Aug. 21, '72 -- Conrad Richter, THE WATERS OF KRONOS:

p. 161 -- It was the great deception practiced by man on himself and his fellows, the legend of hate against the father so the son need not face the real and ultimate abomination, might conceal the actual nature of the monster who haunted the shadows of childhood, whose name only the soul knew and who never revealed himself before the end when it was found that all those disturbing things seen and felt in the father, which as a boy had given him an uncomprehending sense of dread and hostility, were only intimations of his older self to come, a self marked with the inescapable dissolution and decay of his youth.

Sept. 14, '72 -- Belated notes on trip to Montana in August: scenery was spectacular, with great white clouds accenting the sweep of sky and horizon.

(5)

Aug. 30, '73 -- The Jensen ranch: sullen brute of a place. Now that I have been out in world and learned what odds are, I despair that we ever tried to make a go of that ranch. Bleak; needed shelter belt. View of the great mountains from the ridge road in, but buildings were situated below horizon, down hill slope near bottom of coulee. Perhaps location was supposed to be down out of wind, but wind whipped down hill anyway. Everything was on a slant, but not enough of a slant to drain runoff which made the yard a spring quagmire. Everything was ungainly. The road in came along a high ridge, then down a hill impossible to climb when muddy. Hayfields were at far corner of ranch, folks were forever hauling hay. Bog holes on the place like elephant traps; time and again the jeep pickup would go down in one. needing a pull to get out. The grass wasn't much good, apparently lacking some minerals. Housing was dismal. Jensens had kept the front half of the house to store their stuff, so we had the back half: big kitchen-dining room, with a pantry, and with bedrooms off both ends. No place to get away from each other, I see now. No view, no protection from wind, no amenities. Not even satisfaction of trying to make anything better, because it wasn't ours.

Oct. 1, '73 cont.

--More style: Mrs. Badgett, when someone knocked, instead of saying something like "come in", said a half-friendly, half peremptory "come!" For a year or so in Ringling, we pumped our water at the Badgetts. Played canasta with them; I had a curious mix of loathing to do it, thinking I could better entertain myself (though I probably couldn't), and secret mild pleasure while playing. Looking back at how badly Grandma needed something to pass time, I should have played hours every day if she wanted.

Mrs. B a tough, interesting old gal; sold bootleg whiskey at ~~Medicine~~ Maudlow.

--Where we fit in time: Peter Doig was dead before WWI; my mother dead before end of WWII. So they died in other worlds, far from mine. Dad lived from horseback to jetliner, G'ma of course longer than that.

--In high school, Mrs. Tidyman taught me 4 yrs of English, and couple of Latin. When I got to NU writing classes, discovered I was writing like Julius Caesar.

--Dad in WWI worked for a family somewhere along Milwaukee rr out of Sixteen. Was almost indentured -- got only about 1 square meal a day, sent all his money home to his mother. One of his tasks was to hike some miles down the track every day so his employing family could see the AEF casualty list in the paper, to check for their son's name. Dad got to wishing the guy would get killed so he could quit~~m~~ making that damned walk.

--Diversions: Dad's was dancing; would ride or drive any distance to a dance. Mine was sports.

--Life changes like tree rings; each ring separate, identifiable, but merging inexorably into the larger single accretion of passing time.

Oct 2 - Dad's nickname for me: Sonny Jim
A derisive nickname he had for others:
Schmichalfritz
Others occasnly called me Ivan Skavinsky Skavar

Oct. 1, '73 -- Half-Life entries:

Advantages of growing up in bars: gave me an early gravity, sort of miniature adulthood. Listened to the talk, including profanity, and maybe through the impatience of sitting around learned some patience. Drank niagaras of pop, bought by Dad or guys he was drinking beer with. Usually not too many people in bar, except Fri-Sat night, so it was a place of visiting. Dad often would be talking with only one friend, or maybe bartender Pete McCabe at Stockman, or Lloyd Robinson. I remember high maroon cushioned barstools, on chromium legs; could twirl around on seat. Bar itself would be big and long, endless variety of bottles and trinkets behind it. I studied those varieties endlessly, especially when there'd be girly calendar somewhere in array. Many booze bottles, though most all the drinking was bottled beer. Snacks, such as pickled pigs feet and dried meat in cellophane, which I never remember anyone eating. I can remember sitting on roulette table in old Mint, on main st. across alley from Grand Central; punchboards, which guys sometimes would buy me punches on; green felt ~~p~~ card tables in the back of the Pioneer. Dad's favorite seemed to be the Stockman; also would call at the Rainbow, run by the Dempseys, where Cliff and Marie Shearer usually drank; spent lot of time in the Mint (?) and Melody Lane. When hiring guys, would check the Stockman and Pioneer; old drunk sheepherders hung out at Grand Central, and even WSS bar regulars thought it a terrible place. Rarely, Dad would go to bar in back of old hotel; it was dark, modernistic, with cold blue neon lights, not really western bar at all.

--An impression of style: once Dad ran into Pat Ebert, black sheep drunk brother of state senator Oliver Ebert, in the Pioneer, and talked about possibility of hiring him. Pat had reputation as a horse-handler. He was oddly well spoken; instead of going to "take a leak" as everybody I knew said, he excused himself "to go empty my bladder."

--Still on style: Tidymans were the ~~xxxxxx~~ 1st people I was around who had drink before dinner, white tablecloth for the meal, houseful of books and magazines, big 2-story house at least twice as big as anywhere I'd ever lived.

Oct. 2, '73

Catching up on notes of cross-country trip: Dave Felts talked of Decatur as a training ground for young talent. Big enuf to be more than small town but far short of big-time, it has been where youngsters such as me and others on L-S papers learned to be good enough to go on; same process, Dave said, for preachers (think he said one of theirs went on to Grace Riverside in NY); executives (pres of Sears once store mgr in Decatur?), espcly at the local Caterpillar and GE plants.

--best source on my Decatur days: letters to Tom Holden, in our Letters files.

--other Decatur memories: good food at Blue Mill and at the Brown Jug.

Suggestion from Ken Twichel: oldtimer worth taping is Dick Allred.

From talking with Bob Glatzer, Smith'n project director at Spokane Expo, Sept. 24, '73:

--among rr men, yard with toughest reputation was Pocatello. If you said you'd worked the Pocatello yds, you were taken as a good man. Consequently, helluva lot of guys said they'd been in Pocatello yards.

--when Glatzer talked with woman rancher about her brand, which was some sort of fancy W design, she told him designer had made mistake by having sharp points in design instead of curves: sharp points concentrate heat of branding iron and cause burns. Got me thinking that Dad's 80 brand and Wellington D. Rankin's ~~80~~ 00 didn't have sharp points to them. Are there brand books still around -- Mont. Histcl Society, for instance?

Oct. 2 cont.

Another meang of Half-Life: ½ lifetime in Mont., ½ outside

Family info:

--from WSS tombstones: Peter S. Doig, 1874-1910
Annie C. Doig, 1871-1943
Berneta Doig, 1913-1945

--Grandma's parents, from her baptsml certfct?:
Augusta Kopplin, b. LaPorte, Ind., Aug. 9, 1870
m. Jack Glun, June 30, 1887, in Philips, Wisc.
G'ma born " "

Carol's family names: on Frank's side, van der Werde, from Goedereede on i. of Overflaake, Holland; supposedly came across in boat, 90 days trip, about 1840. Couldn't find anyone to let us into church records the day we visited the town.
-- on Lucie's side, Bell from Frome, near Salisbury; fnd church records at Methodist church there, Lucie took dn info. Her father, whose name was Dean, came from Midlands, she thinks; around Manchester or Macclesfield?

The irridescent set of dishes G'ma gave us belonged to her mother; the thin gold ring she once gave me I think belonged to her grandmother.

Small towns are more crowded, in a way, than cities: you rub against your neighbors and relatives more.

WSS shoemaker Joe Loman, when I had him fix my boots during summer '73 visit, began telling me of his past year or so of troubles: old lady driver ran into him and case was in court, his wife died not long ago. Telling me about her last days, at home and in hospital, his eyes filled with tears and he interspersed wracking exclamations of "oh, golly" -- proof that pain needn't be eloquent to be dramatic.

Oct. 5, '73

Remembered sound of windshield wipers, punching methdcly back and forth at rain and show -- and sometimes the tan splatters of mud on the windshield. Occasional digging out mud from wheels when it would roll up on tires -- because it was clay?

I suppose there were lessons in ethics as I grew up in bars but if so they were unclear. Remember that for a week or so I won dimes off somebody by betting on baseball games; whoever I was betting with was going by scores in GF Trib, while I was getting much earlier scores off radio and betting on results I already knew. Dad made me quit when I found out, but drew no morals that I can recall.

Other lessons likewise were uncertain. I look back in horror now at slaughter of wild things I eagerly participated in. At Burt Ranch, I remember sick terror when I finally killed a magpie with a rock after all I'd thrown stones at -- but even years later during a college vacation, Dad and I moonlighted rabbits, shooting them for sale and eventual dog food. He taught me to shoot .22 on Quigley ranch, which must have been summer of '50, when I was 11; the place was a gopher heaven, and the 2 of us shot lots of them. Different thinking then; gophers, magpies and rabbits, even hawks, were thought nuisances, best killed. Before that, it was coyotes; pic of Dad and Bud (and me as a tyke) with winter's string of coyote pelts at Stewart ranch.

Oct. 11, '73 -- framework for chapter of rememberings, similar to Aldo Leopold's "Rest, cried the sawyer" device: Snider or Dad counting sheep through a gate, yelling "hunnerd" to me to notch on willow stick, I'd yell back "HUNNERD!" There were about 1000-1200 sheep to band then. Skill of counting sheep through wide gate. Counter would use his hand, pumping as if shaking hands as he counted in whisper or low tone to himself.

-- panel fences, made of boards, took two men to handle; we used hundreds of them, in fencing haystacks and during lambing and any other corraling, such as shearing.

--my job of filling water barrels during lambing.

Oct. 29, '73 --From the way I grew up, there were modern touches I was unused to even as an adult. Not until we moved to Seattle had I ever been around a forced air furnace -- always wood/oil stoves or radiators. Not until we moved here to Linden N. did I know what the flag on a mailbox was for; I'd thought perhaps the mailman put it down to signal the mail had arrived. Always before, I was used to mail coming to post office box or to mail slot in door or to apt. house box.

Dec. 10-- Randoms:

--Haystacks alter landscape; ranch fields don't look right without them. The summer's feeling of achievement as stacks on the "bar" at Burt Ranch counted up. They become dimension markers, what you draw sight on.

--Patterns of working the earth: back and forth plowing, round the field mowing, free lance swoops of buckrake, lifting hay in air, brick-like piling of bales.

--We are all, at whatever age, orphans after death of last parent.

--Names: Candy Dan (Dan Candea); Diamond Tony; Shorty the barber; Raw Bacon Slim; Vern, aka The Swede; Finnigan.

--Ranch hands: Burt Ranch -- Mickey Allen, Rudy Helwig; The Swede; Finnigan; Bob Kay; Al Goode.
Jensen Ranch: Al Goode was Dad's partner the 1st year. Dave Salois; Chas. Trafelet? Joe Smith?
Prescott ranch: Ray ____
Others: Conrad Thiel; Doris (?) Schuyler in WWII?

--Autumn of '50, watching the Milwaukee tracks in Ringling from threshing in Brewer's (?) field to see if train would stop and Dad would come home from Mayo Clinic.

--Dad's visiting buddies in bars: Lloyd Robertson in the Stockman, Pete McCabe who ran the Stockman, Cliff and Marie Shearer and the Dempseys in the Rainbow.

--Dad's livestock dealings: mostly with EdMcReynolds, Cliff Shearer's bro-in-law. Ed was affiliated somehow with Walter Mecklenberg and McHattie, too. Henry Wansinck (?) was another buyer. I can remember shipping stock from stockyards at Ringling -- cattle, I think, going up ramps to rr cars. Also remember shipping from stockyard east of Browning -- n. of reservation land we were renting -- when we ran sheep at Two Medicine. Spot and Tip worked sheep there; Spot would leap into a jammed chute and walk on sheeps' backs.

--Ranches remembered: towards Sixteen, Skeet Mayn, Jonas Schendel, Jim Stewart Ranch (including Luther Keith place?), Alan Prescott, Robinson's. Geography includes Battle Creek, Battle Mtn., Wall Mtn., Grassy Mtn, Sixteen creek.

Towards Burt Ranch: Ft. Logan, Bob Lyng, the Burt Ranch, Ed Teague -- the last 3 strung along Camus Creek? Summer range for Burt ranch was towards the Lingshire ranch -- the Dry Range. Another ranch beyond Lyng's was also part of the Burt.

Along WSS-Ringling road: Cliff Shearer's on both sides of road, the Catlin (Rankin?), the Cook (Manger?), the Crosby (Cliff Shearer's dad), Chas. Straugh, abandoned (?) McGloughlin (sp?), Moss Agate, Vinton. Far side of Ringling, Angus Doig, Bob Campbell (Dad's double cousin?); on to Morgan ranch?

-- More names: Mulligan John, Ham and Eggs Barfus, Chum ("shum") Sage, Blacky Walters.

-- From WSS school days: the old Auditorium standing derelict; Springs hotel ditto. Metal fire chute on old grade school, which we walked up stocking footed to slide back down. Steam rising on cold days from hot water of slough. Softball diamond between old high school and the grade school; I once hit one to the church from there. Also, old hotel sticking out into Main St., where you could sit and watch traffic come straight at you and then veer. Whenever Dad had business phone call, would go to pay booth in hotel lobby.

-- Spitoons in all the bars.

--At Straugh place, or maybe later, Dad and I would take baths at hot artesian well. Remember Jack Nott the barber commenting on how stiff it made our hair.

--Scratching match on steering wheel.

--silver dollars; people didn't like paper dollars.

--ranchhands chewing snoose, esp. Rudy Helwig.

--ranchhands went by first name; always was surprise at paying-off time to learn what the last name was.

--Dad's expression of disgust: "Wouldn't that frost ye?"

Dec. 13, '73 -- More randoms:

--The way sheepherders minds unraveled in solitude; makes me suspicious of Eastern meditative religions.

--Sheepherders sometimes would act cantankerous in hope of being fired so they could get to town.

--Jensen ranch: the spare look of the house.

--Memory: kindling against the dusk of age.

--Things I grew up without and so was not used to even as adult: furnace, mail box with flag on it.

--Jeff: the hobnail clomp of his mind moving around topic.

--The way we live now: comparatively well off compared with the past, but with no hired help to do time-consuming jobs.

--Dad's emphysema: the slow years with death rasping at his lungs.

--question of where was best place for him to live was decided at last by indecision.

Dec. 29 -- Montana Xmas trip, Dec. 22-26

G'ma, while sorting pics as I marked names on them, said there's good reason for so many of me outdoors as small kid; I couldn't be kept indoors, I liked being outside so much. Thinking about it, I can't recall any indoor pic of me -- except school snapshots -- until I was late in high school. Different technology: no flash bulbs, so everything was shot outside with a Brownie box camera.

--G'ma also said she at first couldn't tell the Doig bros. apart.

--Chuck Lucas on Hutterites: said there's about 130 to a colony; decisions are by bd of directors made up of all the adult men of a colony.

--Wally confirms that my folks were working on the Frank Morgan ranch when my mother died.

--Story from G'ma: once while she and my mother were alone in the Wilsall country, she wanted to kill a rooster. Never able to do it herself, she put Berneta and the rooster in a baby carriage and went down the road to neighbors to have it done.

--G'ma remembers Rose Gordon coming to WSS sewing room in the 30s. On coffee breaks, Rose would never come with other women, but go off by herself -- doubtless ~~knowing~~ feeling unwelcome because black. One day while sewing G'ma looked at Rose and saw large wart on her cheek; later it was gone. Puzzled, G'ma finally figured out the recurring wart was chewing gum, which Rose stuck on her cheek to keep track of.

Dec. 29 cont. -- Montana language:

-- From Wally: "sidling" to mean steep, causing vehicle to slide or slip sideways -- the hillw was pretty sidling there.

--from G'ma: calls woman she dislikes "the old rip"

Her expression meaning a task is done, all wrapped up: "The baby's born and his name is Dennis"

--Stories from Wally: Beth Johnson had a bread recipe which included among ingredients "a big yellow bowl".

--A family near the head of Deep Creek has increased and increased over the 20 years he's been ploughing the canyon, until the place nearly overflows with kids. Wally says maybe he's responsible; his passes with the snowplough at 3 a.m. maybe wake folks up. It's too late to go back to sleep and too early to get up, so...

Half-Life idea: haystacker symbol to me as minehead towers against sky are to Welsh. (winding wheels)

Jan. 28 --Randoms:

--John Roden's memories of his dad; like mine, his would stretch any story with a bit of conflict to give himself more stature. In any story about an argument, John's dad would eventually get to: "I just reached back for a 2x4..,"

--John also remembers his dad playing child's card game with Cindy and Lisa. He'd laboriously read: "'A red card you must draw, in this game it is the law,'" and say "Well, I guess I have to draw it..."

--On the reservation, we lived out of cans and containers -- maybe even more than nomadic Arabs, because we could never camp near a waterhole. We carried water in milk cans, gas for jeep in barrel, fuel oil in 5 gal. can.

--language: "sotter" for solder. Also, babbitt was used in ranch shops.

--The tone poems of river names. Here I love the litany of the Nooksack, the Skagit, Stillaguamish, Nisqually, Hoh, Quillayute. In Mont., my favorites are in the north, where Lewis and Clark came on their way back, after they had named everything on the way out for themselves and political patrons. So the rivers are the Two Medicine, the Milk, the Marias...

Bars in WSS as I grew up:

--Stockman, Dad's standby, or at least usual starting place. Sloping ramp up from door. Usually fairly quiet, Pete McCabe behind bar, Lloyd Roberson might be there. Christy liked to drink there.

--Two bars on same block with Stockman. One was Melody Lane; can't remember name of other one across alley from Grand Central. Melody Lane was more modern than Stockman. The other one had gambling, I think. Can remember sitting on roulette wheel there, watching white ball spin. Dad used to go there a lot; especially when Carl the barber had his shop next door.

--The Grand Central, lowliest of all; sheepherders and derelicts. Dad would rarely go there unless trying to hire somebody. Also known as jocularly as Bucket of Blood, I think.

--The Mint, once run by Bozonitz? Blue neon and juke box place, modern. Remember hearing Good Night Irene endless times there.

--The other side of the street: 1st the hotel, with genteel bar in back. Very dark, cocktailish place.

--The Pioneer, a hiring bar; cut above the Grand Central across the st. Green felt card tables in back.

--Ham and Eggs' place; odd, cliquish; Dad hardly ever went there.

--The Rainbow; professional drinkers' bar. Dance hall in back. Dad drank there with old friends such as Shearers and Dempseys.

bar in Ringling

Jan. 28 cont. --

--Nobody had the literary or Englishy pretension of using three names, like Edward Arlington Robinson. If a person had 3 names, he probably was a Missourian -- Jim Bill Keith-- or had particllarly vivid nickname, such as Ham n Eggs or Raw Bacon Slim. Even many of the nicknames were only two words -- Diamond Tony, Mulligan John -- because the last name was never used.

--language from Dad: "I'm awfully old but I'm awfully tough". And in his storytelling, he might say "That slowed up Mr. so-and-so..."

--From G'ma: "So that's the how of it."

--nicknames: Skeet Mayn, Moxie Sarter

He never wintered well. Came down with colds, sieges of hacking and sniffling, strange fissures in a man of his size and strength. Had it not been for the trapping he tutored Alec and me in, he might have gone through all those winter months--which in Montana could amount to five or six--like someone you would think was a permanent pneumonia candidate. The trapping, though, was an excuse to defy the season and put in hours outdoors (as well as being a way to add to the family income, which never was too much). At that time there were still plenty of beaver in English Creek. Too many, in the view of the ranchers who would find their meadows flooded. And weasels were a considerable creek population, too, and occasional mink. My father never said so--again, not what you'd expect, because otherwise he seldom minded talking--but the way a trapped animal dies must have bothered him. However many gnawed-off feet it had taken to persuade him, by the time he was teaching Alec and me he insisted that we set spring poles on at least the weasel traps; beaver of course ~~were~~ are trapped at their hutches, in such a way that they drown promptly. With a spring pole, the weasel or mink would be snapped off the ground and hung into the air to freeze to death within an hour or so, rather than fighting the trap for days or gnawing its own foot off. I suppose that my father's view was that a spring pole was not much mercy in a cruel

be more natural than for Karlsson to offer Bilibin a few extra holiday swigs of hootchina.

Confusion, alcohol, reluctance, all would be their allies for the escape, the tall leader concluded. The best possible guests for New Archangel Christmas.

The waiting became a kind of ghost attaching itself to each of their lives, as if a man now cast two shadows and one somehow fell into his body instead of away. The outer man had to perform

Anyone who has not grown up around livestock perhaps does not understand their part in country life. They are the engines which turn grass and hay into a livelihood. Like engines, they have their quirks -- sun on snow can blister the teats of cows and you have an entire herd of hungry calves who can't eat; sheep in their heavy cocoons of wool seek out predicaments which will drown them or kill them helpless on their backs. Horses -- we used teams of workhorses then -- have personalities as profound as oo. A team of horses will have one who pulls like Percheron, but dumb; one who cleverly lays back in the traces. One who kicks, one who you could pass a porcupine under without response. Saddlehorses are even more treacherous. Four times Dad had been nearly killed by saddlehorses.
a wide-eyed innocent, a sneaky assassin.

Life centers on the livestock. This gives an odd tinge, because the livestock are apt to be exasperating.

I stepped off the train onto a brick street, the first I had ever seen. Took a taxi to Latham House, not knowing it was near enough to walk.

I went to work in the dishroom. An man with skin the color of coffee with cream in it was blasting a jet of water onto dirty plates. He turned, stuck out his hand, and said his name was Archie Moore. I said mine was Ivan. "All right, Ivory," he said, here's what we do.... I would be Ivory for the next 4 years.

The dishes came steaming out of a machine which soaped them then rinsed them with scalding water. When my hands toughened, I could empty the tray in two grabs -- nine plates at once each time -- and shuffle them into a stack. It made a great clattering riffle, like a deck of cards made of china.

(Characterize machine noises: SHHH and blow of hot water, KLLKK of dishes against each other as I pulled, klungleklungleklungle as I riffled them into stacks.

One busboy could position a cup in its saucer, flip the cup into mid-air, and catch it again in the saucer without breaking it.

Mr. Hurd had come from South Carolina, his wife and children still back there. He was short and round, and the Chicago people seemed

been considerably worse strewn through the history of the American territories -- these aspiring overseers of Washington Territory had one failure common to them all. The Civil War had barely ended before influence over the Territory's Republican party bypassed them all into entirely different hands; most notably, to the control of a gifted but erratic stump orator with the unbeatable name of Selucius Garfielde. This new Republican panjandrum of Washington Territory hadn't even started with a patronage office in the great American backyard as a base of operations -- and apparently never left the least record of ever having been a friend of Abraham Lincoln.

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gigantic to him. He described the tallest man he had ever seen: "I was looking at him right here", jabbing a thumb to his right buttock.

When Dad learned I was working for a Japanese woman, he made one of his adjustments, and treated the fact with admiring wonder. The Boss may have been a title that appealed to him; one of the first things he would ask of me when I came home was, "How's the Boss?" As if asking about a member of the family.

stay in Washington, D.C., which had included consoling Mrs. Lincoln after the President was assassinated. Customs Agent Smith was coming back from one of his frequent missions to defend himself in the national capital. Bound out of San Francisco for Puget Sound on July 30, 1865, the Brother Jonathan hit a rock off the northern California coast. Henry and Smith together went down into history with the ship.

District Attorney McGilvra, when his term was up, moved to Seattle and lived on for forty years as a lawyer, landholder, and high-principled civic gadfly.

Secretary Evans had the satisfaction of becoming acting governor when Governor Pickering went off to Washington, D.C., in early 1865. He practiced law after leaving office, and in 1868 was nominated a territorial judge one day and unnominated the next, when President Grant discovered some flaw in his political allegiance.

Failing in an effort to have President Lincoln appoint him the Reconstruction governor of his home state of Mississippi, Judge Wyche stayed on in Washington Territory, and within a few years died at Vancouver.

Governor Pickering was removed from office by Andrew Johnson's administration in November, 1866. He retired to a farm for a time, then moved back to Illinois.

Judge Hewitt also retired to a farm, and seemed much happier.

Judge Oliphant departed Washington Territory in 1866 to become a clerk in the General Land Office in Washington, D.C.

Whatever their individual records -- and in fairness, there have

Sometimes I had help. One afternoon I had a twenty-foot piece of machinery stuck in a 21-foot gate when Dad and Grandma came along. Dad had me work the cat back and forth until the gate post was battered loose; then we lifted it out, pulled the machinery through and reset the post.

I wasn't a great cat skinner, but you learn skill in a hurry when the penalty is getting the equipment stuck at odd angles in a gate. Or when you pull beside a combine with a grain truck to load on the run.

Driving the cat was a move for me, from mild objects such as hay bales and sheep to mammoth machinery. There was great preparation just to get it into action: grease all the machinery, hand pump the fuel (or worse yet, fill 5-gallon cans from 50-gallon drum, then pour the 5-gallon can into the tank). Start the warming motor, then coax the cat to cough into life. Those were a unique set of days in my life. The wind blew that summer, and when I drove up the field the dust from the cat tracks would blow into the cab, while when I drove down the field the billow from the farm machinery would sweep in. It was hot, I would sweat through a shirt in minutes. I would lose five pounds during the day. Would start each morning weighing 155 and at night would weigh 150. I went through fuel as voraciously as the cat.

Such jobs gave time to dream. After a few days, I could drive automatically and spend the time looking at the countryside or dreaming.

Swan's innings of negotiation featured rather sharper nudges. As his specimen gathering became more ambitious and his quiltwork of careers ~~faulted~~ fell short of his financial hopes, he began dickering for a salary for collecting or, failing that, political patronage. In the skirmish of the scholarly article, for instance, Swan peppered Baird and Secretary Henry with five years' worth of pointed letters.

It began in 1864 when Swan wrote a long article titled "The Indians of Cape Flattery" and sent it in to be published in the Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge, a periodic printing of scientific research which was Henry's especial pride. Henry accepted the work promptly enough, but to Swan's disgust, edition upon edition and year after year passed without the article seeing print. "Can you give one any encouragement that it will appear within the next decade?" Swan heckled Henry in one letter. An 1867 blast revealed a more pragmatic reason than author's pique for his impatience:

"I..I have labored for some years as you well know for the Smithsonian and at considerable personal expense of time and money, and I hope the offices of the Smithsonian will favor me if possible by publishing this work which will show my qualifications to be employed in the Indian Service."

The article finally was published in Contributions in 1869. Mollified even though the position as an Indian agent had not come through, Swan resumed cordial relations.

Aside from occasional ambitions to secure a federal patronage job of some sort, the copious record in Swan's diaries, journals, and

Like the vee that wedges open the puzzling name I was given, memory has plowed broad and sharp through my life. And no more than my father when he spliced Russian onto a Scottish family name -- he was a surprised man to learn when I was half-grown that Ivan is a Russian turn of tongue; he simply had liked the sudden soft curl of the word and wanted to show up a brother who had daubed "Junior" onto a son -- do I understand how the patterns furrowed into me

"The Enforcement of the Alien and Sedition Laws,"

I am reminded of the cycle of the coyote. In the early 1940s

I worked once, for a few days, on a field freshly broken from sod. I still feel the sense of wonder about that piece of land, cut into furrows for the first time ever, the native grass tipped on its side. I was part of a [high school] crew hired to pick rocks, which was like sorting through a landslide. We threw the rocks onto a truck, which would dump the load alongside the field. No stone fences like sutures on the landscapes as in Britain or even New England -- just raw piles of rock, dumps, scrapings from the fundament of earth.

slag

Some of it tidghtens down into nothingness, then by some glance fuels itself into image again.

Memory, windswept and creviced as it is, is the internal fit of life. Its bumps and contours are the impress of life.

It is the story of three people, then 2, then three
This story out of memory ~~has~~ flows ~~runs its coure~~ through three people, then two, then three again, and at last,-now,-one. I am the last of the story memory's people,

and here through me the story shapes itself like this:

Its violences hit sections of popln, segments. There are sagas of travel b our bgnd — oceanic, cont'l. So few of us folo our parents' jobs or way of life mo thr 2. dfces feed memory.

I come my. part of. am part mo has - set place, no settld life. Our rembgs are of moving -

groups which would perform specified kinds of work, each group a part of a complex community structure which added up to a Phalanx of between 1620 and 1800 persons. Eventually, he proclaimed, there would be exactly 2,985,984 Phalanxes, worldwide.

Fourier could have been the original for the joke about the fellow who frequently was wrong but never was in doubt. His faith was unkillable. He lacked any money to try out his notions, but in the last years of his life Fourier ran newspaper advertisements announcing that he would be home at a certain time every day if any curious philanthropist should want to visit him. Daffy as Fourier may seem, he had his effect on utopianism. The endless precise details of his plan worked a magic on his followers. An American named Arthur Brisbane took up Fourier's ideas, wrote a weekly column on Fourierism in Horace Greeley's New York Tribune, talked the utopian contingent at Brook Farm into trying the Phalanx life. The forty or so Phalanxes attempted in America between 1841 and 1858 were not frivolous tryouts, for amid the shotgun pattern of Fourier's ideas could be found an intriguing concept. Fourier had planned out a system of wages which paid most for the worst chores, less for ~~agreeable~~ easier labor, and provided special rewards for skill in any work. At the North American Phalanx in Red Bank, New Jersey, the most durable and impressive of Fourierist colonies, the system worked for a dozen years.

It is no news that some core must hold a utopia together. From Ephrata through Harmonie, that core had been unbending religion. Fourier's contribution was to suggest that an economic core might also work in utopia.

Clifford's father was our neighbor, a big white-haired man with a ~~black~~ scar black as a coal vein across the back of one hand. He had, he told me, cut it terribly at work and daubed axel grease on it to staunch the blood.

Sheep are baffling animals. No creature is more winsome than a lamb, bucking in disorderly fun against the calm of the forest. The waggle of tail, almost faster than the eye can follow. The stiff-legged jumps sideways, a current of joy hitting so quickly there isn't time to bend the knees in frolic. The bleat. But lambs grow up, and what is pleasantly foolish in a lamb's mind is stupidity in the mind of a grown ewe.

I learned the deception of jacketing. Cutting the skin from a dead lamb, making holes at the four corners for legs to slip through, then putting it on another lamb like a garment. Rub the dead lamb's liver. The ewe knows her young by smell; a few suspicious, semi-frantic sniffs, and she's satisfied. The imposter has a source of meals.

When I was growing up, there were moments when my family was out of money, but somehow we never thought of those as times of being broke. We had things we could do--my father was regarded highly as a jack-of-all-ranch-work, my grandmother ~~x~~ a valuable cook and housekeeper, if it ~~was~~ happened to be summer vacation from school I was young muscle for bale-piling or tractor tasks or the grain harvest--and so we were never far out of reach of a wage of some sort. Besides, in whatever small Montana town we lived in, always ~~another~~ some family led an existence so ~~bedraggled~~ tottery and inept and beyond hope that we, and everyone else, looked grand in comparison. They were poor, we were short of dollars. And we were not the only ones ~~who saw~~ to see it that way. When I returned to Montana to write about that time, one of the people of the past ~~I~~ whom I talked with was Alfred Messmer, who told me my father had borrowed $250 from him in 1948 for an ill-fated cafe venture. Nervously I said I hoped he'd got his money back from the deal. He looked at me as if I was slandering my own ~~father~~ bloodline. Chollie? Chollie vas good people!

Coming home out of Air Force training school sixteen years ago, I stepped off the train at Ringling with two dollars, both of them borrowed.

next door. One night, smoke was smelled in the house. Somehow a light bulb had dangled too close to a pile of blankets and quilts in an upstairs bedroom. Fred Cartwright sprinted for the stairs, shouting to Eric and me to turn on the water in the bathtub. We clambered to the tub and hit a plumbing problem. Hot water would roar out of the Cartwright bath spigot, but the cold only drizzled out. We could fill the tub faster with hot water, but would hot water put out the fire, or would it need cold? Overhead we could hear the commotion as Fred gathered the smoldering bedding and started down to dowse them in our still-empty tub. Panicked, we did the one thing we could think of: turned on both spigots full blast.

At last, late on a Friday night when I had given up hope again, Dad appeared. He couldn't take me to the ranch with him then; he had spent ten hours fighting his way through the snow, and there was the risk that the countryside would close off entirely again before he could bring me back to town Sunday night. But if I would do the extra schoolwork needed, he would try to come in the next Friday and take me to the ranch for two whole weeks.

All week I stayed in at recess and worked ahead in every text. Before school was out on Friday afternoon Dad came to the door of the classroom for me. The highway was bare, a black dike above the snow, as he drove the pickup to the turnoff toward Battle Creek. Then the white drifts stretched in front of us like a lake whose waves had suddenly stopped

start into the mound of mail, magazines, newspapers which has been building on my desk since Swan's diaries moved into my days. The first item in print tells me that the President's brother has peed on an airport runway, probably the single profound gesture, even if inadvertent, he will ever be capable of, and has become notorious for it.

I decide I am amply caught up with national news and put aside

written me warmly about *House of Sky*, particularly of the Camas Creek rancher my father was the foreman for, and of the remembering from my boyhood when the rancher castrated lambs with his teeth. "*McGrath biting the balls off the lambs echoes a part of Errol Flynn's life story,*" the letter observes, "*in which Flynn once worked on an Aussie sheep station and being low man on the totem pole, got to dag the hoggetts as the Aussies put it.*" Another man, in rapid printing on coarse tablet, says the Ringling years of the book remind him of his own time of growing up there, and of Louie Petzold: "*Louie was a bartender in the largest saloon. He did not have hands--you should have seen how he handled glasses and bottles with his stubs.*"

Ewan Flynn's lips with a pink plump testicle slurped

winnow out the week-old letter from Mark, in his faculty office

Dupuyer was in the basic business as when it came into being as a trading post in the 1880s. Sullivan's Store fed an area big as OO. It ran the way a store was supposed to run: ranch families would charge groceries until their year's payday came -- the calves or lambs were sold -- and they came in and paid off the entire bill. Most of the rest of the town was gas stations -- three of them, and all of them could repair machinery as well.

But if Dupuyer wasn't much more handsome than its name, it was a working community, vigorous and affable. Gertie claimed that once a year, usually toward the end of winter, everybody got mad at everybody else, and that cleared their systems of it.

The cafe was a gathering place -- ranchers drinking coffee. Ilie came in one morning, could see no one but heard bustle behind the kitchen partition, and decided she would scare Gertie. She sneaked down on all fours, crawled around the end of the counter and behind the partition, saw an ankle, clamped a cold hand around it and cried BOO! -- and looked up into the face of the new cook, butcher knife in hand.

April Fool's Day, Gertie snipped a circle of cardboard and put it under the meat pattie in the postmaster's hamburger when he came

--In more than three decades with the Experiment Station, Leo Isaac had become a nationally-known expert on Douglas fir reforestation. Isaac was the old type of woods-roaming researcher who thrived by his wits, as in his kite flights to study the drift of tree seeds. His personality and feisty affection for the Douglas fir species were felt almost as strongly as his scientific instincts; it had been Isaac the Douglas fir champion who asked Ponderosa pine researcher Ernest Kolbe how Kolbe went about finding the logs of his lesser species "when they got lost in the tall grass." Now, on a day in 1956, Leo Isaac retired.

--On another day of that same year, the Portland office became the first of the federal experiment stations to use a computer.

I lived with Christie and his wife at the end of one school year.

Their marriage at least was just starting to crack at the seams instead of exploding as Dad's and Ruth's was. I had the guest room to myself, one of the few times of those years I had some privacy. Christie and Marie's house was clean, bright. Marie's palomino horses in the pasture behind the house were a rich tan, the color of the cougar the Ward boys and I had treed.

Their manes ~~were~~ blew like flax as they ran. Marie had some of the bearing of her horses, head up and proud. We were quiet toward each other, but comfortable. Where Helen Carter pondered the ways downtown sin might snare me, Merel would have given me her quiet smile if I had told her I'd been down at the Grand Central watching a hayhand knife a sheepherder. She liked independence. It must have been what had drawn her to Christie, who wasn't much to look at it but was one of the valley's freest men as he roamed the county with his grader. It was also that independence which began to separate her from Christie as he drank more and more.

March 10, '76

Ann --

A few lines to set down for you some of the payment terms we talked about on Monday, and to give you some notion of my work schedule in the next few weeks.

But first things first -- your Victoria trip. We can't come up with the name of the country inn we told you about, but I think it was near Sooke and possibly had "Sooke" in its name. It was on a small bay which looked across the Strait to the Olympics; at that time, the inn was a middling-size white house with blue trim, and had a wonderful old dining room. This was some years ago by now, but if you do drive west along the coast, you might watch for it. In Victoria itself, the Shakespearey place we told you about is the Olde England Inn; it's been 7-8 years since we were there, so look it over and run a glance over the menu before you chance it, hmm? A couple of good things to see in Victoria: Craigflower Manor, the Maritime Museum in Bastion Square, Parliament, and the new Provincial Museum, which has some sensational jobs of display. Enjoy.

Am enclosing your check to cover Feb. expenses. Now, about my schedule the rest of March. Carol and I are renting a summer house at Cannon Beach, Ore., from the 21st to the 27th, her spring vacation. No writing for me that week. This coming week of the 15th, I'll have the page proofs of Utopian America to contend with, plus some chores to clean up for Pacific Search. All in all, I doubt that I'll manage the rewrite of Passports until the very end of this month, or early April. It'll take some diligent reworking -- including more research -- to get the piece good enough for the Times. I have some Times travel sections out of the library and will study them and begin tinkering with the article, but it'll take a while. Which is okay, considering the pace of magazine work

You, my father ... you had a saying whenever perplexed. The
all the disgust you could summon

burr of your voice would thicken as you said: "Wouldn't that frost

ye?" I heard that a hundred times in memory, and it is all I can

say of you and Ruth together: Wouldn't that frost ye? Yes, yes it would.

freeze in amazement

GETTING UNDERWAY IN PORTLAND

> We had ... a bicycle tire valve soldered to the gas tank under the seat so we could forcefeed the gas when we had to go up steep hills -- the only other way was to drive backwards up the hills.
>
> --Richard E. McArdle, recalling the Pacific Northwest Experiment Station's first truck

Down from Wind River in two truckloads came the makings of the new Experiment Station headquarters in Portland -- files, library, and some odds and ends of furniture. Four rooms had been leased in the Lewis Building at Fourth and Oak. June H. Wertz was transferred from the Forest Service's District Six office several blocks away and put onto "the big task of going through the ten years of Wind River files, throwing away the inconsequential stuff and retaining the remainder, and then supplementing that with whatever the Experiment Station files should have from the District files." Promptly a "Monroe electrically driven calculating machine" was bought for use on statistical studies—as Station Director Munger reported with chagrin, "Price $500!"

The staff assembled by late 1924 was both new and young. The Wind River personnel, Leo A. Isaac and A. Gail Simson, had been transferred to the Station. Richard E. McArdle was appointed as a Junior Forester from the Civil Service

The end of school each spring meant looking for a summer job. My first two years of high school, I helped Dad with shearing before hiring out. But from then until I finished college, I worked the summer months as early and as late as possible.

The reason for summer work, as we talked about, was always to make some money for school clothes. And that was accurate. We could scrape by during the school year, with money enough for most things, but a school wardrobe was a bit much all at once. Not that it was fancy dress: some pairs of blue jeans, a week's worth of shirts, a pair of everyday shoes and a pair of dress shoes, and a suit. A winter coat and cap.

I see now that the summer job was an important rite. It took me away from home and put me on my own. It demanded that I adapt. On my first job, I slept a shed which had farm supplies in one end of the room, and shared a bed with the other hired hand. The next summer, my job was 50 miles from the nearest town. I drove out in late afternoon, across endless slick clay roads, a ranch house once every several miles. Our ancient Dodge killed itself when the battery cable got wet; I stopped a few times to jump the battery posts with a pair of pliers and get started again. I pulled in at nightfall -- and nobody was home. No bunkhouse in sight, so I went in the house and went to sleep on the sofa. The owner's son arrived in a couple of hours, thought at first I was a drifter across the border until he saw the red hair. This summer I slept in a small shed I at least had to myself, albeit with a leaky roof.

I learned how to cope. What to do when the battery fell out of the truck on a long hill. How to keep some aplomb when the rear axle came off, strewing the truck and a full load of wheat on the wrong side of the road.

letters shows that his life on the Strait of Juan de Fuca passed pleasurably enough. During the Civil War, Swan taught at Neah Bay, a Makah Indian village on Cape Flattery. He recalled that his uncle, veteran of an 1806 fur trading voyage to the Pacific Northwest, had told and retold tales of Cape Flattery, and of the coastal Indians there who dubbed all white men "Bostons" after these Yankee sailors. Now Swan himself was a "Boston" among the North Pacific natives.

He found the Makahs an endlessly interesting tribe of seafarers. Newly turned to seal hunting, they had been renowned for paddling far out into the Pacific to hunt whales. Swan's pedagogy was not much better adapted to this adventurous Indian culture than most frontier teaching. As he once described it to Baird, "I commence not with the alphabet or a bar of music, but a bar of soap." But his eager curiosity fed a growing respect for the Makah lore and way of life. He shared his insights plentifully with his correspondent at the Smithsonian.

Once, for example, he wrote to tell Baird he had just read an article in the Smithsonian annual report about "scintillation of stars." It reminded him, he said, that the Makahs would forecast wind the next day if stars twinkled at night. "They believe the 'wind in the air' makes the stars twinkle," he explained. "If on the contrary the stars shine tranquilly they say there will be but little wind, and consequently prepare themselves at midnight to go off to their fishing grounds."

Other tribes lived along the Strait as well, and Swan studied

Ruth, I think, was not anxious to raise a step-son. She seemed to like me best at my most independent, reporting in that I was going to play in the old auditorium and then vanishing for several hours. How she spent time alone -- if she was alone -- is a mystery. She did not read, as I did, nor brood, as Dad did. But she had a solitariness like a cat's, maintained for its own sake.

Just as Ringling was the last bare bones of a town, Grandma's house was only the skeleton of a place to live in. It had been empty for ten years -- empty of people, that is, for the flotsam of Grandma's earlier family leaned and teetered everywhere. Diving into the dusty boxes and dented metal suitcases, I came up with a boomerang sent by the son who had moved to Australia, and a lavender-enameled jewelry box which had been my mother's. The place was stacked with dead time, and the first few days Grandma could not move in it without tears flooding her eyes.

second-hand house
3 small rooms, stacked & dead time

Somehow the tiny house again stretched and made way for people once more. When the single closet was full, we stashed boxes and suitcases under the bed and davenport as if ballasting the place. The ironing board went behind a door, my mound of paperback books covered the hope chest at the foot of my bed.

G'ma grumbled things out of under bed

The house had a kitchen, living room and bedroom, all as narrow as a pullman car and about a third as long. The bedroom was crimped down further by the low shed roof which angled down onto it. Once the house had been painted a railroad orange, which had grayed and flecked until the place now was a dull brindle color.

FLIP

Let me call her Ruth here.

She came to the ranch on one of the first pale days of spring, hired to cook for us during calving time, and stayed on in our lives for almost three years. Living womanless had left us wide open for Ruth. To me, she was someone who might provide some mothering again. Not much mothering, because she kept a tight, careful mood, like a cat ghosting through new tall grass. But patches sewed on the knee of blue jeans, fruit and fresh cookies added to my lunchbox, even a rare open grin when I found an excuse to come into the kitchen--all were pettings I hadn't had recently. And for Dad, Ruth must have become a chance to dodge the past, a newness to pull him from

For all its edgy energy, the Camas was a base of repose just then, The Camas was a good ranch for me, bustling enough that there was plenty to watch, sprawling enough that I could stay out of the way if I wanted

For all its edgy energy, the Camas was a base of repose for me just then, a kind of pier from which I began looking out into life. The ranch bustled enough that there was plenty to watch, yet sprawled enough that I could skirt out of the way if I wanted. And more and more, I wanted.

My bound leg excused me from haying--I couldn't work foot-levers or clutches--

THE SKEIN OF LAW AND ADMINISTRATION

> ...America had the virgin West for Science to open, and in Washington forged keys to open it with.
>
> --Wallace Stegner, Beyond the Hundredth Meridian

While the trees toppled, legislation and administration on behalf of forest research were inching along. The U. S. Forest Service, which began in 1881 as the Division of Forestry in the Department of Agriculture, had listed research among its official functions from the very start. But the first three decades of federal forestry saw time, energy, and budget mostly spent elsewhere.

What has become the present system of national forests was being pieced together from the timber and range portions of the public domain. As national forests were created, they had to be administered. From 1898 to 1910, Gifford Pinchot's era as chief, the Forest Service was an agency kept busy putting itself together out in the new ranger stations and in the headquarters in Washington, D. C. Research poked through mostly on a project-by-project basis.

The Forest Service for some years had cooperated with the Bureaus of Entomology and Plant Industry to study forest insects and tree diseases. In 1908, the first forest experiment station was set up in the Coconino National Forest in Arizona. Came 1910, and the Forest Products Laboratory was established at the University of Wisconsin to work on more

This new cargo of life spilled around us not only in Grandma's an ironbound boxes and mementoes. It also swept in as a stout notion of family.

There were a lot of people who didn't have much more than was on their backs.

was another case. He possessed a close idea of his own capabilities and could gauge himself with some dispassion as to whether he was living up to them. (That he had not much interest in people who lacked either capability or gauge, his stand-off style more than hinted.) What Melander was proposing, Karlsson doubted he could tailor himself to. But "Right fit or not," Melander assured him, "you're the only fit."

And so Karlsson began to increase his frequency of visit to the native village, and by lingering on after the other visitants, to stretch each stay deeper into dusk. Eventually he was nudging regularly against the second curfew, much to the discomfiture of the night watchman at the gate of the stockade, Bilibin.

Bilibin was one of the longest-serving of the Russian indenturees who had been funneled out through the Siberian port of Okhotsk and across the northern seas to New Archangel. Peg him, perhaps, ~~Bilibin might be pegged~~ somewhere amid these milder miscreants, without doubt having skinned his nose against one law or another but not the most hellbound soul you can call to mind, either.

(no9) ~~But~~ for our purpose here, however, which is that of Karlsson and Braaf and Melander, Bilibin's significant earmark was his longevity at New Archangel. Sufficiently a scape grace to have exasperated a generation of superiors, Bilibin now stood the least desirable of watch shifts, the one spanning the middle of the night. Turned about, the matter was that his superiors over the years had sufficiently knouted and berated him that Bilibin took some care not to rush into their attention.

Thus: the first time Karlsson arrived back to the gate past curfew, Bilibin blustered a threat to march him double-quick to the sergeant in charge of the sentries.

Part of growing-up is to hang onto whatever ground of independence you've managed to gain

Trying to ~~expel~~ yawn the last of ~~[illegible]~~ sleep from himself, Karlsson ~~yawned and made his way~~ eased out through the trees toward the island's edge. As usual, he was the first awake and the earliest to wonder about weather. This morning he found that The Pacific lay gray with cold, but no storm sheeted up from its surface. Along the beach Ahead of Karlsson ~~on the beach~~ a small surf pushed ashore, idly washed back on itself: low tide. A pair of cormorants amid a spill of tidal boulders hung their wings wide. High up on the beach gravel a hundred or so strides away the sharp-prowed ~~the~~ canoe rested, as if having plowed to a furrow-end and now waiting to be turned for another day's tilling.

Between one eye-blink and the next, Karlsson's brain filled with the jolt of what he was seeing. He and Melander and Wennberg and Braaf had carried their canoe as ever into the cover of forest for the night; ~~as [illegible]~~ This canoe could ~~was~~ not be theirs; it sat ~~was~~ larger by half and the designs entwining the prow were different, simpler and bolder, and Karlsson by now was in crouched retreat~~ing~~ toward the trees, ~~in a crouch,~~ staring hard at the wall of forest beyond the canoe for any sign that he had been detected ~~seen~~.

An area the size of the Two is like a small nation. Big enough to have different geographies and climates, and a considerable population, yet compact enough that people know each other all through the country...

Its one resource was the land, and its primary manufacture was sheep.

A night later, their first time as four. Karlsson openly appraised Wennberg as if the blacksmith were marrying into the family. Their newcomer was both hefty and wide, like a cut of very broad plank. An unexpectedness atop his girth was the fluffy set of sideburns--light brown, as against the blondness of the other three Swedes--which framed his face all the way down to where his jaw joined his neck. Except for young dandies among the Russian officers no one else of New Archangel sported such feathery side-whiskers, but then it could be assumed that no one either was going to invoke foppery against this walking slab of brawn. A time or two ~~the blacksmith~~ Wennberg had re-edged an axe for Karlsson, but Karlsson knew little more of him than those spaced hammerblows onto red metal. He found it interesting that the man was amounting to so much more than arm.

Wennberg meanwhile tried to reciprocate as much scrutiny as he got, but was at the disadvantage because he needed to share it around the trio of them: fancymouth Melander, this mute fox Karlsson, Satan's choirboy Braaf...

"We have a thing to tell you, Wennberg," Melander began at once. "Since you're new to our midst, we can't really know whether your fondest wish is to go with us from here or to sell us to the Russians as runaways. If you've had any waverings, it'll be a relief to you to know we've made up your mind for you. There's no profit whatsoever for you to go to the Russians."

McTaggart was a high crag of a man, wintry, boulder-jawed, long-boned. He had been battling the northern plains for half a century, and at last had edged far enough head of nature to own a ranch ~~beside the Two Medicine~~ and a few thousand head of sheep. Exertion had been made a creed with ~~him~~ McTaggart. Perpetually he ~~was~~ would be trucking in mammoth loads of bales to his hayless ranch. Soon after Dad came on the scene, the state highway patrol noticed one of McTaggart's overpiled runs and made the pair of them unload hay ~~at the roadside~~ beside the road until the truck came down to legal weight. It took two more trips to transport the roadside surplus home to the ranch.

No one was deceived that McTaggart and Dad and Grandma made a ranch combination that could last long, yet the three of them went month after month without igniting. When I visited them on my Sundays off from farming, McTaggart would ~~tell stories in his~~ recite his history a nervous way, fixing by the hour on a topic such as my going off to Northwestern. He too had gone to Chicago as a young man, he told, spending some months there when he worked for a ~~horse~~ buyer who ~~freighted~~ dealt in Montana ranch horses.

Over the years, I have tried to think out what it was that Dad hoped to accomplish. I was thinking about it as early as high school, right up to a day when I looked at the dead sheep frozen in a July storm and decided I would do something besides ranching for a living.

Between tides of pain, he worked at what he knew. No man in the county had more friends and fewer allies.

Did my father ever think it out? Not aloud, certainly. The closest he came was when my grandmother insisted on moving back from northern Montana. Dad dreaded that retreat, that arc back into the area which held the bodies of his parents and his wife and all the memories which added up to a man banging himself against the country with ~~no~~ little visible result.

subprefect from Avranches, Bussy,[71] and ex-lieutenant Vezian,[72] from Algiers, of exceeding their authority, these having been the ones who, with perfect justice, had thundered at the quarreling and unruliness.

Considérant and the Colony Council informed Monsieur Maget that they could not hear charges against a man in whom the Paris and Brussels committee placed such confidence, entrusting him with the care and leadership of seventy-five colonists. Also, looking at it another way, Considérant said that, knowing Savardan and Bussy personally, he could not believe the charges made against them. The tailor was invited to await the arrival of the column, and advised in the meantime to take living quarters in Dallas, since not until the whole matter had been satisfactorily cleared up could he be received as a comrade of ours and a full member of the colony.

After the arrival of Savardan, Maget was invited to present his charges face to face. He agreed not to say any more and remained in town, where he purchased a small building and set up a tailor shop. But the whole affair was not satisfactory to the supporters of the accuser, and various whispered innuendoes began to be heard.... Bussy had been a perfect, Vezian, a French officer, and many of the others arriving with Savardan are enlightened and reasonable people. Among the farmers and gardeners also, there are many of an orderly and industrious mind. But unfortunately it takes only a few uneasy ones to spoil order, so necessary everywhere and absolutely indispensable in the early stages of an undertaking. Sadly enough, among us now there are just such ones.

August 15—In the twenty-five days that have passed since I touched my diary, many very unhappy incidents have occurred in our colony.... Vezian, the ex-lieutenant, a young man of only twenty-five, fell ill and died. Rupert, a Swiss by birth but a long-time resident of Paris, where he was an editor of one of the French dailies, after an illness of several days also died. And more than a dozen are ill, half of these hopelessly. Of the first colonists, whom Cousin and I led here, all are still in good health. It is true these made the journey under far better conditions. For this reason: they left Europe in winter and arrived in America at the end of February. In the months of March and April, when the heat is as yet not entirely unbearable, we crossed the Gulf of Mexico and then the forests and wastes of Texas, where our thirst could very often be quenched with fresh, pure water. Then, on arriving at our goal, we all took a good rest for a few days. The whole journey was made in harmony, good temper, and with hope, the great sustainer of strength.

To add to our misfortunes, the water in the spring near our colony went dry,

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[71] M. A. M. Bussy, a Parisian, was an accountant. He was in charge of equipment at La Réunion, but could get no cooperation from Considérant and resigned. *Ibid.*, 98, 110. Later, Bussy left La Réunion with Wolski. Avranches, his home, is in northwest France.

[72] A retired officer, Vezian (Vaizian) could never get along with Savardan. Savardan suspected him of being a spy for Considérant, and rejected his suggestion of raiding the farms along the route for food. Never very well after leaving Houston, in part because of his dissipations, Vaizian was one of the first to die at La Réunion. There are scattered references to Vaizian in Savardan's *Naufrage au Texas*.

I have no real notion of how illness and accident gouged away inside him. It must flood your eyes pinch your vision.

~~He and a youngster working on the ranch rode onto Wall mountain to dig out a coyote den. Dad got off his horse first, and stopped over to look at the den. The youngster tossed down the shovel he had been carrying. Dad's horse bolted, spun, and kicked him in the back.~~

The remembering expands details to the size of major features. The swipe of ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ wipers on a mud-spattered windshield comes as distinct as our efforts to stay in touch with each other across the width of the pickup seat between us.

He tried the country from every approach he could think of. He had planted peas, made one prosperous round with the combine, then saw a September snow smash the rest of the crop into mud. He tried growing mustard, another baffling crop which OO. He worked cattle, herded sheep, put up hay. He ran a cafe which did a thriving business. And nine years later, when we left the Smith River Valley, all that effort amounted we were hardly as well off as when we started.

There are photos of the face and the wiry body in bat-wing chaps, but no pictures of the mind. What went on in my father, as best I can tell, was at odds with his outside.

~~the valley. A few years later, he held together a haying crew for the longest and rainiest haying season anyone could remember, without losing a single man quitting.~~

came thru earlier

If I hold very tightly to memory, it takes me into realms I passed through in ignorance. The flash within life that is purpose is returned to me, fed on a strong new wick.

That is history. We could live with each moment lapsing away from us without record, as animals do -- that is, to the extent of remembering only the physical lessons needed for survival. But we build the present of the past. The flick of a junco's wing in the bush outside my window recalls to me the beauty of all juncoes, the massed beauty of birds. The wheel of seasons leads me not only on to the next scene of time, but back to others -- the winter of '48-9, the month of May in Evanston, the glory of June in Montana. (Go through entire calendar? If done well, idea could sustain itself)

Or as: man b. Borges short story who remembered w'thing

combine c "hunnerd"?

use w/ Alyona PR?

In the hotbox of ~~those~~ that ~~machined~~ winter ~~summers~~

First rights only

FIREWORKER

by Ivan Doig

Bending heat
pushes at my yearling stare.
The fireworker nods,
tongs the metal
to the glow's heart
and I hold slow
the bellows handle.

Outside, rain strews
quick lakes.
No haying today
nor mending fence
nor riding the sorrel mare.
So we come,
fireworker and boy,
to our minor sun.

The forge edges us
in hotter light.
My hands tense
the bellows to a slow breath
slower

use w/ Wally >

Did we talk about death? No, not in words. It is not in my family, or in me, to believe that much can be talked to solution.

That was failing 1 spots, & it was our failing now. Yet rmo cd be said? Yet, was it a failing - were we worse for not saying aloud rmo was so plainly known?

This era of ecological outcry crested with the celebration of Earth Day on April 1, 1970. By then, the PNW Station, no less than the rest of America, could wonder what environmental priorities would have to be in the coming years -- and how one ~~knows~~ knew when the sense of balance was just right.

The country my parents came out of was an uphill treadmill. My father grew up in what amounted to a family bunkhouse--he and five brothers in the stem of the homestead house, his mother and sister with rooms in the crossbar. My mother's family was a couple of economic cuts below the homestead life, which is to say not far above the tumbleweeds. They milked cows... (Grindstone life)

The seasons declared themselves. Life was regulated by them. (My father did not like to be regulated by much else.) At least once a generation, a giant winter would clobber the livestock industry...

On a New Deal questionnaire which asked a listing of "racial groups within community," from the Doigs' part of the county came the laconic response: "Mostly Scotch."

Going girling...

Hang a skirt on a sagebrush and he'd ride around it in circles all day.

...hurling their lives against the hills.

The rough edges weren't off the country.

The Stewart place was handsomely neighbored by Wall Mountain, ramrodded by my parents into a nicely profitable ranch, and God, was it remote. Besides what they could grow or slaughter, my mother always bought a truckload of groceries before first snowfall; you did not just dart off to a store from the Stewart place because that amounted to a 35-mile dart. And, if it was a tough winter--(they ~~normally~~ always were)--my father fed hay on the road so that as the sheep ate they packed down the snow and gave a better chance of getting out to the hospital, in case of one of my mother's hardest asthma attacks.

The trophy picture from the war with the coyotes. Since I, little Mr. Personality in a snowsuit, look to be about a three-year-old, the photo likely dates from near the end of the winter of 1941-42. This scene speaks in several ways. First of all, the extraordinary statement of the coyotes, twenty-eight of them in simultaneous leap of death up the log wall where their pelts were strung. Winterlong they had been picked off, for the sake of bounty and the safety of livestock, as they loped the open ridges of the Stewart place; ideal coyote country, but unluckily for them, also ideal coyote-hunting country for guys who could shoot like my father and my uncle Bud, on hand as our hired man. [How young Bud looks, I notice next. He is now a grandfather and hunts no more.] And now, it always comes as a pleasant shock, how in charge of life my father looks. Posed there, he knows of at least twenty-eight coyotes who will give him no further trouble, a chinook either has arrived to his ranch or is on its way, he has a son and heir, his wife is taking the picture of this proud moment--a day to mark, truly.

ME

my solo sports at Jensen ranch -- basketball, football, baseball

my running starts (chasing lambs) off running board

relationship with Fern: always avoiding the fatal "You are not my mother."

need G'ma was another negotiator, not a director, in my life.

Never a room to myself -- sleeping on someone's couch at Wally's or Bud's, with Dad at home, in room with Tom

Riding past the WSS cemetery where my mother was buried. Pam Pfeiffer riding every day on school bus past white cross at Dupuyer Creek where her father was killed in car wreck.

change in my life: when I got big enough to ride in right-hand place in front seat of car, and G'ma took the middle I'd always sat in

smutty postcards in bar, such as "Once a king, always a king, but once a Knight is enough"; or pic of Reddy Kilowatt-type pronged plug chasing a skirted socket

when I began living with other people

in WSS grade school, worked your way up -- 1st grade on grnd floor, etc.

PHRASING

the river was rolling boulders

an extension of the arctic

water ate at the gullies

fastened like flesh to the bone

death-cold

rivers of air, cataracts of cloud

The rivers of the country were not water, but air -- blasting blizzards, chinooks, unceasing wind the summer I farmed for Mozer.

Castle Mtns gouged up into air above trees

Interjection device as lead: Can you see it?

what took root in the crevices of his mind, loosing now a particle of hate, now a clump of cleverness

the center never holds; things are constantly falling apart

Device: he watched the writer (then bring the graf full circle, until the writer becomes me)

filed Memory is metaphor: not the actuality itself, but some striking similarity, some inspired comparison

can we know the OO..? What lights guide ...?

filed with his cat's calm

filed as long as we walk the earth

the molecules going together

filed he used his days ...

IDEAS

Montana a western Appalachia?

I spent 3 years on McGilvra, a Scot who made good in Seattle. What brought my forebears from Scotland across the U.S. to remote valley in Montana?

Smith River Valley the highest in Montana?

The industrious Norwegians of Wilsall area...

rodeo of '28: by pics in album, and mother's notes on them, must have been a turning point, a falling in love. She was 15

I begin to think of them as memories rather than people...

Why remember the blaze star on a horse's head better than my own mother's face?

Memory is like a frontier -- as far as you can see from a given point

Use time as a measure of distance -- 0 days' ride

No churches in our life -- significantly

Consider:
making prose imitate state of mind it describes

need for visual exactness

using all the senses

unexpected details

families of contexts

make words call up a picture

The process of memory from certain fixes in time

There is no more 80 brand, my father's brand. Instead, I have a byline, and more letters after my name than in it.

I am probably overeducated; to me, education was the way out of where I was, and almost as long as I can rmember I have been reading myself along that route. Now that I am long out, and have the ideal home life, the habit stays with me.

when does a homestead become a ranch?

ME

bookkeeping for Dad at Burt Ranch

I would read anything -- old Life magazines at sheep ranch near the Huts, pulp romances, sport stories, Gt. Fall Tribunes at a bar or during cafe meal (what was in those papers then?)

books -- words on paper -- were fireships in my head

without knowing what I disliked about it, I despised constantly being sent to toolbox

small white scars on my hands from jackknife and other cuts

foot-racing and playing football despite bandaged knee -- stiff-legged gait

during haying: "Do you need me today?"

When I went to work for Hoyt, Dad suggested I grease up the Cat each night after supper, so I'd be thought a good hand (ready to go the next morn). I quickly saw that wasn't for me, and instead would read a book or watch TV.)

in May '74 visit, at Lucases with G'ma, Clint Shelhammer didn't know me because of my beard -- a man I'd worked 2-3 summers with.

how much I have always liked the feel of newspaper, and the pattern of words on paper

how much of my dreaminess do I get from Dad? He was always going to accomplish -- build a garage in Ringling, a new porch in WSS..

the oddity of my name

college nicknames: Ivory, from blacks on dishroom crew; Vanya from Russian students; Ive from Grant and others.

Pinky

my hair made me stand out

the ghost of Dad's gestures in me: angling my index finger across my mouth, or steepling forefingers together on mouth

Dad's shortness -- my absolute mediumness, in size, temper, and probably ambition

my horse White Cloud

black and white magnetic Scottie dogs

GRANDMA

always in apron

stoutness of her outline

just before what must have been her 65th birthday, telling me as we drove to Bill Higgins ranch about fearing age. ("Gee golly, it doesn't seem possible...")

the Ringer kids in Ringling would send for free mailings, addressed to "Sagebrush Avenue" etc.

in summer of '54 (?), when she and I were left to herd sheep on resvtn for couple wks while Dad and Al Goode built fence at Sun R.; our horse got away, sheep died on their backs and we had to skin 'em... days of exasperation

Her memories of Dick Ringling: (May 12, '71)
When Ringers were at Moss Agate, Dick Ringling bought trainload of dairy cows from Wisconsin. Turned out to be culls; probably had bought them sight unseen. Ringers were told to select the herd they would run. Cows were turned loose when unloaded, running everywhere, unmilked. Ringers had no barn with stanchions, just a shed. Milked cows in there; some had enormous bags, hadn't been milked for days.

HE else p'd

At Dick Ringling's funeral, pallbearers were so drunk they nearly dropped the casket. Smell of flowers and booze nearly made my mother faint during service.

dispute over Wesling ring

airport scene in Spokane as we put G'ma on plane from Expo

Dad-G'ma: my perpetual fear that it would all come apart, as it nearly did time after time. There was no telling when -- or if -- either of them would get over an anger.

she had good reason for threatening to go. Why Dad risked it, time and again, I have no idea. Contrariness

She had been afraid Fern would marry Wally; never occurred to her it would be Dad.

Remembering her own marriage at 19, she now saw her only daughter, and her favorite, being courted by a cowboy. (And G'ma's mother before her marrying that stern silent father...)

DAD

the misery knifing in his chest

each of us has his own universe: describe Dad's as it shrunk

Dad feared G'ma would want to raise me -- with good reason

Dad fought ulcer a dozen years

Dad never again lived in the mountains, tho it would have made sense for us

he was going into death

in the text [comets attend the death of kings, but what can the heavens display mighty enough for the loss of a father...

G'ma's phone call: after all theyears of hospitals, all the gasping after breath, he had died in his sleep in his own bed.

the endless oxygen tanks, the tether of tubing to his nose

watched Carol and Dad together, crying inside: if only she could have known him when he was whole and healthy. A cosmic if.

Dad: "Gee, it was a dandy" -- the warm, almost wistful tone he would use in explaining something to Carol

Dad in '50: savaged by ulcer, suspected he might die

writing drs. and hospitals about Dad: how in God's name does a person find the right treatment? Rage and fear. At last, Dr. John Allen...

Bills loomed as Dad got worse and worse in late &70-'71; I scrounged for more assignments, mulled jobs; Carol signed on to teach summer school...

directing snowplow in circle in '48 winter as they tried to plow out the Stewart ranch

had "a grip like a monkey wrench" even until the last

the bad health, esp. after the ulcer operation, left him unable to eat much

in the text [By age 30, Dad was a medical history -- flu, horse accidents

carved face, crowsfeet at eyes, web of lines

carbon dioxide narcosis would make him blank out, sleep for hours during day and then a sleepless night

pared [the years were savage to him now

MEMORIES

(recopied from smaller notebook begun in early '72) --

Jan. 29, '72 -- Start of a sometime diary, towards the book of where I came from.

--Changes in my life. From NU, when I thought I'd be a broadcast newsman, to UW, when I thought I'd become a professor, to now, writing for a few thousand a year. Why the changes? Maybe, why not? My perspectives do shift, and perhaps all I can do is live as close as possible to the top of ability within the perspective of the moment.

--Physical habits change, too. Time was when I shaved in one pan of water, with a little hot added midway from G'ma's teakettle. Now I turn faucet and fill sink time and again, let water run; I must use 10-12 times as much. Ditto in shower -- as against the metal tubful of the days in Ringling.

--Why I take care to have good hiking equipment and boots, am fussy even: perhaps it's because the effort should be saved to use against the trail, against myself, rather than spent on preventable misery.

--Dinner table at Sniders (Burt Ranch): effort by Mrs. S to be an aware, gracious hostess.

--Weekend or so ago, we hiked Ebeys Landing with Jean, and as usual I spotted eagles and other birds before anyone else. I see them -- and ships, and changes in weather -- so far ahead of the others I'm a bit overbearing with it, probably. But my eyes are not better, or not much. It's a way of seeing, I think, which I must have picked up in Montana and ~~xx~~ never realized it until recently.

April 3, '72 -- I am becoming less markedly a Montanan -- have become so in the yearm since Dad died. Today came phone call about Taylor Gordon article, and in re-reading, became aware I now think about Montana as a foreign place. Who I was when I lived there seems a strange person to me now.

Even so, I look more and more back to how I grew up. I suddenly remembered what an education that Dupuyer bus was: Vern Kuka's case of the clap, for ex, was the first I -- or probably any of the rest of us -- know about VD. Dirty jokes were the currency of those bus trips. Card games, fist fights.

April 4, '72 -- Crisping weather in Montana comes after Labor Day. Indian summer. Labor Day in WSS usually cold, rainy, even snow skift, then weather likely to clear.
--I've seen snow in Montana every month of year except August.

May 7, '72 --The gutwagon. Filling water barrels with hose at lambing time.

--In WSS ~~mt~~ during G'ma's recuperation from heart attack, met man at propane station who worked for Dad on Prescott place in '48.

May 17, '72 -- Archer Gilfallan article on sheep herding in Atlantic Monthly, Jan. 1929 -- 2d of series.

(1) Dad: cigarette stains on right hand. Powerful grip; even when weakened by emphysema, could still open stuck jars.

My mother's death -- far back in Bridger Mountains, in sheep camp cabin. Just the 3 of us there; Dad must have taken us out by pack horse.

May 17, '72 -- The embarrassingly bad prose I was trying to write during summers when I was in college. Must have thought I was Thomas Wolfe. From a scrap of notebook, probably written during summer job at Higgins ranch:
"shod in weary leather"
"For 9 weeks the sun ruled alone, burning a brown crispness into the land, its grass, and its people."
"...with only the songs of birds to roil the silence."
"...the grief drying her voice to a whisper..."
"Winter came like a clumsy assassin, shattering the autumn mood and despoiling its memory."
"...winter rain smudging the snow"
"...Watching the young intellectuals splash through the slush in canvas shoes..."
"thews of conscience"

--The patterns in a person's body. When I began playing handball this spring, I quickly found myself brushing the back wall with a hand to see how close I was. It was same movement I made in Ringling, where I bounced ball off house and made leaping catches against tin shed. Other remembered movements are a running scoop like fielding grounder, and setting myself in outfielders stance, on balls of feet.

May 24, '72 -- Dad's swearing: "damn ye!" and "Damnitalltohellanyway," pronounced as one word.

July 4, '72 -- from Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, OR I'LL DRESS YOU IN MOURNING, p. 335: "...slowly, very slowly, the pools of Andalusian poverty from which the Belmontes, the Manoletes and El Cordobes came are drying up."
As ghetto fighters have been vanishing, and tough rodeo kids may vanish from western towns.

--Saw recently something which made me think of a saying about a tough foreman: had three crews -- one coming, one going, and one on the job.

List the hired men Dad had: Malcolm, Al Goode, Conrad Thiel, Rudy, Mickey Allen (who dubbed Snider "Little Jesus" and, I think, "The gutrobber"), Finnigan.
Perry Ailey, taking grizzled hired man from Higgins' to Livingston one holiday: man directed him to brothel. Perry, amazed: "In the afternoon?"

--Perhaps what I'm writing is the view of the inside of my head, rather than the exterior scene of Montana.

July 29, '72 -- The great regret in my relationship with Dad is irrational and impossible to do anything about: I regret that we could not move through the plane of time on the same terms. Because the father is older than the son, he is fading; there are differences in outlook, opportunity, between them, besides the grooves of parent-offspring. The great turn of the wheel is the shift of responsibility from old to young -- and that turn means the father's crushing, in terms of age and health.

Aug. 7, '72 -- Milwaukee rr engines, orange and black, called "Little Joes" because, the story was, they had been made for Stalin's Russia before Cold War set in. The rr cut through our lives in Ringling; Duane once scampered beneath moving train to get to school bus.

PO. taken to MTBK Festival

MEMORIES

(notes made in Britain)

HALF-LIFE

Man at his life's halfway

Also half-life in scientific meaning: time it takes substance to lose half strength

Letters to and from myself -- responding half brief memos and comments signed with my initials, ID.

Letters explore my life as it looks to me-- middle-aging impulse to examine childhood; the Montana experience; what I try to do with my life. Try writing as letter to myself, then criticize or react as if to someone else's work.

ideas

Myself when callow, trying to write for magazines and wading in morass of rejection slips. Present my overwrought ideas about articles as mock pageant, with stage directions

What I have already written in some notebook-- eternal regret between generations that a person cannot know his father on equal plane of age and outlook -- that the years between them warp the friendship.

Dad, who was short, thrilled that I was taller; took me long to realize I'm average size. Not until college, I think, did I realize that I'm about 5'9" instead of near 6' he saw me as.

Dog poisoner; narrowing circles as Pup raced out his last agony. Is it real memory, or what's been told me?

Dad's habit of making himself look better in any retelling; belligerence of small man?

Dad: pea crop; running cafe and ranch.

G and I waiting in car for Dad to come from bar; tension in me.

MEMORIES

(notes made in Britain)

Scratching my name on stone near fencepost, near Dry Range; Snider set to lasso naked sheepherder with DTs; me throwing a rock at sheep camp one day so hard it whistled, and Dad told Al Goode I would be a major leaguer some day.

Sheep wagons themselves -- describe as tiny different world, capsule of another culture, different scale, different configurations of furniture, even; Snider sensing when sulking herder hid stovepipe from his wagon during spring drive, cutting across field to find it.

Finnigan; Raw Bacon Slim; Bohunk who didn't go to town for 6 years; the Swede chopping wood to fight back thirst for booze; maggots under sheep wagon floor boards.

School: concrete pit behind school like trench used for mock battles; tube fire escape, walked up shoeless for traction; Ray Hurst's father beating bedding at jail; sulphur water.

Cox's creamery; Bailey's elevator; Wally taking Grandma and I along in truck to Bozeman; Dad at Mayo Clinic, as I watched for train to stop from threshing field.

Asleep on bench at dances, or in pickup.

Lloyd Robertson kidding me about being Scotty, me kidding him back about being Missourian.

nettles; alfalfa; brome grass; foxtail; flying ants

spend life gathering memories to burnish

dogs: potlickers; kiyi-ing SOBs

List places where I've lived. Maybe they have to do with my independence.

In his own tellings, dad was a king ...

My mother, dead in the last days of WWII; the changes she has missed in the years since...

Jan. 14, '74 -- The Half*Life journal begins. DonIt know why I haven't before now. The other books, inc. the Matter of Facts to date, have their diaries. It took the arrival of Steinbeck's Journal of a Novel to get me going on this one. He brooded and reassured and thought onto paper there, and maybe it would help to put down some thinking about what I'm trying to do.

One thing: I want a timeless book, as much as possible. Lead segment so far is that way, by design: I intend to mention the date only in the final sentence. All the rest, I hope will read as if it could take place almost anywhere within span of 50 or 100 yrs past. Mtns, sheep, 3 people living out a summer -- ancient and clockless scene.

Then, the birthday reports. They'll have to be well-done or they won't work. But well-done, they may give the book the surprising and rhythmic element to carry the reader along.

Intend to do set of 3 segments, with the corresponding birthday flashes, as sample for editors: lead, baseball, Air Force. Good surprise to find I've kept so much AF stuff-- or rather that I wrote it down in the 1st place.

Jan. 15 -- Harsh day, hard to get started. Finally about 1:30 I got down to it and wrote couple of pages. The AF segment stymies me; so much to be told, I haven't yet found handle for doing 4-5-6 pages as a sample.

Failure to get down to writing is agonizing. I read more Steinbeck, skimmed 3d vol of Writers at Work, tried to nap and get up fresh, all lucklessly. When I did begin, I wrote as rapidly as I could put together sentence with any coherence at all, and skipped from topic to topic if need be. It's not very good stuff, but can serve as seedbed for later. Now I feel fairly steady again, and will spend a little time tonight trying to solve the final sentence of the deathday segment.

Odd experience last night, which cost a lot of sleep and didn't help today any. About 11:30, dog began barking and howling in corner of our front yard next to Headrick's. It was in angle from the house so that I couldn't throw anything from the front porch to drive it off, and yelling to scare it didn't help. Raining like hell. Decided I'd have to go out. Raingear was in trunk of car, from abortive plans for ocean trip the past weekend. Finally I am dressed, raingear over pajamas, and slog out. The dog

Jan. 15 cont. -- was on a long chain which had caught in our hedge. I freed him, and finally shooed him down the street. Took an hour or so to get back to sleep.

Just recessed to tell Carol about Nelson Algren on CBS news this morning, poohpoohing writers conferences with funny stories. Last time Marsh was here, he commented that I'm the only person he knows of who works at writing full-time. I might do well to mull what writing means to me, since in one form or another it is what I have wanted to do ever since I was about 17 -- coincident with Half-Life, half my lifetime ago. Talked with Carol a bit after supper about frustrations of not writing enough, and she pointed out I have four book proposals in the air right now. That likely is the best way for me to work, though it's awfully grasshopperish. Anyway, I do work at writing, for better or worse.

Tomorrow: try for early start, then quit at 10:30 to do chores, such as haircut, buying file folders and other supplies.

Jan. 17 -- Entry for ¥'day: worked on 1st b'day interlude until 10:15, then edited on lead segment a bit last night. Lead segment has been reread and polished countless times, and is beginning to please me. I've worked on it almost as a poem, tinkering long and hard with individual words. In 2d graf, 4x, last night I changed "lofty spill of meadows etc" to "primitive spill", and "down the slants" to "along the slants", both touches of precision I like. It would be magnificent to do the entire book with this slow care, writing it all as highly charged as poetry, each line with some gem for the reader, but will I ever take the time? Under contract, maybe.

Jan. 18 -- Entry for y'day: worked out the birthday interludes for 1st 2 sample segments. Had Carol read what I've done so far, and she seemed to think it good. Not sure she's convinced about the interludes, and perhaps I'm not either. The idea is that the interludes will be a rhythm, a continuing theme for the book, done well enough in their own right to be inducement for reader. I don't know how successful the attempt to do them in the language of different ages can be; y'day's 7-yr-old and 15-yr-old sound pretty good to me, and in working on them I found myself searching out old speech patterns which I know are accurate. But it's an accuracy which only I can be sure of, and whether it means much or anything to a reader is yet to be seen. Now to work on the 3d segment, the AF, which has been puzzling me with the problem of cramming a huge event, with considerable detail, into this sample.

Later: roughed out about 500 words on AF, inc. prospect of a good lead. Not a great writing day, but ok. Perhaps I'll want this missile crisis material to be episodic shards, giving details of life in basic then back to the carrying theme of missile threat, details again, and so on. Want to write the absurdity of military and war here, and counterpointing threat of holocaust with latrines may do it.

Put aside day's ½life work about 3 to think about The Realms of Utopia for Hayden (just came up with that title). Occurs that since we returned from Britain, I've handled 3 major separate topics: urban life for How Can We, fundamentals of research for Matter of Facts sample, and my own past for ½life. Apparently my mind grasshoppers as much as always. If only I could write well rapidly, to keep better pace with what interests me.

Jan. 28 -- No time on ½life last week; worked on Realms of Utopia proposal and other jobs. Today, began again on AF segment. Couldn't see how to connect missile crisis and latrines theme, since one takes place at Lackland and the other mostly at Sheppard. Began on new lead, which I like: "Suppose an Air Force sergeant, and dub him Sgt. Garble." Didn't get much written today, but it seems clearer in mind. Made some entries in notebook.

Jan. 29 -- Strong day on ½life. Wrote the AF segment and interlude after it. Interlude is stiff and maybe a bit dull, but it's accurate mood of me in 1963; much of it is taken from letters to Holden. Carol read the AF stuff tonight, thought it was hilarious.

Finished the writing about noon, worked on notebook entries and cleaning desk until 3. Linda comes for lunch tomorrow, and I think I'll wish off a reading copy onto her, maybe Jean and Marsh in the next few days.

Plan to draw list of editors for querying in next few days, then keep on writing -- picking up after interlude 1 -- for couple of weeks. Would like to see if I can hit pace of about 750 words/day, as I did today.

Jan. 30 -- So-so, tho I did end up with 3 pp. Millers came for lunch; not a good idea for my work, but we're not seeing some friends as much as we should. Tomorrow, lunch with Marsh, and maybe I'll try get up earlier to get in more time beforehand.

Today's work was scattered, tho related one way or another to describing Mont. Will try write a segment tomorrow -- maybe on Dad and bars? Hope I feel like more work after dinner tonight, but it's St of the Union night and late news, so likely won't get back to typewriter.

MEMORIES

Jan. 31 -- 3 pp today on WSS saloons. Rough, but of some use. Gave Millers reading copy of lst 3 segments y'day, gave Jean one today. I look them over, sometimes think they're good, sometimes pretty average. One question is, how far do I go in keeping the words plain and simple?

Spent some time in Shoreline library this afternoon, meaning to get addresses of editors. Decided to take more time on it, study Publishers' Weekly a bit. Came across 2-part series on agents there; made me wonder whether to try get one. Offhand, I still think not, figuring I'll handle myself with more concern than anyone else would.

Where is ½life headding? I need to do long section following up segment 1, but seem to have to write later material, such as the bars. Tomorrow: unsure yet.

Feb. 3 -- Friday's entry. Wrote on lambing, which needs explanation of terms such as jug and gutwagon. Edited some of week's work in afternoon. Have been collecting words to stipple into the work -- pointillism. Have been talking to John and Jean some about the storyline -- not so much as to bore them, I hope, but who knows? Spent some time looking through my writing notebooks and a few books I've analyzed the writing in.

Feb. 4 -- The hunnerds sequence today. Not bad, but dogged a bit by semi-cold. Always wonder how much is cold and how much is tendency to shirk. Anyway, some of the lore in today's is okay: details of counting the sheep, docking the lambs, the bitterness of Mickey Allen. Technically, have worked this pretty well, making plain in the lead that counting is involved, and weaving through each sequence so its begins and ends in present voice. Fret a bit about having scheduled two lunch hours out this week: publishers' show tomorrow, Pacific Search on Thursday. But if the pages keep piling up, perhaps the pace is good enough. I'm going to need long spate of editing and rewriting soon, and that's when I'll truly fret about lack of day-by-day pile of progress.

Feb. 5 -- Some work (3pp., rough stuff) on herders and the vagaries of sheep. Went to Shoreline briefly in morn to copy 1929 Atlantic article written by literate sheepherder, found it surprisingly helpful in detail.

Reactions from John and Jean were good, on 3 sample segments. John said they aren't too nostalgic. Suggested I sound a bit too much like a writer in spots, as early in #1 where I said the weather tinctured every sensation. My first reaction was to agree, but looking it over I'm not sure. Maybe there should be signal to the reader that I am a writer. Also, the sentence is fairly precise as it stands. They liked the birthday reports, though read them as a diary I'd been keeping.

Before supper I spent about an hour jotting phrases on legal pad, weather descriptions, sentence rhythms and the like. If they stand up, they'll be a fine help somewhere in the book.

Today's coup, at least from this near distance: "We all are murdered by mortality in due time..."

Tomorrow: haying. And that likely will be all for this week. Thurs. a library day and lunch with Pac. Search editor, Friday probably to look over Matter of Facts. Next week on ½life, too? May as well. Must try draw a schedule before I quit this week, maybe tomorrow afternoon.

Feb. 11 -- Will make this entry for last Wed. the 6th, before starting on today's writing. Wrote 2 pp. about haying. About one page short on week's work, but should make it up this week with five writing days. Have been getting up mornings feeling as if Carol's cold is getting me, but feel better by 8:30 or so.

4 days away from Half-Life, because of magazine work and the weekend's income tax; must spend some time this morn looking over jotted ideas.

Ended work on Wed. by jotting lines on yellow pad; they look good and helpful.

Feb. 11 -- Later. Wrote about the reservation today. Not especially good day, but wrote about 3 pp. Tomorrow, may try do some birthday interludes.

Still fighting low-grade virus; throat has turned sore in past half hour or so. Tired, and will quit now.

Feb. 12 -- Wrote 2 pp. on summer jobs and made start on two birthday interludes. Not a good day, though I'd been banking on one. Still the virus sapping energy, I guess.

This afternoon, read Hughie Call's Golden Fleece, about sheep ranching in the Madison Valley. Useful, brought some detail back to mind.

Feb. 26 -- Back at ½life, after week on magazine pieces and last week on chores. Now wish I hadn't spent the good health on other work. Woke up y'day morn with tremendous nasal drip; feel better today, but lack stamina. Sleeping a lot, and maybe that'll shake it off.

Began today on picking up after 1st b'day interlude, and think I have the right theme in Dad's bafflement after my mother's death. Day's work is only a graf or so, tho. Am I flagging on the book, or sloughing off generally? I think it's a short phase, just as I had phase of terrific work on magazine piece a week ago.

Feb. 27 -- Feeling better today, but Frank and his son have been pruning a tree next door all day, constant rasp of chain saw. Some work done, a bit more than a page. Have been uneasy with stabs at starting this 2nd section, today decided to go with line about writer's dread that only the fingers are talking. Hope it won't look too fancy later on. For now, it seems to make the point that there are big facts of the past -- basics of a situation -- and then the detail of memory filling in.

Have felt bogged recently. This afternoon began telling myself I'm a writer with considerable credits behind me, working on a topic I know better than anyone else, so why don't I just get at it? Tomorrow is eye exam and other chores; Friday I'll hope to get this 2nd section truly rolling, and go on with it next week.

MEMORIES

March 1 -- This week's entries will be distressing to look back on, but they do show the bind I've been in. Looked at my lead from the 27th this morn, and could see it just isn't right. Too frilly. Told myself to tell the story simply, and trimmed back to "My father suddenly had a son to raise... why only this first and trickiest of botherments seemed not to baffle him." Carol read it over lunch at Pier 70, liked it.

Next began fleshing the description of Smith River Valley, trying to make it accurate and picturesque while putting across my unease about the country, trying to find what Dad may have thought of it. The writing is starting to take on some rhythm, have some body, and I sense that this section of landscape, b*ground on Dad, and the bars can be good. I intend to lead out of it, at the end, with the sometime step-mother.

Still bedraggled with cold; every so often I erupt in sneezing and runny nose. Glad the week is ending with a few decent sentences, at least.

March 6: this entry is for the 4th and 5th; chores today, no ½life work. On the 4th, smoothed some of material about Smith River Valley. Y'day, began editing the original 3 sections planned as a sample. Did much editing, a lot of it in direction of simplifying, and the opening segment at least seemed to take on richness. And ever more precision. Plan to get back to it in morn, more editing.

April 11 -- Appallingly long time since I last worked on ½life. Buying the 10th NW house has intervened, as did the trip to Vancouver, the Pacific Search piece on Stanley Park, sending out Matter of Facts queries again, and couple of days of blahs because of spring allergies early this week. Today made a start -- shaky, but a start -- on Dad and I after my mother's death. Need to write about 20 good pages, taking us up to when he married Fern. Struggling to keep words and sentences crisp, and to keep moving on storyline. Hope to hell I shape up the work tomorrow and next week.

April 15 -- Work began to shape up last Fri (12th) when I began telling stories from taped interview with Dad in '68. Harshness of 1918-19 winter, for instance. Today, worked mostly on the "hunnerds" sequence, which still needs much effort to make it work well. Still hope to spend 3 more days on ½life this week, similar schedule next week.

Listening to tape of Dad on Fri morn made ideas and work flow; I hope the May taping trip to Montana will have same effect.

April 16 -- Fair day on ½life. Worked to tell story of Dad in Chicago, and to make plain how winter of '18-19 shattered the family ranch. Still far from smooth.

Folder is getting thick now, though the usable material I want is only a few pages. Hope to get into major editing next week, and put material together.

April 20 -- Not too bad a week. Y'day re-edited some of opening of 2nd sequence, and it began to take better shape. Also worked on Hunnerds sequence, which is improving. Showed Carol the first bit of it, she thought it good.

Lots of things brewing, hard to concentrate on just ½life. Work on Pacific Search projects, house projects, looming trip to Montana. Busy.

April 22 -- Some editing on last weekIs work, bit more work on hunnerds sequence. Looked back over lead seqnce after reading some of Donald Hall's book Writing Well, eyeing rhythms and specific words. Made some changes, but rhythms there seem pretty good. One advantage of my fusspot style of working is that by the time I'm through with a graf, it's at least shapely.

Must continue trying for style I have in mind: short sentences, sometimes stumpy, sparse adjectives, hard-working verbs, and small not quite common words every sentence or so.

MONTANA VISIT, May, '74

WSS, May 14, '74

from roadside sign near Crosby ranch: "The gulches draining the west slope of the Big Belts were famous in the 60s and 70s for their gold placer diggings. Montana Bar in Confederate Gulch was called the 'richest acre of ground in the world.'"

Abandoned homesteads or "places" pointed out by Grandma: John McKee, Ed McReynolds, McGloughlin

Burt Ranch: green velvet -- suede? -- hay meadows along Camas Creek.
--jackstay fences
--red shale road, going to yellow.
--rocks in the pastureland
--timbered ridges all around
--buttes like fins on the earth, with rock spines
--trees thick on the buttes, almost black; the farther mountains, blue black
--ranch bldgs rundown and junky -- auto carcasse
--tangents of county road to get there, making almost trapezoidal ~~pt~~ path from town.
-- sharp treacherous turn across Smith River near Candy Dan's, similar to turn near Jim Keith's.

Sixteen country: hillsides splotched with red shale. Long ridgelines of mountains. Endless gray balls of sagebrush making up a plain.
--Country is less populated than ever. Ranches are Scotty Prescott's, Jim Keith's, Jack Lucas's,, and the Climbing Arrow land which includes the old Doig ranch. One person (or 1 family?) lives at Sixteen.

MONTANA VISIT, May, '74

G'ma, after we poked through a scanty "antique" store on main street (May 14, '74): "I've never had anything but junk, so I don't need any more."

Also from her: her kids used to chant "Hot lemonade stirred by an old maid with a spade."

Also from her, as she stirred reluctantly to do dishes: "Well, this isn't buying the baby a shirt nor paying for the one he's got on."

From Pete McCabe: we were talking about the wet May snowfall. I said it was so heavy and wet it was hard to push off the car. He said yes, "just like bread dough."

Also from Pete: talking about living on Social Security and his income from weed control job, he said a person can get by "if you hang onto your shy tail a bit."

G'ma told me about John McKee, rancher or homesteader who had a huge deformed jaw. He left his skull to medical research. "Headless man into heaven," she laughed.

G'ma: Cahrlie Straugh was so crooked he couldn't lay straight in bed.

Jim Clay, when I told him of my house-fixing at G'ma's, said he envied me because he was the type who couldn't open a do-it-yourself book without tearing the pages.

red-marked items typed into Heart Earth filecards by Marilyn Ridge 10/16/91

LINGO

went on a big drunk

quakinasp

sarvusberries

haying as a verb

Dad: that's way-to-hell-and-gone too much to pay

didn't want to buy anything from the honyocker anyway

scissorbill

damn ye

damnitalltohellanyway

quite a deal

hellicopeter

it'll weld anything but the break of day

oh, golly (cluck of tongue)

Duane, even as grown man, called Angus "daddy"

Grandma: "fee-fee" for barefoot

busticate (I ate so much I'm about to busticate)

jimjams (the willies; that gives me the jimjams)

mersey (my mother as a child called cows "merseys")

Patch beside patch is neighborly, but patch upon patch is beggarly.

You're not salt nor sugar nor nobody's honey, so you'll be all right.

Well, this isn't buying the baby a shirt nor paying for the one he's got on.

Charlie Straugh was so crooked he couldn't lie straight in bed.

Close as three in a bed with one kicked out.

got a Wyoming scatter on 'em

took his own sweet time about it

Grandma: I'll have a sipe of coffee.

LINGO

"made quite a sashay around the place"

"got to do something or drought out"

G'ma: "so crooked he couldn't sleep in a roundhouse"

Chuck Lucas: "You could have talked all day and not said that."

mosquitoes so big they could stand flatfooted and drink out of rainbarrel

"Do something, even if it is wrong."

"chouse" for "chase"; to a dog, "chouse 'em, Mike!"

"get your duds on"

Dad: "...or I'll put in with you."

Dad: "That was bright, wasn't it?"

G'ma: "Here goes nothin' from nowhere."

"The hell."

"She's a tough old sister." Or, to sheep: "Here, you old sister!"

"dab and a promise" "a lick and a promise"

G'ma: "Don't be such a crosspatch."

LINGO

"place" for ranch: the Straugh place

Rocky Mountain oysters

G'ma, scolding Spot: Sam. Don't be so sappy.

Dad at 5'6" was what country jokesters would call "runt of the litter"

"for all the tea in China"

G'ma: when she misspoke a name, she would say "(the name) must be thinking of me"

"give 'er snoose"

"hit 'er a good one"

"a sledgehammer adjustment"

"pulled through a knothole backwards"

"like cold death warmed over"

"sunamabeach" for SOB

"...till hell wouldn't have it."

cooties

PHRASING

It takes money to make money, the local saying had it. Or if not that, at least luck or a father-in-law with deep pockets. Dad had none of the three.

A time when they ran a trapline every winter without thinking about it.

~~snowbeaten~~ storm-beaten

sunless

It is the oldest story of humankind, the two people closest to each other with distances yet between them. That near, and that far.

I was 18, and had slept in the same bed, shared the same room, with my father for the past dozen years. · closeness sent me into myself

The awfulness of that.

The covering darkness.

Of 00 of us descended from their children, only 2 live on that land.

The quilt is a good metaphor of her life.

None of it counts.

It is a rhythm lost to us -- even my father later lost it -- but...

with decision

the 00 repeated the 00.

The country's terms were harsh.

reprise -- reprisal; it was the land's reprisal.

And that is the story of it.

Nothing plentiful but sage and wind.

The sage said:

My dead mother said:

What he knew was bad for him, but could not stay away from.

The smallest things hurt.

This is time without hours or minutes, the time of memory. memory's time.

The seam of time

gush

PHRASING

the sheep are flooding the highway
they moved through our lives, more name than person

and next, last,

sometimes...always...often

rheumy clouds

the wind full of cold from 20' drifts in the Lewis Range

spiteful wind

old slabs of dirty snow

stored it up against him

a lane of ...

memory blotters the past

memory: half deception, half clear reality

I expect to live another 40 years; but <u>why</u> expect it?

nuclear war: we'll all die "facing the monument"

the past bends near and says, I will tell you a story. You...
I examine that story now, and ...

presidential advisers prepare their historical versions

I've been in "exotic" jobs all my life

I didn't know what that life (childhood) was like, because I had never been outside of it...

We didn't have much more than what was on our backs, and Dad's reputation as a top hand.

I began to be born when my father met my mother at a dance.

I know now that... but that is not what I was born to. I was born to...

Hers is the third story that goes into my life. I know it better even than my own wife's, because I come out of the country that Grandma lived 60 years in...

"Your mother"..."my mother" -- neither Dad nor I knew how to refer to her, except in awkward formal way. Dad often talked of her to other people as "Ivan's mother" instead of "Berneta". Similarly, he usually called Grandma "lady".

PHRASING

the bit of guile we call memory

It is a dark secret of our family that Dad feared G'ma would take me.

I have no idea what it was.

winter would blow itself out.

I was doing the job better than I knew how

deathday

I think that it ~~is~~ may not good for a man to live within sight of where he was born. The constant crowd of memories...

time remembered, time regained

the national memory is motion

wind from every direction. When I stepped down from the cat, it puffed dust up at me. From the front, grit in my face; from behind, swirl over my shoulder. Cornering, it came sideways for the corner of my eyes.

the mark of wind -- dirt -- rimmed my teeth all summer

a stutter in the mind

a loose shingle stuttered in the wind

conning towers (Castle Mtns?)

The Depression did the wind out of its job.

It was weather to cook the sweat out of you as you walked across the yard.

Weather to be afraid. Sheep could freeze. We could freeze, if pickup got stuck and blizzard came up.

Weird winter. My dog fell thru the ice and drowned before any of us missed him. Dad led snowplow in circle. His and Fern's best time together. Going to town by sled. I rode off a cutbank on my sled and opened a knee. Dad at JB's, saw the chinook break winter.

my running starts (chasing lambs) off running board

It was a notion bigger than he was.

first snow

in my father's telling

crisp snow

snow light and dry as foam (sawdust?)

DETAIL

Wally's perpetual houseful of friends & relatives (when married to Joyce)

WSS town groups: small center of professional men -- 2 lawyers, teachers, Dr or two, dentist.
--influence of families (McAfees, for ex) large

Fern Vinton's boast of 2300 head herd of horses

rainbarrel (esp. in Ringling, for soft water and to save carrying)

odd turns of family history: D.L. Doig as champion chicken raiser

WSS area ranchers now won't admit it, but band of sheep pulled many of them through hard times.

chaps

lambing apron?

caps with earflaps

overshoes left unbuckled, buckles would soon fall off

1948-9: out of that winter sky snow fell like

Men in WSS bars: everyone wearing hat or cap. Wrinkles at corners of eyes.

sagebrush ripping at chaps with swatting sound

saloon fights: regular drunks

train riding to & from college: the long nights of awakening at stops (name them)

ears froze on livestock

Mrs. Badgett pillowed in the fat of her body

lupine -- death camas -- loco weed

fencing pinchers -- wire stretchers

cairns built by sheepherders just to be doing something

Sam and Susie Agee fights: in Dupuyer bar, she ran, ~~xxxx~~ jumped, caught him around neck with her legs and sailed out the door with him onto sidewalk. At Dabney's, pinned him under machinery with crescent wrench

snow in heads of gulches and on north slopes

jackrabbits darting in car lights

the steady summer wind while I farmed for Tony Moser

bare dirt around WSS grade school -- hi school lawn

DETAIL

snoose: Rudy chewed it, claimed mosquitoes never bothered him while he irrigated

what the Higgins cookhouse was like: my newspapered room upstairs

dinner bell

kerosene light of campsite -- like star on mountainside

prosperity was going from kerosene lamp to Coleman lantern

in forest: branches are wands moving magically overhead (no breeze on ground)

early morning sun in treetops

the blanched patch of grass left when a tent was stripped away or the trailer house was moved

Castle Mtns: sentinel crags grappling above trees

sage ticks

sections and gates

tin cans on circles of baling wire -- "use those cans on 'em"

feel of high hay against your hands as you walk through it

cream seperator -- whirring tug of handle's momentum

noon hour laziness after meal and nap; reluctance to get up and go back to work. Lunches in the field: sometimes cold fried chicken, potato salad, kool-aid

prairie corrals: hoofs beat the ground into a bare spot, dark against the surrounding grass

cheat grass

syrup pail

Rankin's cows on road

Lloyd Robison and Ed McReynolds: town men with big bellies

Wall Mtn. visible from everywhere

Ringling: snow through windows of house. Houses like wagons in a circle, left to fall apart.

sight of running horses on Black Butte

hitting skunk with car -- smell stays

that clamp of mouth

I suit to be buried in

he wasn't alone every time -

he do-' hno sic'em

Hnnf! Balloon ascension

Birch Creek rodeo

sweaty hat band

sagebrush annie

prairie fire, greasy smoke of sage

Annie Doig: tew dews in a dewcutt

a town where anything is believed but little is known

rewardful

extremities

quilting the OO together

rodeo 1928: they took the town

"get to drinkin'"

little touches of murder -- dog beaten to death with rock

finicky

slope of his mind -- sloped as much as his forehead

his tough outer ply

it must have been the 1st time he laid hands on death

the vee is a plough

it wasn't the same in the bars with Ruth. For one thing, Dad seemed to drink more to get drunk than he had before

sidebets of fate

overgreedy

watching for ticks

just worlds of grass

train a hat

where does memory lead? That it does lead, there can be no doubt...

scuffs of sage

pieces of the past become pieces of me

the skull case -- casing

just bein' sociable

This was war, now.

nap -- sage nap on the land

nerved himself

browse

dungeon

Duells: Dabby has installed poetry into the family, and they know it

Before, it was get it down on paper, put some shape to it and it won't matter much which. Not this time. The shape has to befound, ~~invented~~ discovered rather than invented

Whatever news could not be discovered, she would happily invent

atoms of time

the gone ones somehow live again -- Christie back from the crushed auto at the base of the ridge ...

Cliff Shearer's dad, with black scar across back of hand from daubing axel grease (axel dope?) on it

snubbed down

nicker

fencing pinchers

three times back from death, but alive with a burning in his stomach

the push of wind

pock of the crater

the brimming

splay

sage reached up over the stirrups

moulting

slink

the mind's eye

stirrup high

sage polishing chaps leather

not much worked in the n'hood except gravity

cleavered into

quills of trees along the ridgeline

the sun mothering the green grass

for life is fatal to all of us

edgy

swelter

There is no away...

ghostcraft

I must remember, or lose...

in the skull crevices

an idea to work with

bleed -- bled away -- bleed as noun, the long bleed of ....

spang

prospector

PHRASING

where the whips of wind had cut in

jerked him up short

hardmouthed

he gave you opinions like a man paying out rope

So deep a silence it rang in the ears

memory is a detailist

bantam

deadwood

Dad fought to town at some risk. There were only 0 ranches between his and the road..

There is no knowing

the half-dark of a winter day

Why this should be ...

weedy

so recently in mind it might have been y'day (this morning)

crag

featureless

with a hatchet nose and an ax of a jaw

worry lines

the still face

the hills hunkered

the wintering-in truce

gone in search of

orderly fields, disorderly hills

chambers -- chambered

a chain of iron-cold days

crowbait

knolls (in the mind)

splatters

old women stiff in the knees

add to prism 2? -- point about memory emanating from great, unchangeable things

circle of memory

breastbone

now, in the lee of those angers

he was everlastingly weak now

memory begins to beat there

then would come boiling back

spots of sunlight probed in around the gear housings etc.; chaff older than I was caught in the light as I mussed past.

memory a constant delirium

a sheen on everything in her kitchen

She gave me attention in a clear, absolute focus, all for my behalf and none for hers. Listening to her stories, I realized this was at least the third time around for her...

M I was a gift, a bonus chance to raise

threaded

clothesline

the wind shoved against the north side of the house all winter

creeks with plates of ice

describe stacked hay

cud of snoose

the mountains pulled down lightning, sent thunder mauling down the valleys

memory as homesickness

what Dad would have been in Scotland

scars on back of my hunting knife where Dad pounded it with rock to cut thru deer brisket

he could scarcely have put breath on a mirror

Mrs. Tilyman: at news of disaster, would begin to wish it involved no one from a town she knew, then a state, and on up until the wish was that no one at all had been involved

G'ma: I deaded him

Reservation: no room in all that space to get away from each other. Once in a while, take a walk

on his way to death
the code of time
I realize that I am thinking about ghosts, not persons, and that they had become ghosts to me even while they were alive.
sallow
she had grown a rind, tough and salty
goad
tease
feeling the light which glimmered to the foot of my bed, straight from the two of them and their charged talk.
I had a turn of mind then
a cold eye; a cold I.
Just once, it was explained to me that I should not be stricken by her sharpness, that it was a mood
that galloping idea
stanzas of argument were not her style. She hit fast, went icy and silent
agriculture is now agribusiness. What I call my boyhood now could be called pre-adulthood.
stunted
Having Tom Ringer for a husband taught her that much.
She would ask me, as if I were an authority,
the work-stained ranch
By that was meant
the alfalfa, the greenest thing the country grew
a kind of absent-mindedness, as if only dreams fit in my head
my dreamless sleep. It is only since I have begun writing this that I have been aware of dreams
I craved room, room for my dreaming
my heavy leg
heavy as sandbags

in all this book, in all this search of memory, my mother has not spoken

It is something we somehow carried with us through all that happened later

You were so damn bashful, a friend of my father's grunts. Hard to get a word out of yuh.

with a teacup delicacy

tagging time (before lambing)

rim of it all

homesteaders came, printed ruts into the country, left

G'ma wore bib overalls only when no one could see her

Her letters unparagraphed, uncommaed

What're you doing? Oh, this, that and the other.

that brute winter

refrain (n.)

a two-day rain, which was all the rain we could imagine

hearsay

to be as truthful about it as she would have been

debris

nips away

wrinkles coming in the edges of eyes

I believe that memory takes a fix from landmarks as a traveler will

If all of memory was in the mind when we were born -- could watch it happen, mark it off -- and it would provide the one answer we all ponder: the instant of death

I set out to write better than I can

Memory is our second existence-- second life

Imagination is the mind's run in the opposite direction from memory: if they were reversed...

Finnigan's somewhere-beyond-Helsinki accent as if he was breaking glass with his teeth.

I am the bonus child, son of her daughter and promising in my own right-- How much was I the shadow of my mother?

Lost for years, regained.

They shared the same wound, the death of my mother.

G'ma and Dad at last made an alloy

Like other women of the valley, she would not break up because of the children. Like other men of the valley, Tom was caught in a vise he could not handle.

fidget

the blizzard wind whacked...

went girling

the silences of thought

putty weather, gray and changeable

coldest shadows

loot

gruel

sliver

falling into kindling

noiselessly

on a spree

next -- and last, and always --

If there was a backwards way to do something, McTaggart knew it by instinct.

icicles

the scald of that face

The wind sucking moisture -- and something out of me...

husked

the animals were husks

butts of hay

guff

carrying in the head

clay roads turned iron in summer and soup in the spring

shoring inside him

some flouncing sewed around the edges

Split his tongue, and he would tell

shy creatures the Indians had ~~left behind~~ abandoned

the tuck of

nuzzle

PHRASING

gone sour

texture

bleary

the loft of the mind

try not to flinch away

...if I wanted to think about -- and being a worrying child, I did --

Here is another memory:

perking up through

six sons, named like the rollcall of a Highlands regiment

Little by little

settlers in the valley, like seeds dropped in a furrow

The weathers of the country

guttered out

hit a dry hole

pounding (adj.)

The mountains lift out of 00 foothills

resources in themselves

staunch (v.)

being dunned

And even that

The grass was started

riveted onto the countryside

As though he had caught a fever

purred

Wheat in the fingering wind -- wind fingered in at every crack

bewilders

The country had become a polar wilderness

the willies

nock

made a pattern, like quilt panels sewed edge to edge

as odd panels of cloth edge to edge will design themsvles into a quilt

Sat. night came to town with a vigor which seemed to make main street sit up pertly.

preening himself on the sound of his own voice

more friendliness than I was comfortable with

Some rough ones drank here.

put a shoring in my life

The bars gave me the attention span of a raccoon. Whenever anything more interesting came up, the conversation padded off toward it.

A social structure as stately and intricate as linenwork.

It (Aberdeen ~~question~~ winter?) must have been the first time he was hit with the question of where he ought to be. The Basin had given one answer in the winter of 1919-20...

Retreating into myself has always been a main method of my life, but the broody mood of that first school autumn was a disorder I have never known again.

Sheep drift, like a slow, slow cloud

The spell of those early mountain seasons must have stayed with them. Why else return to the thin air so soon after my mother's worsening asthma?

Since I could outread everybody and outwrestle most of them...

His grieving always worsened, too, at the points of the year which brought my mother's memory fresh to him -- some late summer weekends when they would have been at a rodeo together...Christmas...my birthday.

used Ewes and lambs browsing, always browsing, the endless nibbles of dry grass firming them...

used Sheepherders talking to their dogs, their horses, anything for voice to go into.

PHRASING

what pain cratered in his eyes

if there is an axis in every ~~man's life~~ soul, Dad's was ...

unborn in him

Just now I am growing up to my boyhood, and already it's a generation too late.

His limits were sharp. But they did not include...

(Begin chapter with:) The sheep.

clever with ranch tasks

the act of breath

undead-- unalive

fixed hour

furtive terror

see to it

staunch (v.)

rough edges weren't off the country

carom

bearings

the winks of a stone skipping on water

stayed through

call up

drove (n.)

holding himself together by ...

stiff and heavy and empty

quilted chocolate edge to ~~pale~~ blonde stubble (fields)

for one last time

part of us now

lived through a similar night

callous

PHRASING

the road climbs ridges and then falls into the Basin

stark

handful-- double handful

tense as a cat

holds OO to this world

grope

my mind was too OO (comparison with Dad)

jittered in my mind like fancy clothes on a clothesline

Breath dragged in and out of ~~Dad~~ her grudgingly

almost sober

bossy

hands hard as rasps

a voice the size of OO

it was hard to tell when the weather would entirely stop being winter.

sheep raising had become spiritless work for me

it's an eternal story (my leaving for college on train, Dad wishing me the chance he never had)

stored it up against (someone)

they had all started even

trying to believe myself into a writer

afraid to remember

togged out in

never quiet in forest -- upper air moving through boughs

here is where the story writes itself

memory handles the past with heavy mittens on, occasionally fumbling onto a treasure while letting all else drop.

PHRASING

If you pry at memory, you may bring out ancient truths you hid at the time.

It gives me a pry on memory.

glommed on to

the swipes of ...

calcimine

flitch

patter

trellis

the molecules of a story going together (the bones of...)

some restless toss in the earth's surface left a ridge

I would dance beneath the sheltering fir if that memory could come back whole. As it is, the portions of it are delight enough...

Time dies too, and is buried. The years of OO are held in this OO...

I pick memories like apples. Some have gone soft, unreliable. Some show elderly wormholes. A few are solid and fulfilling as vintage...

the pull of OO, the shove of OO

tiny volcanoes of emotion

and turning, fell to earth

when I call up memory

I like the classic sweeps of ~~mf~~ mountain and plateau; gimcracks of nature bother me

clues that nature was still toying with the area, and didn't want man around

a bright edge to that was...

the early minutes

primp

most secret

PHRASING

lured by what I saw ~~how~~ in books

altitude too high for sagebrush

the camera's eye as strange in this place as the eye of a bobcat in a city

glorious spill of mountainside -- cresting in horizon

the writer's guilt of never working enough

what counts in life

sign language of weather

in dusk, a life snapped short, a life celebrated

summer like a nocturne

all is felt -- nothing is abstract

* summer is always the most temporary season for me

life is the fight against eternity, the losing grapple with eternity

difference between memory and reverie

what neither memory nor photos show

this healing power of memory

the hue of an old gunstock

they looked like the same person done by different sketch artists (Hurst girls)

a man who talked as some people sing

the Indian tribes had gone to pieces under white push

We all start to be born far in the past. Where evolution leaves off and ancestry begins, I don't know, but...

what tug toward emotion my father felt, I only half-know

tribal memories, these (Scots in the Basin as a tribe succeeding the Indians)

I swear he said it

clouds walking the ridgelines, hurried by chilly wind

the ceremony of innocence is drowned

the land opened to the east
he was charred inside
Rudy: walked with all his stride from waist down, like soldier marching
Badgetts: those two serene old outlaws

calouses on the land
pattern of frozen irrigation water
Rankin a king
I too work on marginal land, at edges of my talent
the snow-blind land
G'ma's mother did not recognize her
~~Walter Badgett:~~ a hand as big as my face
seagulls became her new nemesis, as magpies had been
we have been a family drawn to margins
Before, death had made fast swipes at him. Now it fastened
onto his chest and drained him.
His life was ending before his existence.
her death was in him like a saw cut
her death had gonex into him like an arrowhead
let her tell it
let it tellx itself.
the two of us pondered my first beard, a pale rim off fuzz on
my upper left
outfitted with

regular as cedar
an eclipse of gray that had taken the horizon and all detail
snow pushing down on the land, land quiet with weight of snow
long underwear
a time of storm in the land, and storm in our house
fingernails black
sitting silent as doorstops
the rain booming down on the roof
time compacted to moments
knowing exact # of days to getting out of AF
flannel
fog-world
will ye forget it?
buttery
reading voices
me as a watcher -- in bars, at dances, on ranches
sage tick
memory begins to bunch itself there like a ~~rope of~~ muscle
hat-brim
stiptic
deviling in us
refugee
rezavoy
lineaments
tamped
as far north as we could go -- unknown cont'l divide beyond
spandy
sprigged with sage
solstice
that pivot summer
Ruth in the great winter, Ruth everywhere and nowhere.
scuff of hooves
blinded land
milky overcast
2 young half-strangers, like past neighbors glimpsed years after
the silver winter -- tarnished winter
words to toll me back

men in hayfield, salt rings from sweat under arms
the pitchy night
leather lines of harness sectioned over horses
give 'em a jag of hay
Three black faces -- Rose G, TG, and Bob G
spears
spearsrgrass
going to post office, getting mail out of box
one of them dreaming of NY and second fame, the other
  fumbling for his next bottle of whiskey
religion we had none.
To this minute I will avoid argument if I can...
the flecked sky, filled with fat snowflakes
whunk
coffee up
work ahead -- common phrase in my schoolwork:If you want to work ahead.
seemed to be more snow than space between the flakes
The Bohunk; Finnigan
the week of life
scour
when the winter ended, so did D's marriage to Ruth.
  It took several months, but they were months of hopeless war...
Time ticks backward as well as ahead...
the evidence of it burned in his belly
stinted
feather in
what I most hoped would not happen
doorstops
cupped
keen -- keening
snow drifting -- the softest of keening, and the deadliest
Ruth's line of sight thru life would always center on Ruth
eclipse of color
nock
What son was this? But he had only one...

three, two, one -- it is the ominous countdown
Wally on trucking job to Bozeman, would stop for G and me
For the first time in my life I realized that my father, too,
might die.
the zero of obliteration
fluke -- fluked
the cold fused earth and sky together, one sheet of grayness
like a collision of meteors
places with elbow room
he was in a new desperation I did not know about then
now the burning in his stomach
unlovely country
decision made between the thighs
calamitous marriages
it is as much guess as fact, but I can see how...
believe himself into it
a gray the eye was afraid to look on for its strangeness
the first word of a secret, and no more
disinclined
But that was nothing to the puzzle she was in person
religion therewas none
WSS changed to timber town
ranchers paid bills once a year
on account
the old duffers
Other men. Other women? I think not..Not from what I could see
on a big binge
snowblind
storm that swallowed our private storms
aye, yes or no
alphabet of college degrees
holy gosh
Dad: you can go straight to hell

Between ~~sagg~~ stands of sage you would see a cow carcass, the papery hide stuck to the rib bones

Hawks and eagles rode the air above the ridgelines, making their half-mile watchful glides before ~~tha~~ letting the air carry them high again

Dad's chest built up, the ~~lungs~~ muscles stretching out to squeeze air into the failing lungs. bunching like a shell

flint

what a moss agate is like: pattern trapped in rock

snaggled

These they stored up against each other, supplies for the next fireup.

fidget

their silent stand against time

moss agates: they are like the blot tests which things can be seen in. My grandmother's life there was like that, a pattern trapped...

shaley

theme: Dad trying to cope

I began to learn the town.

husks of men

EYEvun--eyevun

sheepherder's gravy

As my gran'parents were emigrants from Scotland, I am an emigrant from Montana, from the skein of life they started there.

rutted face

I see these people, and wonder:

for the first time in my life.

flinty

undersides

pared (adj)

his talk was music

in the town, but not of it

wart (on landscape)

the mindscape of those years