

DIANETICS IN LIMBO

A Documentary About Immortality

by Helen O'Brien

DIANETICS IN LIMBO

A Documentary About Immortality

by
Helen O'Brien

WHITMORE PUBLISHING CO.
Philadelphia

Copyright (c) 1966 by Helen O'Brien
All Rights Reserved

Library of Congress Catalog card Number: 66-18682
Manufactured in the United States of America
\$3.00

PDF version 1.00, Jan 2009
created from plaintext version 1.0, July 30 1998
with spelling corrections

Comments in square brackets

[Spine: O'BRIEN DIANETICS IN LIMBO WHITMORE]

[front flap]

DIANETICS IN LIMBO
A Documentary
About Immortality
by Helen O'Brien

Dianetics was the idea of a red-haired man named L. Ron Hubbard, who wrote a book about it which became a best seller in 1950. He was in his fortieth year then, a former Navy officer, fantasy fiction writer, and civil engineer. He has stated that he was a member of one of the first classes ever held in nuclear physics. He called Dianetics an engineering approach to the human mind.

His book advocated a do-it-yourself attitude toward mental therapy, utilizing affinity, an agreement between two persons, as the *modus operandi*. He promised invariable success in the elimination of psychosomatics and personality defects, in addition to the alleviation of more serious disorders of the mind and body.

(Continued on back flap)

[back flap]

(Continued from front flap)

In format, DIANETICS seemed scientific and reasonable, but an outlandish optimism about its potentialities filled the pages. This repelled some readers, but to many others it was contagious. The book met with an overwhelming public response. Sales were high, and the copies were passed from reader to reader. People wore them out.

The National Association of College Stores reported that DIANETICS was first even on its best seller lists in the middle of 1950. A Williams College professor, writing in the New York Times, said, "History has become a race between Dianetics and catastrophe ..."

DIANETICS IN LIMBO is a remarkable, inside account of a movement which swept the United States, and involved a great many intelligent people. Its honest, plainly stated narrative of events raises important questions and offers many hopes.

WHITMORE PUBLISHING CO.
Philadelphia, Pa. 19130
Printed in U.S.A.

[Photo of both sides of a headstone:

**JOHN HENRY O'BRIEN
HELEN O'BRIEN**

... on the front

**MARRIED AT
ELKTON MD.
MAY 19 1952**

... on the back]

FOREWORD

I'm alone now. My husband's ashes are under a small marble tombstone in Longwood Cemetery that has my name on it too. I don't feel sad or morbid in the least, but I look forward to the end of this human lifetime the way somebody anticipates the ending of a prison term. John was free to act on a careful decision to end his life because agreement between us was so strong it wouldn't be jeopardized, and there was nobody else who counted with him.

I'm still here because there is a bridge of affection between me and individuals who don't share the reality that John and I moved into. Their love and loyalty have been unaffected by my acts and ideas, some of which have seemed alien, some absurd to them. I've been reluctant to burden them with grief that's traditional to this age of man, in which belief in the fact of immortality has become only a convention.

It sounds as though I may have 'gotten religion' but I haven't. And no religion has gotten me. If anything did, I guess it was Dianetics, but I'd be the first one to admit that Dianetics turned out to be a failure in every goal it professed to have.

L. Ron Hubbard once referred to the theory of evolution with some justice as 'a sprawling and contradictory mass of poorly compiled data.' Well, compared to the way his science of the mind developed, Darwin's theory has the simplicity and precision of a schoolmarm's two plus two. Dianetics fell apart as an organized theory as time went on and Hubbard kept revising it. But the preface to Dianetics concludes, "May you never be the same." And some of the people who read the book never were. They even lost the option of wanting to be.

They say that when a zombie, one of the living dead of Haiti, tastes salt it suddenly knows it is dead. Sometimes it seems to me that the people who stayed with Hubbard through the development of his science from 1950 until it poohed out in 1953 aren't much better off than that, as far as human beingness goes.

I don't know for sure which way the analogy would apply. Were we zombies as human beings and were his ideas the salt? Or did the outré experiences divorce us from the circuits of life, so that an occasional contact with it only emphasizes the cleavage?

INTRODUCTION ... the story of Dianetics

Dianetics was the idea of a red-haired man named L. Ron Hubbard, who wrote a book about it which became a best seller in 1950. He was in his fortieth year then, a former Navy officer, fantasy fiction writer, and civil engineer. He has stated that he was a member of one of the first classes ever held in nuclear physics. He called Dianetics an engineering approach to the human mind.

His book advocated a do-it-yourself attitude towards mental therapy, utilizing affinity, an agreement between two persons, as the modus operandi. He promised invariable success in the elimination of psychosomatics and personality defects, in addition to the alleviation of more serious disorders of the mind and body.

In format, Dianetics seemed scientific and reasonable, but an outlandish optimism about its potentialities filled the pages. This repelled some readers, but to many others it was contagious. The book met with an overwhelming public response. Sales were high, and the copies were passed from reader to reader. People wore them out.

The National Association of College Stores reported that Dianetics was first even on its best seller lists in the middle of 1950. A Williams College professor, writing in the New York Times, said, "History has become a race between Dianetics and catastrophe...."

Thousands of Dianetic clubs were formed in towns and cities and colleges. There were no criteria with which to evaluate Hubbard's 'science,' since it was genuinely novel, and in this century people have become incautious as a result of the amazing things which science has pioneered and then made commonplace. In addition, the phenomena which Hubbard described did turn out to be available to many of the people who read the book and followed his instructions. The boom was remarkable for awhile. People everywhere embraced it as though they had found something which they had hungered for all their lives.

Professional people and white-collar workers, technicians and housewives from well to do homes – a great many people got together to form organizations dedicated to Dianetics. Members then paired off into teams, to practice Dianetic therapy as it was outlined in the book. Only in rare cases was this a family endeavor, though it was not unusual for a spouse to

Dianetics in Limbo

accompany an enthusiast to meetings, often with barely-concealed dislike for the proceedings.

In general, the press refrained from reporting these events, although several magazines published derisive articles. A few doctors expressed interest, even enthusiasm, but organized medicine was bitterly opposed to Dianetics from the start. Consumers Union, in a major article in the August, 1951 Report, said that Dianetics' rapid growth had "challenged the attention of the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and other professional and social welfare organizations." They considered it "remarkable that society permits persons without any medical training to treat persons with every kind of mental and physical illness." Perhaps they explained it by expressing the opinion that, "irrespective of whether psychiatry is more art than science, that fact remains that as practiced by physicians it has failed to meet the needs of our population."

The editors' description of Dianetics as a "cult without professional tradition" and, as a matter of fact, the article as a whole, was a much fairer appraisal of what was actually happening than most of the other things which appeared in print. An MD with a nationally syndicated question/answer feature contrived a pithy condemnation of Dianetics which was widely quoted – with horror by the 'cultists' themselves, needless to say. He referred to Dianetics' advocacy of directed re-experiencing of suppressed memories of grief and pain by saying that Dianetics reminded him of the fact that anybody can cut open a patient with appendicitis, but only a surgeon can do the right thing after that.

The tidal wave of popular interest was over in several months, although a ground swell continued for awhile. The book became unavailable, because of a legal tangle involving the publisher. People began to see that although Dianetics worked, in the sense that individuals could cooperate in amateur explorations of buried memories, this resulted only occasionally in improved health and enhanced abilities, in spite of Hubbard's confident predictions.

But to speak of Dianetics is to speak of something past. Beginning in 1953, the joy and frankness shifted to pontification. The fact-filled 'engineering approach to the human mind' faded out of sight, to be replaced by a 'Church of Scientology' in which Hubbard ordains ministers. The therapies which sought to provide cooperation with a 'basic personality' which was unaberrated, have been replaced by highly mechanistic verbal performances. There is no longer an appeal to reason in what is done under Hubbard's aegis. As a matter of fact, it resembles nothing so much as a temperate zone voodoo, in its inelasticity, unexplainable procedures, and mindless group euphoria.

Dianetics in Limbo

There was so much that was valid and original about Dianetics that it is hard to believe it will be abandoned entirely. Even those least impressed by it would be likely to admit that it was presented as a very ingenious mockup of a science.

Funk and Wagnalls defined it: "di.a.net'.ics, noun, a system for the analysis, control and development of human thought evolved from a set of coordinated axioms which also provide techniques for the treatment of a wide range of mental disorders and organic diseases: Terms and doctrines introduced by L. Ron Hubbard, American engineer. (Gr. *dianoetikos* – *dia*. through, plus *noos*, mind). di.a.net'.ic adj."

In Dianetic theory, the only intention of life is to survive. This intention expresses itself in human beings by four dynamic urges: the urge to survive as an individual, as a family, as a group, and as a race. These dynamic urges may be aberrated by what Hubbard called the 'reactive mind.'

The analytical mind constantly weighs new experiences in the light of old experiences, forms new conclusions in the light of old conclusions, and is generally very busy being right. The source of aberration is a sub-mind which underlies it, complete with its own recordings. In psychology, this may be called the 'subconscious' or 'unconscious' mind. Dianetics called it the *reactive mind*.

According to Dianetic theory, this subconscious is actually the only human mind which is always conscious. It records without interruption during the entire life of the organism, including periods of sleep and unconsciousness, and uses the recordings to produce action whenever it is triggered by the environment (some of this is called 'learning' in our culture). This reactive mind is a stimulus-response mechanism, incapable of differentiative thought. Its *modus operandi* is by identity: $A = a = A = "a."$

When one of its recordings becomes reactivated, it shuts down the analytical mind to a greater or lesser degree, takes over the motor controls of the body, and causes behavior without the consent, or even the knowledge of the individual, who may occasionally realize that he is not acting rationally and wonder why.

The reactive mind was an important survival factor in *homo pre-sapiens*, just as it is in his animal cousins, but its commanded actions conflict with man's reason. He is handled like a puppet by his reactive mind.

Dianetics in Limbo

Hubbard named the key recordings of the reactive mind 'engrams.' An engram is a recording of pain or unconsciousness or, apparently, acute pleasure which has command value over the individual but which is not available to his analytical mind as memory.

The book developed the concept of an ability of the mind called 'returning.' This is a different thing from memory, in which the analytical mind deals with the recordings of past events in a secondhand way, and is mainly concerned with evaluations and conclusions.

A small child is likely to be able to demonstrate this faculty with a little coaxing. Ask her to remember a recent event, such as a birthday party. At first, she will just tell you things about it. Then ask her to 'go back' and taste the ice cream, and smell the candles burning on the birthday cake, and feel the smoothness of her pink silk dress. You will observe the difference.

In Dianetics, it was explained that anyone could easily re-experience an event from the past in just this way, if it was done at the direction of another human being in whom the person had confidence. In this way, an engram becomes part of conscious memory, part of the analytical mind, which removes it from the control of the stimulus-response mechanism.

The restoration of full, present-time self-determinism to the individual, who was described as basically good, was the stated goal of Dianetics. The book listed precautions to be taken in guarding against the inadvertent hypnosis of a person undergoing Dianetic therapy. Hubbard had studied hypnotism in the Far East as well as the West, and he called it a wild variable. He wrote, "It is dangerous and belongs in the parlor in the same way you would want an atom bomb there."

One of his potentially valuable contributions to man's knowledge of himself was a 1952 Chart of Human Evaluations, which listed gradations of attitudes and conditions which might be recognized as characteristic of certain individuals. There were columns dealing with emotion, discrimination of truth, ability to handle responsibility, potential of survival, and many others. An individual who was high in one column was likely to be high in all the others, right across the board.

One column heading on this chart, which was also referred to as a 'tone scale,' was hypnotic level. A high-level human being was stated to be "impossible to hypnotize without drugs." The low-toned human is "equivalent to a hypnotized subject when awake." It was invariably observed that the

Dianetics in Limbo

original Dianetic techniques were most effectively employed by a team of high-toned individuals, as defined by Hubbard's tone scale.

Dianetic therapy was conducted by two individuals, one of whom assumed the role of the 'preclear,' the other, who directed the return, that of the 'auditor.' The use of the word auditor was a pun on Hubbard's part. It indicated that the person was a listener. It also was part of an elaborate analogy comparing the human mind to an electronic computer, in which keys are depressed unknown to the operator, so that solutions cannot be correct. Engrams from the past aberrate the computer, and an auditor's job was to clear it.

The keystone of Dianetics has been that the basic personality of the individual is good and will cooperate in clearing away the aberrations. The goal of Dianetic therapy was the creation of 'Clears.' When a person had been cleared by means of transferring painful unconscious memories into analytical awareness where he was in control, the theory was that he would become free of illness and aberration of all kinds.

Perceiving the environment fully, with every sense organ functioning perfectly, as Hubbard described the state, the Clear would gyrate automatically in the interest of survival goals, making swift and accurate calculations. Self-determined, and in full control of his sphere of existence, he would greatly enjoy life. In addition, he would have abilities "not hitherto suspected of Man" which the author of Dianetics failed to describe.

It was stated unequivocally many times in this book that anyone of average intelligence could Clear another person after only a single reading. Such optimism is of a magnitude difficult to describe in English.

The idea of 'Clearing' human beings may have been a gimmick which Hubbard used to dramatize the theory of Dianetics. Hundreds of thousands – probably millions – of man-hours were devoted to Dianetic therapy, but the fact is that there were never any Clears, as he had described them. There were randomly occurring remissions of psycho-somatics. There were very interesting cases of individuals who moved into a semi-ecstatic state called 'optimum,' for the duration of which they possessed heightened perceptions and experienced a sensation they sometimes described as "walking six inches off the ground." But the ethic and wisdom Hubbard had predicted never seemed to be part of this phenomenal condition.

He called it 'being up the pole' and deplored it. He said that it only endowed an individual with an ability to 'play marbles with his aberrations,' which brings

Dianetics in Limbo

to mind the historical eccentricities of saints and mystics in various religions. Observing these optimum individuals in the field of Dianetics, it was obvious that although they became very happy and often exhibited unusual mental abilities, it was more of a magnification than an improvement in quality – an inflation, rather than an increase.

It was a wonderful experience, being up the pole. And it came about as a result of Dianetic auditing, very often. But the phenomena were of brief duration. And while they lasted, they were hard on the 'optimum's' associates. As the catch phrase might express it, if he were annoying by nature, up the pole he was intolerable. Ecstatic states are part of the history of every human culture. The fact that Dianetics triggered them is one more indication that it has been a valid attempt to open new avenues of thought.

Hubbard himself took a sobered backward look at Dianetics as early as October, 1951, in a book titled *Dianetics: Axioms*. He wrote: "The phenomena of engrams, key-ins, the time track ... all these things exist in truth. How we evaluate them and what we do about them is something else I have no fear in saying now that the first book was how L. Ron Hubbard thought he processed. Unknown factors were present. The only important thing I did, I now discover, was enormously increase, by my own attitude towards life, the self-determinism of the preclear."

Hubbard may not have developed a 'science of the mind.' Perhaps he has been more of a showman than a scientist. But a news magazine that once derided him, recently credited him with pioneering the data about prenatal memory which is now freely acknowledged in medical circles. It's not unlikely that a lot more data about the human mind and psyche will eventually be incorporated into man's ordered structure of knowledge as a result of his efforts.

Perhaps the long view of history will ignore everything but the inspired talks and writings during 1950, 1951, and 1952, and, clearing them of the dross, will find that Lafayette Ronald Hubbard was in actual fact an enormous benefactor of mankind.

Finis coronat opus.

[Finis coronat opus = the end crowns the work; or "The end to a crowning achievement"]

DIANETICS IN LIMBO ... A Documentary About Immortality

I

Millions of people responded with curiosity, interest, or enthusiasm to the book Dianetics. This suggests that we may be at the start of one of the exciting periods of history, when it is the masses of mankind who constitute an *avant-garde*, and not the intellectually elite. Whatever else it may be called, the book was a book of new ideas, and they don't fit anywhere within the framework of self-perpetuating complacencies where you find Authorities on the human mind and spirit.

The areas of ignorance in the fields of the humanities are enormous. In physics, scientists take the unknowns into careful consideration. There are wide bands of frequencies we know nothing about, for example, and they proceed with caution when they approach these unexplored wavelengths, on the chance that they may be destructive to life. But they do approach them. In the physical sciences you find humility about how much there is to know which is still unknown, coupled with an eagerness to learn. But in the humanities and the so-called sciences of man, we have been smug. If we couldn't explain it, it didn't exist.

Many of the people who became absorbed in Dianetics were turned into a lost generation almost overnight, and it wasn't because of any philosophy we adopted. If anything, we suffered from a vacuum in that respect. What harmed us irremediably as homo sapiens – it would be fairer to call it an irrevocable change – was the fact that we witnessed and experienced phenomena in connection with the human mind and psyche which demonstrated beyond the remotest possible doubt that our families and teachers and everyone else who had contributed to the reality we had shared as human beings didn't really know what they were talking about. All they had done was to hand on to us, as they in their turn as a generation had received them, 'certainties' which were only mirages.

There are some individuals who enjoy iconoclasm, and a few who welcome martyrdom. Most of us weren't that type. We went out of phase with the culture we'd grown up in without even the satisfaction of filling an emotional need. There was a lonesomeness about it. After a year or two of Dianetic auditing, followed by the experiences which a nucleus of Hubbard supporters had when the wraps were briefly off and 'Scientology' emerged as his *tour de force* in 1952, we felt out of place in a normal setting – were comfortable only with our kind. We weren't Clears by any means. All we'd gotten out of

Dianetic therapy that had been promised in the book was the remission of a few psychosomatics. But there were tremendous changes in the psyche, as though broad, shining highways to an unknown destination were opened up.

We found ourselves up on a beach, still with useless gills and flippers, though we'd only rudimentary legs and lungs. We were mainly equipped for the world we'd left, but we had been beyond it and there was no impulse to go back. Misfits. "One foot in sea and one on shore," as Shakespeare said, referring to something else. Was an evolutionary step in the making, or was it just a sport? I've had a lot of theories about this, since we broke with Hubbard near the end of 1953. One thing is obvious. After a couple of years, he refused responsibility for the forces he'd partially unleashed, and took steps to tamp them down into a profitable little cult which has found safe refuge in the British Commonwealth. But there is good recall of the high-powered days of the breakthrough. It's time an honest account of what occurred was on the record.

II

Dianetics was sprung upon an unsuspecting world nearly six months before I heard of it. Somehow, I missed the reviews, which registered shock and skepticism, but also communicated a lot of the excitement to be found in its pages. One critic wrote that it was the only book in his long experience which had ever prompted strangers to call him late at night to ask if he had read it. And Winchell printed the famous first sentence about Dianetics being superior to man's invention of the wheel and the arch.

What finally alerted me to the existence of this book, which was about to change my life, was a news item in the New York Times. A group of psychologists in convention denounced something called 'Dianetics,' and although I couldn't learn from the article what Dianetics was, I was intrigued by their immoderate, almost panicky tone. These people are professionally calm.

Calling the library, I learned that a book called Dianetics had been published several months earlier, and was already a best seller. There was a long waiting list for it. We lived in downtown Philadelphia, in the shadow of city hall, so I decided to walk over to Wanamakers and buy a copy. They said they couldn't keep it in stock. A big shipment had arrived the day before, but a college psychology class had bought them all. So even before I'd seen Hubbard's book I became a little excited about it, anticipatory and intrigued.

Wanamakers had a copy for me a few days later. I noted the dedication to Will Durant, and wondered why. The table of contents didn't make much sense. Then I came to the synopsis, which seemed to be patterned on the abstract you find in the front of a scientific report. I read the opening sentence, my first encounter with Hubbard in the raw. "The creation of Dianetics is a milestone for Man comparable to his discovery of fire and superior to his inventions of the wheel and the arch." Comparisons with a scientific treatise ceased abruptly in my slightly dazzled brain. Instead, I wondered – How will he ever live up to that?

After that opening sentence, I was hooked. Most readers were, one way or another. Many hoped against hope that something marvelous would follow. Others looked forward to a failure to make good. Certainly, few people turned away from Dianetics in boredom or indifference. Like an Albee play, it might repel you or mystify you, as well as enthuse – but you couldn't shrug it off.

I finished reading the book at one sitting, carried along by a sense of discovery and joy. A broad outline of his theory began to form in my mind,

although the explanations of why people were changed so dramatically for the better seemed oversimplified. The second paragraph of the synopsis had a paragraph in italics which stated flatly what the book was about. "The hidden source of all psycho-somatic ills and human aberrations has been discovered and skills have been developed for their invariable cure."

When my husband arrived home for dinner, I tried to explain. "It's just that the basic personality of a human being is perfect; ethical and wise and good. But from the time you are conceived, things keep happening to aberrate you, to distort your emotional responses and decisions.

Hubbard says you can clear away the sources of these aberrations just by re-experiencing them, and knowing fully that they are there, And when you do that, you become a 'Clear,' a sort of superhuman."

The young plant manager to whom I'd been happily married for seven years looked skeptical, but he agreed to read the book. When he read it, nothing happened. He remained soberly immune to the excitement which had reached out from those same pages to capture me. But I read the book again, and agreed wholeheartedly with J.A. Winter, the MD who wrote the introduction. "In my opinion, Dianetics is worthy of being called a New Idea, and is destined to take its place alongside of these other milestones of progress." (The invention of the wheel, the control of fire, the development of mathematics, and the discovery of the means of atomic fission.) "It might even be considered to be more important than any of these, for it is a science which for the first time gives us an understanding of the tool with which these other inventions were created – the human mind."

A prepaid postcard came with the book for requesting additional Dianetic material through the publisher, and I mailed it. In addition, at a local medical book store, I was able to add my name to a roster of local 'Dianeticists.' Within a short time, I received an announcement that Dr. Winter was coming to Philadelphia, to lecture about Dianetics in the parish house of Saint Lukes Episcopal Church, in Kensington. Charles and I attended the lecture together, in the ark of a building.

Dr. Winter, a fine looking man who died not long after at the age of forty-four, was introduced by a sprightly young man who turned out to be the rector of Saint Lukes. The doctor was an excellent speaker, but he was much less enthusiastic than his writings had led us to expect. In print, he had said, "Dianetics is the most advanced and most clearly presented method of psychotherapy and self-improvement ever discovered." But as we listened to him lecture, it became more and more apparent that he was making a retreat

from this early optimism. My disappointment was keen. But I felt his change of heart was for personal reasons. "You could practically see the AMA reaching for the back of his neck," I told my husband afterwards.

There is an indication of the scope and intensity of the public's acceptance of Dianetics at the time in the fact that several doctors had taken the trouble to attend, including some prominent psychiatrists. Saint Lukes is in the industrial northeast section of Philadelphia, so their presence represented a lavish expenditure of time which is usually budgeted carefully.

Dr. Winter concluded his talk abruptly, with a statement that the question/answer period would be short, because he had to catch a train. We thought that he was probably reluctant to stay and defend Dianetics against an attack by his colleagues. At any rate, doctors in the audience had time to ask only a few questions. They addressed them to him in emotional tones, after sitting for two hours in silent conflict with everything he said which, although it was watered down, was still Dianetics.

Replies from the rostrum were inconclusive, although other members of the audience seemed eager to take sides in the debate. However, the Reverend Jefferys closed the forum with the announcement that a basket by the door was available for contributions towards Dr. Winter's expenses. These were generously made as the well-dressed audience filed out.

III

During the week following Dr. Winter's lecture, I sat down to write a letter to L. Ron Hubbard. I wished to become a Dianetic Clear, and I wanted to ask him how to begin. Charles and I had attempted to work together, the way the book described, but we never got off the ground. So my next thought was to write to Hubbard, until an element of common sense cut in. It occurred to me that with the volume of mail he must be getting, there might be some delay if I waited for his reply to get started.

Delay, indeed. A few years later I read a statement by a former officer of the Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation in Elizabeth, New Jersey, that when the move to Wichita was made early in 1951, many tens of thousands of letters addressed to Hubbard were left unanswered in the files. It's sad to think how much went into the writing of each of those letters to which no response was ever made.

But intuition stayed my hand. Then I remembered a man I'd met at Saint Lukes who said he was a professional auditor. From the beginning, the Dianetic foundations offered courses to those who wished to make Dianetic auditing their profession, and a certificate of proficiency was awarded to those who made the grade. This man, a rather seedy but refined man in his forties, had taken the course. However, as he frankly told me, they did not certify him, and he was willing to be my auditor three afternoons a week for a modest fee.

We arranged to meet at Saint Lukes parish house, where he said he was already auditing several people by regular appointment. The rector had a deep interest in Dianetics at that time, and the parish house was the center of Dianetics activity in Philadelphia for nearly two years.

I waited impatiently for my first appointment. Looking back, it is hard to believe that I had no doubts or hesitation about entrusting myself to these unorthodox therapies in the hands of this odd practitioner. All my life I had known and respected the important role a trained professional plays. My father and brother are lawyers. The uncle who delivered me at birth has completed fifty years as a medical doctor, and my grandfather and his brother were fine doctors, too. But there was a promise here of something even more basic to my beingness.

You could have called me well adjusted, but I spent more time and energy trying to satisfy my curiosity about the nature of man and the universe than

most people do. All my life I'd been trying to orient myself. What else could be so important to an individual? There was never a time when I seriously believed that I had suddenly begun to exist at conception and would suddenly cease to exist when this body died, although my ideas lacked coherence. There was one thing I felt sure about. The magnitude of individual consciousness is geared to other dimensions than the minute points of time and space which comprise a human lifetime.

I went to church and Sunday school when I was small, but it didn't take. Starting at the age of ten I read a great deal, and somewhere in the course of it I ran across "The truth shall make ye free." This settled my thinking a bit and gave me a point of spiritual conviction, because it crystallized something strong and formless in myself I'd been struggling with. Thereafter, I had a touchstone.

Before Dianetics, I had come to believe that the best sources of the kind of data I was interested in were three texts from our prehistory; the Rig Veda, the I Ching, and the Tao Te Ch'ing. Hungry to know them, I studied Sanskrit for two years, and Chinese. This is enough to teach you to use the dictionaries, at least. But little firm data or competence, in our contemporary sense, results from such studies. I came to believe that years of scholarship would only increase in number glimpses like the ones I'd had, of knowledge in a scope beyond our present ken.

Most of the actual content of these works is unavailable to modern man because of language barriers. The formulations and discoveries of physicists about the atom, for example, are now found to be paralleled in the Rig Veda. But until the modern language of mathematics was developed, there was no living language to express what is in the ancient Sanskrit.

IV

I went to the parish house to keep the appointment with a fast-beating heart and the trust of a child. And only this sense of anticipation kept it from being a very unimpressive set of circumstances. The auditing was done in a large room with an unshielded ceiling light, which was also used for the men's Bible class. It was crowded like an old attic, with blackboards and all kinds of furniture, most of it oak, in addition to a cot for the preclear

The auditor had provided well for himself, no doubt to avoid invidious comparisons which might otherwise have marred his detachment while the preclear stretched comfortably at full length on the cot during the hour and a half the session usually lasted. He had secured an ancient upholstered chair, which he additionally padded with small, very soiled cushions. And aside from his conscientious efforts to be always using the latest Dianetic techniques (this soon became impossible, because Hubbard was continually revising them), this personal indulgence emerged as the outstanding characteristic of the auditor I had chosen, with whom my sessions continued for the next ten months. The role of an auditor was that of a listener, except for an occasional brief request. And he was an unobtrusive man.

And so I became a Dianetic preclear, by the simple actions of taking off my shoes and lying down on a cot. And even the first day's experience was soon outside the bounds of anything I'd ever perceived before as a human adult. At first, I only remembered scenes. And then I imagined memories, based on things I'd heard so many times about my childhood that they had become a sort of reality to me. The auditor was asking me to return to birthday parties and Christmas toys and other high points in a childhood catalog of pleasurable things. My first responses were a confused shifting back and forth between actual memories and reconstructions of events I knew had occurred, based on what I'd been told and photographs I'd seen.

But all of a sudden reality took over and I was moving on a Dianetic 'time track.' By some ability of the mind or psyche, I returned from 1950 to be part again of a family group around an old upright piano on a date when I hadn't been born.

At first I heard the piano, as I lay there on the cot in the parish house, with a cotton blanket pulled up to my chin because the place was so cold. It was a sound I heard, the physical sound of a piano. I relaxed still more, accepting the perception of it without question, because the book had accustomed me to the idea. And though I knew I was still lying on the cot, I simultaneously

began to be more and more aware of what was happening 'back there' when I was just a vague baby-that-was- going-to-be-born in the minds of the persons present, except in the case of my mother. Her physical awareness of me coincided with a bump which apparently made me record the moment with intensity.

My first return was brief, because the engram was a minor one. The fetus which became this body was jarred, however, and a recording was made containing my perceptions of that moment in time. It was probably made through means not dissimilar from those employed in a modern electronics laboratory.

The presence of an auditor seemed to give a person confidence to partially remove his attention from present time to explore recordings from the past, which Hubbard called 'facsimiles.' It was a cooperative effort between the auditor and the preclear, with the law of agreement at work.

V

In reference to an auditing session, Dianetics said, "The patient would not dare address the world which has gotten inside him and turn his back upon the world outside him unless he has a sentry." Well, I had a sentry, and I addressed myself to many past events about which I'd been in ignorance before. My three weekly sessions assumed more and more importance in my life, and the work I'd been engrossed with, my student interest in the ancient Orient, and even my marriage, became minor in significance next to the realities I encountered in the hours spent with Dianetics.

Anyone who had the strange and vital experience of 'returning' during a Dianetic session is unlikely to forget it. There was a shocking shift of realities, although the effect of this was always to exhilarate you, never to stun. We discovered that moving on a time track was as stimulating to the average person as a vacationer's travel from place to place.

And fortunately there seems to be a latent or instinctive wisdom in normal minds (perhaps Ron Hubbard's 'basic personality,' which wishes to be Clear) which charts a careful course in this returning.

I came to believe, incidentally, on the basis of observations and experience, that many deranged persons are quite literally so. In relation to their functioning with the same mind machinery used in Dianetics, the arrangement or sequence of their recordings of actual events has become disturbed – deranged or disarranged – and their orientation with present time has been lost.

In the case of a Dianetic prenatal return, there was often an additional richness to the experience, because an individual is apparently not well fixed in his new identity during this period, so the preclear sometimes shared the viewpoint of a parent in an event. This happened to me when I returned to a prenatal engram on many occasions. It was to experience another era in just the way it occurred, in many more ways than the simple matter of seeing and hearing. I knew just how it seemed, to be living then.

There is a different feel to another period in time that's so basic it's hard to describe. If you find yourself in a room, there may be color with unfamiliar tones because of gaslight shining on it. The air has a strange quality. Its particles of dust derive from unmodern constituents. Even human bodies seem to radiate a different kind of warmth when they are covered with the

fabrics of another age. Memory, per se, filters out all that. When you return, you find the past intact.

Returning was easy for me. I could relive past events of this lifetime with full perceptions, even re-experience them with some re-enactment of the physical motions involved. Upon the auditor's direction, I played off a recording made in my unremembered past like a player piano.

One day I was asked to re-experience my birth in a Dianetic session. According to Dianetic theories of that time, this engram was likely to be of major importance in the backlog of intolerable sub-memories. I returned to the time when this body, weighing about thirteen pounds, was going through long hours of distress, discomfort, and deep apathy, as the first-born of a young and fortunately vigorously healthy mother. The event stayed in 'restimulation' through and between the regular times for being audited, despite our efforts, and it was a violent, lengthy experience. It nearly floored my auditor and it was a living nightmare to me.

It was more than a week before I experienced normalcy again and returned fully to present time, once the engram had begun to be relived. The occasional asthma I'd always known never reappeared after that, and I am inclined to believe that it did originate in the feeling of suffocation I endured during those long hours of birth. But I question whether its alleviation is adequate compensation for what I went through in returning to that time. Neither is the fact that I can now vividly recall how it felt to be smothered and helpless while being violently handled by the flesh, muscles, and bones of another human body.

The phenomena of returning may be utilized properly in the future, but I do not believe that there is an art, philosophy, or science in existence at this time on Earth with a professional tradition and body of data that justifies directing a person to re-experience latent recordings of such violent past events.

VI

When I decided to write this account, it seemed likely that the biggest problem I would face was the question of how to describe in a matter-of-fact way some of the phenomena we encountered during auditing which indicate that a person has available to him recordings of the lifetimes of identities other than his present one, and of times and places without a body at all.

To talk about reincarnation is to talk about absolutes, and I do not believe the explanation is quite so pat. However, in the face of demonstrable abilities of the mind to know intimate details of lives remote from that of a human being in the twentieth century, the declaration, "When you're dead, you're dead, and that's all, brother!" becomes absurd.

It sometimes happened that an individual who'd been urging that point of view on everybody would discover during his Dianetic sessions that he had reasons to want it to be that way, when he vividly experienced guilt-laden 'prior life' phenomena himself.

There are many unattractive aspects to this universe, and one of the worst is the fact that there's apparently no way to just quit. Thought seems to be indestructible, and consciousness is something that can go out of communication, but never actually end. As an individual, you are thought.

Like any student of ancient Oriental ideas, I knew the concept of reincarnation and disincarnation, which we call death. But I had no suspicion that Dianetic sessions ever involved anything but your present lifetime. Hubbard had been very careful to screen anything beyond it that may have persisted in showing up during his research, from Dianetics. So my first encounters with events beyond the scope of this present identity affected me tremendously because I was completely unprepared for such a thing.

All my life I have been repelled by the charlatan trappings of most psychic research, and the saccharinity of the rest. Anything with the flavor of the occult, anything mystic, has been distasteful to me. But the things I experienced firsthand in Dianetics were unrelated to all that. They had the feel of life about them, often to an uncomfortable degree.

To set the stage, let me recap. The sessions were a cooperative activity between the auditor and what was called the basic personality of the preclear. Processing was put into motion by a request from the auditor for "the next incident needed to resolve this case." This was pursuant to the simple theory

that the individual, basically clear, could examine and remove whatever causes for aberration had unwittingly been carried over from his past.

When the auditor asked for the next incident, the preclear, lying with closed eyes on the cot, would become aware of another situation in time and space. All that seems to be required, once a frame of reference has been accepted that permits these things to occur, is that a condition of agreement and genuine goodwill should exist and the request be made. As events unfold, however, it is urgently required that the auditor or listener keep his attention on the other person and ensure that there are no interruptions. When the re-experiencing of some event has been completed, he must ask that it be run through again, and then again, repeating the process until the painful emotions and other important content has become thoroughly familiar to the preclear, and he is beginning to feel bored and a little amused at their former seriousness.

As Dianetics averred, there seems to be a self-clearing impulse natural to the mind, which the environment usually invalidates and 'trains' out of existence early in life. Parents sometimes observe babies and toddlers 'running out' something painful by recalling it right after it happens and crying awhile and then, after a pause, recalling it and crying again, each time a little less.

It was essential for the auditor to be kept informed of what was happening and this was done verbally, although it was not uncommon for the event to be reenacted in physical ways. As a preclear, I usually became aware of the physical efforts in an incident first of all, and then the emotions would begin to sweep me. Finally, thoughts and perceptions like sight and hearing would become consciously available, although sometimes this sequence was reversed.

The first 'prior life' which I ran, I dropped into without warning, simply in response to the auditor's request for the next incident.' It occurred in Ireland, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. I know of no criteria for determining whether it happened to me as an individual, to a genetic antecedent (I am half Irish) or to someone else whose viewpoint I assumed. An identity is finite, an expression of individuality that generally persists only for the duration of the life of the body it composes with, though it can persist in 'past' time as long as this universe lasts.

When the auditor asked for the next incident, I found myself walking along the blank wall of a thatched-roof building under a bright blue sky, with an amazing feeling of physical exuberance. I knew I was still in a Dianetic session and I

spoke freely to the auditor – but at the same time, I seemed to be totally present there in the warm country air of another place and time.

I was a husky young woman wearing a rough-textured, full-skirted dress. As I walked, I looked ahead to a narrow lane bordered with waist-high walls of mud covered with bushes and small plants, where birds were trilling. I thought about my husband, who was somewhere off in the distance, fighting the English. The year was 1813, as we later established.

When I came to the corner of the building and turned to the right, into what seemed to be a barnyard, the first thing I saw was two furled, bright-colored standards leaning against the front of the building. The next thing I saw was my fourteen-year-old son lying on his back in the yard and a British soldier standing over him with a poised bayonet, which he then drove downward, while another soldier stood by and watched.

The violence of the impact of that sight was terrific. I literally shuddered with grief. It was a long time before I could fully re-experience it in the auditing session, which lasted three hours. As a matter of fact, the possibly dangerous strength of that shock may have been the reason why I seemed to enter incidents more gradually during later sessions.

The moments following the murder of the boy were blurred. Only the grief seemed real. As we went through it again, I became keenly aware of the fact that one of the soldiers was carried away by emotions of savage bestiality, while the other was a decent man who was aloof and rather ashamed. A remarkable element in returning is that you know the thoughts and attitudes of persons present, in many cases. There was smoke in the distance. Apparently there were raids and engagements going on all over the countryside.

The next thing I became aware of through the haze of grief was the shock of being thrown down onto the sloping bank, as the soldier intended rape. I snapped into vivid awareness then, and spit into his face. His response was immediate. He picked up a loose cobblestone and crushed my skull.

The grief didn't end with the death, although it seemed to become a kind of essence, and the circumstances surrounding it lost their character. There was only an awareness of a disembodied cry that continued on and on in the space of the sky. It was a sort of banshee wail, which I translated as, "Can't be borne, can't be borne, can't be borne"

This was one session, at least, that went according to Hoyle. We moved through the sequence of events again and again, exhausting the grief, lessening the tension, and, above all, wearing out the violence of the visual shock. By the end of it, I was luxuriously comfortable in every fiber, yawning and stretching and taking breaths in a full, deep satisfaction that seemed to reach to the soles of my feet.

When I walked downstairs (this session was at home, during the Christmas holiday), the electric lights dazzled me. The clean modern lines of the house interior, and the furniture, were elegant and strange to me beyond all description. I was freshly there from another age. For the first time in this lifetime, I knew I was beyond the laws of space and time.

I never was the same again.

VII

Only one prior life among all those I contacted seemed to be certainly mine. This was a young baby which was already dead when my realization of the incident began.

The mother was clutching it and crying, and I knew positively as I entered that point in time that this baby had been my body, even though my awareness was diffused by then, exterior to the infant's form.

I felt a sense of responsibility for the woman's grief, and had a feeling of regret, as though I had rejected the situation for reasons which we didn't explore. (You didn't spend much time in Dianetic processing of this kind before you recognized that even 'natural' death is sometimes voluntary.) The burden of her crying was, "There must be a way, there must be a way." And when I began to run through the incident I felt for awhile as though a mountain of slag had fallen on me. During this lifetime, that phrase has sometimes keyed in with typical reactive mind automaticity, and each time it brought with it a feeling of deep despair.

A young husband hovered in the background, and the bedroom was cluttered with furniture and paraphernalia of the same era when my birth occurred. However, I learned no more about this painful scene, because the auditor called me back to present time. This was one of many incompletions during my period as a Dianetic preclear, but it left me feeling certain that it had happened to me just before this current lifetime.

Another event I 'ran' at the parish house remains vivid in my memory, again probably because we made no attempt to exhaust its content of painful emotion and sense of defeat of an individual by environment. It is an example of the way recordings on what Hubbard called the time track were keyed in during a Dianetic session and the preclear lived through them again, very much the way a record is moved from the stack and put on the turntable of a juke box when a button is pushed. Of course, what we were supposed to do was replay the record until it was worn out, so it could not be accidentally played again.

This session began with the usual request from my auditor, which was followed by a feeling of blankness, almost a static on my part.

Then I began to have an impression that something was happening, with no idea what it was. Suddenly I experienced violent stretching sensations in my

neck, and almost irresistibly began to arch myself on the cot, pushing my head up and away from my shoulders. I felt as though some force were literally elongating my neck, like a length of rubber hose.

There was a rope around my neck, I soon realized, and the event was a hanging. A pale predawn light showed a large stone-paved square in a European city of a few hundred years ago. There were neat dark buildings with small paned windows surrounding it. I think the city was Ghent. My body was dressed in velvets and silks and was that of a young man. I experienced its agonies and helplessness exactly as they occurred, with as intimate a sense of reality as I feel in any present-day happening.

That is what returning is, and it points up one of the major differences between it and the careful analytical process we call remembering, as well as the other careful secondhand processes we know as dreaming and imagining. When you return, you may be taken by surprise by things which are part of a situation, because your present-time personality is not in control. There was a Dianetic session, for example, during which I was startled to realize that I was stark naked under a rich court gown I was wearing to a rendezvous in the chill night air during another Middle European lifetime.

On another occasion, I was mystified by creaks and groans which were finally identified as the sounds of a wooden sailing vessel on whose deck I stood. This was in the lifetime of a New England woman, which we explored rather fully in a series of sessions. She sailed with her red-bearded husband on a modest ship which plied the Atlantic more than a century ago. One day I was nearly overwhelmed by the stench of a slaver which berthed alongside, but this was balanced later by experiencing the soft night air of the tropics as I stood in the moonlight, with my husband's arm about my shoulders.

There was no hypnosis in this, of course. I had present-time analytical awareness. For example: I lived again the death in convulsions of a young English doxy on a city street during the time of the Restoration. Her spasms and gyrations occupied me, and her worry about the contents of a kerchief purse. But the thing that concerned me most was the sight of the dirty condition of the ruffles of two young gentlemen of fashion as they stood in the front row of a curious crowd, watching the death throes without compassion. I followed the sequence through the shock of death and the pleasure of relief which often succeeds it. But an important element in that session was my amazement at filth coupled with elegance, and that reaction was modern American.

As the gallows scene became more real, in what I set out to describe, I shifted into another viewpoint and was almost swamped by the desperate grief of a young woman who had thrown herself onto the wooden platform below the gibbet. She and the dying man were lovers and their experiencing of the event was almost completely shared. However, the grief of one and the death throes of the other made that package too much for the auditor to handle. We didn't run it out. After struggling with his own perturbation for awhile, he directed me to "return to present time" and ended the session. I was deeply depressed for hours afterwards, without definable cause in the circumstances of my life.

VIII

There were many occasions when my auditor retreated from the indicated course of directing me through emotionally charged experiences again and again, because he himself became upset. He can hardly be blamed. His funk is illustrative of the terrible impracticality of the Dianetic theory. How can the blind lead the blind? But Dianetic forays into the great uncharted reaches of the human psyche at least show that they exist. They promise incalculable rewards if man can ever succeed in making an orderly conquest.

Humans live in shallowness, and they could be living in depth. Mine was not an isolated experience. The kind of phenomena I personally knew during the three important years of the Dianetic movement were experienced by thousands of people, many of whom were changed as profoundly as I. How long can the availability of this kind of data be disregarded by persons in positions of trust, responsible for man's welfare?

You could bring in a passerby, put him on a cot and, if he was a sane and healthy individual, expect that he would soon be running a 'prior life.'

There was little preparation required. Once he'd gotten comfortable, you could ask him a few generalized questions, determine if there was some small chronic discomfort which might be traced back to its origin, and ask him to return to some recent pleasure moment as a starter. When this return had been completed, and he was back in present time, you would ask him to focus his attention on the chronic somatic. Perhaps he had recurrent twinges of pain in his wrist.

The auditor says, "Now, please move on the time track. Please go to the earliest incident available in connection with the wrist pain." Typically, there would be a pause. Then the preclear might say, "I don't understand it, but there seems to be a lot of noise and yelling and ... why, I'm right in the middle of some fighting. Men in British uniforms. They are fighting with men in frontiersman clothes and – look out! They're crowding me There's something coming at me ..." And he'd throw his arm across his face.

Before the session ended he'd have one man's part in a battle out of American history relived, with color and excitement and shock that may have been sitting there beyond his conscious awareness for a long time. It didn't always happen as quickly and as easily as the case I've talked about here. But as a former auditor, I can testify that few preclears confined themselves

to events in their current lives, though most came to their opening sessions with no idea that anything else could be run.

There was no warning, no preconception. All of a sudden, instead of finding themselves in the familiar past, with people and places they could identify, everything would be strange. But a typical preclear took it in his stride. He felt as much at home wherever it was, as on the cot. That was part of the recording. And there was no time to evaluate. There was action to be lived through, and sometimes death – which was always just part of a sequence, never an end.

People emerged from these sessions with more self-determinism, more dignity, more certainty. It was as though they got back something they'd lost.

IX

Soon after I'd become a Dianetic preclear I resigned the position I'd held for ten years, and not long afterwards, Charles and I separated. We sold the Main Line carriage house we were planning to remodel, instead of signing the construction mortgage, a long-term commitment which suddenly seemed abhorrent to me. Our estrangement began soon after Dianetics came into the house, although there was no obvious relationship between the two events. Perhaps it had been potential for some time.

The sale of the property paid for the divorce, and there was enough left to bridge me across the months of auditing I felt I should have as the first step in what I believed would be a lifetime dedication to Dianetics. A great many people were thinking along those lines, then.

A Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation had been organized in May, 1950, in Elizabeth, New Jersey, where L. Ron Hubbard made his headquarters. Branches were opened almost immediately in New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Hawaii, and Los Angeles. Courses were offered in 'professional' auditing, as well as expensive therapy.

The foundation was a nonprofit corporation, the chartered purposes of which were to "study and conduct research in the field of the human mind and of human thought in action." Membership was available to anyone for \$15 a year, and a Dianetic Auditor's Bulletin was issued monthly. The first two bulletins listed Dr. Winter as medical director, but when the third appeared, his name was no longer included among the officers and trustees.

I was an awed outsider with an associate membership during the boom-to-burst cycle of the first Dianetic foundation, but I've heard a lot about it since. One man who was an important member of the organizing group told me a few years ago that he still retained copies of the bookkeeping records that made him decide to disassociate himself from the Elizabeth foundation, fast. A month's income of \$90,000 is listed, with only \$20,000 accounted for. He was one of the first to resign, along with Dr. Winter, but I suspect that the latter was mainly disturbed by the reckless way in which profoundly upsetting techniques were applied by unqualified persons.

The Elizabeth foundation with all its branches closed before the summer of 1951, and only the financial support of a Wichita businessman provided L. Ron Hubbard and his science of the mind with a place on the map. But few

people knew the details of those events at the time. All we knew was that the Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation had moved to Kansas.

So after ten months as a preclear, when I decided the time had come for me to become a professional auditor, I boarded a plane for Wichita at Philadelphia's International Airport. The Mole Street house was sublet, and in my pocket I carried my only resources – \$1500, just borrowed from a bank. However, my confidence in the future was complete. At one point in the flight, an engine threatened to quit. My only reaction was to think that they were lucky I was aboard, since I had no intention of dying at that time.

Rest and simple living combined with freedom from responsibility had undoubtedly contributed to my high spirits and good health, which far exceeded anything I had known in my life before. But the sense of spiritual equilibrium was important, too. I felt as though I'd emerged from a dark tunnel into a bright, familiar world. Until I got used to it, the validation of my own sense of – what shall I call it, immortality? – was enough to keep me brilliantly happy. It is one thing to be intellectually convinced of the probability of such a thing, but it's quite another to have subjective reality about it, free from cant and moralistic copyrights.

I'd been shifting my awareness around in time and geography with the same uncluttered naturalness with which you'd accomplish a neighborhood errand. There appear to be no barriers to doing this other than mental blocks, and in my case these had been removed by the reading of Dianetics and the presence of an auditor.

Hubbard said it this way in 1952:

As far as the awareness point you call your mind is concerned, there is no reason why it can't stretch – not only through this galaxy, but through all the island universes. There is no limit to how far a mind can expand or to how small it can contract. But you may find it more convenient to conceive yourself to be the size of this piece of the physical universe, your body. And while the physical universe is marching forward rather onerously and consistently on a time span, we have elected a point on the time span as now, and we agree that it's now, and we all live in it.

X

We were grounded by sleet in Chicago, and it was after midnight when we finally reached Wichita. I checked into a hotel, and after breakfast the next day, walked down Douglas Avenue to the new Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation. Its patron and president was Don G. Purcell who, with his wife, had taken the course in Elizabeth. It was he who had come to the rescue of L. Ron Hubbard and Dianetics when the going got rough.

I approached the recessed door between two plate-glass windows with a feeling that this was a very important moment in my life. This building was Mecca to a Dianeticist. Publications such as the Professional Auditor's Bulletin and Hubbard's current books were originating here, and the author himself could conceivably be inside.

It looked like a warehouse which had been converted to Dianetic use by the erection of numerous partitions, and it was almost deserted that Sunday afternoon. Two other prospective students were the only persons present, when I opened the door and entered the small, nicely furnished, reception area. One of them was named John Henry Neugebauer, an artist with light brown hair and blue eyes, who called himself Noyga. He undertook a briefing about people and events on the Wichita scene for me for an hour or so, while his companion wandered aimlessly about the big empty building, which was divided into small offices and auditing rooms, opening into long narrow corridors. On the second floor, there was an auditorium where classes were held and a weekly public lecture was delivered by L. Ron Hubbard, his only participation in foundation activities, except to sign certificates.

My life went into high gear at the time I met Noyga, by cause or coincidence, and facts about him belong in the narrative here, although I learned most of them later. All that he told me about himself the day we met was that he and his friend had come from the same town in New Hampshire together and had been working at Boeing to accumulate enough money to live on for the two month course, after paying the \$500 enrollment fee at the HDRF. This goal had been reached, he said, and he was planning to register as a student.

Noyga had suffered a breakdown during the war, and lived his life in quiet desperation, holding at arm's length a black cloud that never wavered in its threat. He gave you an impression of rare finesse and certainty, and he was gentle the way a child can be. He lived with an awareness of what it's like to be swept out of communication with present time, and when this has

happened once to an individual of quality, his human beingness is likely to have the temper of fine steel.

John enlisted in the Navy in 1943, instead of going to architectural school as had been planned. After training, he served as radar man for several months on a mine sweeper in the South Pacific Theater. Then the Navy flew him back to the States, to Yale as an officer candidate. So far, in his service career, as in his lifetime before it, his path had been clear and successful.

But the sudden release from shared tensions and excitement, which happened almost overnight, was apparently too abrupt. Student life was meaningless only days away from an island where you helped bury piles of enemy dead with a bulldozer. He fell into apathy and entered a Navy hospital, where he blacked out. Later he was released and given an honorable discharge, only partly restored.

As a civilian, John's talent and intelligence made it easy for him to find employment in creative fields, which he did repeatedly. But sooner or later there'd be a deadline to meet and the renewal of tension would key in the Navy trauma and he'd go off by himself in lonely misery to wear it out.

He knew all the signs after that first bout. When it began to close in, he met its agonies full face, and it never conquered him again. That was what the name he'd chosen meant to him. Noyga was simply agony, rearranged. It came from the pronunciation of his surname. This was his private joke, partly in wryness, partly in genuine amusement at the weird helplessness of his condition.

He learned about Dianetics when he sold artwork to the science fiction magazine which first announced it. After reading the book, he felt that if there was hope for him, Dianetics offered it. He also decided then that if it failed him, he would join the strictest monastic order he could find anywhere in the world and finish his life with them. He was not at all religious, but if we hadn't met, I think that's what he would have done.

Hundreds of hours of Dianetic processing, beginning in May of 1950, were fruitless as far as the trauma was concerned, even when Hubbard was the auditor. There was apparently a fixed idea in his reactive mind that it would be too dangerous to permit any exploration of the roots of it.

The Navy psychiatrists, top men in their field, had released him into civilian life still subject to this menace, after exhausting their skills. And Dianetics failed to free him, too.

His human beingness was more in pawn than there were ever means available for its redemption.

XI

Early Monday morning, I arrived at the foundation to register for the course. I met the men in charge: Purcell, Maloney, Lamoreaux, and the director of training, a young family man named David MacLean. They were all personable, well educated men – types you'd find as executives in almost any kind of well managed enterprise.

I paid the \$500 and became a student. I was given no books or papers, no curriculum. But I was now entitled to attend a morning 'class' and co-audit with fellow students in the afternoons for a period of two months.

Someone took me upstairs to the lecture room, where the enrollees assembled every morning. It was a fairly large auditorium, filled with writing-armed chairs, plus a number of folding chairs leaning against the walls. These were used once a week, when the place was always filled to overflowing for Hubbard's free public lecture.

MacLean conducted a sort of one-man school from the stage. Sometimes there was a taped lecture by Hubbard. Sometimes Dave spoke for awhile and then there was class discussion, by as random a group of people as I'd ever seen assembled. I had years of statistical sampling experience in back of me, in connection with public opinion polls, so I had a connoisseur's appreciation.

Ages ran from the teens to the seventies. Clothing and mannerisms belonged in environments as disparate as rustic, poverty-stricken Appalachia, and international society. People with advanced degrees found a common meeting-place in Dianetics with others who hadn't finished grammar school. The human race is extraordinary when you leaven its reality with hope.

There were no medical doctors, but there was a chiropractor from Florida who was an officer in their national organization, and a wonderful osteopathic physician from South Dakota. She was one of the most dedicated doctors I have ever known.

MacLean had a difficult assignment, because Dianetics had been out for a year and a half and Hubbard had been experimenting and changing the techniques of auditing during all that time. This was inevitable, I suppose, since the attempted breakthrough tried to encompass so much. But no science of ours has ever developed from one man's crash program. I have had the experience of being in a class conducted by a great scholar, who could draw on the accumulated richness of generations in his teaching. And

even there, there was a feeling of inadequacy in what was available to us, a modesty on his part because he felt the presentation did not do justice to the subject matter.

Dianetics radiated certainty. Everything was in terms of absolutes. Now, although the basic concepts were unchanged, the procedures which an auditor was to follow changed from week to week. These people I was joining were confused, as was their instructor. And in back of many confident expressions there was sheepish recognition that the claims of easy 'cures' were proving false. An empty fishbowl on the reception counter had been placed there for the glasses people would be enabled to discard through Dianetic processing. The only thing I ever saw in it was a cigarette lighter, put there when somebody stopped smoking.

It was a relief to everybody when the inconclusive morning sessions were over. After lunch, the students were assigned to co-auditing in the rooms available for this purpose, and everyone was more relaxed. Every room contained a narrow bed, a chair, and a table. Most rooms were small, but a few were as large as an apartment second bedroom. The latter were mainly for the use of staff auditors who were as confused as anybody, now, about how a session should be conducted, even though they worked with preclears who came to receive professional auditing at very high fees.

There was an interesting sidelight to the constant outmoding of techniques. Occasionally we would hear of someone, usually a doctor (there were always many doctors on the mailing lists), who would quietly adopt some facet of the Dianetic kaleidoscope, incorporate it into his healing art, become proficient in its use, and thereby have a permanent new skill.

XII

To add to the general confusion, Hubbard chose this time to launch a project which was without much justification in either the effectiveness of his therapies or the understanding of their use. He ran newspaper advertisements inviting arthritis sufferers to register at the foundation for a course of free treatments. Several people presented themselves, and they were assigned to student auditors for a week of afternoon sessions.

As far as I know, mine was the only one who showed any real improvement, and that was partly a matter of luck, in that she was a high toned individual with plenty of self-determination, and her acute case of arthritis was of recent origin. She was a young married woman who knew nothing about Dianetics.

As a matter of fact, I was beginning to wonder exactly what Dianetics was myself, in spite of the fact that there was a Dianetic foundation and a national association with an impressive membership. The closer I came to the center of all this, the more nebulous it became.

There were people around the country who had convinced themselves that they were experts in the subject. They commanded preclears with an air of certainty which sometimes satisfied the other person's needs. The professional auditors' course had been given since May, 1950, and after taking it these individuals wound up in some town or city where they became an authority to a local amateur group. Why not? There's a grave need for 'mental counselors,' and those Dianetic old pros are likely to be conservative in what they do. They got off Hubbard's bandwagon when he began to voice his more sensational theories, and when they work with people they are careful to avoid precipitating anything they might not be able to handle. They've all been frightened a few times by things that turned on in a session, but it's unlikely to happen ever again.

Those of us who tried to maintain standards of intellectual honesty, however, kept the basic theory in mind and took refuge in a quasi-acceptance of just a few ideas when it came to therapy and adopted a wait-and-see policy. We counted on the fact that there does exist in healthy individuals a survival impulse which will cooperate with an auditor. Each of us worked out a technique for utilizing this, out of our own experience. Mine was fairly typical, and in the case of the young woman with the arthritic feet it proved to be adequate.

The most important thing I did was to do nothing, except to show that I was quietly confident about her intelligence. She was stretched out comfortably on the narrow bed in one of the larger auditing rooms, and I sat in a leatherette chair with wooden arms. There was a shaded lamp, and the atmosphere was friendly and relaxed, and, above all, unhurried.

Occasionally, I directed her attention to her crippled toes, or asked her to return to some event in her life. There was no assumption of authority on my part. Just sureness in my manner about what we were doing, and about her. The sessions weren't far advanced when it was as though a dam had burst. A bright intelligence took charge and she started relating her present time problem to the past, enthusiastic about her grasp of things – laughing at what she had been desperate about. This was the 'basic personality' which Hubbard talked about. I kept quiet.

By the middle of the week, when her mother brought her in, she'd become very serious. Without prompting, she shuffled through forgotten memories the way you'd handle a pack of unfamiliar cards, studying one, then putting it aside in order to focus her full attention on another. I said very little, but I showed by my attitude that I was concentrating with her. And she alone spoke of the possible significance of any of it, but she had a lot to say about that.

Among other things, she discovered that her painfully crippled feet had helped avert some threats to her married happiness. After she'd come to that conclusion, she returned to a basic incident that had been entirely occluded in her mind. She found herself a small child, crying bitterly because she had spilled hot tea on the exposed toes of her grandmother, who was sitting in a plaster cast.

That broke the case. Much sickness and aberration stems from the fact that we blame and punish ourselves for things that happened long ago. The preclear had hobbled on crutches to the auditing room for her first session. By the fifth and last one she walked without pain, and her mother told me that she had been dancing to the radio the night before.

This resume of what she discovered about herself during the hours on the cot is oversimplified. There were subtle undertones in the blame motivation, for example, because it was someone trampling on her toes in a movie theater which triggered the arthritis. But she felt she had used that injury done to her to atone for hurting her grandmother, to square the account by becoming in turn a victim of pain. And there was a bonus in the situation, too, because the

illness had neatly solved a present time problem. I wondered what she would do about it now.

A strange thing happened right after her return to the time when she spilled tea on her grandmother's toes. She found herself in a building which was falling down, as might occur in an earthquake. She described standing there with a heavy beam fixing her feet to the floor, and felt terror as sounds in the darkness above meant that there was more to fall. Sitting in the auditor's chair, I was sure that this was an incident in another lifetime.

The official attitude of the Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation did not countenance such a controversial possibility, despite the things which were happening daily in its auditing rooms. So I gently directed the young woman's attention back to the present life injury to her grandmother, the basic incident in the current chain. But as Hubbard once said, "An individual is a composite of all his experiences."

XIII

Hubbard's lecture was the highlight of every week. He would arrive at the last minute, stopping briefly in his office to sign whatever professional auditor certificates were due students on the basis of their completion of the required number of weeks attendance. There was no other criterion. Then he would appear at the back of the crowded hall and walk down the center aisle to the platform, amid applause. It was well staged. He spoke against a backdrop of rich drapes, bathed in spotlights that set off red hair and weird, enthusiastic face.

The lectures were not part of an orderly structure, some well organized theory. Rather it was as though someone were to put a different slide under a new kind of microscope every week and describe what he was looking at. There might be smears of a variety of things. All that would be consistent would be the viewpoint and the fact that details of a microscopic world had become available to his gross perceptions.

Ron Hubbard supplied an important new viewpoint, but the specialized studies and development of a body of knowledge embracing them were still unmade. He made a point of this in one lecture. He said, "There's no frame of reference you can fit this into. But you do have a frame of reference to study it from. That's you. See if this data applies to what you observe ..."

Hubbard was a marvelous lecturer, and he spoke quite frankly then, introducing the soberest and wildest ideas without apology, seeming to share the uproarious delight of some of the members of his audience at his flights of intellectual audacity.

His rhetoric had a tempo that usually carried everyone along in at least pseudo acceptance of everything he said, although some of it was far afield of the 'science of mental health' which had brought us all together. Sometimes it seemed as though members of the foundation staff paled a little, while the rest of us chuckled in glee. That was on nights like the one when he appeared with a terrible limp, mentioning casually that he'd been returning on his genetic time track, and hadn't completed running out the time his grandfather was shot in the leg during the Civil War.

One night he started talking about the fact that everybody has a governor which you can learn to control, so that you can slow your energies down or speed them up, like an engine. We were strung along the front row as usual, and I had my feet, in flat shoes, extended in front of me in relaxed comfort.

When I saw Hubbard glancing in my direction as he spoke, I didn't take it as a compliment. I'd heard him called a ladies man and besides that, when you're tall, you learn that there's often as much curiosity as gallantry in a casual glance.

So I looked toward him angrily and met his eyes. And while the lecture continued, he demonstrated a strange ability by challenging me with the kind of acceleration he had been referring to. It was like somebody giving you a ride on a scooter, but the direction seemed to be up. He communicated an essence of speed, that exhilarating sensation which some people pursue obsessively all of their lives.

The small glare fight was over very quickly, but the effect lasted for a couple of hours. It consisted mainly of a feeling of bodily lightness and a not unpleasant breathlessness. I felt the sensation of travelling at high speed. Perhaps I could not have shared it so easily if I had no recordings of that kind of motion in this lifetime. Liking speed is one of my aberrations.

To us, one of the most important lectures delivered at the Wichita foundation was about a code of honor. Hubbard rarely prepared notes, but on that occasion he brought a slip of paper with him and read off a series of statements, making comments about each. About the code in general, he said that rules like these had been adhered to closely in certain times and places in a way that would make our age of chivalry seem very pale, like a dim reflection.

A CODE OF HONOR:

- ❖ Be true to your own goals.
- ❖ Never need praise, approval, or sympathy.
- ❖ Never disparage yourself or minimize your strength and power.
- ❖ Do not give or receive communication unless you yourself desire it.
- ❖ Never compromise with your own reality or fear to hurt another in a just cause.
- ❖ Your self-determinism and your honor are more important than your present life.

That's the essence of it. With a yardstick like this, you can make an analytical choice to stick to it when your environment tries to bluff you out of doing so. You can at least know it's happening when you don't.

The climactic events of every prior life I ran in a Dianetic session hinged on those values. I remember hearing a professor talk about the critique of great

literature. He said the basic requirements are a protagonist and a major decision. Honor is the factor that gives magnitude to human choice.

People living in terms of something like the Code of Honor are likely to be hard to regiment. Maybe that happened in the remote past. Maybe somebody decided to promote the idea that you only live once, so you had better ... how do they say it? Oh, yes. "It is better to be a live slave than a dead hero."

But maybe the hero is a hero next time, too.

XIV

Audiences at Hubbard's public lectures were always partly composed of oddly dynamic fringe characters who were known to us as 'squirrels.' They had come from all parts of the country, a few from overseas, attracted by Dianetics. There were engineers and college students (who would never graduate now), actors, fliers, cowboys, factory workers – each had been part of a human group, but they arrived alone, to rent a room and find a job in his vicinity.

They practically never enrolled at a Dianetic foundation, seeming to obey some unwritten law which prohibited them from supporting an organization acting in Hubbard's interest. Nevertheless, his ideas dominated their lives. Often intellectually brilliant, they co-audited a great deal, and developed offbeat theories with feverish excitement.

Association with squirrels never had a constructive outcome. But we were fortunately too busy to be tempted by the guise of social life which cloaked their activities. They were ardent conversationalists, and we were just as enthusiastically involved with perceptions of things which were put into words only for the benefit of an auditor.

A handful of us constituted a sort of honor guard for Hubbard at that time. We were intensely admiring of him, and loyal, and what went on in our auditing sessions was very directly in line with his current writings and lectures. The one closest to him was Bud Eubank, son of a Missouri doctor. Tall, heavy, with a cherubic face and an uncombed head of soft black hair, Bud was the *enfant terrible* of the Wichita foundation. He was a college student, destined to be a doctor, when he learned of Dianetics. He became a professional auditor at the Los Angeles foundation, and at the time I knew him in Wichita, had just worked with Hubbard on a new set of Dianetic axioms. Noyga, of course, was one of us. And the fourth was a tall, blond Texan named Norman James, an excellent chess player, who'd also walked away from college when the Dianetic bugle sounded.

We got together for meals, and sometimes we went to the movies or played cards, in a brief recess from Dianetics. I'd never been west of the Appalachians before, but I felt at home in Wichita. The people were well-dressed and urban in their ways, and the stores were filled with bright, clean merchandise that enchanted our eyes, perhaps because we viewed it with heightened perceptions. In particular, the colors seemed beautiful, and we used to walk downtown to eat in the restaurant on the top floor of a big

department store, just for the pleasure of window shopping, and the feeling that we trod the pavements like gods in modern disguise. This is not an exaggeration. It was the happiest period of my life.

Sometimes we ate by candlelight in the fancy coffee shop of the modern hotel up the street, where I had spent my first two nights in Wichita. But I lived in a shabby shell of a big old hotel which must have known Wyatt Earp. This hotel, at least, was without precedent in my experience.

On both sides of its entrance, the street level had been converted to stores, and the guest rooms on the second floor were along the sides of a great open space that ran from the head of the wide stairway coming up from the street entrance, all the way to the back wall of the hotel. It was nearly as wide as a city street, and was probably once a grand salon. Now, of course, it was empty, except for a bathtub on one side, enclosed in four sides of a partition without a ceiling. A bath in that airy cubicle in Kansas in December was something like going through the same thing out of doors.

The rooms in this hotel had lost most of their wallpaper, and some were beginning to lose patches of plaster. However, I was pleased to secure a big corner room which had just been vacated, because of the low weekly rate and the convenience of the location. I spent the first hour of my occupancy filling two wastebaskets with empty pint and half-pint whisky bottles, which I found hidden in many sly places in the closet, furniture, and loose molding in the room. The former tenant had apparently been reluctant to throw them away. This was Kansas.

XV

John and I had an occasional opportunity to work together, and we decided that he would return to Philadelphia with me when our stint was completed, so that we could become partners in professional auditing. Most of the time, however, we were under the pressure of bulletin board assignments.

Things were far from a state of equilibrium at 211 West Douglas. Foundation executives felt that the question of 'prior lives' was moot, and that to attempt to incorporate it into Dianetics would be financially disastrous. Hubbard wasn't trying to do that exactly, but he had given up his earlier attempts to ignore everything that didn't fit into the idea that conception marks the beginning of an individual's time track. His weekly lectures were filled with references to other-lifetime phenomena. This jarred with the reality that the students were told was Dianetics, as did some of their own experiences during auditing sessions. To top it off, Noyga was assigned to audit the training director regularly, the focal point of management's effort to keep Dianetics within the scope of Dianetics. That worthy dropped into a prior life complete with earthquake and tidal wave in his first session, which compounded the complexity of the situation.

New people were still arriving, and students who were nearing the end of their stay frequently felt that none of the things they had hoped for had been accomplished. So the experienced auditors became the crux of an expedience. We had to do a great deal of auditing, but had little time as preclears ourselves. However, Noyga and I had some evening sessions.

He had difficulty contacting key incidents in his current lifetime, but other lifetimes and conditions were available to him, and he was an excellent auditor.

Sometimes he found himself in the ancient world, which was not so very long ago. There has been no interruption in our heritage from them. One night I had the experience of seeing his young American face and body seem to expand into the calm maturity of a bearded teacher in very early Greece. During the most successful returns it was not at all unusual for the preclear to assume another personality which the auditor might 'see' as well. When there was good rapport, an auditor would frequently anticipate most of what the preclear had to relate.

I had asked for a 'pleasure' moment to begin a session, and Noyga found himself at a banquet consisting of fruits and ambrosial unchilled wine. It was a

pleasure moment de luxe, and we stayed in it for some time, as he gently explored the innocent pastimes of a few beautiful people in a terraced outdoor place. The pastimes were not games, because they were indulged in by only one person at a time. I remember that there was a flat receptacle containing colored sand in which designs were traced, and an odd geometric shape to be tossed into the air from a taut string between sticks, among other things.

When I asked him to scan through that lifetime to its close, we encountered something strange. The sage spent his final years travelling about with a small donkey, but when he decided that it was time to die, he climbed into the mountains alone. Reaching a high point, he stood and uttered a death cry which echoed back across a ravine and killed him instantly. I have since read that there are monks in Tibet who still know how to effect the death of a body by a shout.

There is apparently more than engrams to incline the tender shoots of a beginning life. One night, when Noyga as auditor asked for "the major incident needed to resolve this case" I returned to unremembered moments which set a pattern in my present life which no force of reason or instinct could afterwards affect. At the time I was a small child, so small that the dining room table towered over me and my grandmother, who was with me, was like a giant.

When I returned to that place in time, John told me afterwards that I became remote, though we still talked together easily. He said the voice seemed to come from far away, and the body on the cot was very still. I trusted him so thoroughly – this was a nearly complete return, the most successful in my experience. And I learned firsthand that the perceptions of a young child are quite unlike the clear-cut light and sound of the adult shared reality.

Everything seemed misty, with solid objects standing in space the way that vehicles on a highway take shape in a fog. The table I was standing near was enormous and real to me, but I had little awareness of a body of my own. One of the reasons, perhaps the only reason, why people don't ordinarily remember babyhood may be that their recording of it is in a high range of perceptions almost never used in adulthood except in the great moments, or perhaps in sleep.

My grandmother was a cultured Frenchwoman who had been a fiercely devoted mother, but she was seized with an impulse that day to warn me against what she must have viewed in retrospect as domestic slavery. She implored me to save myself, to stay free, never to be trapped into motherhood

and keeping house as she had been. Small as I was, I seemed to understand exactly what she meant.

I looked up at her trustingly, through a haze in which her eyes glowed at me, suggesting a young and beautiful presence. The tired, gaunt human body I ignored. I was entranced with the eager intensity of the love I felt beaming at me. There was something magic about the whole thing, and I believed in her completely. As psyche, I was utterly exposed, and I think she was the same. Perhaps I represented hope, and the future.

Unconsciously, I was loyal to that moment all my life. I remember sitting in a restaurant one day in my teens, looking at a light-haired youngster with tears in my eyes, saying dramatically to myself that I knew I was never going to have any children.

During my married years, it never seemed to be the right time to start a family. Once, when nature took a hand, I went to a professional abortionist, an act I now consider to be indefensible, since another individual is involved who trusts you. Once pregnancy occurs, your destinies should be joined until incurred responsibilities have been discharged.

I was fortunate that it was John who was my auditor. He brought me through it again and again before the session was concluded. Finally, he was satisfied, and told me to come back to present time. I seemed to return from a great distance.

XVI

At the end of December, there was a convention of Dianeticists, which Hubbard called a 'conference.' People came from all over and paid a registration fee, after which they were entitled to attend special lectures and seminars for a few days. This was one of Hubbard's best sources of revenue.

Quite a crowd showed up, including a lot of the original professional auditors, who had 'graduated' from the Elizabeth foundation and its branches. But there were none of Ron's former friends, the people who had made those foundations possible. He felt that they had betrayed him. The climax to this Wichita conference was something he called a 'Bad Old Times Party,' and it marked the windup of our weeks at the Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation. It was held in the main ballroom of a leading hotel, with a big orchestra and floor show. Everyone attended: foundation staff, conferees, students, and squirrels. Hubbard led the festivities.

He was just an ordinary human being as far as dimensions went, but there was something attention-arresting in the way he handled himself. He danced a great deal, with a light and exact rhythm that was completely without grace. Watching him, you could see why people persisted in identifying him with science fiction, despite his efforts to conform. Many almost worshipped him in those days, but there were other individuals who looked at him askance, with something close to fear.

XVII

On the morning following the Bad Old Times Party, Noyga left Wichita with some people who were driving east after the conference. I'd had my TWA return ticket all along. We arrived in Philadelphia on the third and first of January, respectively.

Male and female, and adult, we each began to occupy one of the two bedrooms at 122 North Mole Street, in a relationship of meticulous formality. We were un-chaperoned, as though the sexless condition 'Dianeticist' had superseded our humanness. Nothing could better illustrate how set apart our dedication made us feel. As a symbol of it, we had a shiny key to the house made up, and sent it to Ron.

Cards were printed, and we mailed them out, most of them to members of The Dianetic Association of Philadelphia. They announced that John Noyga HDA and Helen O'Brien HDA were available as Dianetic auditors. Household expenses were shared equally, and we often had a meal together, either in a restaurant or at home, with one or the other acting as short order cook. There was great harmony between us.

Noyga was good at space design. He went to work on the interior of the square little house, putting in shelves and louvered doors and walls of canvas drapes. We soon had an attractively modern duplex, in which we lived and audited until November, 1953, although a big four-story building around the corner became our Hubbard Foundation a year before that date. This was, incidentally, the only foundation bearing Hubbard's name which remained solvent and successful throughout its span of life – and the only one in which, although he was given a lion's share of the profits, he had literally no say in management.

Our certificates as 'Hubbard Dianetic Auditors' were gold bordered and gold sealed, and we proudly hung them on the wall. We had a choice of preclears for auditing sessions costing fifteen dollars each by regular appointment, and we didn't accept anyone considered to be mentally ill. There were no dramatic cures as a result of our therapy – one reason being that we didn't have any preclears with anything dramatically wrong with them, no doubt – but people benefitted in general ways, becoming happier and brighter.

The Dianetic Association left Saint Lukes and began to hold its weekly meetings in our neighborhood downtown, in The Whittier, a Quaker hotel. A couple of hundred people attended. John, who had been rather shy, now

discovered that he had a flair for public appearance, and he soon became the president. He took office as a result of the only unanimous action ever taken by this group.

After several weeks of comparative uneventfulness, a telegram arrived from Wichita. It was a long one. It announced that another conference would be held almost immediately, at which Hubbard was planning to present important new material. The only question in our minds was which of us should go. It was settled that I would go, while Noyga took care of both sets of appointments. Professional auditing could only be done a few hours a day without a marked lessening in effectiveness, and we had kept our schedules I light.

XVIII

So I returned to Wichita. But not to the Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation. Hubbard and the HDRF had embarked upon what became a lengthy and well-documented feud. To regress a little, the primary cause of the failure of the Dianetic foundation in Elizabeth, New Jersey, and its branches, was financial, despite the money people poured into them for awhile. By October, 1950, the situation had become critical, and in the following month the combined incomes of the foundations totaled less than one tenth of the payroll. But Hubbard blamed the failure on the motivations of the people who had been his friends. In reckless language, he later wrote and caused to be published in Wichita, a bitter denunciation of his former associates, one of them his second wife Sara, who had served as executive vice president of the corporation, saying that they, "hungry for money and power, sought to take over and control all of Dianetics."

In the same way, during 1952 Hubbard tried to divert people's attention from the fact that the Wichita foundation was a financial failure by attempting to create the impression that Don Purcell, the 'angel' whose money had made it a reality, was an arch villain who had plotted to seize Dianetics or, in another version, to destroy it for \$500,000 from the American Medical Association.

What apparently happened was that Purcell had been willing to subsidize the deficit operation of the Wichita foundation, but they were constantly badgered by creditors from the earlier HDRF, to whom he was forced to make payments. When the situation became grave, he told Hubbard that a declaration of voluntary bankruptcy seemed essential, and a fresh start. But Hubbard refused.

Early in February, 1952, the creditors became insistent, and threatened a liquidating receivership. On February 12th, Hubbard called a meeting of the board of directors, of which he was the chairman, and resigned completely from the Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation. This seemed to set up an effective screen between him and every creditor. He opened offices of a new organization in Wichita and called it Hubbard College, while the remaining directors of the foundation took the necessary steps to enter it into voluntary bankruptcy.

Almost immediately, Hubbard began to accuse Purcell of bad faith. He made these accusations in public lectures and by mail, to people who had been interested in Dianetics. And Don Purcell was brought to the amazing decision that he had to defend himself by denying the charges. There were a series of

mailed statements in which he set forth the accusations and detailed facts in their rebuttal. A full transcription of the Wichita foundation bankruptcy proceedings was even printed and sent to the field.

I later played a small part in litigation which dragged on and on as a result of the controversy, because Hubbard and Purcell fought each other in the courts, too. During the June, 1952 conference in Phoenix, where Hubbard was then located, I took the stand briefly in a courtroom there, to testify that we had received some of the mailings in Philadelphia. That particular action concerned the mailing lists, which were in dispute. And when Hubbard was nearing the end of a lecture series which he came to Philadelphia to deliver in December of that year, a pair of U.S. marshals showed up with a civil warrant for him, inspired by Purcell in connection with disputed assets in the bankruptcy.

L. Ron Hubbard's attacks were bitter against Purcell, and the rebuttal was comprehensive. Aside from the financial data, people were probably most interested in Purcell's statements that when he rescued the New Jersey foundation by offers of financial assistance and brought it to Wichita, Hubbard himself was in Havana, Cuba, where he had fled from Los Angeles upon being informed that he was about to be judged insane and committed to an institution. On April 23, 1951, the press services of the world had carried an account of Sara Hubbard's testimony, at her divorce hearing, of medical evidence backing her contention that Ron Hubbard was suffering from paranoid schizophrenia.

To devotees like us, it was a cloak and dagger thing. We viewed all this as concrete evidence of sinister machinations going on against an individual whose only desire was to free mankind from aberration and superstition. On the other hand, people who had been made to feel uncomfortable by the scope of Hubbard's concepts, heaved a sigh of relief, because they now felt justified in their hesitancy.

They soon forgot about L. Ron Hubbard and Dianetics. But I have never envied them their retrieved complacency.

XIX

When I arrived in Wichita, I took a cab to 'Hubbard College,' at an address on the other side of town from the HDRF. It was on the second floor of a modern office building, in a compact layout which consisted of a reception area with desks, chairs, and a switchboard, and three good-sized inner rooms. The rooms were used for classes, and the storage and maintenance of electronic equipment such as recording machines, amplifiers, tapes, and electro-psychometers. The latter were a new kind of lie detector.

I discovered that Norman James was director of training, and he continued in this function for the duration of the stay in Wichita. Hubbard College remained nebulous in its official character in Kansas (to give it the benefit of semantic nuance), and was moved to Phoenix, Arizona within a few months. There, it languished, with never more than a handful of students. But at the time of the March, 1952 conference, there were many successful, good-looking people on its premises.

The class was composed of about thirty persons, some of them transferred from the HDRF. And Hubbard had acquired a lieutenant. James Elliott was in charge of most of the activity. He stalwartly shared the target area with Ron during the most intensive months of Purcell's legal and communication broadsides. Jim had come into Dianetics back in the days of the Elizabeth foundation, and now returned to it for awhile. He was handsome in the original Hollywood tradition, with black wavy hair and a strong chin.

Hubbard delivered the conference lectures to about eighty persons, sitting on gilt chairs in a banquet-sized hotel room. They were an exciting review of everything that was now acknowledged to have become part of Dianetics, which he rechristened 'Scientology.' At the time, we thought this name succeeded Dianetics, but eventually we learned that he had chosen it originally for his work.

The lectures were taped, and they form an extraordinary exposition of human beingness; of thought, emotion, and effort. As he once said about the Hindu, this package has a "terrifically workable lot of data lurking in a terrific lot of treacherous data." In the case of the Hindu, it is mysticism which boobytraps. In Hubbard's data, it is outmoded therapies.

Despite its raggedness, and other obvious faults, the March, 1952 lecture series was considered by many experts whom I personally knew – teachers, doctors, and other professional people – to be more practical and informative

by far than any psychology course. At a Phoenix conference in June, Hubbard concluded the series, just before going to England. It is fragmentary, interlarded with therapies which soon proved worthless, and strongly colored by the author's personality. But you can't expect a breakthrough to be neat.

There were ultimately fifty lectures on tape, each accompanied by a booklet containing comments and seminar questions written by a Californian named Richard DeMille, who was commissioned by Hubbard to work with the copyrighted material. The idea was that there would be Hubbard College Associates in various cities who could buy this package and offer a basic course in Dianetics-Scientology, sending Hubbard a percentage of their gross receipts.

While I was in Wichita, I negotiated with Jim Elliott and conferred with John by phone. We paid \$500 and agreed to send Hubbard 10% of our gross, and Noyga and O'Brien became associates. Our first class was an introductory course given in the evenings for a \$100 fee.

XX

When the conference ended, I stayed on in Wichita for ten days to settle details of the associateship and continue the co-auditing I'd been doing with Norman James. We were using an electro-psychometer, or psychogalvanometer, to measure the preclear's reactions, and I wanted to learn all I could about it before going home. There had been one at the foundation with which Eubank and I experimented, but it was just a novelty without the codification of its use which Hubbard was now beginning to provide.

Norm and I met for breakfast every morning at six to get in an extra session, because he was auditing one of Ron's expensive preclears, in addition to his duties at the school. But the opportunity to use a lie detector on prior life phenomena was worth getting up for. What they are could best be called emotion detectors, and during the following months they played an important part in our Philadelphia activities. They were an invaluable aid for an auditor in showing him what should be followed up and whether 'charged' emotions had been reduced.

The Mathison E-meter, which was sold nationally, was a portable black metal box with knobs to adjust and a big lighted dial, to be plugged into house current. It measured fluctuations in the passage of a trickle of electricity through the body of a preclear, who held electrodes in either hand. Hubbard improvised the use of tin cans for this purpose (number three tomato cans were excellent) and they proved to be exactly the right thing, because they were easy to hold and were unlikely to be handled in a way which might produce artificial movements on the dial.

Other things were tried: metal plates bound to the feet with elastic; wrist bands with silver discs against the skin and wire mesh potholders. But the cans were best. And we learned by experience that the very first E-meters, which a Californian named Volney Mathison made in direct response to Hubbard's suggestions during a lecture series in Los Angeles, were far superior to anything which came later. These were the ones which Hubbard worked with and wrote about during the period when his attention was fixed on the meter's use.

Ron called the E-meter "the only instrument capable of measuring the rapid shifts of density of a body under the influence of thought, and measuring them well enough to give an auditor a deep and marvelous insight into the mind of his preclear." I can only echo this. They were a fabulous instrument when properly employed, with ethics and intelligence.

The simplest demonstration of the E-meter's action was to pinch a person's arm and then, as he still held the cans, to ask him to return in time and feel the pinch again. The needle on the dial would show a reaction almost matching the first, when the pinch actually occurred. When you asked for it again there would be another dip, but not of the same magnitude. Next time, the fluctuation would be smaller still. After we had bought a demonstration model, which projected the lighted dial onto a large screen, we used this to illustrate to an audience the basic Dianetic theory about running out a painful incident.

There were people in Dianetics with secretive natures, individuals with what we called 'control circuits,' who learned to restrain their own responses so that the needle would not register very much while they were connected to the machine. But no one could fake a response. Imagination, delusion, profound conviction, or an extremity of bathos – all left the needle equally unmoved.

In using the E-meter for auditing, we found that whereas returning to a major engram in the current lifetime – the death of a loved one, rejection or pain, an accident, even a crime – could produce a needle drop of half a dial, we might see a needle drop to the bottom of the dial again and then again, after as many as a half dozen resettings, in connection with an event in another lifetime, during which some dreadful decision may set a pattern of aberration which persisted through a hundred lifetimes since.

The betrayal of a lover, or one's comrades under pressure from the environment, for example, can assume these grave proportions to an individual. I sat in tense cooperation many times while a preclear traced such a chain of self-reproach and degradation of the psyche, while the needle swung in wider and wider arcs as the returning moved closer on the time track to the basic incident. Abuse of power derived from the trust of a group was another of the things an individual may bitterly regret. The misemotion in these returns was measured by the dial-fulls.

Hubbard felt that he was free to speak of what he called 'whole track,' which is all of time, when means became available to validate it, a physical universe method of proving that what was being explored was physical universe truth. For months after the introduction of the E-meter he dealt with this theme. One of the most interesting things he did was to put out books for an auditor's use which he called 'Individual Track Maps.'

The first edition contained reproductions of drawings he made on which the auditor could record chronologically the events returned to by a preclear during a series of sessions. There are twenty-one foldout pages, each 8½ by 12½ inches. One page is for genetic track (cellular) recalls. One page is for current lifetime. The balance provide space for recording incidents all the way back to the first contact by an individual – who is not native to it – with this universe, which Hubbard called the MEST (matter-energy-space-time) universe, billions of years ago.

There is a story that when someone asked Confucius about the Tao Te Ching, he said that if he were granted a thousand lifetimes, he would spend most of them in the study of it, and in that way make a beginning. In the same way, use could be made of the Track Map by humans. But now, perhaps, the millionth-second data handling ability of the machines may permit a new approach to this kind of data, if there's someone with an untrammelled intellect of sufficient magnitude to try it.

I am not comparing L. Ron Hubbard to Lao Tzu. The point was, that only fragmentary use was ever made of any Track Map, because each entry required an expenditure of time and energy on the part of at least two human beings, and we are all terribly limited in that respect.

What To Audit, which was later published in England with the title *A History Of Man*, was supposed to be the text for this phase of Scientology, but Hubbard's quickly outmoded therapies clutter the factual nature of it. It is a loose compilation of things which were encountered in auditing sessions by a great many preclears, which are far beyond the reality of Earth man now.

Needle action on the E-meter dials located many of these incidents in time with amazing consistency among many preclears. These "Charts of Terra Incognita," as Hubbard called them, may sometime be regarded with awe because they came to exist at the time they did.

XXI

On the night when I returned from Wichita, I took a cab from the airport. It seemed very good to be back in Philadelphia. And when I opened the door to the Mole Street house, I caught my breath. The brightness was the same as the night I came downstairs from my first prior-life return. And this time there was a focus for it. John stood there, wearing a light spring suit and bow tie, grinning in welcome. We happily clasped hands. It didn't occur to me to wonder why everything seemed so bright. Our dedication had brought about a genuine naïveté.

He brought me up to date on our preclears and the association, and I told him about Norm and the lectures and the E-meter, and what was in the contract with Ron. Our attention was on one thing. This was working out the details for presenting the introductory course in Dianetics – Scientology.

A few weeks later, Noyga and I were checking household accounts. In the same businesslike voice in which he had been reading off a list of items, he gravely suggested that in view of the fact that we were living under the same roof, it might be a good idea to purchase a marriage license and "keep it in a drawer someplace, in case there is any question." Nobody had ever raised an eyebrow, as far as we knew. The sincerity of our life was obvious. And at first I was surprised, and somehow aghast, the way a yellow-hatted monk in Tibet would feel about marriage talk.

Then we became enthusiastic about the idea. Why hadn't we thought of it before? We went to Elkton, Maryland, and were married on May 19th, each giving 'Dianeticist' as occupation. We made no announcement of our marriage to the class or to our preclears. There was never any mention of personal affairs.

The introductory course, which we scheduled to meet on Tuesday and Thursday evenings beginning in April, was supposed to be completed in ten weeks. But most of the people who registered for it continued on into the professional auditor's course, which we started a few weeks later. Some dropped out, and some were added. But the evening class was stable in size from the beginning, numbering about forty.

Our daytime students during 1952 and 1953, after we'd begun a full-time operation of the school, were individuals from scattered points in all the English-speaking world, except from England itself, where Hubbard

conducted a school for several months. He went to London after a June conference in Phoenix, which I attended.

Most of the local evening students, like the day people who came from a distance, were professional people, college trained in one of the sciences. Three were from Delaware, several from New Jersey, and the others lived in Greater Philadelphia. Almost all were heads of families, young adults in their busiest years. But there was rarely an absentee. The professional course was given three evenings a week. And they met on alternate evenings to co-audit, despite occasional sniping at this at home. These people formed a sort of inner guard, which maintained its integrity until John and I closed the doors of the Hubbard Foundation late in 1953.

Several who were engineers with Philco and RCA built their own electro-psychometers, and one co-auditing team wrote about their construction and use for an engineering magazine. But Noyga and I always used the Mathison E-meter because of the data which Hubbard made available about them, including an operator's manual which he wrote, titled Electropsychometric Auditing.

XXII

Until November, activity was centered on Mole Street. We folded up the ping pong table in the basement, and John built two auditing rooms down there. The students generally made arrangements to work in their own quarters, however. The regular course lasted two months, although students could stay as long as they wanted, and were encouraged to return at a later date for a review. It consisted of Hubbard's recorded lectures, which we bought as soon as they became available, assigned co-auditing, and study of the Dianetics – Scientology texts. One of the first things we did with new students was to give them a copy of the Code of Honor.

Our first brochure had this introduction:

Dianetics has come of age in Scientology, and nothing in man's history has approached the magnitude of this practical structure of knowingness. You have been tricked or persuaded into believing that your life began with the conception of the body you are using, that you are helpless in the grip of its pains and emotions, that it will die without your consent. L. Ron Hubbard has developed techniques that will restore your self-determinism to a near perfection it has not known for a long, long time. The test of the truth of Scientology lies in explorations that each individual may make for himself. He can validate the reality of what he perceives by means of a device which cannot lie – an Electro-psychometer. We now have a scientific way to set men free.

John Noyga, HDA Helen O'Brien, HDA

We did not interpret Hubbard's printed or tape-recorded words, feeling that it was important to preserve their integrity in passing the ideas on. This was a brand new order of knowledge and any evaluations or re-statements tended to weaken the framework, even Hubbard's, when he wasn't in top form. There was ample proof of the soundness of our approach when he came to have an editor who didn't have our scruples.

The move from Wichita to Phoenix was followed by estrangement between Elliott and Hubbard, for reasons which were never aired. Ron then hired an editor who never really understood the subject and also for several months injected his personal viewpoint into Hubbard's American communication line. He even 'edited' the lecture tapes. This was done, he said, to make them fit the reels more neatly.

It is ironic that someone of this stripe showed up in the capacity he did just when Hubbard's concepts had reached their peak of daring and lucidness. However, the most important part of the 1952 output escaped adulteration. This was something he called '8 8008.'

The original text was mimeographed in London (printed editions came later, half spoiled with interpolations), and Hubbard came to Philadelphia from London to deliver a sixty-two hour lecture series in exposition of it, which was recorded directly onto high fidelity tapes. He illustrated the talks, using big red and black crayons to sketch a total of fifty-four drawings upon an enormous pad fixed to the wall behind the lecture platform. We had them reproduced in a 9½ by 13 inch, spiral-bound Chart Book later, primarily for the use of people taking the course.

XXIII

It was around the first of November that arrangements were made for Hubbard to fly to Philadelphia to lecture to our students, and we were jubilant at the prospect. We had been looking for larger quarters and were already considering a well-designed detached building around the corner, at 237 North Sixteenth Street. It had fallen into disrepair after the death of a man who had used it as his home and display rooms for many years, and once Hubbard's visit was set, we purchased it for a little cash, a mortgage, and an FHA loan for major improvements.

The brick exterior was black with white trim, and we had the spacious, high-ceilinged interior painted turquoise. Black-tiled floors were installed, with matching baseboards. John selected oversized silver shells as ceiling fixtures, with lots of spotlights for the halls, curving stair well, and lecture room. The latter we equipped with a platform and acoustic panels, and comfortable secondhand theater seats. The building was ready for use by Thanksgiving, complete with lounge, cloakrooms, many auditing rooms, and a coke machine. There was even a big private office, with its own tiled bath, which Hubbard used during his visit.

He arrived in Philadelphia several days before the lectures were scheduled to begin on December first. We drove him from the airport to 2601 Parkway, where we'd rented a terraced apartment for him, high above the River Drive. The furnishings were ultramodern. He called it a "science fiction writer's dream," but he seemed to enjoy living there immensely. He was there almost a month, returning to London just before Christmas.

For the first time in nearly a year, John and I shared our private life. Hubbard never made any preparations for the lectures, which were delivered three evenings and six afternoons each week, and we had given up professional auditing almost entirely by then. At first, we suggested bringing other people with us, some of the very interesting individuals who were signed up for the course, but he refused so unceremoniously the first few times we mentioned it, that we always went up to his place alone.

We argued a lot, in a casual way, about how the activities of Dianetics-Scientology should be conducted. John and I were beginning to feel very strongly that it was essential to clean house because, like anything connected with mental phenomena, Scientology attracted quacks and charlatans who had been accustomed to lush pickings in these fields.

Ron never openly opposed our views in this, although we got the impression that he thought we were being naive. But John and I remembered the way we'd each reacted to Dianetics. People feeling like that would be sitting ducks for some of the shady characters we knew to be connected with the subject, especially on the West coast. In Philadelphia, we made no bones about barring them from the foundation; squirrels, quacks, sycophants, and curiosity seekers were totally absent from the premises.

Hubbard's attitude was *laissez-faire*. Every time we talked about it, the discussion would devolve to the same point. He'd look at us with genuine plaintiveness. "But don't you want *élan*? Why, I can give you *élan*."

We wondered why there was so little resemblance between the viewpoint he expressed on the platform, and his acts and opinions as a man. Despite our affection for the latter, our agreement lay entirely with the first.

XXIV

The lecture series, which became Scientology's 'doctorate' course, dealt with the relationship of the individual to this universe. He said extraordinary things about this, using ordinary words, as well as other words he had coined. In general, it was the evening lectures which dealt with this theme, 8-8008, the gradient scale of beingness in this universe, in which human beings are at levels close to zero, compared to upper reaches which expand in the direction of "an unapplied potential, an infinity." The afternoon lectures were largely given over to his hobbyhorse, therapies.

The afternoon sessions, which sometimes consisted largely of demonstrations of his latest auditing techniques, were never dull. But none of us, even those who'd heard him lecture many times in Wichita and Phoenix, were prepared for the fantastic pyrotechnics of the evenings.

You are studying the anatomy of universes. The construction, maintenance, and destruction of universes of various kinds and dimensions. You are studying the basic structure and experience – get that, structure AND experience – called the MEST (matter-energy-space- time) universe. It sums up into what they laughingly call 'natural laws,' and these natural laws are the outgrowth of the composite agreement of all the beings in this universe.

These laws, you might say, are the inevitable average of agreement if you start out with something like the first entrance, the first postulates, of the MEST universe. If you start out from there, you wind up seventy-six trillion MEST universe years later with things squirreled up the way they are. When you get these basic agreements summed up you will find out that they are stateable. Very accurately stateable. Another thing – they are experienceable, which is more important.

This subject is very clean. It has been under development for a long time and has actually been a progressive examination of the agreements which came to bring about the MEST universe, which then became the science of how agreements are made, and then became – who are the beings who make these agreements?

You find yourself addressing something which seems to be and which seems to itself or himself or herself to be an energy production unit, which exists almost as a non-dimensional point existing in space. This energy production unit is quite separable from the body.

You could stop one of the tapes anyplace, and come up with a provocative sentence or paragraph.

With processing, people stop being identities and start being individuals. There's a big difference there. They stop being a name. They're very comfortable with this name, but right under the name, they're saying all the time, "Who the hell AM I?"

Or, Every saint on the calendar is represented as having a big, bright aura. What do you think that was representing? Something very interesting. Raw energy. If you want to be able to heal somebody at a distance you have to have the capability of charring him to charcoal at a distance.

Or, This MEST (matter-energy-space-time) universe is a very temporary affair. It's very ramshackle. It's built out of old decayed energy, it exists in these large masses of it. Maybe if we were in some other universe we'd be saying, "There's that little place called the MEST universe, but you sort of have to get down on one knee, and then you see a vague blur of stars ..."

Or, Your psychotic has full and adequate reason to be completely fruitcake. Somewhere along the track he has taken refuge in the fact that he was completely irresponsible so somebody could stop punishing him. You see, when a guy can't die, he can be punished and punished and punished ... You know, it's a very fine thing to have a body, because we have an agreement here that when you kill the body, the fellow is legally dead. You can only go so far with punishment.

Or, Would you believe that they give a Doctor of Philosophy degree in universities that demands only this of a student – that he know what philosophers have said? If you had a Doctor of Philosophy, you'd expect that Doctor of Philosophy would be able to philosophize. The professors of those courses would be shocked if you dared to come in and infer that the goal of their students should be the production of philosophy.

You can sample a homogeneous thing like a soap powder or a breakfast food or a sachet. When you've seen one newsreel interview with a Hollywood starlet or a press secretary, you know what to expect next time – and all the times after that. But samples can't do justice to a map or a sunset or a Gobelin tapestry – or the 8-8008 lectures delivered at the Hubbard Foundation in Philadelphia by L. Ron Hubbard. Later, after the foundation was closed, I transcribed all the non-therapy subject matter and had it printed in an 'HF Notebook' for our ex-students. Copies went around the world, to

everyone who'd attended the foundation. It's a good feeling to realize this fascinating book exists, and in so many far-flung places.

XXV

After dazzling a student group, which exactly filled our lecture hall, with three weeks of brilliant discourse, Hubbard returned to London and we became absorbed in consolidating the new material with the old. The foundation course now comprised one hundred and twenty hours of Ron's recorded lectures, in addition to all the texts of Dianetics-Scientology. A student was required to listen to important parts of the 'doctorate' lectures more than once, as well as spend a good portion of his time co-auditing with an E-meter, with which the foundation was well equipped.

We bought a Latin-English lexicon that was nearly a hundred years old, and John used its typeface in designing a gold key-pin bearing the word SCIO, a fourth conjugation verb meaning "to know, in the widest significance of the word; to understand, perceive." This was the first time the root of Scientology had been correctly identified. We began presenting the pins to people who successfully completed the course, in lieu of certificates and diplomas.

We submitted our texts and details of what was offered to the Department of Education in Harrisburg, and they gave the Hubbard Foundation full authorization to conduct its course, after what we appreciatively recognized as an intelligent and thorough consideration. We were happy to comply with their suggestion that we drop the various degree awards, which Hubbard was beginning to worry us with. He had moved on from the simple certificate of skill in auditing into a takeoff of the academic world, by distributing bachelor and doctor degrees indiscriminately. We were never enthusiastic about the idea, although he ceremoniously presented John with one of the first 'Doctor of Scientology' awards. His rationale was that Sigmund Freud had set the precedent for it, in psychoanalysis.

Most of the people who attended the foundation did so with a real fervor, a sustained enthusiasm which matched our own. The Hubbard Foundation was a unique spot on the map. It was a place, the only place, where the amazing data and opinions of L. Ron Hubbard were fully available to a succession of go-for-broke humans who wouldn't settle for anything less than a go at the truth to be glimpsed in them.

You couldn't read anything heroic into the pursuit. The original impulse came from a lot of things. But once you'd observed the phenomena and had subjective reality on Scientology as it was then, a return to ordinary homo sapien activities would be comparable to turning your back on the pounding

surf of a big northeaster on the New Jersey coast, to go into the shuttered parlor of a beachfront house to watch stereopticon slides.

Of course, there are people who do exactly that. Even Hubbard?

XXVI

Around the first of March, 1953, Hubbard asked me to go to Phoenix and close shop for him out there by ending the unsuccessful operation called Hubbard College and bringing the publishing office to Philadelphia. He asked us to form a Pennsylvania corporation like the one he'd had in Arizona, called the Hubbard Association of Scientologists, which published and sold his writings and put out a bimonthly magazine.

The financial picture had been steadily deteriorating at the Phoenix 'communications center,' but the immediate reason for his action was the fact that a serious distortion of 8-8008 appeared in the Journal of Scientology and Hubbard wanted the editor fired immediately. He cabled us URGENT TO KILL ISSUE 12G TEXT DESTRUCTIVE when he received his advance copy by air, but it was too late to catch it. Something from 8-8008 was badly garbled under a heading about using force, that Ron was afraid would make people think that he, like Nietzsche, was advocating the use of force.

In the spirit of high drama which he cultivated then, he phoned and said I should get the next plane and tell nobody, to arrive in Phoenix unannounced. We followed his instructions, but as usual, there was either a slipup from London or the fates were kind to his mockup, and what I found in Phoenix did full justice to his emotion. I arrived quite late, and got up early – and across the morning papers were headlines and pictures of the burglary which had occurred at the house he rented out near Camelback Mountain.

After I'd walked into the publishing office and relieved the editor of his office and keys in a fairly decent way, which was easy because he was a likable individual even if he didn't understand Scientology, the sheriff drove me out to Camelback. The place was thoroughly ransacked. Nobody ever did find out what they were after, although a couple of guns were missing which were registered, so I reported the serial numbers to the FBI. There was supposed to be a manuscript called "Excalibur" with sensational data in it, which Hubbard had offered for sale for \$5,000 the year before and then, reportedly, refused to sell when somebody sent him the money. Maybe that's what the thief was after. Maybe he got it. The case went unsolved.

Everything was shipped to Philadelphia. We formed a Pennsylvania Hubbard Association of Scientologists corporation for publication purposes, and I assumed editorship of the journal, which became a clear communication channel between Hubbard and the thousands of Scientologists who were members of the association. He wrote almost everything which appeared.

When he wished to discuss L. Ron Hubbard, he signed the articles Tom Esterbrook.

John and I eased the HAS over the rough spots, financially, for the next seven months. The Hubbard Foundation was always successful, and we didn't need much money in our goldfish way of life. As a matter of fact, we had the attitude that all we were entitled to was current living expenses, feeling that the rest of the income should be devoted to the activity itself. So we decided to increase our payments to Hubbard, who was not doing well in Europe.

We began sending him fifteen, then twenty percent of our gross income at the foundation.

Just as a scientist maintains order and simplicity in his lab, we were meticulous in every detail of our lives. But subjective awareness was our means, rather than the exterior, controllable matter and force of the scientist.

The climate in which the psyche demonstrates its great intelligence and communicates freely is one in which certain elements are present, hard to discuss in modern terms. Things like honor, purity, dignity, and truth exist as raw power, but the words for them have been so misused by demagogues and religionists that although their strength is undiminished, the ways in connection with them have become booby-trapped. Only where they exist in force is there a proper atmosphere for undertakings which involve the mind and spirit, such as Scientology was in its beginning years.

XXVII

One of the discoveries of childhood is that soap bubbles don't just burst without any warning. One day, you're observing a bubble, seeing the iridescent streams flow beautifully across its surface. Suddenly their character changes. The colors become darker and murkier. The streams move more sluggishly. For the first time ever, you see that holes appear in a bubble. And they grow until the surface is a net, with expanding areas of emptiness. Then, and only then, does the bubble suddenly burst and disappear.

It happened like that with us and Scientology. The bubble finally burst near the end of 1953, when we closed our successful foundation, said good-bye to the extraordinary individuals who had supported it, and formalized the termination of our loyalty in a last meeting with Hubbard in Camden, New Jersey – the state where the Dianetics-Scientology project had put out its first roots, thirty months earlier. But the signs of the beginning of the end appeared a long time before that.

For several weeks following Ron Hubbard's return to London from Philadelphia following the 8-8008 lectures, the friendly, affectionate communication we'd had with him continued in our correspondence. He signed his letters with "love" and so did we, as we wrote to him in detail about all that was happening with us. But there was an area of misgiving on our part. He had done a complete about-face in the basic rationale of auditing.

Imaginings were taboo in the first years of Dianetics-Scientology. The imagination was tagged 'lie factory,' and the electro-psychometers had confirmed the wisdom of this summary rejection of the process as sterile. It was secondhand, generally an activity of an aberrated human computer, or a disguised communication from an overloaded reactive mind. But now, Ron was beginning to advocate something he called 'creative processing,' which dealt with imaginings and 'mockups.'

One of the most popular of the books which followed Dianetics was called *Self Analysis*. It was a primer for self-processing. There were long lists of situations, hundreds and hundreds of them. And each list was prefaced by a question. Like this:

"Can you recall a time when...
You found some love you didn't know was there?
You got up when you wanted to?
You enjoyed seeing the rain come down?"

You walked?
You turned the pages of this book?
You amused somebody with an object?"

We heard of many exciting results when people embarked upon this self help adventure, including vastly improved memories.

But one of the first things Hubbard asked us to do after we had moved the communications center to Philadelphia was to publish the second edition of Self Analysis, which had already been printed in Phoenix. A fundamental change had been effected. The individual was not asked to recall anything. Instead, the book asked "Can you imagine...."

There had been uncertainty after the publication of Dianetics about the exact way an auditing session should be conducted, because Hubbard continued to revise the procedure. But always, there was the underlying principle that outside our conscious awareness and unavailable to our reason, there were recordings from the past which could aberrate present-time behavior. The purpose of auditing was to bring these recordings, or 'facsimiles,' into conscious awareness and, by confronting the fact that they existed and re-experiencing them over and over, to remove their power to key in and command actions and emotions without the conscious choice of the individual.

The concept that an individual carries recordings from the past that can influence his behavior without his conscious knowledge is almost universal. The idea of a subconscious mind is important to western psychotherapy, and the belief in an irresistible karma stemming from past acts is the keystone of Buddhism and Hinduism. The tremendous appeal of Dianetics came from Hubbard's apparent certainty that you could easily clear yourself in present time of the heritage of woe from past misadventures.

But now, he turned his hack upon subjective reality. As soon as he returned to London we began to receive more taped lectures to supplement what he'd said in December about 'creative processing'. And as a new, bland approach took over, all the vitality and excitement began to disappear. But we were still seeing the bubble whole, that spring. Hubbard made the same extravagant claims for the therapies in which a preclear created illusions as he had for returning, and our hopes were still high.

Yes, we still believed in L. Ron Hubbard, thaumaturgist. But our disillusionment snowballed in 1953. There was no lessening of our conviction that some fluke had put us in possession of the means to know, analytically, a

great deal more than our birthright on twentieth century Earth. There's still no doubt about that. But in addition to our growing doubts about the therapy, as soon as we became responsible for Hubbard's interests, a projection of hostility began, and he doubted and double-crossed us, and sniped at us without pause. We began to believe that the villains of Dianetics-Scientology, who peopled the tapestry of its growth, had been created by its founder, along with the subject itself.

XXVIII

So now we come to the saddest part, because the ideas which had fired us lost none of their validity, while the individual who had produced them seemed less and less their protagonist. Ron had said in December, "The one thing you mustn't do in the MEST universe is know ... Information dives out of sight in this universe faster than anything you ever saw." We began to think we were witnessing a classic example of this.

Things were not proceeding well in the London operation. At the time, we had no way of knowing just how desperate they were, but a key figure wrote me a description of it later. "There was an atmosphere of extreme poverty and undertones of a grim conspiracy over all. At 163 Holland Park Avenue was an ill-lit lecture room and a bare-boarded and poky office some eight by ten feet – mainly infested by long haired men and short haired and tatty women."

It is small wonder that the writings and tapes which we received from London reflected a bad falling off from the originality and factual power we had prized in the preceding years. When you turned to the earlier material after a session with Hubbard's current work, it was to smash your fist into an open hand and be tremendously excited all over again at the greatness of it. Only a superficial resemblance to this remained. It has always seemed probable to me that at some point that spring he said to himself, in good Americanese, "To hell with it!"

There was one touching break in the obscurity we felt was enveloping his science. Unexpectedly, on April 23, 1953, he issued a short paper called "The Factors." It seemed to be a hastily-attempted summation of all that had been said. A chill struck us as we read it, I remember. It was an echo of a gallant voice, and it haunted us like the last words from the control room of a radio station going off the air in an invaded city. The valediction read, "Humbly tendered as a gift to Man by L. Ron Hubbard."

Although other 'associates' had been set up, committed to send him ten percent of their gross, Ron wrote that we were his only source of income in America. But he was a strange partner in business, because he seemed determined to undermine us. He airtailed our U.S. subscriber lists offers of books for sale from England, but reneged repeatedly on promises to ship us a supply, after we'd backlogged orders to the ceiling by advertising them on his instruction. He said that all letters should be forwarded to him for his reply, and then, when they went unanswered, dubbed us the "Philadelphia

Incommunicators." When I hired a secretary, he wrote directly to her, with pages of instruction about how I should be conducting the operation!

But I think that none of this would have been important enough to bring us to the decision which we had to make to give up Scientology. There was one area, however, where tolerance and compromise proved to be impossible. And this was in Hubbard's reluctance to clean house.

Ron repudiated, then reinstated for cash, a number of unethical opportunists in the field, writing us contradictory letters in the course of it. Standards were very high at our Hubbard Foundation, and the caliber of the individuals who attended would have compared favorably to any adult education center in the country. Engineers dominated the scene, but there were other professional people too. We even had a judge from Wisconsin, who came to Philadelphia whenever his court was not in session.

These people were in decided contrast with many others who bore the title 'Scientologist' throughout the country. And all our appeals by mail and cable to Hubbard for a code of ethics fell on deaf ears. Finally, we came to the conclusion that I should fly to London to present the case in person, but within a day of our decision, we learned that he had left London for the continent. Thereafter, we marked time for several weeks and waited for his promised return to America.

XXIX

Late in the summer, Ron Hubbard wrote from Spain that a Philadelphia conference, to be called an 'International Congress of Dianeticists and Scientologists' should be scheduled for the end of September, and we set it up. He arrived in plenty of time, and it was the most successful Dianetic get-together ever held. About three hundred persons each paid a substantial fee to attend, and they were people of unusual presence and ability, from all over the world, although most were Americans.

As soon as Ron reached Philadelphia, after a flight from Spain marked by dramatic mishaps, we tried to find ways to equate the differences between us but he would not, or could not, understand. He seemed bent on a weird foxiness. He was terribly changed, almost a stranger. About the double-crossing in minor ways – yes, he agreed that it had occurred. But he had an explanation for it. He said that he had wanted to hold down the HAS operation, keep it on a modest scale, until his sensational new techniques, which he had brought with him for the congress, were ready to be launched. We laughed out loud at that, because new therapies were such an old story to us.

On the final day of the congress one of our SCIO people, a young Navy commander, without prearrangement brought the whole question of reputation and ethics into the open for debate and action by everyone present. Enthusiastic plans were made for the formation of a professional body which would insure that standards were maintained. Hubbard, of course, agreed to everything.

But nothing happened along those lines. We didn't really expect that it would. Hubbard set up headquarters across the river in Camden, and almost without discussing it, we began concluding the existence of the Hubbard Foundation in Philadelphia.

On October 30, 1953, we had a final meeting with L. Ron Hubbard. We resigned from the Hubbard Association of Scientologists, arranged to transfer funds, etc., and then left the unimpressive premises. My parting words were inelegant but, I still think, apropos. "You are like a cow who gives a good bucket of milk, then kicks it over!"

And that was that.

XXX

In one of his quiet decisions, which sometimes took me by surprise, John informed me that he was thinking of changing his name, as he had wanted to do for years. He said that he liked the sound of John Henry O'Brien, and of course I liked it too. The legal change was soon accomplished, and he took an interesting job. Then we moved to the suburbs, after finding a tenant for the building. And somehow, after we broke with Hubbard, we ignored the reason for the kind of partnership we'd had.

Without acknowledging its presence directly, John and I had acted in terms of his war trauma from the beginning. We arranged our lives so it wouldn't be triggered, the way we might have kept him from exposure to drafts and dampness if he had come back with jungle fever, instead of a psychic blight.

When the wire announcing the March, 1952 conference arrived, we had set a pattern that was constant after that. He was concerned with people and properties and the presentation of material, while the line of action where decisions might be instantly required belonged to me. Our viewpoint was the same. It was just a dodge to handle things that way, something tacitly contrived to outwit the senseless automaticity of aberration.

It may have been almost as soon as we began to plan an ordinary life that John realized it was hopeless, because he took a position that involved six months of training at a good salary before responsibilities would start. At some point, all the stubborn nobility of his nature must have turned to an effort to hide from me the knowledge of grim facts he already saw.

For awhile, he worked with his employer, a manufacturers' agent, in pleasant dealings with architects and builders and John seemed happy. We bought a new convertible, took occasional trips, and began to take an interest in new houses and other aspects of suburban life. There wasn't anything on earth that we particularly wanted to do, but it was good to be together.

By the time the summer began, his responsibilities increased, and he began to come home in the evenings looking pale and terribly self-possessed. Once or twice, he talked about the possibility of going to some quiet resort town where we could run a small business together. But the idea didn't appeal to us very much. Looking back, even now I don't know what alternatives there were for us.

Early in July he took charge of a three-state area. Tension was inevitable. John had the qualities of a good executive – intellect, integrity, and a flair for directing others. But it was only on the surface that he was doing well. He must have been in hell, but he stuck it out for weeks, in an action of pure valor that went on and on.

I became affected by his tightly controlled depression too, much more than we realized at the time. We stopped looking ahead at all, except that he would sometimes bring work home and we would talk a little about future developments in that. He brought out all his art equipment and set it up by a large north window we had in our apartment, but once it was arranged he rarely touched it. Sometimes we played Scrabble, more often we were just quiet, maybe holding hands.

About a month after he had taken over the territory, he told me casually at eight one morning that he had decided he would rather 'junk his body' than put himself through another day at the office. He looked healthy and restored as he always did on Monday morning, and we'd been on the beach the day before.

I saw that he was wearing his favorite suit and a favorite bow tie. I didn't feel much like it but I was casual too. I told him that he looked very well for a person who was discussing suicide, something he had never mentioned before. His reply should have alerted me, but it didn't. He said, "Oh, you get those habits in the Navy." Then he matter-of-factly left.

Later, I found that he had taken the tool box with him, carefully leaving behind a little patented cutter which we had always liked. That's when I knew he had meant what he said. This was the only bad time I had, because I went down to our garage wondering if I would find him there. But he wouldn't have let me in for that.

I notified the authorities, and the state police found him in the convertible, which he had driven deep into the Brandywine woods. He bought an inner tube and used it to connect the exhaust with the interior, then waited relaxed in the back seat, with his shoes off, drinking a coke.

His relatives came from New England and for their sake I had a service before the cremation, a simple Quaker service. John wasn't involved with it, except remotely. There had been no feeling that we were separated. We didn't identify ourselves with our bodies much anymore, except in the way that some people identify themselves with an automobile which they 'own'

and drive. My serenity during that period was a thorough validation of the data we'd acquired, because I never was a stoic.

I had the only 'psychic experience' of my life soon after that. I awoke around dawn one August morning and we were together in the middle of the room. "What shall we do about that?" I asked, pointing to Helen O'Brien lying in the bed. It was an odd sensation to remember later, but a more familiar reality than every day.

"Oh, let's just give it élan," he answered, with a sense of mirth.

THE END