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Dear Tom and Carolyn,

It is good to hear from you that you are mending, and I missed a good bit of active worrying by not knowing how threatening the trouble was. I'm all for your continuing to regain vigorous health, and not only for 1997.

I went to New York a bit early, and got there the afternoon of the 25th. Not much time left to find entertainment, but walking around and some supper made it a satisfactory day. Some things were closed, like the ticket office of Carnegie Hall. So I was there promptly at 11:10 am, and got myself a ticket. Then in the evening, in the third row, and center section, I observed the wonderful antics of P. D. Q. Bach's benefactor. And applauded vigorously. More new stuff, and a bit of old stuff. So then I went back to the hotel, and read a bit of Fischer's (which Fischer? Why, the decipherer one, of course) book. Which, even though it comes from way back in '86, I was cornered into promising to write a review for the new periodical one editor of the Writing Book I contributed to (with the aid, at one point, of your computer and its LB font). This was after meeting the other editor when he came up to Madison to hear A. Parpola talk about the Indus script decipherment. Which was probably what set off the first editor to pester me. I've figured out how to do it in fairly short compass, but haven't started the writing part. And, in looking around I found that I had on my shelf the ms of Fischer's book with a letter from him bound in, a letter thanking me for my generous help, and expressing great admiration! I fear he won't like my review, however.

There were lots of people in NY, and I heard a fair number of papers. Got the opening reception (first time I'd been in the Brooklyn Museum, though most exhibits were closed off). Skipped the Roman Banquet. Listened to Ruth P. Didn't know that ELBrown was talking, because his was omitted from the APhAAbstracts. But I'd have had to skip something on my side. Heard a very nice paper by two graduate students of Anthropology, one Michigan, one Wisconsin, both part of the MARWP crew, so I knew them well from summer 1994 on. Better than nice. Very good! I heard lots of other papers, and met again a decreasing number of my generation. I was naturally surrounded by lots of young whipper-snappers, but some were really good to look at. On the other hand, most of my generation did look still vigorous.

I guess one couldn't fail to mention parties. Only three, however, were affected by my presence. On the first day, I bumped into Bob Sonkowski of Minnesota (Fellow-Inmate, Austin, 1968-69). He invited me to the first of the MINNESOTA parties. So I showed up, recognizing a few others, but again lots of young people just looked at. Half-way through, Bob said, let's go to another party. I therefore, followed him upstairs to the ----- TEXAS ----- party. Met several familiars, and was again surrounded by the young. So one the next day, following a mailed invitationh, I went up to the Cincinnati party. Where there were familiar people from Austin, Madison, Michigan, and, I think, Minnesota. And some Cincinnatians, too.

The trip back went very smoothly.

Now, after reading the stuff that some of the Roman session participators sent me, and consulting the calendar, I decided I would not go. Besides, I'm bound to go with Loretta on this year's Turkey, Rhodes, and Islands. After which I'll stay in Athens, Pylos, et quien sabe? Now let's see, where on my machine do I find that upside down question mark? ¿ That's where. Less than a minute to find it.

The picture of Emmett is colorful and good to have - but what a strange costume!, and what strange, undefinable, weird action is he involved in? No young picture of me looked like that, aside from being in black and white - or sepia and tan! O tempora, o moors.

9 January 1997



Blankety Blank - I forgot
to fix the printer, and
the envelope is all crumpled
and will foul up the PO's
sorting machines