

X

REVISED

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The only time he met his culinary match seems to have been

the winter at Shoalwater Bay when he lived with the old whaling

Purwington

captain. The captain was famous for cooking every thing that had

ever lived. We had eaten of young eagles, hawks, owls, lynx, beaver,

seal, otter, gulls, pelican, and, finally, wound up with crow; and

the crow was the worst of the lot. The captain once tried to take

a skunk, but, not having properly cleaned it, it smelt so unsavory

when the bake-kettle was opened that he was forced to throw skunk

and kettle into the river, which he did with a sigh, remarking what

a pity it was that it smelled so strong, when it was baked so nice

and brown.

NWC
326

X

#

660) ~~Oct. 1, 1866~~ I have been gratified and surprised at the

manifestation of feeling on the part of the Indians at my departure.

They are not usually very demonstrative but children and adults appeared

very much affected--well they might have, with the mercurial ^{agent} Webster

to look forward to--the former shedding tears and the latter singing

a chant expressive of their sorrow.

I have tried to do my duty towards these Indians and these friendly

expressions on their part are more grateful to me than the approval

of others who can not know by report the value of my labors.

~~S to Baird, May 23, '64:~~

15 bird skins

1 skeleton of loon

" " " duck

2 Indian skulls

2 fur seal skulls

skeleton of land otter

imperfect specimens of land crabs

skull and backbone of fur seal

2 bark capes

2 feather blankets

shells

grass basket

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At times, more than scientific good-fellowship showed through

Swan's precise little handwriting. In March of 1863, he wrote wistfully:

I should be pleased did your time permit it you could give me some

reliable idea of the state of affairs at Washington. I can gather

very little from the contradictory statements of the newspapers

and know about as much of the doings of the Khan of Tartary as of our

own government at Washington.

Jan. 1

Day Twelve

The new year. ^{On} ~~For~~ Sunday, January 1, 1860, his first New Year's

Day on the coast of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Swan entered in his

diary: May it be not only the commencement of the week, the month

and the new year, but the commencement of a new era in my life, and

may good resolve result in good action.

Days ~~Seven~~, ~~Eight~~, ~~Nine~~, ~~Ten~~

3#

I have been ^{into} ~~to~~ Swan's diaries. Sixty-six of them, they hold

the second forty years of his life and at least ~~three-quarters of~~ ^{some} ~~at the University of Washington,~~ ^{and a half} a million ^{handwritten} words. Out of their gray archival boxes,

^{could be} they look like the secondhand wares of an eccentric stationer. ^{Most} ~~Many~~

~~of them~~ are pocket-size, some mere notebooks with cheap marbled

covers, others with ~~black~~ covers-and-clasps which contain themselves

Black, green, tan, faded maroon, they have in common the look of time spent neatly as a case for eyeglasses. ^{Some} years, an ordinary school ^{in a busy pocket.}

^{sneaks} exercise book ^{comes} into the collection. Small economies are displayed

Swan made use of ~~his~~ his 1890 Standard Pocket Diary for entries from

January 1 to March 28 of that year, ^{then in 1898 for} and ^{for} April 4-December 31, ~~of~~

^{printed} ~~1893~~ the year's ^{last} digit carefully ^{daubed} ~~doubled~~ from "0" to "8" ^{by his pen} each day.

Eighteen sixty-six is the ~~prime~~ aristocrat of the bunch. ~~It is~~

^{III} a marvelous fat ledger, some nine inches wide and twelve high, with

380 pages, it weighs ^{embossed} 0 pounds. The spine is elaborately ~~tooled~~ and

^{and embossed,} hinged, and in the middle of the cover's panel of leather is tooled,

in half-inch letters, J G Swan. On page 1, in pristinely neat handwriting--

evidently Swan recopied these entries from rougher entries--^{the chronicle} ~~it~~ begins:

May 1866 Diary and private journal of James G. Swan, being a continuation

of daily record commencing July 1862 at the Makah Indian Agency ~~Makah~~

Neah Bay, Washington Territory.

Years afterward and hundreds of miles from the valley, I was
I stepped from the shadows of my mood into the shadows of his.
If it was Dad who came to take me from the schoolyard,
some more after school until Dad or Clifford drove up for me.
Every recess and lunch hour I moped off by myself, then snickered
for ranch life and its growlups and its times of loneliness.
time in my head that I could spend most of the day being lonesome
as she chalked them on the blackboard. I had so much free
could put in front of me, and add or subtract numbers as fast
lessons. I already could read anything the surprised teacher
Even before the surprise being, I wasn't thrilled with
rungs for the next few days of reading lessons.
a mop sopped up the other. I sat with my feet up on the chair
this. The teacher's hankie ended the tears, and a janitor with
her puddle and watched to see how school handled something like
and set up a sobbing howl as the rest of us backed off from
for reading, the blond girl sitting next to me patted her pants
And one morning when we were fanned out around the teacher
it it caught fire, which gave me hope that maybe it would.
about how to line up and quick-march out of the old brick building
only two little bursts of excitement. We went through a drill
Mountains. Those early weeks in the first grade, there were
ridden a sawbuck packhorse or shot an arrow in the air.



The school got off to a stuttery start. The first ~~day~~^{morning,} a single student, ten-year-old Jimmy Claplanhoo, showed up. This evening I got out the magic lantern and gave an exhibition of it as a reward....(N 17, '63)

Within A few days, ~~later~~ four more Makah children came, and were treated to Swan's the picture show. By the end of the first week, Twenty children present

Success b. something school world

today exercised them on the alphabet and then gave them a pan full of boiled potatoes. # Success in the schoolroom, discord in the world.

here Something set Swan to brooding about the war and its politics: I do not believe in the principles of the Republican party as enunciated by

Greely, Sumner, Phillips, Beecher.... But I do believe that the country

is in real danger and I believe at such times it is the duty of every true man to stand by his government (no matter what the party) in saving

the country and ourselves from ruin. # That out of his system, Swan he went on to note that the Indians' dogs had killed two skunks in the lumber pile.

He next three days out Swan soon had to take ~~time out~~ to supervise the

digging of the schoolhouse cellar, introducing the Makah laborers to which they thought a hilarious machine. Then, the mysteries of the wheelbarrow, ~~Next,~~ a drain to carry the runoff

which they brought from

from the schoolhouse roof ^{needed} had to be finished. Jimmy Claplanhoo came down with a cough so severe that Swan worried it might be consumption.

he made

The Makahs put on a ^{raucous} loud tamanoas ceremony to boost Jimmy's health, just as a gale ripped ^{across} at Neah Bay. Crows tipped over Swan's rain gauge.

he went to work on

He went to work on them with shotgun and strychnine. More Indians arrived for Swan to dispense potatoes to. One of the Makah men brought his two-year-old son to school to learn the alphabet, and created uproar by spanking the ^{tot} boy for not mastering it. A number of the Indians

put?

embarked on a two-day ^{drinking spree,} drunk, which got rougher as it progressed. There were knife wounds, and one combatant smashed three canoes with a stone

before ~~the~~ ^{partyers} others knocked him out with a brick. This drunken frolic

shows how easily these people can be excited to deeds of violence, Swan's

5' pen scolded.

pen scolded ~~put down.~~ We are powerless under the present circumstances either to

prevent these drunken scrapes or protect ourselves in case of an attack,

but I have not the least apprehension of any difficulty if liquor is kept

from them. ^{Now caught} Swan came down with a cold--I have not felt so sick for a

year certainly. Jimmy Claplanhoo, ^{health mended and he arrived back at} ~~got better and came to school to see Swan~~

The agency's winter larder began to be questionable:



no 41

Mr. Phillips and myself had roast ducks for our dinner. Sometimes we are very short of provisions and have to depend on our beef barrel, then again the Indians will bring in such quantities of fish and game that there is a surfeit. It is either a feast or a famine.

The agency cattle ^{started dying} began to die. ^{Cold damp weather held and held} The weather continued cold and rainy.

On December ¹⁶ 18, we had the most remarkable fall of rain I have ever

^{gurgled to the top of} known. ^{it} filled his rain gauges twice, a total of nearly seven inches.

^{a number of} The Indians ^{began} had another ^{drinking} drunken party. ^{participant was blasted} one ^{was} shot in the arm with

~~the~~ a dragoon pistol, and another came ~~to~~ to borrow a shovel from

Swan. He went where old Flattery Jack, Sixey's father, had been buried,

and dug up one of his arm bones, which was taken and bound on as splints

to the arm of Sixey, the Indians believing that the bone from the father's

arm would cure. [#] A weakened bull from the ^{staggering} agency herd had to be put

in the basement of the schoolhouse for shelter. ^{he} took out a window

on his way in. A party of Makahs from another village ^{trooped in} came to purchase

purchase a bride: They came in the house and rigged themselves up with

masks and feathers and all went to Whattie's house to make their trade.

^{date?} At last Webster sailed in with some supplies, Christmas came, and an

audible sigh lifts from the ^{ledgers} pages as Swan noted ³ the making of a plum

pudding.

X

I have had a recent letter from Mark, in his faculty office in Illinois--we may be the last two American men who write regularly and at length to one another--and folded with it came a quote found during his research on missionaries. The Reverend

come upon

Summers, reporting from Benton County, Iowa, in July of 1852: (Swan was about to head north ~~to~~ from California to Shoalwater)

~~A Western home is a place of sojourn, like the home of Abraham or Lot or the Patriarchs that we read of in the Bible. Very few, however, like Abraham, are willing to either to the East or the West.~~

The whole land is not before them, the East is occupied.. A young man recently left for California, who for two years has been very anxious to go, but during his minority had been restrained by the influence

and authority of his parents. They offered, for the sake of diverting him from his purpose, to furnish him the means to travel and visit the

Eastern cities. He derided the idea. He would not turn his hand over to see all that could be seen in the East, but he must go to the Utopia of the New World; and he has gone.

4

Gone west, and cared not so much as a flip of his hand to know

any of that lesser land behind him. In all but flesh, that young Iowan

was my grandfather, my great-uncles, my father and his five brothers, me.

After my grandparents sailed from Scotland and crossed America, nobody

of the family ever went to the Atlantic again. When I journeyed off

to college, I was spoken of as being "back east in Illinois." My father

adventured to Chicago once on a cattle train, and twice to visit me.

My mother, after her parents moved from Wisconsin to the Rockies when

she was half a year old, never returned east of the middle of Montana.

Our westernness, then, has been extreme as we could make it.

We lived our first seventy years as Americans on slopes of the Rockies

as naturally, single-mindedly, as kulaks on the steppes. My own years

eastward--which is to say, in the middle of the Midwest--amounted to a

kind of instructive geographic error. Instructive, that is, because

the jobs in the horizonless Midwest turned me in on myself, I worked

the tasks for more than they were worth and the accumulating overflow

of word ability began to go onto magazine pages. Also, the best

result of my misguess of geography, I met Carol there. She already was

edging west on her own, and when the two of us turned, away from editorial

careers and back to life, we came a fourth of the continent farther

than any of my family had done. Salt water begins 000 yards from where

I sit at this instant.

And so with Swan. When the reverend wrote those opining words,

James G. Swan already had been on the Pacific shore for twenty-three

months, and was about to head onward to Shoalwater Bay.

(599) # Capt. John tells me that the Indians predict a very cold winter.

There will be according to his statement, very high tides, violent gales, great rains, much ~~more~~ cold and snow. The Arhosets predict rain from an unusual number of frogs in a particular stream at their place. The Oquiets predict cold from the fact that great numbers of mice were seen leaving an island in Barclay Sound and swimming to the mainland.

The natives and the mice and the frogs were promptly right. ~~November~~ The nineteenth of November:

(606) Nov. 19. The wind this morning blew open my chamber door which opens out from the south side of the tower and slammed it against the flagstaff breaking out the entire panel work. This has been a very stormy day.

The next day:

next day
Nov. 20. Gales of wind accompanied by tremendous surf, the highest tide that I ever saw. The water was nearly up to the Indian houses.

The Indians were out with their torches saving their canoes and other property.

And the day after that:

day after that, commotion
Nov. 21. Gale lasted till sundown doing considerable damage to fences and unroofing Indian houses. Frequent lightning and thunder all day and evening....The Indians were badly frightened and brought their children to the schoolhouse for safety.

Swan's exploration on that day in 1864 we ~~may~~ duplicate with eerie exactness.

(Swan Diary transcript, pp. 464+)

The trail commenced a short distance south of the village and runs up to the top of the hill or bluff which is rather steep and about sixty feet high. *So the route still goes.* From the summit we proceeded in an easterly direction through a very thick forest half a mile and reached an open prairie which is dry and covered with fern, dwarf sallal and some red top grass, with open timber around the sides. *The very grass seems the same.*

From the prairie we pass through another belt of timber to another prairie lying in the same general direction as the first but somewhat lower and having the appearance of being wet and boggy. This was covered in its drier portions with water grass and thick moss which yielded moisture on the pressure of the feet. *Step from the boardwalk,*

and drops of moisture from James Swan's pen are on our boots.

By now, this second of the twin prairies has a name, and some

winsome history. Maps show the eyelet in the forest as Ahlstrom's

Prairie--where, for fifty-six years, Lars Ahlstrom lived a solitary

life as one more outermost particle of the American impulse to head

for sunset. Through nearly all the decades of his bachelor household

here, Ahlstrom's was the westernmost homestead in the continental

United States.

Originally--which is to say within the first few dozen days after

his arrival in 1902--Ahlstrom ~~had~~ built himself a two-room cabin close

beside the Ozette-to-Alava trail. That dwelling burned in 1916, and

he lived from then on in the four-room cabin which still stands,

thriftily but sturdily built with big tree stumps as support posts

for its northwest and northeast corners, a few hundred yards from the

Even now, as Carol and I battle the brush to this cabin,
trail. All signs are that Ahlstrom kept a trim, tidy homestead life.

In his small barn on the route ^{in,} ~~to the cabin,~~ the window sills above a

workbench are fashioned nicely into small box-shelves. At the cabin

itself, the beam ends facing west ^{are} ~~were~~ carefully masked with squares

of tarpaper to prevent weathering. Inside, when Ahlstrom papered the

cabin walls with newspapers, he carefully wrapped around the pole

X

The next morning, the twenty-third of July, 1864, Swan intended to go out with Peter and sketch his way along the Ozette shoreline, but awoke ~~instead~~ to heavy fog. He and the Makahs prepared instead to hike back to Alava. I had accomplished two things. I had proved the existence of a lake and had made a sketch of a portion and as I was the first white man who had ever seen this sheet of water I concluded I would take some other opportunity when I ^{might} ~~might~~ have white companions with me and make a more thorough survey. ¶ The trailside brush was saturated from the fog~~s~~ by the time Swan was back to the coast he was as well drenched as if I had been overboard.

typist-ready,
Sept. 21, 1979



Day fifty-five (Feb. 13)

Storm. Fence-floater. Goosedrowner. None of which is fractionally enough word for ^{such weather.} it. Nightlong, rain swatted walls and windows, the wind pounded and ripped among the valley trees. Carol and I jerked awake ~~to~~ at the gale's first try at peeling the roof from the house,

never entirely slept from then on.

mod

I was certain that the birch trees outside the bedroom would be bending, eluding, as they always do in southwest blows. I was equally certain I would be greeting ^{or more} one of them in through the rafters any moment.

After breakfast--the birches still stood, although branches ~~lay~~ thicketed the lawn as if someone had spent the night up in the ^{limbs} trees with a pruning saw--I slumped away to try for sleep, Carol

the wild dark to ^{drove} drive up the hill to ^{meet her classes} the ~~state~~ college. The wind roared on. In minutes I admitted myself more or less awake for good, managed to decide that I would head for Shilshole to see this weather at full run on the Sound.

In the car: full run hardly says it either. Wind-flung clouds dive almost into the streets.

All is flying.

^{thin reach} Just beneath ~~them~~, traffic lights dance like lanterns swung by frantic trainmen. People waiting for buses try to squeeze themselves narrow enough to fit the lee spaces behind telephone poles, ~~wherever they protrude,~~ ~~the wind shears hard at them.~~ Everywhere, a sprinkle of evergreen branches

sifted
has ~~come~~ down, as if the city has been seeded with them by a giant *foresting*
hand.

In ~~any open shops or~~ restaurants I pass, people are talking ~~with~~ to each other with their hands. Famous weather, a man said to me on a Killarney street one wan but rainless spring morning, famous weather. This ~~blow~~ ^{gale} is going to have name of its own sort. It takes much to draw a gesture from a Puget Sound resident, but ~~the way~~ steaming mugs of coffee are being waved around in there ~~I can all but hear~~ ^{to punctuate} the expostulations that somebody's daughter and son-in-law got up this morning to find a Douglas fir limb exploded down through the carport roof, that they themselves will not even ~~try~~ ^{attempt} driving to the job at Boeings this morning, that there's been nothing like this christly wind since the Columbus Day blow of '62.

At Shilshole, I lean my way out onto the fishing pier. A bird ^{hazardously} lifts in front of me near the boat ^{ramp} launch. Incredibly, it is a kingfisher, blown in from some forested river bank or another. I look west, ~~and~~ north, ~~and~~ south, and find the Sound entirely empty of ships and boats, ^{in my dozen years along this shore.} the first time I have seen it so. Oddly, the weather is not ^{too} a steady ^{that it is in our valley.} rage down here. There is an uneven chop to the water, no higher than a tugboat's bow, and not much breakage of wave ~~swells~~ along ~~the~~ the shoreline.

in my
OO
Kew

The southwest wind is ~~sending~~ ^{skidding} the water ~~skidding~~ up the length of the Sound instead of crashing it ashore. When the miles of chop finally fetch up against the banks of Whidbey Island, the banging spray must be ~~tremendous~~ ^{colossal}.

A high agitated whistling whangs to me from the harbor's ~~boat~~ ^{sailboat} masts, like their cry of untold mournful birds. ~~The~~ souls of displaced kingfishers, most likely.

no 9 In the clouds to the west the Olympics pop through into whetted outline every so often, and unexpectedly, sunshine through some loophole in the vapors is beaming onto a stretch of the shoreline across the Sound. But quickly full storm again. A new ~~front~~ ^{waterlogged} rain front hits, rolls along the wavetops, resists me every ~~inch~~ ^{water-filled} of the way back to the car.

Homebound: ~~Against~~ my habit, the storm has me listening to the car radio. The announcer has just said the Hood Canal bridge has vanished--a mile of it blown beneath the waters. I count the number of times I have driven across it ^{To the Peninsula} this winter, to Neah Bay, Alava, Port Townsend, Dungeness. With its ~~long~~ ^{barge-sized} linkage of pontoons across



the broad surface of Hood Canal, the gray floating bridge has always

reminded me of a blockade chain across some river contested in the

Civil War. ^{No more.} This storm was the ironclad to snap it.

Day fifty-six

Innocent weather today. Clouds wander sheep-like along the horizon as if unacquainted with rain, never any lust to meet the wind and ^{go dancing} ~~dance~~.
^{raucously} on the grave of a bridge.

In one or another of his earliest sojourns at Neah Bay, Swan had watched a Makah pageant of marriage proposal. According to what he wrote later for the Smithsonian, into the bow of a beached canoe stepped a man,

^{adj.} with a whaling harpoon. Another Makah sailor climbed in amidship and held a seal-skin buoy as if ready to cast it onto the waves. A third man, the steersman, ^{abertly} knelt in the stern with paddle poised.

Onto the shoulders of eight men were hoisted the canoe and its crew of three, ~~men~~, and through the air, ^{in its above-sand voyage} ~~across the sand~~ toward the lodge of the family of the girl being wooed, the whaling pantomime slowly sailed.

In front led a fourth Makah actor, a man beneath a blanket and creeping on all fours, occasionally raising his body to imitate a whale when blowing. At intervals the Indian in the canoe would throw the harpoon as if to strike, taking studious care, however, not to hit him.

Behind the man-whale and the airborne ^{sailors} ~~crew~~ strode a chorus of the suitor's friends, singing, drumming, shaking rattles. The burthen of their song was, that they had come to purchase a wife for one of their number, and recounted his merits and the number of blankets he would pay.

At last, as the procession reached the lodge, the mock-whale scuttled to one side; there was an instant of poised expectation among the entire tableau; and the harpoonist with full might whammed his harpoon into the cedar plank door.

This operation, deadpanned Swan, may be said to be symbolical of Cupid's dart on a large scale.

Evidently some splinter of that great dart flew and buried ^{itself} years-deep ~~into~~ ^{quest} the watching ~~writer~~. Just before Christmas of 1874, into Swan's diary pages arrives the name of Amelia Roberts. It sparkles there fifteen times in the next two months, and oftener and oftener "Amelia" is fondly burnished down to ~~Dolly~~ the attractee's nickname, "Dolly."

This is new.

(no 4) Over the years, Swan's words on women have been scant. In 1863 when the Neah Bay employees invited ashore ~~for~~ ^{to} Fourth of July dinner

the captain of a trading vessel, it ^{was} ~~is~~ rare exuberance when Swan noted that the captain was

(1. is little angry 7 a man is landed, this)

companied by a very handsome specimen of savage beauty in the

person of a Stikene squaw whom he had brought down in his schooner...

There are the warm diary entries about the Makah housekeeper, Katy.

A single wisp on a spring evening at Port Townsend ^{in 1869, Swan had gone} when he ~~was~~

Calling on friends:

Easter. Mrs Phillips & her sister from Whidbey Island were present. I was much interested in Mrs Phillips from her strong resemblance to my late wife.

Mar 20 / 1869

But little else. Until now these drumbeat inscriptions of Dolly, Dolly, Dolly.

Gifts to her begin to dollop from Swan like honey from a pitcher: sewing box, market basket, inkstand, writing desk, earrings, a painting, collections of seashells. Dolly full of fun, the diary exults. Dolly weighs 127 pounds and measures 5 ft 1 1/4 inches, it ~~appreciates~~ commends.

One other reckoning does not reach its pages. That winter of 1874-75, James G. Swan reached his fifty-seventh birthday. Dolly Roberts was sixteen.

That canyon between their ages perhaps did not gape as widely as it would in later eras, but it was chasm enough. ~~Swan's~~ There were Swan's other fissures as well: his thin finances, his drinking.

Indians sometimes slept--sometimes lived--in his office. Swan

himself periodically dwindled ~~over~~ ^{across} the horizon to Sitka or Utah or ~~someplace~~ ^{somewhere}. Plenty, in short, for Dolly's mother, and maybe even Dolly,

to mull about Swan the swain. And Port Townsend being the compound

of New England small town and muscular Western port ~~it~~ ^{it} was, whatever

could be brought up against Swan stayed in the air a doubly long while,

as tittle-tattle among the mercantile families on the bluff, ~~nudges~~

~~the~~ ^{Boston-born} (Dolly was the ~~mother~~ niece of prominent merchant F.W. Pettygrove), nudges

and heavy winks among the waterfront saloon constituencies.

4 Unpromising odds.)

Yet, as the ongoing diary lines about Dolly indicate, Swan ~~was not~~ ^{had} ~~without~~ ^a bridgehead in the situation. ~~For~~ he had been smitten with

young Miss Roberts in, of all locales he ever can be found at, the Port Townsend Episcopal church choir.

Against Port Townsend's night-in, night-out whiskey baritone,
that choir ^{must have been} ~~was~~ a very wavery Sunday trill. Sometimes the hymning voices

in late 1874 and early 1875
were ~~as few as four~~, sometimes as few as four. But consistently

show dogged ~~but sporadic~~ ^{stint of} ~~regular~~ church-going by Swan ^{as long ago} in late

as 1869
~~October of 1874~~ --they included Mrs. Roberts and her daughters Dolly

and Mary, and Swan. (Mr. Roberts is a mysterious absence, both from

Absconded?
the choir and the household. Deceased? A sea captain?) Swan quite

promptly begins to ^{drop} ~~come~~ by the Roberts home for rehearsal of the

church music. Then he begins gifts of food--scallops, salmon--

and naturally is invited ^{to share} ~~for~~ supper. Henry Webster, also at loose

ends in Port Townsend just then and still Swan's stalwart, might be

asked to join in as well. One ^{fine} February Sunday, there is even a

genteel stroll, Swan and Webster and Dolly and Mary, in the course

of which the young women probably heard more than they wanted to know

about the singularities of life at Neah Bay.

romantic

What came of Swan's season of hovering was just what could be expected: letdown. The choring goes on, but the gifts and visits slow a bit, and then become more widely--more respectably?--spaced.

4) Swan never ~~says~~^{speaks} it in the diaries, but the increasing intervals say

it for him. Sometime here, the ~~invisible~~^{, invisible but sharp,} moment occurs when the fact

registers on Swan, as it probably already had on Dolly with some help

from her mother, that the choirgirl and the white-bearded frontiersman

I find ahead in the diaries that

are not a likely lifelong match. For a number of years to come, Swan

will continue a fond proximity to Dolly and the Roberts family. Not

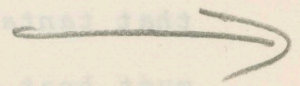
the daily nearness of an infatuated suitor, however. More like the

favorite

weekliness of a bachelor uncle.

He had never admitted to his own another form of acceptance.

more - Swan remain I find ahead in diaries



Who would have thought the clerkish whiskeyfied aging dabbler
had such steam in him? But of course he did, exactly because he
had never shown ^{it}, and I find his infatuation as entirely wonderful
as it was foolish. I wish such a season ^{to} for any of us, man or woman,
so long self-locked into aloneness. Emotional paroles are due the
solitary even if, like Swan's, the outing turns out to be quick and
bittersweet. Better that than simply bitter.

Meanwhile, ^{this} the newspaper item of 00: (Webster-Mary elopement)

MARRIED: In Portland, Oregon, April 3d, by Rev. T.L. Elliot,
Henry A. Webster and Mary E. Roberts, both of Port Townsend.

Day sixty-seven

~~At last,~~ ^{at last.} two weeks and a day after Swan's arrival at Masset,

paragraphs of promise. ^{at last.} In the diary, the ninth of July: The old chief

for whom I had been waiting returned home today. His name is Edinso

or, as the whites pronounce it, Edinshaw. ^{the next day} By letter to Baird:

(to B, July 10, '83)

The Chief of North Island, who has been absent, will be starting

shortly to go with me to that interesting place and till he is ready

I shall busy myself collecting specimens of fish, and dredging for

The familiar financial sign-off
molluscs. My Indian, Johnny Kit Elswa has proved of great service in

purchasing articles at far less prices than I could, as tourists and

collectors have advanced prices greatly. Mr McKenzie tells me that

my purchases are actually lower than he had paid Indians for the same

kind of articles, and Swan was away to begin the dickering with Edinso.

the canoe chief.

now?

Edinso. There is a story of him terrible as any mythic lightning flung down from Olympus. Early in the 1860s, a group of Haidas led by Edinso were in ~~the British Columbia capital of~~ Victoria when smallpox erupted. Whether to clear the Haidas from its ravages or simply to get the obstreperous Edinso out of town it is not clear, but the governor of British Columbia ordered in a gunboat to tow the ~~Queen~~ Indians home ~~to the Queen Charlottes~~. Not far north along the coastline of Vancouver Island, Edinso pulled out an axe and hacked free his canoes. He put to shore with his followers, they defiantly made camp, ~~they~~ more defiantly returned to Victoria, and smallpox swept them. When Edinso eventually led home to the Queen Charlottes those who had survived, the epidemic ^{went} ~~came~~ with them.

4 Which of course is only to say that horror came to the Haidas on ~~one~~ ^X wind rather than the next. (Smallpox in this period is thought to have killed ~~at~~ at least a third of the ~~tribal~~ tribal population along ^{entire} ~~of~~ the British Columbia coast.) ^{Yet} ~~But~~ that wind was

Edinso's, as if fate couldn't leave him alone. ⁴ He was a name in the North Pacific for the ^{staggering sumptuous} ~~seven great~~ potlatches he had thrown; for whirling a Tsimshian chief into the path of a gunshot intended for him during a tribal fracas; for ^{traveling} ~~gliding~~ about in a ~~skin~~ canoe "twelve fathoms in length, elaborately carved and painted at both ends, manned by a large number of slaves and dependents." ^{By now, however,} ~~But~~ he also was a fading figure, an aging ~~leader~~ sea-soldier who was ~~just~~ merely one of a dozen chiefs basing themselves at Masset ~~after~~ ^{since} their villages had died or dwindled.

I was rather than next.

Edinso had been one of the Haida leaders to decide that missionaries were a milder plague than the invisible diseases. He also ^{had} made his peace with Victoria officialdom, even erected a carved column which was topped with the figure of the governor of British Columbia in frock coat and silk hat. But ^{political} accommodations with the white world were one thing, ~~rearranging his canoe travels~~ canoe charter was another. ~~Edinso~~ Swan would just have to wait, ^{longer, serenely} Edinso told him, until he completed a trading trip to Fort Simpson. Meanwhile, wouldn't Swan care to look over a lot of ancient things he had for sale?

The next day, the tenth of July, Swan shopped through Edinso's items, ~~but~~ ^{seized} as he asked too much I did not purchase. What ~~was~~ Swan's interest, ^{instead} was the project of the chief's sons, Charley Edinso, a carver who could work in wood, stone, or in gold or silver but at

the moment was using the ivory teeth of a walrus. Two beautiful canes nearly finished, Swan records, each representing a serpent twined around the stick which was a crab apple sapling...on top of one was a clenched fist: yes. The ^{writing} Port Townsend museum ~~piece~~ piece in gestation.

The depiction, Charley Edinsoy ^{enlightened} ~~explained to~~ Swan, was the hand of Apollo's priest Laocoon, vainly grappling the serpent as it crushed him to death for trying to ~~to~~ warn his fellow citizens against the Trojan

The Haida carver ^{an advanced} horse. Charley Edinsoy did not have, as it may sound, a ~~First from~~

^{degree} ~~Oxford~~ in Greek mythology, ^{simply} ~~just~~ a picture from a London illustrated

newspaper which had found its way ~~to~~ ^{planet} across the ~~world~~ to Masset.

Swan ^{Swan squinted close to find} ~~it was merely~~ an...elephant. Newsprint

had provided ^{these} ~~the~~ astounding details--thrust of tusks, bend of trunk--

too: a picture of Barnum's Jumbo, representing the hoisting on board

a steamer when bound to New York. # Veteran shopper of Indian art that

he was, Swan was dazzled. Beautifully carved, the diary says again, and

when varnished will look finely. A cautious ^{prod} ~~inquiry~~ to Charley

^{about} ~~of~~ price. He asks \$10 each. Swan ^{may} ~~perhaps~~ ^{have} even managed to keep

a straight face when he said he'd think ^{on} ~~it over.~~

Edinso pushed off across Hecate Strait toward Fort Simpson, Swan strolled down to watch Nellis the canoe maker. As a canoe connoisseur, ~~was~~ Swan was interested in the process of molding a ^{hollowed} ~~hollowed~~ log into a craft of honed grace. Nellis first softened the wood by filling... with water which he made to ^{boil} ~~boil~~ by putting red hot stones in it. The canoe was then partially spread and allowed to remain for a day... The next morning after heating the water again with hot stones he built a slow fire of rotten wood and bark on the ground along the sides of the canoe to render the wood perfectly soft, or as he said, "to cook it," and then stretched the sides apart as far as was safe and kept them in position by means of stretchers or thwarts. I measured this canoe before he commenced to widen it and found that amidship, the opening was two feet eight inches wide, after he had finished the canoe I again measured it at the same place and found it was four feet nine inches...

Days peeled from Swan's summer. On the twenty-first of July,

a canoe came up Masset Inlet. Not Edinso; out stepped the tardy

James Deans, by way of a supply steamer which had brought him as far

as Skidegate. Swan shows no measurable enthusiasm about the arrival.

Instead, now that he had been beached at Masset for a solid three

weeks, Swan's thoughts were turning inward. Stomachward.

Now that he had been beached at Masset for a solid three weeks,

Swan's thoughts were turning inward. Stomachward.

Not that his menu ^{thus far} hadn't been ~~not~~ as fertile as usual.

pocket diary, June 28.

runs one diary report,

Johnny cooked a nice breakfast, a stew of potatoes & onions, Griddle cakes or "Slap Jacks" as Johnny calls them, and nice coffee-- Another:

pocket diary July 10.

I made some clam fritters for breakfast which were very fine.

And again:

pocket notebk, Jul 24

Today I made a pudding of the roots of the brown lily...
first boiled the root, then mashed & mixed with eggs, milk,
sugar & spice & baked...I think it is the first pudding
ever made of this kind of root.

^{now whisk with Swan's}
The diary pages fly into a flurry

marine gathering and garnishing... some clams which

I put in a tub of water for two days to get rid of the sand... large

crabs nicely boiled in salt water. Some fresh trout and fresh salmon...

A soda-biscuit stuffing prepared for the trout, ^{enhanced} dabbed with dried herbs...

fat bacon chopped fine... three cloves of garlic bruised, pepper and salt

and water, the whole rubbed into a ~~uniform~~ uniform mass with a potato masher.

Swan ^{cheffed} ~~flow~~ on to ^{clams,} ~~the~~ crabs, ~~the~~ salmon. When all was ready, I called the
gentlemen to the repast which may be

Prior to my advent, he begins, the H.B. Company people were content to

live on Indian dried salmon cured without salt, canned meats, beans,

peas and salted fish... In other words, like a colony of Martians

bivouacked in an orange grove and eating galactic K-rations. So

I thought to give them a treat.

pp. 44-45

But is his own palate was faring splendidly, the Hudson's Bay

But if his own palate was faring splendidly, the victuals of the Hudson's Bay employees horrified him.

enumerated as follows, clam chowder, baked trout, roasted salmon and

deviled crab, with a dessert of wild strawberries and strawberry short

cake, coffee and tea; a banquet of natural products which elicited

encomiums of praise from the guests. ~~Even the encomiums were not his~~

Even the ^{glazed} encomiums were not his final word; where food was concerned,

there seemed never to be one with Swan. Two days later he is found busy

preparing an octopus salad and serving it up to ^{his} the Hudson Bay ^{converts} men with

chutney sauce and another of his ^{culinary} ~~dietary~~ perorations: ...

4 Saturday: Weather showery. Swarms of gnats were very troublesome
all night. This morning I killed quantities on the window with the
fumes of burning matches...

letterbk, Jul 29

7 Sunday: No prospect of Edinso getting here so long as this gale
lasts...must be windbound some where between here and Fort
Simpson...(pocket diary same day) I think if he does not get
back by Tuesday that I will get Weeah to take me to North
Island. Swan took his mind off Edinso with the youngsters of Masset,

✓

no 41

Sunday evening, after church some children came to look at some

pictures of the Zuni Indians in the Century Magazine of December 1882,

when they looked at the dancing scene and masquarade performances in the

February number they chatted like magpies....

On Tuesday, the last day of July, the details pause as Swan notes

a favorable wind and hopes ~~it will bring old Edinso~~, as I am very

that it will waft in old Edinso. It does not,
anxious to be starting off. ~~It did not,~~ and the next day Swan ~~listened~~⁵

to McKenzie and Johnny Kit Elswa ^{discuss} describe a Haida method of fixing guilt. ^(sets back and)

When a person is taken sick and foul play is suspected, two men, not

doctors but relatives, drink salt water for four successive days. In

this water a frog dried and pulverized is stirred and mixed. This causes

purging and vomiting. This cleansing of the system enables them to see

clearly both mentally and physically...A wood mouse having been caught

is put in a little cage, and set up on a box or table. Its first impulse

is to retire to a corner and setting on its hind legs it remains immovable

for a short time. While it is quiet the men question it to learn who

made their relative sick. They name the persons suspected...The person

whose name causes the mouse to nod its head is considered the guilty one,

and unless he or she pays a number of blankets or give a present of equal

value they will have the same sickness and die.

By now, Swan had been encamped at Masset long enough for ~~his~~ hair to grow down the back of his neck, ^{so} and very nicely this morning Johnny pocket diary, Aug 2

Johnny trimmed him as well as any barber and better than most... and better than most I have had. The young Haida by now is earning the diary's steady praise:...

this morning. He is an excellent assistant. He is a good interpreter, a good cook a good valet, and a splendid hand about a camp and managing a canoe, young active and strong, and faithful in looking after my interests.

Friday, August fourth, no Edinso. Wrote letters and packed specimens today. # On Saturday, ^{Swan} ~~we~~ bought two of Charley Edinso's canes, including the one with the elephant's head. They are beautifully carved and when varnished will look finely.

Sunday: ~~meant~~ church and another of Reverend Harrison's ^{sermons.} interesting
Monday, 8:30 that morning, ~~the~~ ^a plash of canoe paddles at last.

Swan, Johnny Kit Elswa and Deans ~~are waiting~~ pushing off in Edinso's canoe, in company with Edinso and his squaw, three men and two boys. I am to pay Edinso \$1.00 per day. His wife and the three men 75¢ each and canoe 50¢ per day... and the two boys 50¢ each...

The start had not been smooth. Edinso
letterbk Aug 7

~~xxxxxxx~~ He did not give instructions about stowing the things
and when I got in I found myself perched up on some boxes with
Mr Deans. Old Edinso asked in a curt manner why I sat so
high up. I told him I had spoken to him to have a proper
place for me to sit down, but if he wanted me to stow his
canoe I could do so. I then ordered several packages placed
properly and made myself comfortable and we proceeded on ~~to~~
Jalun river...

after ^{bramble} That bit of brangle done, the canoe rode before a fair but light
wind, its passengers let out

~~Once underway,~~

The canoe rode before a fair but light wind, its passengers ^{let} put out

~~salmon~~ fishing lines with spoon bait and trawled them astern and soon caught three large salmon. Edinso's squaw had about two gallons of

strawberries and a lot of red huckleberries and she gave us as many as

we could eat. [#] By mid-afternoon, the floating picnic had crossed Virago

Sound ^{by mid-afternoon} and a stop was made to cook a meal for the canoe crew. Mr. Deans and I lunched on strawberries, sardines, bread and cold coffee.

They went on in the canoe to camp for the night at a village called

Yatze, a spot Swan thought

letterbk, Aug 6

...Yatze has little to recommend it even to Indians.

The Haida villagers were gone somewhere, a few wan potato patches and ^{one}

lonely carved monument the only signs of life. Human life, that is.

Mosquitoes and gnats were plentiful and...quite lively.

As if not wanting another clear look at the place, the canoers paddled out of Yatze the next morning before dawn. Edinso sprained his back launching the ~~the~~ craft and was quite cross, but

progressed west
the expedition ~~went~~ on to the Jalun River before breakfasting. *There the*
queer beach ~~there~~ impressed Swan as a singular exhibit of volcanic

action in which the lava had burst up through the upper strata of rocks
as though the region had boiled up like a pot. The lava was of a brick
red color and a pale sulphur yellow in places, filled with boulders and
pebbles of stone blackened outside with the heat and looking like a
gigantic plum pudding. This is the first instance I have seen of such
an evident volcanic action on the direct sea beach.

In early afternoon, Pillar Point was passed, ~~a ninety-foot-high~~
Swan hurriedly did a sketch, showing it as a ninety-foot-high ~~stone spike~~
driven into the offshore shoals.
of stone topped with bushes. The Queen Charlotte coastline was proving
to be like the rim of some other world. A few hours later, the
cance eased ashore

at Edinso's own village, Kioosta, ~~deserted~~ except for many carved
columns the handsomest of which are in front of Edinso's house.

Swan was in his tent after supper this second night out from Masset when Edinso came by to inform him that the canoe crew desired

~~he wanted~~ hot biscuits and coffee ^{to be} served ^{to them} to him and his men every night.

I knew the old fellow put on considerable style with strangers and I

determined to settle our status at once. I told him I did not wish

him to dictate to me what I should do, and he knew that since we left

Masset we had no time for any cooking but the most simple kind, and it

was no use to talk to me about hot biscuits till we got to a camp where

we would have leisure. # ^{huffed from} Edinso left the tent, and Swan fell asleep to

^{matters} the sound of the crewmen debating the ^{biscuit issue} matter. The next morning, ~~Edinso~~

= # ^{In the} ^{dietary} The next morning, the truckus woke with them. Had a good blow up

Swan's pocket diary begins. ^{was trying} with old Edinso, ^{the canoe crew} This time, the chief had tried Swan on the angle that

wanted to eat with him and they want

flour and potatoes and pancakes, and want Johnny to be their cook.

They might as well have wanted Swan to pare their toenails during supper every night, too. If there was one matter in the cosmos that

Swan had a clear doctrine about, it was the sanctity of his ^{meals} ~~mealtime~~.

He shot back to Edinso and the other Haidas the ultimatum--bluff, more likely--

~~The more so, in fact, because if there was one matter Swan was
unyieldable about, it was food. He shot back the ultimatum~~

that if I heard any more complaints I would return to Masset and get
another crew...When they found I was determined they gave up and all
became good natured.

Good-natured or not, Edinso gave up on biscuits and hotcakes and began showing Swan and Deans the ~~the~~ long-awaited shores of his North Island, now on the maps as Langara Island. He took them first to

~~the deserted village of~~ ^{a site called} ~~the~~ ^a ~~deserted~~ ^{village} ~~and~~ rapidly expiring back into the forest. Even the more recent houses built fifty years

ago are fast decaying; the humidity of the climate causes a growth of moss which, freezing in winter and seldom or never dry in summer, rots

the soft cedar and rapidly ^{reduces} reduces it to a pulpy mould.

Next Edinso, who was ^{proving} ~~beginning~~ to have a ^{rhetorical formula} ~~trick~~ for every occasion, with the assurance

steered them along the ~~the~~ waterline to ~~the~~ a burial cave which he assured that the hallowed spot before ~~now~~ that instant them no white eyes had ever seen ~~before~~.... A dry cavern some 60 feet

in length, as Swan jotted it, the entrance to which is 25 feet above

high water mark and approached by a rough path over conglomerate boulders.

They ^{clambered} ~~climbed~~ in among some 28 or 30 burial boxes of various sizes... In

one of the boxes of skeletons which had been opened by age, a puffin

or sea parrot had made its nest... and had hatched out a brood, as the

presence of broken eggs shells testified. Some of the burial boxes were

ornamented with the crests of the occupants carved and painted in colors,

others were merely rough boxes. Some of the bodies were rolled in Hudson

Bay blankets, and some of the heads were mummified like AZTEC mummies...

But whatever Ruth took from those visits might stop at
That of a Chief or doctor, was well preserved the hair tied in a knot

on the top of the skull, and the dried ears still holding the abalone

shell ornaments...

There was still one more stop in this funereal day: Cloak Bay,

sheltered ~~by a small island~~ on its north side by a small island

which thrust up a conglomerate cusp of cliff

~~Next the journeyers went to Wax Gloak Bay, The small island on~~
~~its north side thrust up a conglomerate cliff which Swan thought~~

astoundingly like a round medieval tower, everything but the want of

windows made this appearance complete. Sharp rocks ^{fanged} ~~rose~~ around the

island. One pinnacle displayed a hole bored through by the ~~sea~~ ocean's

action. Edinso at once advertised ^{the cavity} ~~it~~ as the work of an immense fish

gnawing a doorway to its house. That reminded him that he hadn't adequately

explained the castellated island, and he related to Swan and Deans

that here had lived an Indian slaver named Teegwin, and for his

misdeeds he was turned into this big stone, and his sister coming

to see him was also turned to stone. After this recital we hoisted

sail and returned to camp.

Two days after that, on the tenth of August, Swan made a find

which was among the oddest in his thirty years of jackdawing along

the Pacific shoreline. Edinso and crew had steered Deans and him

to the deserted village of Yakh, there to see the burial place of a

medicine man named Koontz. Inside his plank box, Koontz in a shirt

of caribou skin reclined in full dignified length, not doubled up as

is the practice. Bodies of doctors alone being allowed to remain

in the position in which they die. Deans potted around the corpse

a bit, but Swan was less interested in Koontz's posture than a pair

of items among the skaga's burial trove. Two large curved teeth
which he thought resembled those of a beaver, but which seemed too
long, too...odd. What he had come onto, he subsequently learned,

~~they~~ were tusks of the African wild hog ~~Barbaroussa~~, probably procured
from the wreck of a Japanese or Siamese junk which was lost on Queen
Charlotte Islands in 1833.