

## THE YORK ROAD STREET SAGA AS TOLD TO UNCLE E'BENN

Winsome Smith was employed as a concessions writer and he also helped with the realigning of the history of Herospace as approved by Big Rig.

"And the suit allowance was finally abandoned due to pressure from the work force who refused to accept charity less it weakened their resolve to succeed", he wrote. "And Big Rig had reluctantly agreed". That sounded right.

He sighed deeply. Tomorrow he would expose himself - to danger. It was time to make a move.

That night he returned to his flat, a tastefully converted kennel, part of the long disused dog track.

His VDU flickered in the corner, recording his every movement, his every thought "I still love Big Rig. I do love Big Rig" he muttered but he knew it was not true, and the Thought Police must surely know.

"Ding Dong," went the message, and Winsome turned to face the VDU. A face appeared, a craggy rugged face, puffing a pipe. It was Big Rig.

"And this year your leader in concert with my true and faithful union has negotiated an increase in the working week of five extra hours, but happily wages will be maintained at the 1938 levels. The camera swept across a huge crowd all roaring their approval. They were obviously pleased that the tea money was not wanted back.

"Work is our saviour". Big Rig was saying "Work, Work Work. Abandon thoughts of holidays. Round the clock overtime must be our ultimate achievement. It will keep you off the streets and your family can move into a smaller house because they won't need your bed". But Winsome Smith was not listening anymore. He was thinking of the good old days before new technology. It was dearly beloved Ballcock, and the other NT freaks who were to blame. The NT payments released a long suppressed desire to dabble with digits, to make the VDU respectable. Now everything was memorized, nothing forgotten or forgiven.

Very few were left from those days. Herospace was a lonely, airless tomb, peopled by the ghosts of the departed. Ballcock was a broken man, leading a hundred percent TASS membership of three and one of them was a wordprocessor who had joined by mistake - he should have been in APEX. He must get out.

In a corner of the room where he was just out of range of the video, he began writing with a pencil stub he had found wonderfully preserved in an overtime tea.

Dear Sir Arthur

I have read your advert for miners prepared to work on coal-less seams for men who don't want workday hands, and I would like to apply. The Ageless Pit, where all the new coal-less seams are at surface level with double glazing to keep the rain out seems the ultimate in scargillization. I am quite prepared to give up my rights to be managed, and will sign the relevant documents when required."

"This is the Thought Police" Winsome felt the cold sweat of fear. " Drop that pencil and back away from the Table". Winsome Smith did as he was told. There was no alternative. He recognised the voice of Enforcer Codge. Soon he would be in the Ministry of Love. He shuddered.

They did not hurt him immediately, just hustled him along the, Ministry of Love and into a small cell.

The smoky figure across the desk raised two fingers, and then another two.

"Two and two make five" said the voice

"Four" said Winsome Smith

"At Herospace £8,000 is bigger than £10,000 anywhere else"

"No it isn't"

"We pay the best wages in the world. Real money. Not a series of noughts" said the voice

"No, we are a special case" insisted Winsome Smith

"We are all equal in LuSoc. Some are more equal than others and they are banded together. But tin bashers shall lay down with number crunchers and all shall be rewarded according to the ways of LuSoc".

"But - ", he whimpers

They had broken him . The smoke the glowing pipe, had destroyed his mind. He was lucasized. Two and two did make five. He loved Big Rig and all his works. He would end his days in Herospace, protected by windowless walls, making a DECU mountain.