

## Fri., July 14: Harmony Leads to Missed Burials

New Harmony, Indiana, (originally Harmonie) was founded in 1814, by 800 members of a group that had separated from the Lutheran Church in Germany and created the first Harmonie in Pennsylvania. In a year here they laid out a grid of streets named for the main building on each (Granary, Church, Brewery) within a bend of the Wabash River, bordered by four streets named for the compass points. My inn was on North Street. The industrial buildings were communally owned, and single adults lived in joint homes. Though this religious utopia thrived, it didn't attract as many immigrants as the Harmonists expected. Plus, their leader seemed to think folks were spiritually better off *building* towns than operating them. Less than a decade after starting this one, they sold the whole joint and moved back to Pennsylvania, where they founded Economy outside Pittsburgh.

The buyer was another utopian, Robert Owen, a Welsh-Scottish industrialist who wanted to prove placing people in the right environment would create a perfect society (shades of *Walden Two*<sup>1</sup>). Scientists and educators visited or joined him in ensuing years, such that the town became known as a scholastic center in the 1830s, especially contributing to the field of geology.

The vibe of the town today is “New Age Christian” or “Christian New Age,” terms I came up with while there, but can't define. The architecture ranges from original wooden, stone or brick buildings to what appear to be actual Craftsman homes (bought from the Sears catalog in the 1920s and shipped like puzzle pieces by rail) to places out of modernist architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The Roofless Church is the quintessential example, a courtyard within a brick wall featuring an altar covered by a... a... I dunno, what would you call it? A detached dome?



(Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)

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<sup>1</sup> Written by a psychologist who believed nurture trumps nature, this 1948 novel described a utopian society in which children were conditioned from an early age to support the society, so no central government was required. Our understanding of the role of genetics in determining personality and life outcomes prove he was half-right at best.

Up early, I was so intrigued with the town, I decided to hang out until the modernist VC opened at 10. I walked past “downtown” to the only city park I’ve seen anywhere that allows overnight camping, “at your own risk” for \$18 a night. Exactly one kid was on the impressive collection of playground equipment spread across several spots, each with newly installed sawdust bases. That made me think of a professor I interviewed at Washington State University about his research into playground safety, because one of his complaints was the lack of safe cushioning for falls. The work was in progress, with another section surrounded by black plastic walls but not yet filled, and bales of the interconnecting pieces still awaiting breakdown.

My destination was down the road along the park’s west edge, a 1930s re-creation of a prayer labyrinth, the original having been built closer to town by the first Harmonists. I entered one of the outer circles between waist-high shrubbery, and unexpectedly found myself relaxing into meditation, though apologizing to the spiders whose webs broke on my windbreaker. The center contains a small round hut, painted blue inside and decorated with Christian quotations. The 1965 pic here is pretty much as I experienced it, except the road is paved.



*(Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)*

When I started typing this section, I was so surprised to find no pics from New Harmony on the computer, copied from the camera, that I thought I’d somehow lost them. But I’ve come to accept I just didn’t take any. Why, I’m not sure. It’s true I have resisted picture-taking on prior trips. I’d rather create memories, experience *being there* in the moment. Plus, as I proved after taking no shots during a month in Europe, you can find pictures of pretty much everything on the Web, no matter how obscure. But I’d been taking pictures for three days, as you know. Somehow this town demanded a return to that focused sense of presence. Hence the downloaded shots I’m using.

Back at the inn with an hour yet to kill, I grabbed the computer and headed down to a coffee shop I'd noticed the night before, Black Lodge Coffee Roasters. I negotiated through my weird order with an incredibly beautiful twenty-something and found a seat. Having determined earlier in the year, after 18 months of trial and error, that caffeine was the primary contributor to a decade-plus of recurring headaches, I can no longer just walk in and order my beloved chai. The alternative is a mint-tea soy latte. First I have to explain what I'm looking for; then figure out what tea they have that will have enough flavor, if they don't have mint; then the alternative milk, oat if they don't have soy; and if that milk isn't the sweetened variety, a shot of sweetener—"simple syrup" if they don't have honey.

I hate that I've become one of those pain-in-the-ass customers.

The male barista did an excellent job with the mug he brought to my table of glossy wood. Regarding the town's age, a couple in their 20s came in, and a family group included a teen girl, a twenty-something guy, and a young woman. She was wearing an apron for "National Apron Day," I heard her explain to the woman behind the counter. Everyone else who came through was in my age group. When the barista asked one older couple where they were from, it turned out to be Evansville, a half-hour away. The man launched into a long explanation of them being back because he once lived here—as if they now lived in Africa. I found myself wishing I'd been asked. North Carolina finally seemed distant. I spent a pleasant hour typing up the notes from Day 1.



*(Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)*

After dropping off the computer back home, I walked to the western end of North Street to the visitor's center within the community events building, the Atheneum, built in 1976. A large model of the town in its heyday helped me understand how it had worked. The sailor in me was intrigued by a rope walk, a long lane

formerly in the block across from the VC. As you might expect, it was used by the ropemaking enterprise to lay out and weave the lines. A map on the wall provided an overlay of the modern town to help one see where original buildings remained. Quite a few did. Back downstairs, I paid \$5 for a booklet providing a historical walking tour.



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A number of its contents I had already passed, including houses from the early 1820s, some *in situ*, others moved to town to reflect buildings of the time. The guide was refreshingly open about these histories and what was *not* known about former occupants.

The brick, gable-roofed, three-story Community House #3 was home to single Harmonie Society members—male and female (unlike the Moravians of Old Salem, now Winston-Salem, N.C., who had separate buildings). After the town was sold to Robert Owen, it was used as a school based on a philosophy that sounds like a precursor to the Montessori Method 150 years before Marie Montessori did her thing. The Solomon Wolf House had a thin extra line of brick around the base, rounded at the top, to splash rainwater away from it, given they did not have gutters. The Thrall Opera House, so repurposed in the 1880s, was an 1824 Community House for the Harmonists turned into a lecture hall and ballroom by the Owen utopians. The most impressive of the remaining buildings was the Granary on, yes, Granary Street, five stories, brick over four-foot-thick stone with slits for ventilation. One of the scientists of the Owen era used it as a lab, and later it was a mill.



*The Granary (Source: Michael Gäbler, Wikimedia Commons, [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0](#))*

By far the most surprising building was the Workingman's Institute, though not for the architecture. William McClure was one of Robert Owen's crowd. He created the institute to expose what today we would call blue-collar workers to topics many thought they would not be interested in, e.g., science and culture. Now it is a combination library, archive, and museum.

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The natural sciences section featured the skeletal Old Fly. Fly joined the U.S. Cavalry in 1861 in Evansville along with George Barrett, to put down the Southern insurrection in the Civil War. They served as scouts and fought skirmishes and two battles, mostly in Missouri but as far away as Mississippi. After three years in service they returned home by train and steamboat to Evansville, and then Fly took Barrett back to their farm. A card in his glass case says, “Fly seemed to know where they were going, because the nearer they got, the faster she wanted to travel. When they were in sight of home, she nickered.” In peacetime she was a farm-and-buggy horse and participated in war reunions, “prancing in time to the music played.” As she aged, Barrett couldn’t bear to put her down. He “rested her in a sling each day for several years before her death” at 37.



On the other end of the building were historical artifacts, including a wagon built here and used for the Harmonist move back to Pennsylvania, and a hand pump fire engine they brought with them to New Harmonie. Several items were unique, even to someone who has gone to history museums for 50 years:



- A cigar lighter... from 1865!
- The candle version of a flashlight.
- A U-shaped desk that may have been used by the founder of the Harmonists to give sermons, but reminded me of an old-style newspaper copy desk.<sup>2</sup>
- A six-sided coffin, whose label explained the Harmonists took their ideals of equality into the ground after death by using these plain versions, and not using tombstones.
- And continuing our theme of death, the urn of a benefactor of the Institute, with him inside.



<sup>2</sup> After an article is reviewed by the reporter’s editor for content, it goes to a copy editor, who does final spelling, grammar, and fact checks and then cuts the story for the space it is going into. The copy editors would sit around a U-shaped desk with the chief at the top. The shape allowed quicker consulting and reviews with the chief, important because the copy editors were time-crunched as the daily deadline approached.

While the Workingman's Institute is rightly proud to still exist 200 years later, the fact it was the both the first of 144 and now the last tells us the basic principle was flawed. I think a plumber is just as knowledgeable and important as a Classics professor—maybe more important, as I've never heard of someone calling the latter for a Classics emergency in the middle of the night! But in my experience, having been a blue-collar worker, most plumbers have no more interest in deep discussions on the natural sciences than most Classics professors do in the best way to snake a drain. Everything I see on social media and broadcast TV merely confirms that sense. It is not snobbery to note that you can find modern "workingmen" (...women, etc.) who hobby in history, and scientists who run their own water pipes. But the overlap is not broad enough to support entire institutions dedicated to it.

The most impressive building in New Harmony no longer exists. A model in the Atheneum showed a massive brick church, seating 1,000 people in 1824. It was allowed to decay and die within 60 years. Only the main entrance-way still stands, at what now is a park. I stopped for a look from the car on the way out Church Street, which becomes Indiana 66, taking one back to the real world from a town that proves alternative universes do exist.

Loading out<sup>3</sup>, I made two observations. First, you know a town is really white when even the hotel housekeepers are Anglos. Second, it was a mistake to leave the food bag in the car, because a few ants had made their way in. I removed all I saw, but some ended up on a journey longer by their standards than mine by mine. I never saw them after the next overnight, so either they found their way out or they are buried somewhere in the Sage.

Driving I-64 across the tip of Illinois, I calculated how many times I had done this east or west despite never living in the area. This was trip six, I told the Sage, in three different cars! When planning the itinerary I couldn't believe I'd never made our next stop before, as otherworldly as the last. Many years ago I'd gotten it in my head that Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site was farther up the Mississippi River, and thus had driven within four miles of it six times. It's just across the river from St. Louis.

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3 The theatre terms for moving the sets, lights, costumes, and other equipment for a touring show into and out of the venue are "loading in" and "...out." Like every ex-techie I know, I still reflexively use them during travel.

In the 1100s, Cahokia was the largest city north of modern Mexico, housing 10,000–20,000 people, roughly the same as London at the time. Included were 120 or more earthen mounds over six square miles, 2/3 of which still stand. The largest is the biggest earth structure in the Americas. The city shows evidence of urban planning, with a massive courtyard and specialized districts.



Again the itinerary research had told me the VC was closed for renovation, but this one had paper maps available, so I pulled in long enough to grab one by the front door. Given that I'd added another stop I hoped to reach that day, and I've been to other mounds, I resisted the urge to walk the whole park and drove to the massive Monk's Mound, unfortunately named for Jesuits who later set up shop there instead of the people who built it.

Now, I thought I'd been to a big mound before. One near Natchez, Mississippi, reminded me of a small aircraft carrier. Nothing prepared me for the behemoth of Cahokia, however. The white speck on the picture above is an adult person, climbing a stairway some people were using for a workout. From the top the size is hard to fathom. The 100-foot-tall mound was built by hand, basket of dirt by basket. At one point surrounded by a distant palisade, now partially reconstructed, it originally had another level on the right end of the shot below with a temple and/or residence of the town's leader. I wandered the trails on the top, looking off the side from each available viewpoint and imagining people, cattle, homes, and farm fields far off into the distance.





The park is a UNESCO<sup>4</sup> World Heritage Site, deserving of a lot more time than I spent. I wish the VC had been open, because poking around the Web provides no clear ideas about why it was built here. Obviously the Mississippi was the main draw, probably closer at the time given Horseshoe Lake just to the west. (The river has shifted course many times, leaving valleys and lakes shaped like the former river bends they are.) Creeks run through, providing water, and as with all river “bottom-lands” the soil quality for crops is probably high. Personally, though, I think they chose it for the great view of St. Louis:



When I could drag myself away from the mound, I drove a mile west to one of several “woodhenges” in the area, this one reconstructed with log poles in the original holes. Like Stonehenge in England, the poles align with celestial events.

<sup>4</sup> The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization promotes “international cooperation in education, sciences, culture, communication and information,” per its website (<https://www.unesco.org/en>). As part of that effort, to date it has designated 1,200 of these sites in hopes of attracting protection for them.



St. Louis held my newly added destination, but I had to rush to get there before the last tour. This caused a disappointment. I wanted to try to find the relative of the interpreter at Abingdon. A couple problems arose given the time crunch. I had assumed, for some reason, that Cahokia Mounds were in Cahokia, Il. They're in Centerville. Cahokia, where he was buried, was well off the beltway route I needed to take. Then I missed the turn, expecting the highway sign to have the name of the major road the cemetery was on. The next interchange was miles away. I would not have enough time. I apologized to the interpreter in my head and promised myself I would e-mail apologies later. Meanwhile I ran through all the lies and sleights of wordplay I would prefer to send rather than the truth, knowing I would begrudgingly settle for honesty (which I did, and he was very kind about it).

In terms of timing the decision was the right one. I crossed the Mississippi yet again, a half-mile wide at that point, took the first exit, and arrived at the home of Col. Frederick Dent (his title honorary) later owned by Hiram Grant. To use modern terms, Hiram was born to a self-absorbed, narcissistic father and an emotionally unavailable mother. Throughout his life he was plagued by the former trying to take advantage of him, to an unethical if not criminal degree, and repeated dismissals by his mother. Hiram's fatal character flaw was a bewildering degree of childlike trust in others despite all evidence to the contrary, engulfing him throughout his life in scandal and business and financial failure. It's not surprising he was a binge drinker, usually abstaining but on occasion going on epic benders when circumstances allowed, which did not hurt his effectiveness, but did his reputation.

Why, then, does Hiram have a national historic site? Through a lucky connection, his father got Hiram into the U.S. Army Academy at West Point, NY. On arrival he took advantage of an academy tradition to register using his preferred, middle name as his first: Ulysses. A paperwork error listed his middle initial as "S," and it stuck. He went on to serve with distinction in the Mexican War, under Zachary Taylor. But was such a failure in civilian life he was forced to move in with his slave-owning in-laws, the Dents. He was eking out a living as a farmer and selling firewood in St. Louis when the Civil War broke out. The same connection that got him into West Point got him an appointment as an officer. Ulysses S Grant eventually rose to command all U.S. forces, and to force the surrender of Confederate commander Robert E. Lee.

Some of this I learned because I had borrowed four audio books from the South Durham library for the trip. The first I dove into was *Grant* by Ron Chernow, reputed as the quintessential work for general readers. I find Grant one of the most fascinating characters in American history, with nearly as great an impact on modern America as

George Washington and Abraham Lincoln; without Grant, the legacies of those two may not have survived. Contrary to the claims of Neo-Confederates, as a commander he did not win by merely throwing waves of soldiers into the maw of battle. He was a top-notch strategist, a far superior general on offense than Lee, whose two invasions of the North were disasters.

Grant was elected U.S. president after the war, and along with many historians I think him underrated in that role. In part that is due to the series of scandals I alluded to earlier, which he apparently was unaware of as they happened. But he could not decisively address them once revealed, because he refused to believe men he trusted had behaved that way. He oversaw the successes of post-war Reconstruction, providing African-Americans a degree of equality and security not matched again for a hundred years, while also helping to knit the North and South back into a country.

The historic site has a museum in the former barn Grant designed, which I spent a few minutes in before returning to the VC next door for the tour. The guide took us to shade in front of White Haven, the home Grant would inherit from his father-in-law, who named it after an earlier home but painted it green.



Because the temperature was hovering around 100 and the house has no air conditioning, she explained, she would give us a short talk in the entrance-way and then set us free to wander, hanging out as long as we needed before locking up for the night. A private home until the 1980s and restored back to its old look, the house is not furnished, which I prefer when the place has gone through a lot of changes and the furnishings are not original. Nor were the floorboards original, and the new paint reflected only one of several colors Dent had chosen over the years.

She gave us a challenge and a warning: Find a section of the original paint, but don't touch it. I knew why before she explained. Green paint of those days had arsenic in it. As I made my rounds, which I did not find uncomfortable given the airflow through the large open windows, I missed it. I had to go back and ask, promising "I won't lick it." She led me to an area of old clapboards off the back porch that I had passed without seeing the green section higher up.

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After exploring the original chicken coop and ice house<sup>5</sup> outside, I went back to finish the museum. Dent's white top hat was quite stylish, but he gave it up after such became associated with gamblers, whose activity he opposed. Yet he had no problem forcing other human beings to work for him for life, as illustrated by an exhibit of apparently unrelated household items found buried in a kitchen. As the

exhibit explained, based on African religion, "Enslaved people believed that glass (crystal), and ceramic pieces contained spirits that protected them from harm, cured illness, or brought good fortune." I would have said, "*Some* enslaved people," but at least they tried to reflect part of the slave experience. Memory brought up some small fetishes at the Nashville home of another president, Andrew Jackson, found next to a spring near slave quarters.

Back at the front desk, I followed up with a ranger who had mentioned that an earlier cabin of Grant's built nearby was not part of the complex, but easy to see. He explained it is part of a park owned by Anheuser-Busch, the beer behemoth based in St. Louis, and you had to pay to see it on a tram tour. But by driving back the way I'd come, you could pull off the road and get a clear view, he said. After taking advantage of the VC AC to book my room for the night, I headed out. I first tried a driveway closed off by a gate, but after pulling back onto the highway spotted the cabin and pulled onto the shoulder. After the Mexican War, Grant married Julia Dent, and his father-in-law gave him 80 acres as a wedding present. Grant began farming it and built much of a substantial cabin himself.



Though solid, it was so rustic he and Julia decided to call it "Hardscrabble." They'd only lived there three months when, as a result of her mother's death, her father asked them to move back into White Haven.

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<sup>5</sup> Before refrigerators, large blocks of ice would be placed in the cellar of a small, heavily framed building and covered with straw. They could last for months.



Julia was relieved. Born at White Haven, she was accustomed to more comfortable living conditions. Educated at a boarding school in St. Louis, she played piano, sketched, and hunted and fished alongside her brothers. She met Ulysses through one of those, who became an army officer, and Ulysses became a regular visitor while stationed at barracks nearby. She regularly visited him in the field during the Civil War, but eventually a rich man's club in Philadelphia gave the family a house that became home base. (Though later political opponents tried to make trouble about the gift, for the most part this was not questioned under the ethics of the time.)

What *was* questioned was Julia's loyalties. Like Mary Lincoln's, Julia's family members were Confederates and slave-holders. She had four slaves at the start of the war. One, also named Julia, escaped when they were visiting Ulysses in Union-held Mississippi. It's unclear whether the others remained enslaved or she freed them and the others stayed with her. However, Julia also wrote her father making clear her support for the U.S. cause. Not all slave-owners supported secession; as noted in Kentucky, three slave-holding states stayed in the United States.

After the war Ulysses joined the War Department (precursor to today's Department of Defense), so the family moved to Washington. He was elected president in 1868. Julia was a social sensation, and broke many of the customs of the day, such as ordering that African-Americans were welcome at open receptions—an order ignored by the white doormen. She also established the practice of Christmas cards being sent from the White House in 1876, mass-produced ones having just become available. She took up no specific causes other than her husband's career, but was known to be financially generous to various needy individuals and groups, like hospital patients. She apparently enjoyed being First Lady, encouraging Ulysses to run for a third term, not yet banned by a later constitutional amendment. He lost, and she graciously ordered a reception for the new president and First Lady, Rutherford and Lucy Hayes, whom we'll meet in a few weeks.

After leaving the White House, the Grants took a world tour for more than two years, the first presidential couple to do anything like that, and then of the U.S. West. They eventually accepted another gifted home in New York City, where she again became a leading light of society. After he died of throat cancer, brought about by years of cigar smoking, she maintained a public life and continued to travel before dying at 74 in D.C.

Imagining the Grants going in and out of Hardscrabble was fun. Only on reading just now a pamphlet I'd grabbed at the VC were those illusions dashed. Though on land Grant owned, it was moved several times before coming to rest here a mile from its original site.

Before booking a room I had debated whether to go to my next planned stop in Columbia, Mo., two hours away. I knew I would not get into the last place Daniel Boone rested before his final rest, his son's home to the southwest along the Missouri River. Money played a role in my thinking; the options within striking distance, in the St. Louis metropolitan area, were \$60 higher than their equivalents in the college town. However, a gut-punch feeling arose when I thought of spending the night in Columbia again, where I went to grad school at the University of Missouri. In 2021 I had applied for a Ph. D. program there. I am far from an optimist, but I felt like I was a shoo-in based on the confluence of the topics this program researched with my career background, and my stellar Mizzou grades (3.9 GPA). But I was rejected. I am slow to play the discrimination card, especially as a white male in America, but I have to think my age played a major role.

The rejection trashed a lifelong thought of what my final years might be, teaching and researching at some small college. I guess I've never recovered, largely because I've found no fulfilling substitute. And yet, I still craved a Mizzou cap and mug. Unfortunately, I have a weird thing about wanting to buy my sports gear at least in the town, if not the bookstore, of the college.

Taken together, I decided to see if I could get a picture of Boone's home, and then book someplace between it and Columbia. That would be sufficient, especially since I hadn't planned to see it at all. A winding 45-minute route through trees intermixed with rural neighborhoods finally opened up into a park-like tract on the left. I pulled up to the locked gate, parked, and walked uphill to get a better view. Here I knew I could imagine Boone walking outside the house with historical veracity.

Supposedly claiming that he felt "crowded," Boone moved his family to this area from Kentucky in 1799. The fact he had yet another warrant out for his arrest due to unpaid debts, and that Missouri was "owned"<sup>6</sup> by Spain at the time, may have influenced his decision. Like many people before and since, he was partly leaving the country to avoid legal and financial troubles.



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6 Again, leaving aside the the actual Native American owners.

For a while he was wealthy again, thanks to Spanish land grants and his service as a local administrator. Remember the Louisiana Purchase we mentioned? Spanish claims to the area had been relinquished to France by then, so Missouri became part of the United States via the Purchase. Both Spanish and U.S. law required someone who made land claims to improve the land, but the Spanish had exempted Boone due to his public service. The U.S. land commissioners did not. Boone lost most of his land. He moved among various relatives, including his son here. Lewis and Clark passed up the Missouri at the bottom of the hill, but did not stop by. Boone died here in 1820 at age 85. He had continued to hunt into his final years, as we'll see in a couple of weeks.

Where he's buried is another question. Frankfort in Kentucky claims him, but you'll notice I didn't stop. He was first buried in this area. However, local lore held that an African-American man had already been planted in a space by his wife, so Boone was buried at her feet. The people who added headstones a decade later didn't know that, so when Kentucky finally convinced Missouri to let it have the body, the wrong one may have been dug up! A cast was made of the skull at the time, which a state anthropologist said in the 1980s appeared to be African-American.

The pickings for interstate-side inns were slim, so I had warily selected a chain I've avoided in the past, America's Best Value, in New Florence. Confusion grew when that wasn't the name out front of the only hotel in view of the interchange, worsened by road construction forcing a long detour to get there. I walked in and told the young woman behind the desk with a joking lilt, "I *think* I have a reservation here." She said this was a common refrain, as the place had just gone private (not part of a franchise, that is).

Loading in, I ogled the vintage Chevy flatbed (1949, I'd heard the elderly owner tell the clerk) carrying a slightly older Chevy station wagon, white over cerulean with whitewall tires. Running into the couple at the front door, I said, "It's nice to see someone driving an older vehicle than I am." I got a good laugh from them.



New Florence is not really a town, and only fast food was in immediate view. On my asking for alternatives, the young lady clerk sent me seven miles up the crossroad to Montgomery City, a municipal title more aspirational than actual. She mentioned a couple of places that might have vegetarian food. I noticed after passing through the one stoplight in the old-style downtown a long line of cars filling the angled parking along the



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left side, including sheriff's office patrol cars. I drove past, U-turned, and parked next to one of them. A walk down the covered sidewalk discovered the place of interest was a packed Mexican restaurant. Among the usual faux Mexican scenes on the carved chairs were copyright-busters of Bugs Bunny and Mickey Mouse. I had a salad, basic lettuce but at least with green peppers and tomatoes for some nutritional value, and quesadillas with mushrooms for \$15, while trying not to get myself in trouble staring at the stunningly fit cowgirl who came in with her husband.

The rain threat during my arrival was fulfilled with waterfall intensity as I left, thankful I only had to endure it long enough to get from the covered sidewalk to the car. On the way back, I was compensated by the spine-chilling effect of an orange-red tunnel piercing the gloom and spilling out along the horizon, an alien sunset above rural Missouri. For a moment I thought I was seeing a wildfire. But finally I convinced myself the road had turned a bit eastward, I was heading south, and I was just seeing the sunset on my right.

Having arrived a bit late, I hadn't loaded-in yet. I thought myself clever to halt under the check-in roof and do so to avoid getting things wet. Recall this takes two rounds. I left the first on a table in the lobby breakfast area. On returning with the second I realized I'd left the bota bottle top open, wetting the table and some of my stuff. I spent several minutes grabbing napkins and drying. Did I claim to be clever?

Pride goeth before the spill.