building and go to the top floor to photograph from there. I did and was told if I'd sign a release for them, they'd be glad to let me. I said I was well insured and so was my equipment. "That's not it, sir. You might fall on someone down below and they'd sue us."

The orange is a concentrate and when mixed with gin is a pretty good drink. In fact, I'm now trying gin and orange back here, to the startled looks of my fellow Americans.... Bill Gray and I found that during our

Tube travels the escalators made excellent places to girl-watch. He'd keep talking about their Achilles tendons, being a chiropodist; but I am taller than Bill....

All Tube tickets look the same and merely have different printing on them. Since you pay by the mileage, it would be a lot simpler to color code the tickets....

The toilets usually have the flush box (called cistern) mounted on the wall and do not often come as a single unit like U.S. styles do. There is a pull chain and I constantly had troubles getting them to flush. There's an art to it. Eric Jones told me to simply give the chain a hard pull. I did but nothing happened. Finally he decided to show me how to operate the mechanism, rather than risk having the entire box pulled off the wall....

Lou Tabakow had mailed over 18 tire repair sample kits for me to give away. I had a hard time finding people who had a car, much less tubeless tires. We finally managed to divide them up between London, Cheltenham and Liverpool....

I wore a wool suit and had a pair of washable cotton trousers along to sort of bum around in. They turned out to be the life-saver. The wool trousers were hard on my skin. They wore all the hair off the insides of my legs and had the skin so chafed that it nearly killed me to take a bath. I told Margaret I hadn't gotten the Chinese crud in Paris. It look me at least a month to get cleared up.

One topic of discussion I raised among the older fans was what had happened to all the books which were sent to British Fandom following the Cinvention in 1949. Nobody seems to know just where they are by now. Originally, there were something like 75 hardcover books. Anyway, London, Cheltenham and Liverpool seemed interested in them and Eric Jones planned to start writing letters to the fans like Clarke, Bulmer, Carnell, etc. and see if they can't co-ordinate their efforts in searching them out. Eric found a copy of the Cinvention Memory Book, which had a listing of them.

Lastly, there's a long list of credits due to many fans... first off to those who nominated me: Carnell, Ashfield, Barrett, Hickman and McPhail. Lynn waged an active campaign for my election and Ron Bennett worked hard to make my journey pleasant and successful.

People like Ella Parker, Les Flood, Ted Tubb, Brian Jordan, Ted Forsyth, Rispin, the Joneses, the Grays, the Shorrocks, Inchmery, etc. were most kind with their hospitality. In addition many other fans bought me drinks and all of British Fandom really rolled out the red carpet for me. More than I'll ever be able to repay, perhaps, but I'll try anyway. Maybe

this report can count as a small down payment at least.

Whenever I read an article or see mention of the name of a fan I've met in the fanzines from now on, I'll have the nice feeling of being able to say I know them personally. London, Cheltenham and Liverpool left me with a warm glow in my heart.

The End

Atom in Skyrack *18, 1 May 1960*

Appendix: Original Publication

TAFF Baedeker was first published by Lynn Hickman in two parts: Section One in 1960 and Section Two in 1961. Below is the original header text for each part, plus the closing notes added by the publisher at the end of Section Two.

TAFF BAEDEKER by DON FORD

Section one

Published at $1.25 the copy by FIRST FANDOM.

A First Fandom Publication. Published at 224 Dement Ave., Dixon, Illinois, by Lynn A. Hickman.

TAFF BAEDEKER by DON FORD

Section two

Published at $1.25 the copy (two sections) by FIRST FANDOM.

A First Fandom Publication. Published at 224 Dement Ave., Dixon, Illinois, by Lynn A. Hickman.

Publisher's Notice.

As many of you know, Don wrote up his TAFF Report immediately on his return to the States. Any delay in bringing this report to you is due, not to Don, but myself as publisher. It was a big job typing this many masters, printing the report, and getting it ready for mailing. Bigger than I had thought it would be. This, along with the fact that I haven't had as much spare time as I had previously anticipated, delayed the finished product by

many months.

Don did his job (and very well), right away.

This report has been financed by FIRST FANDOM. After the actual costs of printing and mailing, ALL profits will go to the TAFF FUND in hope that others will follow his lead as considerable revenue for TAFF could come about from each report.

Both covers are done by British fans. The cover for section 1 is by Alan Hunter. The cover for section 2 is by Atom. The interior illustration is by Eric Jones.

Printing by Lynn Hickman. Typing by Lynn and Carole Hickman.

A FIRST FANDOM PUBLICATION

Links

- Don Ford at *Fancyclopedia 3*
- *TAFF Baedeker* Section One (PDF) at Fanac.org
- *TAFF Baedeker* Section Two (PDF) at Fanac.org
- Rob Hansen's pages on Eastercon 1960

The End

This free ebook is exclusive to the unofficial TAFF website at taff.org.uk. If you enjoy reading it, a donation to TAFF is a fine way to express your appreciation.

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