

This is a memoir of a fine man who became ^{my} friend and who made my publication of my first book possible. He died yesterday, the day DK urged an autobiography on me. So, DK and others some of whom know some of this, this fragment, with a few digressions about those early days, to leave a record ~~of~~ of his indispensable help, of what it led to and of how it came to pass. *And of my appreciation.*

Earlier I recorded a bit more about Sammie and how, on his own, he launched me on New York radio and TV that made a success of that first book and bombed Epstein's into premature paperback.

Save for my ~~few~~ OSS days friends, all were complete strangers to me.

~~His~~ OSS was not at all as that slurring ignoramus Harry Livingstone says, as usual from the profundity of his ignorance.

But that also is true of all else he said about me as in small relevant part is in this hasty memoir of a fine, principled, generous and caring man.

HW 11/6/93

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OBITUARIES

Hubert Leckie, 80, Dies; Was Graphic Designer

Hubert Leckie, 80, a graphic designer and adjunct professor at American University and the Corcoran School of Art, died Nov. 3 at the Bethesda Rehabilitation and Nursing Center of complications related to a stroke.

Mr. Leckie, a resident of Washington, was born in Saskatchewan and raised in Chicago. He studied architecture in Chicago at Crane Junior College, served an apprenticeship and studied at the New Bauhaus, where he later became an instructor of letter forms. In 1945, he came to Washington as a Navy serviceman assigned to the Overall Logistics Plans Committee.

After his discharge from the Navy, he was art director with M. Belmont Ver Standig Advertising Agency here. Later, he worked for a design studio, Presentation Inc. In 1952, he opened his own business as an independent graphic designer. Among his clients were the Washington National Cathedral, the Phillips Collection, Smithsonian Press and the Corcoran Gallery of Art. He also had done work for such community groups as the Jones-Haywood School of Ballet and the D.C. Statehood Party. His design work won prizes from various local and national organizations.

His courses at American University and the Corcoran School included graphic design, typography and the history of graphic design.

Mr. Leckie was a past president of the Washington chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, a founding member of the Art Directors Club of Metropolitan Washington and a member of the International Typographical Association. He also was a violinist and played in various string quartets throughout his adult life.

Survivors include his wife of 53 years, Mary Leckie of Washington; two daughters, Christina Leckie of Alexandria and Barbara Leckie of Washington; a sister, Olive Balow of Northbrook, Ill.; a brother, Walter Leckie of Arlington Heights, Ill.; and two grandchildren.

Hubert Leckie, one of those who made what I've done possible 11/6/93

By coincidence, on the last day of a week on which I've had three people press an autobiography on me, last night by an Ohio history teacher, the lead obit in today's Washington Post is Hubie's. Without Hubie's friendship and assistance I doubt I'd have been able to publish Whitewash.

In the late Spring or early summer of 1965 there were several indications^{activity} that ^{the} book might be pirated in France. While I no longer recall the specifics the French cultural attache was wonderful, even providing me with free counsel in New York, the embassy's lawyer.

By then it was apparent that virtually the entire publishing industry was actually afraid to publish the first book on the Warren Report. In the end, before I published it myself, I had over 100 rejections internationally, without a single adverse editorial comment.

Whether or not on that lawyer's advice I decided to publish a limited edition of it to protect it and my rights in it and to continue striving for normal, commercial publication. Only I hadn't the slightest idea how to do that. I did, however, have friends from my OSS days I thought^{would} counsel^{and} advise me.

My first OSS assigned was in the ^{part} of catchall Presentation Branch. It had two parts. I was in the writing half and the artists had the other half. The best known of those artist was Eero Saarinen, the architect and furniture designer. My favorite, the one I found warmest as a person, was the Austrian ~~refugee~~ refugee, Henry Koerner. After the war Henry enjoyed some success in New York. He then did, among other things, covers for TIME magazine. The chief of that section was named McLaughlin. After the war he and some of the others started a commercial shop that included designs, Presentation, Inc. When we farmed some of them were customers. So, I went to Mac (Laughlin) for advice. He sent me to ^{my} Hubie, then in the Dupont Circle Building.

I digress for a story about how anti-Semitism made a great success of my friend and former neighbor who then either still owned the Dupont Circle Building or had only recently sold it.

My first apartment in Washington when I worked for the Senate, was in the heart of a black almost slum near the Senate Office Building. It was at 313 H St., NW, an easy walk also from the Government Printing Office where I was often late at night and in the wee hours. It was only a four-block walk. The apartment was made when the owner of one of the hock shops in that block, Charlie Weisstein, rebuilt the upper stories of two adjoining store-front properties he own^{ed}. Charlie and his wife were wonderful to Lil and me when we married, to me first. They had their first furniture in storage somewhere in those buildings and they let me/us have chests of drawers that we still have and use for storage for \$10 each. Danny Weitzman had the other hock shop. He, his wife, Lil and I

became friends. Danny was not much older than I if at all older. He had been fired from a Pennsylvania Railroad office job because of anti-Semitism there. ^{His workshop} He somehow managed to prosper and, bright and daring, he became an entrepreneur. The Dupont Circle Building was only one of his properties. He also was our customer when we farmed. He then lived in a fine section of upper northwest just above Walter Reed Hospital. Danny was a politically liberal capitalist. The 1st time I saw him was when he had a magnificent upper-floor, perhaps ^{penthouse}, on Sutton Place, with a great view of the East River.

I told Hubie what Mac had sent me to him for and he called in his associate from a connecting office, Sammie Abbott, another commercial artist of Arabic extraction, originally from a successful Ithica, New York family.

The obit ^{re}fers to Hubie's assistants to those who seek statehood for the District. Sammie was a leader in that. The probability is that Washington would not have its Metro system of subways without Sammie. He led that fight with rare ^{carving out} imagination, coining the slogans, doing the art work, leading protests and sitdown ranging from the city council meetings from which he was ejected often to sitting down before bulldozers to prevent the construction of highways, particularly of Interstate 95 ^{that} was planned would have gone through the heart of Washington. Of the slogans and art work he did fighting that I recall "White Man's Road through the Black Man's Home." He actually fought and beat the highway and concrete lobbies in the Congress! ^{Arrested often.}

Sammie, who died several years ago after becoming Takoma Park mayor and reorienting the thinking of its people and converting it into a thinking, caring area in which the young and the old lived in harmony. As we discussed my problem he told me how to have Lil retype the manuscript, single spaced, on legal-sized paper, so that it would reduce before the offset cameras for printing into a 6x9 page. He gave some special blue pencils with a color the offset film did not pick up. I then ^{filed} all those sheets of paper to give Lil the margins and she did the retyping. (later I had those pages printed with those blue ^{leaders} margins beyond which she should not type.)

As Sammie had told me, when we had that done we returned to him. He then made some phone calls to friends who were also his or their customers and after shopping around for us sent us to a Rickville firm with the most modern, high-speed xeroxes of that era. They offered the lowest price, their actual cost, if Lil and I did the work. I think it was about two cents a page and I think they trusted out court. So, Lil and I "printed" that first "limited" edition of ~~What~~ Whitewash. It was of either 50 copies or something near that number.

The next day I was at the copyright office where, fortunately, I wound up with a fine and caring young man, younger than I by quite a bit, and he then told me what to do and what to be careful not to do in filing for copyright. I took it to him, he looked it over, said it was all OK, and he filed it for me. As he later did all the other books I published.

Sammy then also introduced me to Manny Fontana, who owned the Double ~~Dot~~ Dot printing plant rather far out in northeast Washington. Manny ~~said~~ ^{has} said that when I decided to print the book, if I did, he would extend credit for the job. *I was broke & in debt.*

That was in August, 1965. As I remember the copyright date in August 18.

It was not until April, 1966 that I decided I had no alternative to quitting and giving up of printing the book myself. I never thought of anything other than printing the book.

What decided me to stop trying to get commercial publication was W.W. Norton. They had sat on the books for at least three months. (I made no exclusive offers after the first two or three.) Tom Wicker, then the New York Times Washington bureau chief, had recommended that they do the printing. He had also sent that copy of the manuscript to Harrison Salisbury, then the managing editor, *after he read it.*

(In not later than ~~that~~ ^{that} September I took a copy of the "Whitewash II" manuscript to Salisbury. It was the day they fired famed critic Stanley ~~Kauffman~~ ^{Kauffman}. I sat and waited for him so long on the hard wooden bench at the entrance to the newsroom that I was asleep sitting up when he was free and awakened me. He took the ms, said he'd read it, and several days later he asked me to go to New York to meet with some reporters he was going to ^{do} signed to following it up. I remember one was Peter Kihss. *He* became a friend and did half-page stories on that and the following books other than Post Mortem. When it went to the printer, I went to the hospital with my first venous thrombosis. Another of those reports ^{was} named Roberts. *He* is the one sent to the Archives. When he reported that he could not find a single one of the records I quoted and cited, that ended the 'Times' second look at the JFK assassination. Kihss later told me that it was sabotaged from the inside. Martin Waldron, who became a good friend, told me that the same thing

had happened with the first looksee, of which he was part. The copy of the ms. that ~~Salisbury~~ Salisbury mailed back to me is one of those that never reached me. *Another, digression,* was from a Fischer A.G., publisher in Germany. I later learned, I think from ~~her~~ ^{a Fischer woman named Stephanie} at an American Booksellers Association annual convention/show that they had gone for the book, had written me several times with offers, and that when I had not responded had mailed ~~me~~ ^{the} ms. ^{back}. None of the letters or ~~them~~ ^{them} ever reached me. That was when as the ^{church} ~~church~~ committee later established, the FBI was intercepting mail at the main New York Post Office as well as several others and delivering it to the CIA.)

Norton had asked me to reorganize the book into what amounted to charging the government with conspiring to kill JFK (as Gianciacomo Feltrinelli did the next year after he published an Italian edition of Whitewash), that I would not do even though the vice president and chief editor name Eric W. ^{W²} wrote me if I did that it would be "a singularly important book and they would be glad to publish it," close to verbatim. I ~~had~~ ^{have}

that letter in a full file drawer of records on the non-publishing history of Whitewash in a basement file labelled "BOOK."

When I decided to publish the book myself I made the preliminary arrangement for delivering media copies and then drove into to Manny's Double Dot Press with the camera-ready copy. But Manny was then overloaded with printing and could not do it for a while because all his large jobs had been promised for specific days. He said he would make ^{other} the arrangements for me and he did. He also said that he'd save me money because he had some free camera time and his son-in-law handled that. So, that youngster and I shot the pages. Perhaps I am wrong on this, that the boy and I did that with later books, but I now think that we did and that I went over all the "blues" that are proofs of this photographing and placement of the pages of the film for printing because I do remember going over those prints that look like budding blueprints on the illuminated table at Manny's. If the film was not shot that way it was shot at the printer to whom Manny sent me with Manny personally guaranteeing Pathfinder Press that he would be responsible for the cost if I did not pay.

All was hunky-dorey at Pathfinder, in deep southeast Washington, and I was to have the books in time for May 7 distribution.

Then, toward the end of the week before, Sammie phoned me and told me to get there in a hurry, that he had heard from Manny and that Manny had told him that Pathfinder had backed out. I saw both and then drove down to Pathfinder. Where they were very honest with me, although they ~~were~~ had messed some of the film up, as I soon learned. They told me that the presses were ready to roll when their lawyer reminded them that more than 90 percent of their business was with the government and that the government would not like my book. So they broke the deal with, literally, the press ready to roll.

That was one time I was not really able to think clearly. So before leaving Pathfinder, while they were getting my property ready to return to me (and the stinkers could have given me the plates from which the books are printed and saved me that cost, without any cost to them, but they didn't) I decided to phone my conservative British reporter friend, the late Steve Barber, of the London Standard. Steve was the reporter who had expressed most interest, we had visited back and forth and he had let me use his National Press Building ^{office} as my own. Even the phone for long-distance calls. Steve had no difficulty perceiving how ~~upset~~ upset I was so he told me to calm down, to come on in, and he'd see if he could think of something by the time I got there. He had. He had been interested and I'd kept him fully informed. He pushed a piece of paper over and said, "Call his home first." ^{as the Standard's}

They were the ^{brother} ~~press~~ of the late Bill Loeb, without doubt the most ultra-conservative ^{CM} newspaper publisher in the country. His main paper was the Manchester, New Hampshire, Union Leader. His home was at Pride's crossing, Mass.

How I got to Loeb is a bit unusual.

Before World War II, when I was the Senate committee's editor, Henry Zon was the Wash-

ington correspondent of the labor news service, The Federated Press. ⁴ His clients were mostly trade unions. He and his then wife, ⁴ "il and I became friends. When I did not have to work on a weekend night with them living only a little more than a block from us and with the nearest bowling alley only ~~two~~ three blocks from their home, we bowled often. Often at least in terms of the free nights I had.

Henry was one of the reporters who covered our hearings regularly. He was also one of these who came to my office to read the galleys of the hearing transcripts before the volumes were published, usually before all the corrections were made. I sent galleys to the witnesses for them to read and if they desired, to make corrections. I was the sole judge of whether their corrections were acceptable and there never was any problems on that. I also had extra galleys in those days long before xeroxing, and I loaned them out and gave them away. That was part of my job. I remember that one to whom I mailed every thing in alley other than reports before they were filed with the Senate was Isadore Feinstein. He was then writing editorials for the New York Post when ⁴ it was owned by his friend J. David Stern, for whom Izzy had begun a a reporter on his Camden, New Jersey paper. I think he then was switched to the since-defunct Liberal Philadelphia Record, the liveliest newspaper of my youth, the ^{paper} ~~paper~~ of which I picked up the bulldog edition on my way home from the Wilmington Morning News for which I then worked (I think the charge was two cents but it may have been a nickel). Izzy got involved in one of the first cases against a newspaper under the FDR codes or laws, against Stern, and they ~~parted company~~ parted company. ^{and he became L.F.A.M.} It was then that we became friends. But when he was in New York I had been told to mail him the proofs and I did, without fail. When Henry was sent to me by a superior to read and write about some galleys of hearings about to be printed he wrote an accurate story about a secret session, secret not in any classified sense, just secret to hide their discussions, of the Special Conference Committee. As I now recall that was part of or affiliated with the National Association of Manufacturers. Harry Anderson, a General Motors vice president who handled labor relations, told his associates at the session, all labor-related executives, that they needed what GM had, a Black Legion. They were thugs who beat labor leaders and others up, engaged in all sorts of violence including murders and in general was used to break up union activities. Well, of course that was scandalous and there were complaints to the committee chairman, Robert M. La Follete, Sr., a man anything but his father's son. He was so much the worst employer I ever had, for the short period of time I was on the committee's payroll, that I had to quit to have the eye operation that had been recommended. Once he got the pressure of the amount of work I did that nobody else, and more than one worked on it, he hired me back at a small raise. But the committee's Chief file clerk, a fine woman my mother's age, Ruth Shields, whose desk was next to mine, was so disturbed that I was doing so ^{much} ~~more~~ work for so little pay, she spoke to her husband Bob, a sugar-interest lobbyist, and he spoke to ~~friends~~ friends of his in Agriculture, and soon I was the administrative assistant to the head of the agency so much Eleanor Roosevelt's interest, the Farm Security Administration

I was there only ^Cone, to meet my immediate boss for whom I never worked a day, the head of the agency. I had an office, a phone, a secretary and I never knew or saw any of them! I was immediately detailed to the committee. So, when LaFollette fired me for ~~me~~ the non-existing sin of ^{doing} my assigned duties, he could not fire me at all, all he could do was return ^{me} to the FSA. But the entire staff knew it was an indecency so, because I'd literally put in years of voluntary, unpaid overtime, the Senator agreed to delay my return to FSA for some months so I could get a little of what was more than due me in overtime and so I could use that time to look around when I decided not to go to FSA but to try to return to writing, as I did.

LaFollette was peeved at me for something else and he used this firing that was no firing as an excuse for getting rid of me over that.

Gardner "Pat" Jackson, one of the most liberal and effective lobbyists of that era, one of the fathers of that committee, was then one of John L. Lewis's lobbyists. He was with Labor's Non-Partisan League that Lewis organized to lobby for his mine-workers union, Pat and I were friends. LaFollette figured, I think correctly but without principle, that he had gotten all the political benefit he could from his committee and wanted to end it, having first loaded the staff with careerists who did not give a damn about the work but wanted the jobs on their future employment applications. I wanted to end the committee, as those fink careerists also did so they could move upward. But Pat, who knew that it was also Mrs. Roosevelt's sincere interest, wanted the committee to continue long enough for the planned hearing, on corporate farming in California. Pat and I did the lobbying. Which is to say that he did just about all of it but I kept him under control and did most of his thinking for him when he stayed drunk most of the time with his wife and kids spending the summer on Cape Cod.

I got some pretty daring ideas, not uncommon for the young, and he did fanstastically with them. He did succeed and over even FDR's objections, the Senate continued the committee's life. As I've said often, if ~~anything~~ anyone thinks I did wrong to help with that lobbying, which LaFollette hated and really wanted to fire me for and did not dare, independent judgment can be made by those who read Steinback's Grapes of Wrath or saw that Henry Ford movie. It was the incredible abuse of these farmers and their families, "dust bowl" victims of that day, mostly from Oklahoma and Arkansas. They were called "Okies" and "Arkies". What Steinback reported is what those hearings established with evidence.

With both Posner and now Livingstone making slurring reference to this I note the fact, not the slander. I leaked nothing. I had nothing to leak. I did only my job. And what was involved was not even leakable. It was the public record.

And my friend Henry Zon's story ^{did} lead to it.

After World War II, in which Henry was a lieutenant in ONI, he and a former Labor's

Non-Partisan League writer, named ^{Henry} Fleischer, former the first labor advertising and promotion agency. Because he as well informed and well-connected when I was having so much trouble getting Whitewash published, I went to ask advice from Henry. He thought for a minute and then, with a broad smile, said listen to me and pay attention because what I'll suggest is not what you'll probably think it is. He then told me to go down to Jimmy Hoffa's building near the Capitol building and to see Sid Zagri. He said he'd call first. Zagri saw me right away, thought for a minute and then said almost what Henry had about what he would say. He also said he'd make a call first. He suggested that I write and send a copy of the limited edition to of all people, Bill Loeb of the Union Leader!

I did and before long I heard from Loeb. Calls and letters ensued as he tried to help he. He and his wife Nackie ^{by} Scripps, I suppose of the Scripps newspapering family, were both excited by the book. Loeb had two different lawyers give it libel readings. If he had not run his papers from Pride's Crossing and if his secretary had not slipped up, Henry Regnery would have published the book in late 1965, Dhe forgot to send it and when she did I had it being manufactured.

So, with the tab for the call paid by the Standard I phoen phoned hill at Pride's Crossing. I told him what had happened. He thought for a minute and then told me to go to Merkle Press and see Tommy Crowell, whose assistant was Mehrle Delancey, and that he would phone first. Apparently Bill had also guaranteed payment because that was never a factor. But Tommy was a bit uneasy. He sent me to their lawyer whose office was at the corner south of the Dupont Circle Building. He listened to me for a few minutes and said wait a minute. He called Tommy and said what in the hell did you send this man to me for? I'm not your collection agency. And he tells me he told you to call the president of his bank and what that man would tell you, that he is in debt and the bank does not know how but he meets his payments. So, why don't you call that man? Or have you some other reason? He waited for Tommy to speak, what he said I did not hear, and then he said something like is there anything lewd or indecent in the book? Anything that could incite ^{or depart} something wrong? Tommy apparently said not, So, this very conservative ~~latter~~ lawyer said, look, Tommy-you ^{are} a printer. This man is a writer. Wne writers can't get printed what in the hell is there for printers to print? Go make up your ^{own} mind and then call me back. I want to talk to this man. I began to read th Warren Report. You can't read it and believe it so I laid it aside. Now, I want to talk to this man. Call me back. We chatted briefly, he asking me about the Report, and then Tommy did call back. They decided to print it. On the way home to get what I had to take in for the printing ^{to} ~~be~~ ^{done} I went back to the Dupont Circle building to report to Sammy what had happened. The door between his office and Hubie's was open so, Hubie heard it all. When I was about to leave he called me in and handed me a check for \$500 dollars, a not inconsiderable sum in those days. I told him thanks but Merkle had not asked for it. "Look better," Hubie

said. "Take it and give it to them." I did. Months later, when I could repay him, not, it probably was not that long, weeks later I took Hubie a check for \$500. He tore it up and said I owed him nothing.

When Sammie was showing me how to make a book up in 1965, Hubie was preparing for printing a book Felix Greene, an established, best-selling author could not get printed commercially. It was titled, "Vietnam, Vietnam," the first or one of the first books ~~xxx~~ exposing the truth of what was happening there. Hubie arranged to get it printed for Greene and the book did very well.

Without Hubie, who had worked briefly at Presentation, Inc. before going into business for himself, I'd not have known how to put the book together for publication, which Sammie Abbitt did with me observing and without any charge at all. After that first one I did all the make-up and Sammie did all the covers. ~~The idea was~~ The first one was a variation, more artistic, than what I'd suggested to Sammie.

This is to day that what I've been able to do began with Hubie.

And Merkle, a very conservative printer, was wonderful. I think it was from the friendship Crowell and Delancy had with Bill ~~Kobal~~ Loeb. I took what was necessary in to them on a Friday morning and I was to pick the books up, rather the first 100, Monday morning, the day of the planned distribution for which the press release had already been written and duplicated and some verbal arrangements had already been made. Tommy told me not to worry, they worked weekends and to be there about 10 on Monday. We had list of Washington office deliveries and of copies to be mailed. Hil was not able to walk well then so she would have the list and the envelopes already addressed. We got to Merkle and Merkle told me there was a problem but not to worry, there would be books soon. Tommy told him to take us to lunch, he did, and when we returned they did have the first hundred books ~~xxx~~ with time-consuming and costly sewed bindings. The delay was because ~~to~~ someone had forgotten to call the man who did covers in. They worked time and a half ~~Sat~~ Saturday, double-time on Sunday, and on Monday I did get the first of the books. It was a nasty, rainy day but we got all those for which I planned hand delivery to newspapers and offices in the press building made and mailed after dark on the way home.

Among the many big jobs Merkle had were LIFE and TIME and other large magazines. They ran trucks to New York regularly. They made my New York deliveries free, their idea. They also stored cartons of books for me, also free. And they never once dunned me for payment ~~but~~ as the money came in they got it.

Hubie's death does remind me of those early days and the publishing problems I then had. I may soon be facing a similar situation.

THE obit reminds me and leads to my leaving this record of what he and the other wonder man and friend he introduced me to made possible with decency, caring and without accepting a cent in return. They were two of the finest, most principled of people.