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[Cab drivers]

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WPA L. C. PROJECT Writers' UNIT

Folklore Collection(or Type)

Title Cab driver. [Begin] : This is a guy who's hungry....

Place of origin Chicago, Illinois Date 7/7/39

Project worker Abe Aaron

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Project editor

Remarks

W3606

Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FOLKLORE

CHICAGO

FORM A

Circumstances of Interview

STATE Illinois

NAME OF WORKER Abe Aaron

ADDRESS 5471 Ellis Ave.

DATE 7/7/39

SUBJECT American Lives Cab Drivers

1. Date and time of interview 6/15 & 6/21, cab stand at 57th and Cottage Grove
2. Place of Interview " " " " " "
3. Name and address of Informant T. S., Emerald near 50th
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant, P. M., 4523 S. Cottage Grove

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5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you P. M., “ “ “

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

FORM B

Personal History of Informant

FOLKLORE

CHICAGO

STATE Illinois

NAME OF WORKER Abe Aaron

ADDRESS 5471 Ellis Ave.

DATE 7/7/39

SUBJECT Cab Drivers

NAME OF INFORMANT T. S.

1. Ancestry Irish
2. Place and date of birth Chicago, 1901
3. Family Parents dead. Wife, four children
4. Places lived in, with dates
5. Education, with dates Sixth grade

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6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates

7. Special skills and interests Mechanic

8. Community and religious activities None

9. Description of informant Short, stocky, taciturn. Talks only among friends. Refuses to discuss personal history.

10. Other Points gained in interview

Form C

Text of Interview (Unedited)

FOLKLORE

CHICAGO

STATE Illinois

NAME OF WORKER Abe Aaron

ADDRESS 5471 Ellis Ave., Chicago, Ill.

DATE 7/7/39

SUBJECT Cab drivers

NAME OF INFORMANT T. S.

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This is a guy who's hungry, too hungry fer 'is own good; 'e won't work only nights, b'cause nights is where the money is; nights is when ya play the drunks, 'n' 'e's the kind o' guy who'd roll 'is own mother fer a jit.

This guy, 'e picks up a drunk. 'E takes 'im to wherever the hell 'e's goin' an' the freight's maybe seventy cents. The fare forks a sawbuck an' the cabbie, 'e gives 'im thirty cents change. The drunk, — 'e aint so soused as not to know somethin', — 'e says “Didn't I give you a ten dollar bill?”

“Nope,” the guy says, “ya give me an ace,” an' [le?] flashes a buck so's the drunk c'n see for 'imself.

So the drunk, 'e says, “Oh, all right,” an' that's all o'that.

The trick's to hige hide the dough 'soon's ya get it, an 'ta keep an ace in yer hip pocket all the time, so's ya c'n flash 't easy 'f ya want. An' not ta try it on no one but drunks.

This same guy, 'e got a fare once what's never rode in a cab before. This fare, 'e had two week's pay on 'im, an' 'e wanted ta make all the saloons in town in one night. Ya can't help gettin' a laugh outta this one.

This guy, Davey, 'e drives 'im from one tavern to another. The fare gets pretty slap happy after while. Then, when 'e's doped up enough, Davey, 'e says to 'im, “Hey, the bartender, 'e's got 'is eye on you, you better gimme that dough

T. S.

Form C

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y're flashin' t' take care of for ya." An' 'e gives Davey the dough. Not only that, there's four-eighty change from a fin layin' on the bar what b'longs t' the fare. The bartender, 'e's got 'is eye peeled all right, an' 'e's wise t' what's goin' on. 'E says t' Davey:

"Aw right, slub, come across."

Davey,, 'e never bats an eye, 'e just says, "That's your out," and 'e means the four-eighty wheat's layin' on the bar from the fin. That don't satisfy the bartender an' 'e walks over t' the window t' look out an' see Davey's cab. But Davey, 'e's parked so's the bartender can't read 'is number, an' Davey cracks, kiddin' 'im, "What's the matter? - can't ya get mynumber? - can't ya get my number?"

The drunk, 'e's fallen asleep,, an' Davey lugs 'im off t' the bus an' drives off. After a while, 'e wakes the guy up. 'E says, "Come on, come on, it's time t' go home," an' 'e takes the guy t' his house. 'E leaves 'im there, sittin' on the porch lookin' after 'im; 'e leaves, and, 'e's got the sixty-five dollars in 'is pocket.

Take some guys, they're cheap. Ya know what?—they'll have "em a date with a dame an' meet 'em in the lobby o' the Sherman. They ride the El an' at Randolph they take 'em a cab so's ta pull up in style. It don't cost 'em hardly no more'n a flag pull.