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Forman H. Craton - 1932 - 1933 - Diary

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the supper dance at the Hotel Martin in Utica and my diary says we had a very "high-rolling time." When I began to see double, I eased off my drinking and finished the evening at 4 a.m. practically sober but Fred was up several on us all and I had to drive home. Lois proved to be a veritable tank and a bit on the tough side as such. However, it was another experience to add to my knowledge of what the world is like. I had a feeling that Fred had been doing an awful lot of drinking the past year and shot of dismay struck me when I suddenly realized that he was headed for nowhere in particular on his current course. And yet I recognized the possibility that I also might be en route to mediocrity and only time would provide the answer. I was very fond of The Kid. He and his mother had been hit hard by the depression. Most of her money had been in the wire mills and Rome real estate, both of which were in bad shape in 1932. Somehow, as I looked at a photograph of Mrs. Thalman as a baby, held in the arms of her perfectly lovely mother, it seemed that if her mother could have seen into the future, it would have been with sadness and regret—a story of an aristocratic family slipping, slipping. Nothing could make me cease thinking the world of The Kid, but this impression remained to sadden me. I felt that his family was in a losing fight, sliding inevitably towards obscurity, pulled by something intangible.

The following day was Sunday and although I felt fine, Fred felt pretty bad until noon, when he began to snap out of his hangover. We did little and went to a movie in Utica in the evening before my 11:17 train for Erie. My diary records that "The Japanese-Chinese situation is taking on alarming aspects and on every side, one hears of the possibility of war with Japan." Today, I fail to recall this threat, and Pearl Harbor was nearly ten years ahead.

Tom Perkinson and I had been good friends since 1926 when I got off test and moved up to Lew Webb's office, where Tom was working. Like me, Tom had since moved upstairs into Transportation Engineering. Tom was still unmarried and had a bachelor apartment on the top floor of one of the old West Tenth Street mansions. When he found I was to be alone for the month of February, he invited me to move in with him and I was glad to accept. So, on Monday, February 1st, I packed a couple of bags and temporarily abandoned 710 West Delaware, a cold and lonely house, to take up residence with Perk. My recollections of Perk's place are vague. The owners of the house had fixed up the attic into a small apartment, the principal feature of which was a large room like an artist's studio where Perk had his baby grand piano and which lent the place a sort of Bohemian atmosphere. I don't remember if there was a separate bedroom but it seems to me I slept on a cot in the studio. I believe we had a bathroom up there but I recall no kitchen facilities although there must have been something because I think we had at least breakfast up there. The piano was the big deal and Perk, who was quite accomplished, played it a good deal.



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